



trc.

Annual Report 2018-19

Leaders in broadcast and digital training

In 2018 TRC turned 20 years old. Since our inception in 1998 we have delivered high-end training for individuals and businesses working within the broadcast and digital sectors.

Through TRC training, careers have been transformed, new start-ups established, international business secured, skill shortages tackled, business strategies re-framed and invaluable networks formed. Our reputation as one of the UK’s leading training providers has allowed us to provide unrivalled access to the world’s most innovative companies.

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What a year! We celebrated our 20th birthday in style, launched a new brand and website for TRC, put Scotland on the map with international business trips and more. Existing training programmes like Special Edition and SuperSizer have gone from strength to strength: new commissions have been won, job promotions achieved, and lasting support networks formed.

Working with our industry colleagues to support new talent has been a real priority this year. In February 2019 we launched Rad – an exciting new trainee scheme that seeks to address the lack of diversity in the Scottish TV industry. At the time of writing, we’ve just wrapped interviews for our Inspiring Digital Leaders internship programme – a new collaboration with BIMA Scotland and five participating digital agencies that seeks to find and develop Scotland’s digital leaders of tomorrow. Our close relationships with industry have allowed us to identify skills gaps and build solutions that deliver real results – some of which will be outlined in the pages that follow.

None of what we’ve delivered this year would be possible without the support of our funding partners. Special thanks go out to Scottish Enterprise, BBC Nations and Regions, Channel 4, Screen Scotland and The Scottish Government who supported our activity this year. We would also like to thank our dedicated board, who bring their wealth of experience to TRC’s activity: Jane Muirhead (Raise the Roof), Lee Beattie (Wire), Helen Blenkinsop (BBC), D-I Brown (BBC Scotland), Angela Chan (Channel 4), Andrew Chitty (UKRI), Stuart Cosgrove, and Andrew Dobbie (MadeBrave). A big thanks to Team TRC for all their hard work this year too: Alex Blott, Michelle Conlin, Emma Flynn, Suzanne Lord, Caroline Gorman, Caroline Newson and Antonia Spagnoletti.

Last of all, thanks to the TRC Network: the ever-growing community of TRC alumni. We’re always open to new collaborations and ideas, so please do get in touch - our door is always open for a cuppa.

Margaret and Claire Joint Managing Directors



A Message from Our Chair

“The work that TRC does supporting creative businesses, championing new talent, and striving for a more inclusive industry is vital to the sector. TRC’s 20th year has been another mark of success in the organisations history. On behalf of the TRC board of trustees I’d like to thank everyone who has helped us continue this important work”

**Jane Muirhead, Chair of the TRC board
Managing Director of Raise the Roof**



Our Year in Numbers...



81%

Of our trainees reported an increase in their confidence



516

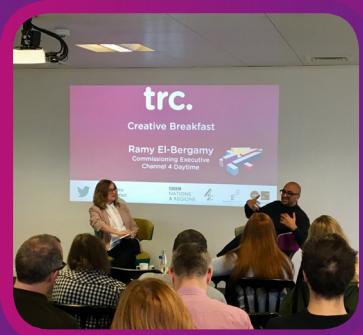
Guests at TRC Events

100%

Would recommend TRC training to others.

83

People trained on long-form programmes



79%

Of our trainees reported an increase in ambition



What people say about us...

“The SuperSizer course is a rare gem of a course. An amazing experience to get in front of the full set of UK broadcasters and to spend such a lot of time in their company. I now have a far fuller understanding of every UK broadcaster, have made so many connections with current commissioners and made friends with a room full of talented creatives who, one day, will undoubtedly be commissioners themselves.



Connie Fisher, Wildflame Productions

“There are initiatives out there for people trying to get a business off the ground, but training for business owners or senior people in a company is hard to come by. Cross Creative opens the door to networking with your peers, hands-on experience and international exposure. I don't think anything else out there compares to it.

Daniel Rae, Hydrogen



“TRC's RAD program is making strides in ensuring that diversity becomes a priority in the film and television industry, and not simply a buzzword. It was refreshing to find a route into the tv industry with a company that understand the severity of my mental illness, and the ways in which it could impact my day to day life. They not only understand this, but manage to see beyond it and actively welcome discussion on the issue.



Charlotte Hall, Matchlight

“For the first time in my career Special Edition has provided a space and forum to take stock of skills and experience. It was a unique time to focus on me, and gave me time to consolidate, prioritise and enhance specific skills which has in-turn boosted my confidence

Justine Leahy, ISO Design



SuperSizer

SuperSizer is a programme for ambitious production companies based in the Nations & Regions looking to develop ideas of scale for the next big returning series. The course was devised following feedback from producers and commissioners about the challenges of commissioning big ideas outside London.

The pilot programme ran from November 2017 until April 2018 and delivered some fantastic outcomes, including four commissions with several treatments in development. The second edition of SuperSizer ran from September 2018 to March 2019 and featured contributors from BBC, Channel 4, Sky and A&E Networks.

Programme Objectives

- Improved development skills
- Creating and pitching big ideas
- Increased industry profile



The delegates received exclusive access to commissioners at Channel 4 and Channel 5 at their London offices, and with the BBC in Glasgow. At Channel 5 the delegates each took part in a pitching challenge with Director of Programmes Ben Frow, with £3k development funding at stake for the winning pitch. Laura Farrell (Tern TV) and Connie Fisher (Wildflame Productions) each received half of the development funding.



Outcomes

100%

of delegates said it improved their ability as a development executive

28

ongoing dialogues with commissioners

49

ideas in development

4

new commissions (BBC, Channel 5, C4C)

1

active collaboration between companies

17

new pitches

“

SuperSizer is a gateway for any indie to grow and expand its horizon of opportunity. The programme totally changed my approach towards developing ideas with a greater awareness and a more relevant approach to what commissioners are looking for.

Khurram Sheikh
Imagemaker Media (Manchester)



”

“

Supersizer has re-energized our development process and has made me realise not only the value of my ideas but also how to present them better and how to unlock their maximum potential for our company.



Henry Imbert
Very Nice (Glasgow)

”

Jennifer Gilroy

Development Executive at Firecracker Scotland
Delegate of SuperSizer 2017/18 Programme



In November 2018 Firecracker Scotland won a 15-part commission from BBC One Daytime - *The Customer is Always Right*. We spoke to Jen about how the skills learnt on SuperSizer led to this commission, amongst other key takeaways from the programme.

Why SuperSizer?

“I liked the concept of SuperSizer from the beginning – it’s about encouraging companies in the Nations and Regions to be ambitious and come up with big returnable series. Why can Scotland not produce the next *Hunted* or *24 Hours in A&E*?”

I loved the ambition of the programme, which is something I think we share at Firecracker Scotland. The course chimes a chord with what is needed in the Nations and Regions - commissioners need to see that there are companies here that can deliver at the high level required for big, returnable series.”

Creative Diversity in the Development Team

“The first session of the programme absolutely changed my approach to the creative process. A crucial thing that I’ve taken away from the training was the learning on unconscious bias and different types of creatives. People often hire those in the same creative mould as themselves. From the training, I now know that I am an ‘implementer,’ so now when I go to hire, I look for those who have a different creative type from my own. It was a real lightbulb moment, and one from which I can see tangible results.

When developing *The Customer is Always Right*, I hired someone to help with the casting for our taster tape. The person I ended up hiring had a very different background to me and therefore a different approach than I might take. Their background helped them bring together a diverse cast that we pitched as part of our taster tape to the BBC.”

“As well as loving the idea itself, the BBC said that the taster tape and the diversity showcased was a key reason for the show being commissioned. Part of our big ethos at Firecracker Scotland has always been about diversity – from class to ethnicity. Now, we’re also thinking about diversity of approach and creativity – something I can attribute to the training on SuperSizer.”



Exclusive commissioner access

“The one-on-one time with commissioners that the course provided was invaluable. The sessions were intimate insights into them as people, as well as their role as commissioners – what they’re looking for and what their department is looking for but it also gave us the freedom to throw out questions to them. I think the commissioners really responded well to it because they were able to say ‘you’re our suppliers and we need to have a mutual understanding.’ It felt like very privileged access – I got so much more out of these sessions than from bigger commissioner briefings. The setting allowed everyone to be really honest, which was invaluable.

It works both ways too: the programme allowed the indies to show the commissioners who we are and the calibre of talent in the Nations and Regions. It allowed us to showcase what we have here, and hopefully these relationships will continue. We’ve followed up with all the commissioners from the programme and have some ideas in with some of them. Having formed relationships with them through SuperSizer has massively helped.”

Special Edition

Women are under-represented at Board level in the digital/tech sector in Scotland. To address this imbalance, we created Special Edition: a professional development programme that seeks to help ambitious, talented women fulfil their potential and reach the very top.

Now in its sixth year of delivery, the 2018/19 Special Edition programme was a great success – there have already been three job promotions since the programme wrapped up in March 2019.

Programme Objectives

- boost confidence
- increase ambition
- expand professional networks
- progress careers in digital



This year's programme comprised six training sessions at TRC's Glasgow offices, on subjects ranging from authentic leadership and powerful negotiation to work/life balance and goal setting. The group of eight delegates also visited London and Amsterdam to meet with a host of senior women doing exciting things in the world of digital.



Outcomes

100%

of delegates said
their confidence
had increased

88%

said their ambition
had increased

88%

have changed
working practices

3 of 8

delegates have been
promoted during or
since the programme

“

Previous delegates had told me Special Edition was ‘life-changing’. I wondered how one course could really impact a life in such a big way. And it wasn’t until closer to the end that I saw how much it’s changed mine. I wish every woman in digital across Scotland could go on Special Edition and realise their dreams too.

Laura Thomson

Strategy and Communications Director, Cause & Effect



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“

Get ready for your confidence to soar, your networks to broaden, to learn you can do things you never even dreamed of! That’s the Special Edition experience.



Anne Grieve
Associate Creative Director, AmazeRealise

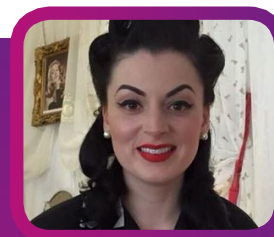
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Serina MacDonald

Head of Activation - Associate Director

Amplifi, Dentsu Aegis Network

Delegate of Special Edition 2018/19 Programme



Serina was part of the 2018/19 Special Edition, which wrapped in March 2019. Whilst on the programme, Serina gained a significant job promotion, which she attributes to the lessons learnt through TRC training.

Why Special Edition?

“I was off on maternity leave when a former manager sent me a link to the application for Special Edition. When I initially looked at the opportunity, I doubted that I would be good enough to be selected. But I read feedback from previous delegates, who were making huge claims about the experience being ‘life-changing’ and I thought ‘I want a piece of that!’. So, I gave it a go and secured a place. Given everything I have learned since completing the programme, the confidence gained and my improved mindset, it scares me to think what I would have missed out on had I not clicked that apply button!”

Finding my niche

“I’ve always enjoyed the industry I work in, and done well in terms of career progression, but I had reached the level of Associate Director and I didn’t know what was next for me. Even though I am confident in my knowledge, skills and experience, part of me has always thought that I could never be a Managing Director or start my own business. I look at others in those positions and have never felt that I could relate. Following the course, I genuinely do believe that I am just as good as anyone else and that I have every chance of getting to that stage. The course has helped not only understand that, but it has also helped me define and shape my goals and ambitions which I hadn’t truly thought through previously. I feel like I now have a better understanding of my “niche” - and that I know what I have to offer an organisation to make a real impact on their business, and that’s quite powerful! I do believe that I could choose a company that I really want to work for and just approach them with what I have to offer - and that’s not something I would have dreamed of doing prior to the course.”

Returning to the industry

“I had taken a year out of the industry for my maternity leave and felt energised and excited about returning to work. At the same time, I was also starting to get nervous about returning to the industry. A lot changes in the digital world in a year, so that was really playing on my mind. I started Special Edition at the same time as coming back to work, and I think I would have struggled more with the return if it hadn't been for the course. Special Edition gave me a really positive outlook on returning to the industry – it was like a rebirth, as cheesy as that sounds!”



New opportunities

“When I was doing the course, a role became vacant in another agency under the Dentsu Aegis network. I reached out directly to the Managing Director of the company to enquire about the position (something I never would have done in the past!) and during that conversation the role was offered to me then and there. I had been nervous about the prospect of asking because this is a senior role that manages across Edinburgh and Manchester locations. Without Special Edition, I don't believe that I would have had the confidence to take the steps that got me this role. I now have a whole new mindset and perspective that has changed how I think, how I feel about myself and what I have to offer the world. That's the greatest outcome, and more than I ever expected.”

RAD

Rad is a new TRC training programme that aims to tackle lack of diversity in the Scottish television sector. Rad is aimed at groups who are typically under-represented in the TV industry: those either with a disability, from Black, Asian or ethnic minority communities or from disadvantaged backgrounds.

We kicked off the programme in February 2019 and will wrap in December. Rad trainees are paid to work full-time with a Scottish TV production company and supported to learn the skills needed to help them become a professional television researcher.

Monthly training sessions are also provided for the host companies, focusing on developing and sustaining equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We had an incredible response from the production community and candidates alike.



The indies taking part in this year's programme are: IWC Media, Hopscotch Films, Matchlight, Raise the Roof Productions, BBC Studios Pacific Quay Productions, Blazing Griffin, Firecracker Scotland, Mentorn and Two Rivers Media.



Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop with trainees at Rad launch

Application Stats

223applications
in total**27%**from a black, Asian
or ethnic minority
community**36%**from a disadvantaged
background**52%**of applicants consider
themselves to have a
disability or long-term
health condition

“

I have been looking for that first step into the tv and film industry for some time, but it has been a bit of a struggle. The go-to entry level position in most cases is as a Runner, but with physical issues such as mine that has been a daunting idea. Going for a job where disability is not only acknowledged, but welcomed in such an upfront manner (along with other under-represented groups) was really encouraging too

James M Macleod
Rad Trainee Researcher, Blazing Griffin



”

“

We all work at such a busy pace that having a day to talk, discuss, learn and reflect on what we could do better to increase diversity and improve our recruitment practices is invaluable. You can't change the whole system but you can make small changes that can have a big impact



Jeannot Hutcheson
Production Talent and Resources Co-ordinator, Raise the Roof

”

Annie Butcher

Junior Development Researcher, Mentorn Scotland
Current trainee on Rad



Annie has been working with Mentorn Scotland for the past 3 months. She will be spending half of her traineeship with Mentorn before moving over to work with the team at Firecracker Scotland, who also form part of the Tinopolis group. We had a chat with Annie about her first taste of life as a TV Researcher.

Why Rad?

"I always wanted to tell stories, whether that was writing or journalism, which I then started a career in. I loved journalism, but I found that I worked much better bouncing ideas off other people, rather than writing away by myself. I remember seeing that Blue Planet had 11 million viewers, then plastic legislation was being altered and attitudes were changing because of this TV programme and found it incredible. People talk about what they watch on TV, and it can have mass influence and real societal change.

Something that I feel strongly about is seeing a fair representation of all people on TV. Growing up, I remember watching TV with my mum, who is African, and rarely seeing figures that related to that part of our culture. The few times we did it was brilliant but I felt passionate that this gap needed to be addressed. Now is such a great time in TV for me, because I am beginning to see so many things that I can identify with, and that's is a really exciting place to be in. I was already looking for work in the industry before rad but was finding it difficult. Rad was a real-life opportunity to work in solid employment for 10 months. Not only was it a stable opportunity that was paid, but also an opportunity for incredible training."

Working in TV

"I work in development - looking into new ideas for programmes that haven't been made yet. It's a really creative space to work in, which I love. I've really enjoyed the fact that I've had a lot of creative leeway to go with my own instinct to come up with stories and ideas. The team I'm working with at Mentorn is very small, and mainly I work with the Executive Producer."

“On my first day, in my first few hours in fact, I was sitting with a presenter and her agent brainstorming ideas for programmes. I had the impression that it would be a big boardroom full of people, and I wouldn’t be contributing much, but here I was coming up with ideas with talent – all before lunch time! I recently had the opportunity to pitch to Channel 4 in a meeting with our MD and Executive Producer. I was pinching myself. It was my fourth week in my job, and I just kept thinking ‘how am I here?’

Learning on the job

“The training with TRC is really thorough – we have industry experts who come in for an intense day of learning each month. I’ve got notebooks filled with notes on compliance, contributors and different research techniques, which has all been really useful when I’m working on something and want to look back at my notes for some guidance. If ever I feel like I don’t know what I’m doing I can always refer to them. It’s great having the rest of the trainee group there too – we’ve all come from very different backgrounds but are all in the same boat when it comes to this role and starting out as beginners. You never feel like you’re alone.”

Industry ambitions

“I feel like I’m living the dream and I don’t want it to stop. Over the coming months I want to fill in any gaps in my knowledge and make as many contacts in the industry as possible. I really love my job – something that I’ve never been able to say before. That’s the dream though, isn’t it?”



Rad trainees with BBC Commissioning Editor Jo Street

Cross Creative

Cross Creative brings senior executives in Scotland's thriving digital media sector together for a unique training and development programme that has been proven to transform businesses and careers.

In May 2018 we wrapped the 10th edition of Cross Creative, and welcomed our next cohort of creative leaders in November 2018. At the time of writing (April 2019) the group are preparing for their international business trip to Canada's famous Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor, one of the fastest-growing innovation hubs in the world.

What we cover

- Powerful negotiation
- Creative company culture
- Benefits of collaboration
- Attitude to risk
- Financing and Scaling-up



During their time in Toronto, the Cross Creative group will be meeting with a number of the city's best and brightest companies, tech and creative professionals, successful start-ups, CEOs, serial entrepreneurs and industry leaders. With a packed schedule of over 20 meetings, the group will benefit from the experience and expertise of companies including: CISCO, Freshbooks, MaRS, Impossible Things, DMZ, Shopify, TFO Studios, Eighty-Eight, 21 Toys, Centre Social Innovation, One Method and Hockeystick.



Outcomes 2017/18

100%

of delegates said
their confidence
had increased

15

private meetings
secured in Canada

20+

average new or
revitalised business
contacts through
programme

4 of 8

delegates have secured
promotions, equity stake
or an invitation to a Board
position as a result of
Cross Creative.

“

I now place further emphasis on innovation and creativity. I am constantly making sure our work environment is a place that fosters creative thinking. I can now spot where there are issues and act on them.

Charlie Bell
Whitespace



”

“

Cross Creative has enabled me to tackle real personal and business issues and take action. I've come away inspired with new visions and actions.



Angela Prentner-Smith
This is Milk

”

“

Cross Creative has truly changed how I approach work. It's given me actionable steps throughout the programme.

Rab Fyfe
CitNow



”

Stu Thomson

Founder and director of Cut Media
Delegate of Cross Creative 2017/18 Programme



Stu Thomson is founder and director of Cut Media, a Glasgow-based company producing content for global brands. Five months on from completing Cross Creative, we caught up with Stu to chat collaboration, international work and gaining a non-exec director on the back of the programme.

Why Cross Creative?

“It’s a cliché, but ‘every day is a school day’, and you get to a point where you think ‘I’ve got a company of nine people, with international clients and a substantial turnover, which is a position I’ve never been in before, so for me it was a lot about meeting peers who were going through the same experience.”

About Cut Media

“Cut Media is a creative content agency – one part creative agency, one part production company. We create video, film, animation and photography content campaigns for brands all over the world and are specialists in working with athletes and performers. We’ve grown to a team of nine, working with advertising agencies, but more so direct to brand, which is about 70% of our work. We’ve got some big headline clients – Adidas, Red Bull and a lot of big cycling brands, which is where our foundations lie.”

Building a Scottish Support Network

“I always feel like Cut Media has grown in a bit of a bubble in Scotland. A good example of this was when I started the Cross Creative programme and Charlie [from Whitespace] was the only one who was aware of us as a company. We were doing this big global work, with millions of people seeing our content, and yet so few people in Scotland and in the Scottish creative sector were aware of our existence. We’ve collaborated with others in the cohort since the programme and been referred work by the other delegates, which has been great.”

Lessons from Canada

“The trip was obviously a very appealing aspect of the programme for me – gathering information from these amazing companies. In Canada we visited TFO, a French language broadcaster, which was incredible. They were breaking new ground with technology, and it was something you could really see yourself bringing back here. I just kept thinking ‘how could I use this with our clients?’. A big learning from Canada was about collaboration, which is something that we really champion at Cut Media, so it was a reassurance that we’re doing things right. We’re very collaborative as a company and have kind of broken down the traditional production barriers – we’re more of a creative agency model delivering video production. A big part of the learning from the trip was to keep this model, and really fight to retain it as the company grows.”



Next Steps

“Our growth has been organic and steady – we’ve arrived here by creating really good work and we don’t want to lose that for the sake of scaling-up. But we’re very busy- we’re hiring three more people in the next couple of months. Through Cross Creative, Cut Media gained a non-exec director. Expansion is definitely on the horizons, it’s just working out the best way to progress.”

Time out of the office to focus on the business

“I’ve been in a position that I think so many company directors find themselves in – really busy with the day to day – but it’s so valuable to take that time out. My staff really saw the benefit of me doing the course and scheduling that time out of the office. I think Cross Creative is part of a movement of really stepping back to consider the bigger picture. Overall, it was an insightful, fun and incredibly valuable experience. The course has given me education and enabled clarity and drive for future goals for the business.”

Event Highlights

We run an extensive programme of digital and broadcast events throughout the year, from commissioner briefings and inspiring presentation events to networking drinks for the industry. We're always open to collaborating with other organisations and to suggestions on who our next guest speaker should be, so please give us a shout if you'd like to work together.

A snapshot of our events this year:

- Creative Breakfast with Sky Arts and Entertainment
- 'Taking the lead' with Women who Code Edinburgh
- Creative Breakfast with Channel 5 Director of Programmes Ben Frow and former commissioning editor Sean Doyle
- Creative Breakfast with UKTV's Head of Scripted, Pete Thornton
- Creative Breakfast with Channel 4 Daytime's Ramy El-Bergamy
- Creative Briefing with ITV's Head of Factual Entertainment, Sue Murphy
- Kickstart your career in TV with Rad!
- Creative Breakfast: How can the Scottish Creative Sector Conquer the World?
- 'The Future of Publishing' with BIMA Scotland
- TRC Network Christmas Drinks
- Blockchain for Film, TV and Games
- Creative Breakfast: ITV Entertainment & Factual
- International Women's Day: Fail up!

TRC's briefings are essential for anyone serious about Independent production in Scotland.

Nigel Pope, Maramedia



Meet the Team



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Our Funders

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A huge thanks to them for all their support this year:



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Government
gov.scot





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