



Impact Report 2023



What Media Trust did this year and the difference we made

'It's by giving everyone a voice that we'll get to a more equal society. That's why it's desperately important to level the playing field for those who are underrepresented in the media.'

Su-Mei Thompson, Chief Executive, Media Trust

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Foreword from Media Trust's Chief Executive

As we look back on 2023, Media Trust's work has never felt more urgent or relevant. We're only just starting to see the full impact of the pandemic on the mental health of young people, while the cost-of-living crisis and rising energy bills are making pre-existing disparities more pronounced. Meanwhile even with the disabled community now making up 23% of the overall population, disabled people continue to experience inequality, prejudice and negative attitudes. And the ongoing debate over how and by when the UK is going to phase out fossil fuels and cut emissions underscores just how much work remains to be done by climate and environmental charities.

As a result, at Media Trust, we've never been busier. Starting from the premise that it's by giving everyone a voice that we'll get to a more equal society—we know it's desperately important to level the playing field for those who are underrepresented in the media. That's why we're giving charities, marginalised communities and underrepresented talent a stronger voice through expert training and mentoring. It's also why we're facilitating vital connections between charities and the media to co-produce solutions to the underrepresentation of certain groups.

Some of the ground-breaking new initiatives we launched in 2023 include our Intersectional Storyteller's Toolkit which almost 600 charities signed up to receive, our Represent the 22% roundtable with [McCann](#) to explore disability representation in advertising and

our all-day Media Unlocked film-making workshops for maintained schools in the [West London Partnership](#). At the same time, we continued to run our signature communications programmes for charities including our thematic cohort-based programmes - Stronger Voices and Weston Communicating Climate. One of our fastest growing areas was Media Trust Films where we match volunteer directors with charities wanting a film made about their work and impact. And we continued to match seasoned mentors with mentees from underrepresented backgrounds working with [ScreenSkills](#) and partners like [News UK](#).

I'm extremely grateful to the organisations and individuals who've supported us this year with volunteering, expert training and best practice guides and resources. And I'm incredibly proud of - and thankful to - the Media Trust team for their passion and professionalism, leading to our engagement with more than 2,500 charities and almost 600 diverse creative talent, and ultimately, the positive changes we were able to affect. In closing, it feels like 2023 is ending on an anxious note for many and we need to redouble our efforts going forward to build a more equal and cohesive society. If that aligns with your organisation's mission and values, we'd love to be part of your 2024, and for you to be part of ours. Thank you again for your ongoing support.

Su-Mei Thompson
Chief Executive | Media Trust

Our year at a glance

2728

charities received support from Media Trust

10524

hours were donated by our media industry volunteers

8317

people attended Media Trust's events

1389

skilled volunteers supported charities through Media Trust

Our employability & skills training supported

568

young people

Our youth and talent programmes created

84

placements

Our charity services supported

3031

charity workers

In 2023, Media Trust delivered

374

events

36

programmes

234

training events

Media Trust in the Spotlight

> Media Trust Impact Report 2023

March

- > Media Trust Screen Industries & Mentoring Lead Daisy Church took the stage at [ScreenSkills' Future Film Skills Showcase](#), sharing her insights on shaping the future of the industry
- > Director of Charity Services, Jenny Walton, and Stronger Voices Senior Programme Manager, Rabia Mirza, empowered 160 [City Bridge Foundation](#) grantees to amplify their voices, leading a session for 160 charities, and later replicating the workshop at the [Barnet Together](#) conference this October
- > The charity films produced by [Media Trust Films](#) won a slew of gongs at the 2023 [Smiley Charity Film Awards](#)

April

- > Daisy Church graced the stage at [Platt9rm's KickAss Women](#) event in Brighton
- > Media Trust CEO Su-Mei Thompson engaged in an insightful CEO Question Time at the [PPA Festival](#). The event saw the publishing industry come together to share learnings, spark ideas and fuel growth in today's ever-changing, multi-platform world

July

- > Su-Mei Thompson shared her expertise on building inclusive organisations in an article for [IMD](#)

October

- > Media Trust's work with [McCann UK](#) was highlighted in [Little Black Book](#), which showcased our Represent the 22% roundtable event
- > Media Trust's Digital Skills lead Jade Staiano shared her expertise at the [Heritage Lottery Fund's Digital Skills for Heritage](#) conference at the [British Museum](#)

November

- > Media Trust took the stage at the [PwC Media Summit](#), discussing how diverse talent is driving innovation and giving a voice to under-represented communities
- > Valerie Leisten and Polly Allen, Media Trust Managers, led separate sessions at the [Communicate 2023: Together for Nature](#) conference at the [Natural History Museum](#)

November

- > [Charity Times](#) covered the launch of our Intersectional Storyteller's Toolkit
- > [McCann Worldwide](#) recognised Media Trust's commitment to Disability inclusion, with a fireside chat featuring Su-Mei Thompson to mark the International Day for People with Disabilities

December

- > Cara French, Media Trust's Head of Strategic Partnerships, was part of the jury for [Sky's Zero Footprint Fund](#)



Giving charities a stronger voice

Our Impact > 2023



Intersectional Reporting

> Giving Charities a Stronger Voice

Our Intersectional Reporting Programme, funded by the [Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust](#), continued to have a significant impact, training 15 charities and 330 journalists to embrace intersectional storytelling in their communications and reporting.

We supported a second cohort of 15 small charities across the UK with 5-months of free training to better understand and communicate the complexities of overlapping social identities. Participants learnt how to frame stories through an intersectional lens, support people with lived experience, and use data to support intersectional narratives and combat misinformation.

We also provided the charities with opportunities to build relationships with journalists and editors and hone their pitching skills. Our Speed Pitching event offered a platform for charities to present their stories and receive valuable

feedback from journalists, editors, and producers from prominent media outlets, including the [BBC](#), [Bloomberg](#), [the Metro](#), [the Liverpool Echo](#) and many more. This engagement has led to significant media coverage for participants, including [Football Beyond Borders](#) who were featured in the [Liverpool Echo](#).

In partnership with [NCTJ](#), we provided individual reporters and whole newsrooms with the tools to integrate intersectional storytelling into their reporting practices. Through virtual and in-person masterclasses, we explored best practices and shared practical tips for reporting that delves into the root causes of complex

societal issues, reflects the multifaceted challenges faced by marginalised communities and individuals, and amplifies underrepresented voices. We are proud to have delivered this training to leading news organisations like [ITN](#) and [Reach](#), as well as to journalists from the [BBC](#), [CNN](#), [Hearst](#) and [the Metro](#).

Over 650 charities signed up to participate in our Intersectional Storytellers Toolkit, a five day email learning series funded by [Lankelly Chase](#)

93%

of participants rated their knowledge of applying intersectional frames and principles to storytelling as high after the programme

93%

of participants rated their organisation's ability to amplify the voices of underrepresented communities as high after the programme

330

journalists and editors benefitted from Media Trust's Inclusive and Intersectional Reporting Training courses

Websites Unlocked

>Giving Charities a Stronger Voice

A strong online presence is crucial for charities to thrive in today's world. Having an up-to-date and accessible website puts charities in the best position to raise awareness of their cause, recruit volunteers and increase their fundraising. However, many small organisations lack the resources to maintain a user-friendly and effective website.

That's why Media Trust launched Websites Unlocked, a new initiative funded by the [WCIT Charity](#), designed specifically to empower small charities with digital skills and tools for success. Through a combination of expert training, online webinars, drop-in sessions and practical guides, Websites Unlocked has helped nearly 300 organisations optimise their websites, enhance accessibility and drive engagement.

The initiative's success is also evident in the overwhelming response to the Websites Unlocked Toolkit, developed in collaboration with digital experts [Few and Far](#). With over 500 downloads in the first month, the Toolkit provides essential guidance on topics like Google Analytics, audience understanding and goal setting, empowering charities to make the most of their online presence.

Special thanks to our expert trainers [Andrew Davis](#), [Lauren Pope](#), [Mind in Bradford](#), [Thomas Nadin](#) and [Suzy Poole](#), and to our industry partner volunteers from [BBC](#), [Google](#) and [Reprise Digital](#).

'Websites Unlocked stands out because it's so relevant for small charities.'

'I gained knowledge on completely new topics, and the training has given me confidence in approaching web designers with a clear brief.'



98%

of participants gained a better understanding of website design

95%

enhanced their knowledge of website accessibility

93%

believe the training will improve their organisation's website communications

Supporting digital skills with Marketing Trust

> Giving Charities a Stronger Voice

In today's digital landscape, a robust digital marketing strategy is no longer a luxury but a necessity for charities to thrive. Recognising this need, Media Trust, with the support of [Marketing Trust](#), launched a Digital Marketing Strategy programme, reaching 154 charities across the UK from March to June 2023.

The programme aimed to equip charities with the practical tools and knowledge to navigate the ever-evolving online world, enabling them to amplify their impact and achieve their wider goals.

Building on feedback from the previous year's programme, the 2023 iteration featured webinars focused on SEO, free tools, paid advertising, and analytics. Additionally, digital drop-in sessions with [Edelman](#), [Snap](#), [Tag Worldwide](#) and [The Gate Films](#) catered to the evolving needs of the charities. Sessions covered crucial topics such as website design and management, data, audiences and insights, social media, and film and content production.

100%

felt confident in their digital marketing skills, up from 43% before the programme

98%

of participants felt they were focussed on the best performing channels, up from 23% before the programme

100%

100% of participants felt confident using digital marketing tools and platforms at work, up from 53%

'I feel empowered to work more strategically and understand where my focus should be. Digital strategy was broken down from something big and scary into sensible bite-size pieces.'



Headlining Mental Health

> Giving Charities a Stronger Voice

Media Trust provided expert training and pro-bono coaching for 174 mental health organisations to help them reach a wider audience, communicate their impact and raise awareness of mental health issues. In the first five months of 2023, we delivered:

- > A Charity Challenge Day with [Atkins Global](#) volunteers supporting two mental health organisations with a full day of pro bono strategic communications support.
- > A communications strategy clinic providing alumni from our Headlining Mental Health programme with follow up coaching support.
- > An 'Acing Social' masterclass with partner PR agency [Edelman](#) supporting 48 mental health charities to navigate the different social media platforms.

A social media coaching session led by four [Meta](#) employees who volunteered their time to help 15 mental health

charities to build their knowledge in utilising Meta platforms like [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

- > A masterclass with [Andrew Davis](#) on Measuring the Impact of your social media attended by 99 mental health charities which covered practical tools for measuring the impact of digital communications.
- > A website/SEO coaching session with nine experts from marketing agency [Locaria](#) which supported six mental health charities to optimise their websites and get found online.

'Thank you to Media Trust and Locaria. Events like this really help charity comms professionals by giving us knowledge and insight that will help us to grow and learn.'

25

industry volunteers provided expertise and support to participating charities

174

mental health organisations took part in the programme

Stronger Voices

>Giving Charities a Stronger Voice

We marked five years of empowering London's charities to champion justice and equity through our Stronger Voices programme, funded by the [City Bridge Foundation](#).

The fifth year of the programme saw 15 equality organisations embark on a six-month journey to enhance their strategic communications skills. The programme covered media training, campaigning and social media strategy, alongside framing clinics to refine messaging that resonates with audiences and influences policymakers.

Our programme partners included [Equally Ours](#) and [Neon](#), experts in communicating for a fairer, just, and equitable society, while our Advisory Board, made up of equalities sector and media industry leaders, helped ensure our programme remained relevant and responsive to the needs of the participating charities. Each charity was paired with a team of expert industry volunteers, including 21 from [Reprise Digital](#) and 22 from the [BBC](#). This collaboration resulted in tangible action plans to address specific communications challenges.

We also brought our charities together for a speed-pitching event with a diverse pool of freelance journalists and reporters from the [BBC](#), [Good Housekeeping](#), [Huffington Post](#), [Insider](#), [Metro](#), [Pink News](#), [Reach PLC](#), [RED](#), [The Drum](#), [We Are Seen](#) and [Women's Health](#). Thanks to the feedback they received on their pitches, one in five organisations went on to secure media coverage within three months of the event.

In partnership with [Google](#), we delivered our Ad Grants mentoring scheme, with 25 Google volunteers providing one-on-one support to each organisation. This collaboration unlocked and maximised over \$10,000 free advertising per month, raising the profile of the organisations and their campaigns.

We also hosted four free sector-wide masterclasses for 237 charity attendees, enhancing their ability to communicate and campaign effectively. Topics included Instagram Reels with [Meta](#), Google Analytics with [Google](#), Pitching to Journalists with [The Metro](#), and a masterclass with [Sho Walker-Konno](#), a communications coach for activists.

Year Six: Embracing the Future

Thanks to a new grant from City Bridge Foundation, we're excited to be continuing this impactful programme in the years to come. We had a record number of over 80 equality organisations applying for a place this year and in September, we welcomed 20 organisations to our sixth Stronger Voices programme. This year, we're prioritising organisations campaigning for systemic change and tackling structural inequality in their work for London communities.



'The communication skills I have gained from the programme will help us to raise awareness of the harms being done to women and girls. Through stronger and clearer digital communication, we can share our message with wider audiences, change perceptions and approach policy and decision makers more effectively.'

100%

of participants increased their confidence in their communication skills

80%

anticipate achieving media coverage due to the programme

80%

of charities secured Google Ad Grants access

Weston Communicating Climate

>Giving Charities a Stronger Voice

In a pivotal year for climate comms, year three of our Weston Communicating Climate programme, supported by [Garfield Weston Foundation](#) and [MG OMD](#), empowered 20 UK climate and environmental charities to amplify their voices and drive positive change.

Over six transformative months, the programme provided charities with unparalleled access to expert-led training, networking opportunities and resources, and pro bono communications strategy support from seasoned media professionals. This holistic approach empowered the charities to more effectively influence media discourse, policy and public sentiment on critical climate and environmental issues.

Five tailored workshops formed the cornerstone of the programme, giving participating charities the opportunity to deep-dive into strategic climate framing, audience segmentation, social media mastery, communications strategy development, and the art of diverse storytelling. Additionally, a [Goodwork](#) training session equipped participants with media engagement skills, before a fast-paced and high-impact speed pitching session. Four framing clinics led by [Heard](#), further

enhanced the learning experience. We extended the programme's impact beyond the core cohort by hosting three masterclasses for 130 environmental organisations. These sessions explored campaigning strategies with the [National Trust](#), engaging Gen-Z in climate conversations with [Dentsu's](#) VIZ community, and tackled how to communicate complex eco-issues with [33Seconds](#).

Additionally, we released two new films in our Conquering Climate Comms series. 'Intersectional Storytelling,' in collaboration with [Fahmida Miah](#) from Climate Outreach, explored the power of inclusive narratives while 'Collaboration for Impactful Campaigns,' with [David Kilner](#) from [Climate Cymru](#), emphasised the importance of strategic partnerships.

The programme's impact has been profound, empowering cohort members with newfound skills,

knowledge and confidence in climate communications. One participant aptly summarised the programme's impact saying: 'This programme has given us the confidence to enhance our communications, use our existing platforms more strategically and monitor our effectiveness. It has also equipped us with valuable and cost-effective tools.'

Charity Challenge: Strategic Comms Support

2023 marked our third year of working with global media agency [MG OMD](#) on our Weston Communicating Climate programme. In September, the agency mobilised over 180 media and comms volunteers to provide one-on-one strategic communications support to participating charities. This collaboration addressed specific communications challenges faced by the charities, from campaign strategy to social media optimisation and audience conversion.

100%

100% rated their knowledge of climate framing as high, up from 50% before the programme

83%

83% said their confidence in segmenting and engaging different audiences was high, up from 20% before the programme

100%

found the charity challenge day with MG OMD useful for their comms

Since 2017, Media Trust's Resource Hub has been a focal point of knowledge for the sector, providing charities with a wealth of free, up-to-date, and accessible digital communications guides and resources. The [Charity Commission's](#) Social Media Guidance for Charities, published this September, actually signposted charities to our Resource Hub, recognising our commitment to strengthening the media and digital communications capabilities of the charity sector.

In 2023, we've continued to publish guides on cutting-edge topics like artificial intelligence and live streaming. We've also collaborated with industry partners like [Arch Communications](#), [Few & Far](#) and [33Seconds](#) to produce new expert-led resources.

The result? A Resource Hub that welcomed over 5,000 visitors this year. Our most popular resources include our glossary of GA4, comms tips for the cost-of-living crisis and our Websites Unlocked and Intersectional Storytelling Toolkits, which have had more than 500 and 650 downloads respectively, since launching earlier this Autumn.



Volunteering

>Giving Charities a Stronger Voice



Women's Voices x Loving Me

Loving Me, a charity dedicated to supporting trans, non-binary, and gender-queer survivors of violence and domestic abuse, faced a unique challenge: reaching their target audience while building trust within the transgender and non-binary community who had been let down by other support services in the past.

Enter **Chloe Dowdle**, Senior Social and Digital Manager at **Warner Bros. Discovery**, and one of our **Women's Voices** volunteers. Alongside three fellow industry volunteers, Chloe dived into Loving Me's brief, crafting a comprehensive social media 'bible' that helped to double the charity's following and connect them with potential service users.

'We struggled to create engaging content without showing faces,' Loving Me shared. 'Our expert volunteers helped us find creative solutions, boosting our social media profiles and our ability to reach those who need our support.'

Chloe added, 'Working with Loving Me was incredibly fulfilling. I really connected with the team on the day of the Women's Voices event, and I've been in touch with them ever since. I hope that the next time I'm 'up north,' I can meet the team in person again.'

Volunteering has been the foundation of our work for nearly 30 years. As UK charities face ongoing financial uncertainty and resourcing challenges, the demand for expert volunteer support has risen. With the support of the **Garfield Weston Foundation**, over the past year, we've connected 1389 media industry volunteers with 1544 charities, matching good skills with good causes.

In 2023, we held several large-scale Charity Challenge events, bringing together groups of charities tackling causes like gender equity, environmental sustainability, racial equality, poverty alleviation, and LGBTQ+ rights and matched them with teams of media industry volunteers.

Our seventh annual Women's Voices event, coinciding with International Women's Day, saw 108 industry volunteers work in teams to develop impactful communications strategies for 30 women and girls' charities.

For the fourth year running, we collaborated with **Ogilvy** for 'A Day to Make a Difference,' connecting 25 **Ogilvy** volunteers with five grassroots charities doing vital work for parents, carers and the LGBTIAQ+ community, working on causes from culture to racial equality, gender equity, and neurodivergence inclusion.

A number of our industry supporters – **Atkins Global**, **BBC**, **Kenvue**, **Reprise Digital** and **Yahoo** – entrusted us to organise their employee volunteering days. These events enabled multi-disciplinary expert teams to provide invaluable, pro-bono support to over 30 charities.

Our partnership with **Edelman** has seen their employees dedicating time and expertise to a range of Media Trust programmes including masterclasses for mental health charities, media training for charities, and a new series of strategic comms drop-in clinics.

As we prepare to relaunch our improved digital volunteer platform, we remain committed to nurturing and expanding our volunteer community while ensuring charities continue to receive high-quality media and communications volunteer support, during a period of exceptionally high demand.

1389

volunteers donated their time to support charities

1628

matches were made by our volunteering team

1544

charities received expert volunteer support

Media Trust Films

>Giving Charities a Stronger Voice

Media Trust Films bridges the gap between charities and filmmakers, creating powerful content that amplifies the impact of grassroots organisations by leveraging the expertise of award-winning directors, many with lived experience of the causes they're supporting.

This year, **Media Trust Films** produced 20 powerful short films for charities supported by **City Bridge Foundation** and **John Lyon's Charity** including Adventure Play Hub, Arts Emergency, Arts for All, Barnet Carers, Colindale Communities Trust, Community Focus, Creative Futures, Ealing Anchor, Fulham Good Neighbours, Hope for the Young, Host Nation, Jazanne Arts, Key Changes, One in Four, Phoenix Rising, Spitalfields City Farm, US Charitable Trust, Vital Xposure, and Young Kensington and Chelsea.

Our volunteer filmmakers included renowned cinematographers **Edward Hiscox** and Emmy-nominated **Franklin Dow**, alongside international production house **Company 3**.

To maximise the films' impact, Media Trust provided comprehensive training in marketing and distribution to the charities, including one-on-one sessions with a marketing expert who helped ensure each charity had a bespoke plan for their film's release. Arts for All hosted a screening in Shoreditch, London while HostNation partnered with the **American International Church** to screen the film alongside a supper club event.

Since launching this Autumn, the films have already garnered six awards and one nomination at the **Circle Awards**, **Smiley Charity Film Awards** and the **Big Syn Sustainability Film Awards**.



'The scenarios were incredibly true to life and really showed that you listened to our young carers.'

Mike Rich, Chief Executive, Barnet Carers

'The director and his team were an absolute pleasure to work with, so respectful of our young people's backgrounds, English levels, and confidence levels!'

Alice Finta, Communications and Fundraising Officer, Hope for the Young



Communications Capacity Building

> Giving Charities a Stronger Voice

For three years, Media Trust and John Lyon's Charity have worked with London-based youth charities to enhance their communication skills through our Communications Capacity Building Programme.

This year, the programme's final chapter saw 21 charities receive support to strengthen their services for young people, raise awareness of their work and address their biggest digital communication challenges.

Media Trust delivered a total of 48 hours of tailored training sessions, 60 hours of communications strategy support, 45 hours of industry mentor guidance, and one-hour pitching sessions with 12 journalists. Each charity also participated in a tailored Communications Strategy workshop to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, resulting in actionable plans for effective communication.

The programme also included eight media and communications training sessions tailored to the grantees' specific needs. These sessions equipped the charities with the skills and knowledge to implement their action plans, address any skills gaps, better engage with their service users and promote their organisations and projects.

The success of the Communications Capacity Building Programme has led to the launch of two similar Funder Plus models in partnership with the Santander Foundation and the Mercers' Company. Over the next three years, these new initiatives will continue to empower charities across the UK to amplify their voices and make a positive impact.

'Creating a communications strategy had not been a priority for us but this programme showed its importance. It was invaluable.' - Dalgarno Trust

'As a direct result, we've gained funding which will directly help us support and reach more people' - Unique Community

100%

improved their confidence in developing and implementing a communications strategy

90%

said the training will help their organisation improve their media and comms

90%

said their knowledge of communications, digital and media engagement improved

Open courses & bespoke training

> Giving Charities a Stronger Voice

Bespoke Training

This year has seen a surge in demand for Media Trust bespoke training, with charities seeking support in media and communications to enhance their impact. Media interview training remains the most popular request, followed by social media training and digital storytelling with filmmaking on a mobile.

Over the year, Media Trust has delivered 67 bespoke training sessions to over 415 charity participants, empowering them to build and strengthen their skills in digital, media and communications.

The impact of the training has been significant for both individual participants and their organisations. 98% of participants strongly agree that the training improved their media and communications. As a trainee from Admiral Nurses and Dementia UK put it, 'I feel more confident and empowered to take up media opportunities, enabling me to promote the work of my organisation more coherently.'

Open Courses

In 2023, Media Trust's revamped Open Courses struck a chord with charities seeking low-cost, accessible and high-quality training. With 20 Open Courses delivered this year, Media Trust empowered 335 charities to tackle their biggest digital, media and communications challenges.

Significantly, 67% of attendees represented micro-sized charities, demonstrating the programme's reach and impact for smaller organisations. The most popular courses this year were 'Beginner's Guide to Social Media Success,' 'Tik Tok' and 'The Power of Email Marketing,' reflecting the growing demand for social media and digital marketing expertise among charities.

The impact of these courses has been profound. 95% of participants agreed that the training will enhance their organisation's media and communications strategy while 97% reported improved knowledge of the topic area.

'The training challenged us to think about how we present Transaid's messaging and why, and how we can do it better. It also addressed common issues, such as confidence, which helped us improve our overall presentation skills.'

Supporting underrepresented and young talent



Media Unlocked

> Supporting Underrepresented and Young Talent

Thanks to funding from [Kusuma Trust](#) and [St Pauls Girls School](#), we launched our Media Unlocked programme to develop the creative digital media skills and career aspirations of students at five maintained schools in the [West London Partnership](#).

Designed in collaboration with participating schools, the programme delivered six weeks of 90-minute training sessions. Students gained hands-on experience in various aspects of filmmaking, from ideation and pitching to scriptwriting, lighting, sound and editing.

Additionally, teachers and students gained access to learning resources and insightful career webinars featuring industry experts from across the media and creative sectors.

Responding to the high demand from schools for more workshops, we devised an ambitious and innovative

all day workshop format which we delivered in the final week of the Summer Term. With the help of 17 industry volunteers, we set up a pop-up professional green screen studio in three schools, supporting a total of 340 students with hands-on short form content creation training.

Each group created a film in response to a brief on 'Good news from the year 2052', culminating in a screening at the end of the day. In total, Media Unlocked guided 453 young people in producing a total of 89 films!

'The green screen and set up of the workshop day was incredible - students got to use equipment that they had never used previously.'

'The students gained valuable insight into the media industry and learned so many transferable skills that I know are so needed in the workplace!'

75%

of students said the training developed their practical filmmaking skills

453

young people took part in the Media Unlocked Programme

89

short films were produced by students taking part in the programme

Creativity Works

> Supporting Underrepresented and Young Talent

In a sector where creativity is the currency of success, Media Trust's Creativity Works programme is empowering young Londoners to break into the media and creative industries.

This year, 52 young people embarked on a journey of skills development, mentorship and industry connections through Creativity Works. Supported by the [Mayor's Fund for London](#), the programme delivered a comprehensive four-week bootcamp followed by a month of online group mentoring and webinars led by industry experts, for our two cohorts of trainees.

Creativity Works is not just about learning; it's about hands-on experience. Trainees attended 28 masterclasses with media professionals from Media Trust's industry partners like [BBC](#), [BBH](#), [ITV](#) and [VICE](#). Sessions covered a diverse range of disciplines including podcasting, TV production, social media, data analytics, AR, journalism, advertising, graphic design, public speaking, money management and employability skills.

Months on, the programme's impact is clear: 68% of Creativity Works alumni were in employment, education, or training six months after completing the programme. Graduates secured paid positions and valuable work experience at leading media organisations including [Bauer Media](#), [Global London](#), [Hearst](#), [ITN](#), [Paramount](#), [Ricochet](#), [Snap](#), and [Warner Bros. Discovery](#).

Trainees emerged with a newfound sense of confidence and direction, ready to make their mark on the creative world.



'This has been a unique experience I could never have had anywhere else. I was immersed in a supportive environment and inspired by so many. I feel lucky to have gained many new ideas and to have been pointed to so many new avenues.'

'These sessions have given me skills I can apply in all areas of my life. I feel a lot more confident in pursuing my career goals.'



88%

of participants felt confident applying for jobs in the media and creative sector after completing the programme, up from 37% at the beginning

85%

of participants rated their knowledge of the different roles within the media and creative sector as high

94%

of participants said Creativity Works has helped them kickstart their career in the media and creative industries

Black Britain Unspoken

> Supporting Underrepresented and Young Talent

That's a wrap on another year of Black Britain Unspoken, our collaboration with [Warner Bros. Discovery Access](#)!

For the second year running, we invited Black British storytellers, filmmakers and creatives to pitch their film concepts to the Black Britain Unspoken commissioning panel with the chance to release a short film on [discovery+](#) during Black History Month. This year, Media Trust developed and delivered continuing professional development training for the selected filmmakers covering essential topics such as Nailing your Pitch, Interviewing, Ethics and Objectivity, and Film Release Strategy.

The three winning films: [Terrie Aghaizu's](#) *Alterior*, [Eden Igwe's](#) *Beats from Heaven*, and [Monique Needham's](#) *Food, Music & Vibes*, received production support from Warner Bros. Discovery and Bounce Cinema and premiered on [discovery+](#) in October. The three short documentaries offer unique and intimate perspectives on the Black British experience.

We are grateful to the Warner Bros. Discovery Access team for their commitment to providing grassroots communities and underrepresented talent with access to a major streaming platform.

Find out more on the [Warner Bros. Discovery Access site](#).

All three of this year's short films are now available for streaming on [discovery+](#).

'I feel transformed as a person and as a creative.'

Eden Igwe, Black Britain Unspoken Filmmaker



Eden Igwe, *Beats from Heaven*



Terrie Aghaizu, *Alterior*



Monique Needham, *Food, Music and Vibes*

Reframing Disability mentoring with News UK

> Supporting Underrepresented and Young Talent

Media Trust & News UK's Reframing Disability Mentoring Programme is part of our mission to create a more inclusive media landscape for Disabled talent. This initiative connected 11 experienced mentors from across News UK with aspiring disabled journalists, providing invaluable guidance and support.

Thanks to our mentors who provided a supportive environment, personalised guidance and opportunities for professional growth, we witnessed remarkable transformations among our mentees. Their achievements included:

- > speaking at the United Nations
- > hosting a newscast at CNN's diversity day
- > joining panels at the Disability in Journalism Forum
- > gaining work experience with the Guilty Feminist podcast
- > completing a placement at Sky
- > contributing to The Sun's TV Last Night feature for three weeks – marking one mentee's first by-line in a national newspaper!



'Because of my disability, I was taught to believe I could never have a career in broadcasting. Now, thanks to this mentorship, I've embraced my place in TV and radio.'

70%

of mentees rated their media industry network as good after the programme compared to 18% before

90%

of mentees felt a job in news or journalism was attainable after the programme vs. 45% before

ScreenSkills mentoring

In early 2023, we delivered our seventh and final ScreenSkills mentoring programme, which marked the end of our series of Media Trust and ScreenSkills Mentoring Programmes aimed at supporting underrepresented talent to thrive in the screen industries.

Designed to empower aspiring screen industry professionals, particularly women, regional talent and Disabled talent, this final programme which we delivered in partnership with ITV connected 25 mentees with experienced screen-industry professionals for five months of mentorship. Notably, many mentors extended their support beyond the programme's end.

Mentees benefited from four co-produced group mentoring circles addressing specific skills gaps, as well as workshops on pitching, resilience, pre-production, casting and writing, led by acclaimed screenwriter Genevieve Barr.

Our mentors played a pivotal role in opening doors for mentees, helping them secure on-set work experience for BBC's 'Ghosts,' facilitated by Monumental Television (ITV Studios), meetings with Raw TV's Head of Talent and interviews for ScreenSkills Trainee Finder.

Media Trust surpassed ScreenSkills' diversity targets across all metrics, with 32% of mentees identifying as disabled and/or neurodivergent, 76% as women or non-binary, 48% as people of colour, 40% as LGBTQI+, 76% from outside of London and the Southeast, and 100% from state-school backgrounds.

Across our seven ScreenSkills mentoring programmes, we successfully matched 272 mentors and mentees, with 93% rating the programme overall as good or very good.

'A lot of the time the power imbalance between those in the industry and those trying to break in is very intimidating, but this programme really helped to create conversations between people.'

Insights from our alumni

> Supporting Underrepresented and Young Talent

At the end of 2023 Media Trust launched an alumni consultation to understand the experiences and priorities of the alumni of our Youth and Talent programmes.

This has helped us understand the demographic make-up of our alumni network, the impact our programmes have had, what they're up to now, their experiences of the media industry, and how we can best support underrepresented talent going forwards. The below data is based on the emerging findings from our alumni consultation survey which had 175 responses.

We will be publishing the full set of findings later in 2024 when we have completed all stages of the alumni consultation, but we'd like to share a snapshot of our survey findings.

Who are our alumni?

34%

have a disability, impairment, learning difference or long-term condition

42%

are from low socioeconomic backgrounds

72%

are ethnic minorities

'Participating in a Media Trust programme took my career to the next level!'

'Media Trust gave me the opportunity to connect with industry professionals which allowed me to get my first work experience placement in TV.'

'It helped me land my first job!'



What impact has Media Trust had?

- > 78% said participating in a Media Trust programme supported them to start or progress their career in the media and creative industry
- > 84% understand the mission of Media Trust's Youth and Talent work
- > 72% still feel engaged with Media Trust

What are they doing now?

- > 71% of those in paid employment are currently working in the media industry
- > Others are undertaking further education or training, or are seeking employment.

What do they think about the media industry?

- > 87% agreed the media and creative industry needs to do more to develop inclusive workplace cultures
- > 'Class and wealth play a big role in who gets to succeed and who gets to stay in this industry'
- > 'Just cultural things like going for drinks after work should not be expected of an employee.'

What support do they want?

From Media Trust

- > Our alumni are most interested in training, opportunities to interact with industry professionals and mentoring.

From the media and creative industry

- > Our alumni want to see more inclusive recruitment practices and access to more professional development opportunities. They want more focus on accessibility, greater understanding of diverse lived experiences, and a long-term commitment to tackling systemic barriers and developing inclusive workplace cultures.
- > 'Make diverse hires feel they have earned that spot and are not just the token coloured hire in the room'
- > 'I want to see more opportunities aimed at supporting deaf, disabled, and neurodiverse talent to step up into higher positions.'
- > 'Creating a diverse and inclusive environment isn't a one-time effort; it requires continuous support, ongoing education, and structural changes.'
- > Alumni value opportunities to be creative, a good salary, finding the work interesting, an inclusive workplace culture, and financial support to progress in their career. They are motivated by their interest in and passions for storytelling, creativity and making a difference.

Thank you to all of our alumni who have taken part in our consultation so far, and for doing us proud with all you have achieved. We're excited to see where you go next!

With thanks to our partners & people

Amidst the challenges of 2023, we were grateful to have the invaluable support of our industry partners whose generous funding, skilled trainers, dedicated volunteers and passionate mentors fuelled our initiatives and helped transform lives.

We're excited to continue working with our existing partners while welcoming new partners who share our vision. We look forward to the possibilities that lie ahead in 2024, confident that together, we will continue to drive positive change.



Our partners & supporters



Our Team and their Highlights from 2023

> Our People



Aoife Allen
Project Manager

I can't pick one! I pick both of this year's Creativity Works graduations. The trainees smashed it!



Ben Bethell
Project Manager

Witnessing our student filmmakers' joy at seeing their work on screen at the Media Unlocked screenings.



Chris Payne
Creative Producer

Meeting our amazing grassroots charities and matching them with talented filmmakers who work so hard to get their message out.



Daisy Church
Senior Programme Manager

Screen industry mentees reconnect after months (or even years!) to share their successes and ongoing mentor relationships.



Fleur Nieddu
Executive Producer

My highlight is friendship. At the end of each year, I have a greater network of charity and creative allies. A privilege!



Jade Staiano
Senior Programme Manager

I loved creating the Websites Unlocked Toolkit and working with incredible experts who really care about the charities we're supporting.



Cara French
Head of Strategic Partnerships

Returning from maternity leave and hearing about all the incredible programmes and events run by our small but mighty team.



Carly Bell
Senior Volunteer Programme Manager

Our ever-expanding volunteer community who help out year after year! It's a testament to their unwavering belief in our mission.



Jenny Walton
Director of Charity Services

Seeing the power of storytelling when we connect talented charity storytellers with media volunteers, amplifying their voices and impact.



Katie Bourne
EA and Corporate Affairs

Hearing the good news stories from our supported charities and new industry talent, and the impact, reach and recognition of our amazing charity films.



Cassandra Buck
Project Coordinator

Leading my first Digital Marketing Strategy programme and seeing the impact of the training on our charity participants.



Cath Walford
CRM Project Manager

Setting up SharePoint and migrating all our historic documents from Box to SharePoint.



Klara Schmitz
Head of Youth

Witnessing the impact of our Reframing Disability mentoring programme through mentees' stories of progress and representation.

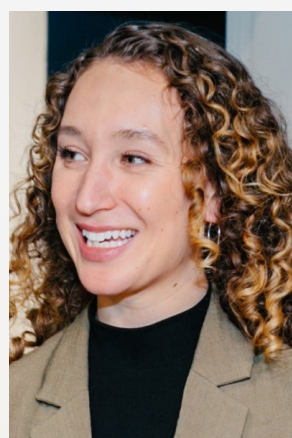


Lauren Bailey
Project Manager

Having the opportunity to work closely with charities across the UK and learn more about the important work they do.

Our Team and their Highlights from 2023

> Our People



Lily Usher
Project Coordinator

Joining Media Trust and being part of the incredible Volunteer Films' Scheme!



Louise Dempsey
Head of Engagement and Events

Collaborating with our partners and seeing the magic happen when their volunteers bring innovative ideas to life for charities.



Nicola Kurt
Senior Programme Manager

Partnering with the Santander Foundation and the Mercers' Company to launch two new funder Media Trust Films programmes.



Polly Allen
Digital Marketing Manager

Amplifying marginalised voices through our Intersectional Storyteller's Toolkit.



Michaela Lowe
Executive Producer

Grassroot charities that make a real difference in their small corner of the world, sharing important stories with creative virtuosity.



Naomi White
COO

Collaborating with our inspiring board of trustees—their passion for Media Trust and our work fuels everything we do.



Rabia Mirza
Senior Programme Manager

Kicking off Stronger Voices Year 6 and unveiling the prospective participant pack!



Rob Janke
Digital Lead

Joining Media Trust and McCann's Reframing Disability in Advertising Roundtable to explore solutions for inclusive representation in advertising.



Niamh Mawhinney
Volunteering Coordinator

Seeing first-hand the transformative impact of media and charity collaboration in empowering marginalised voices



Nicholas McDonald
Communications Officer

Debuting a new series of evergreen content across our social media platforms, designed to engage, inform and entertain our audience.



Su-Mei Thompson
CEO

Having the opportunity to work with such an amazing group of colleagues who stretch and support each other in equal measure.



Valerie Leisten
Project Manager

Supporting environmental and climate charities to increase the reach, power and impact of their Project communications. It's been so inspiring!

The logo for MediaTrust features the word "MediaTrust" in a bold, sans-serif font. The text is white and is set against a black rectangular background that is partially obscured by a white shape on the right side, creating a layered effect.

MediaTrust

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