“BBC Commissioning is at the heart of the UK Production sector – working with the most exciting talent, producers and partners to bring brilliant British stories to the screen. I am proud that we have done even more to support creativity and excellence across the sector this year, and this report sets out what we have achieved in 2019.”

Tim Davie
BBC Director-General

Introduction

Context
Commissioning bold British content that audiences love is what BBC Television is here to do. We are proud to work with world-class production talent across the whole of the UK – and are committed to invest in the next generation to ensure we continue to do so in the future.

Creative success relies on a vibrant and diverse production sector – and it is the BBC’s role to support the health of the UK supply base at a time of intense global competition. We want producers and talent to continue to see the BBC as a place that nurtures, enables and amplifies their best work.

Our commissioners are amongst the best in the business, adding creative value and impact to the stories writers, directors and producers want to tell. Together we can discover and shape the shows that reflect the richness of all four Nations and leave audiences wanting more.

What we’ve achieved in 2019

In 2019 we have strengthened our UK creative footprint even further. We have worked with more producers than ever before, more new producers, more producers based in the Nations and Regions and more qualifying independent producers.

The majority of our programme hours are now made by independent producers and we have increased the levels of competition across our content.

This report demonstrates that we have:

• strengthened our support for the television production sector
• continued to be open, fair and transparent in the way we work
• fulfilled our commitments in the Commissioning Process Framework
• exceeded all our regulatory requirements

This report focuses on performance in 2019. For more background on how we work please see the BBC Commissioning Supply Report 2018 and the BBC Commissioning website. The first three chapters focus on Network TV*.

Section 1: Inspiring Great British creativity
Section 2: Backing brilliant ideas, talent and companies
Section 3: Delivering our ambitions and commitments
Section 4: Nations, Children’s and Sport

Further information
Looking ahead and appendix

Spend original UK TV content
£1.4bn+

Hours original UK TV content
29k+

New producers
77

Producers outside London
57%

Indie productions
54%

Suppliers
350+

The Greatest Dancer, BBC One, Thames/Syco

1 Way Out, BBC One, Sid Gentle Films – Golden Globe Best TV Drama

Front cover credit: Gentleman Jack, BBC One, Lookout Point RTS Best Drama Series

What we’ve achieved

In 2019 we have strengthened our UK creative footprint even further. We have worked with more producers than ever before, more new producers, more producers based in the Nations and Regions and more qualifying independent producers.

We have also increased the scale of our support for new talent and smaller companies, particularly outside London and those that have diverse leadership.

This report focuses on performance in 2019. For more background on how we work please see the BBC Commissioning Supply Report 2018 and the BBC Commissioning website. The first three chapters focus on Network TV*.

* Network TV covers Network Drama, Comedy, Entertainment, Factual, Docuseries and News related Current Affairs. Non-network TV, Children’s and Sport have their own sections. On pages 6 and 7 Children’s and Sport are included in Network TV as part of our Nations and Regions support where relevant.
Section 1: Inspiring Great British creativity

Inspiring Great British creativity

Attracting brilliant ideas is critical to the quality and impact of our programmes. We regularly brief producers across the UK to update them on our commissioning priorities – and share information and resources to support their development. Our commissioning process is open, fair and transparent – we work with more new suppliers than any other UK public service broadcaster.

Communication

In 2019 we increased the volume of briefings, updates and face-to-face meetings and went to more cities to talk to producers where they are based. More than half of our briefing activity was outside London.

700k+
Visits to website
New measure for 2019

20+
Video brief updates
Recorded commissioner briefs on current priorities

8
News updates
2018: 3+

Case study: Scotland Factual Briefing

In the BBC/Screen Scotland partnership agreement we committed to develop a stronger Factual format pipeline over time.

In April 2019, we added a format masterclass to our regular commissioning briefing in Glasgow.

Five network commissioners attended from Documentary, Specialist Factual, Current Affairs and Popular Factual. The Factual Business Partner also attended to discuss strategic support.

Our Audience Insight team presented young Factual audience research.

Each commissioner then met with small groups of producers to discuss what makes a good format, using examples of successful formats, those that haven’t worked as well, and sharing taster tapes of successful pitches.

Companies had the opportunity to follow up one-to-one to discuss specific ideas.

80+
Scottish based Factual Producers attended
Section 1: Inspiring Great British creativity

Sharing information and resources

More independent producers are accessing BBC audience data on their programmes through our online portal. They can now also see research articles and presentations which enable them to strengthen performance of existing shows and gain insights to inspire future ideas. Presentations are also available on BBC Pitch for those bidding for new business.

A single search engine has broadened the range of BBC archive available to contracted producers to support their research.

Case study:
Audience masterclasses

To help inspire ideas that match our audience needs, our commissioners and Audience teams regularly share relevant analysis and insights with producers, as new research becomes available.

The interactive sessions help focus development teams on new themes or trends – and stimulate ideas in areas we know appeal to our audiences.

This year we ran the following masterclasses:

- 'Factual Young Audiences' in Scotland and Birmingham
- 'Wind-down TV' in Salford for Entertainment and Daytime producers
- 'iPlayer Viewing' at a pan-genre BBC Two briefing in Northern Ireland
- 'Drama Overview' for scripted producers in London

Drama Audience Insight presentation
The Capture, BBC One, Heyday Films and EastEnders, BBC One, BBC Studios

Defending the Guilty, BBC Two, Big Talk Productions

Glow Up, BBC Three, Wall to Wall

Famalam, BBC Three, BBC Studios

Note system change: 2018 = companies with Digital Archive Accounts. 2019 = Archive Search accounts.
Supporting creativity across the UK

Supporting the strength of ideas, talent and companies in the Nations and Regions is a key BBC priority to meet our ambition of increasing production and strengthening commissioning outside London.

In 2019 we held 17 briefings in the Nations and Regions and launched a targeted BBC Three Invitation to Pitch in Northern Ireland with ring-fenced development funds and a guaranteed commission.

We have Network commissioning editors to support the development of ideas and companies in each of the Nations and Regions. 17* of our Network commissioners are based outside London.

Scotland

Commissioner support

Drama: Gaynor Holmes
Comedy: Gregor Sharp
Entertainment and Daytime: Jo Street (until August 2019)/ Neil McCallum (from March 2020)
Factual: Craig Hunter
Daytime: Muslim Alim
Children’s: Julia Bond

Northern Ireland

Commissioner support

Drama: Tammy Bulfin
Comedy: Gregor Sharp
Factual: Clare Mottershead
Daytime: Muslim Alim
Children’s: Julia Bond

Wales

Commissioner support

Drama: Ben Irving
Comedy: Gregor Sharp
Factual: Catherine Catoon
Daytime: Lindsay Bradbury

England

Commissioner support

Drama: Mona Qureshi
Comedy: Gregor Sharp
Factual: Emily Smith, North & Midlands; and Daisy Griffith, South West
Daytime: Alex McLeod
BBC Three: Nasfim Haque

* Commissioners based outside London include all Network TV genres including Drama, Comedy, Entertainment, Factual, Daytime, Children’s and Sport (please note two of the 17 left during 2019; one has been replaced to date). Briefings and commissioner support includes Drama, Comedy, Entertainment, Factual, Daytime and Children’s. Commissioner visits exclude BBC Children’s and BBC Sport as they are fully based outside London. Wales and Bristol Factual producers are invited to briefings in both locations.
Section 2: Backing brilliant ideas, talent and companies

Back ing brilliant ideas, talent and companies

The BBC commissions great ideas to excite, educate and entertain audiences. We also support the long-term health of the UK creative sector and drive change where the market needs it, to ensure we can continue to do that. Our current priorities are to increase diverse representation both on and off screen, to strengthen production in the Nations and Regions, to ensure we tell stories from all communities across the UK, and to promote a greener Britain. Some of this we do ourselves and some we do with partners in the industry.

We are proactive in driving progress. We invest in ideas to make them the best they can possibly be, and our commissioners score highly in producer surveys for the creative value they add. We back small businesses to ensure we always have a rich and diverse supply base to work with. We stimulate and nurture talent to encourage them to make their best work for the BBC. And diversity of voice, experience, culture and place are at the heart of everything we do.

All genres have dedicated development funds to work with producers to convert ideas from concept to fully formed commissionable programmes for our channels and iPlayer.

Companies funded development 2018: 250+ ▶

We invest in companies to stimulate growth and strengthen their creative pipeline where they play a key role in delivering our creative and strategic goals.

Glastonbury, BBC One, BBC Studios
RTS Best Live Event

Gary House, BBC Two, Sister Pictures
DAF TV Best Supporting Actor

100%
Development spend contestable

50%
Small companies supported

260
Companies funded development 2018: 250+

90%
Indies 2018: 90% >

75%
Companies out of London

10%
BBC Studios 2018: 10% >

0%
In-house 2018: 0% 

2/3rds
Nations and Regions

30
Companies* Business development support

50
Companies supported*

25%
Diverse led

* Includes out of London and portrayal fund partnerships.

We invest in companies to stimulate growth and strengthen their creative pipeline where they play a key role in delivering our creative and strategic goals.

Giri/Haji, BBC Two, Sister Pictures
BAFTA TV Best Supporting Actor

Small indie fund
In January 2020 we launched our small indie fund: ring-fencing £1 million a year to back small independent British businesses with turnovers of less than £10 million. Selected companies each get a commissioning mentor and a bespoke support package.

* Extended to 100 post-Covid

Murder Case, BBC Two/BBC Scotland, Firecrest Films
National TV Awards Best Factual Entertainment

Murder Case, BBC Two/BBC Scotland, Firecrest Films
RTS Best Live Event

Jesy Nelson: Odd One Out, BBC Three, October Films
National TV Awards Best Factual Entertainment

BBC TV Commissioning Supply Report 2019
Section 2: Backing brilliant ideas, talent and companies

What we do continued

Diversity, portrayal and representation

Representing all audiences in the UK is a priority for us. To back that up we have two ring-fenced funds to support progress.

£2m Diversity Fund
To strengthen diverse representation on and off screen through tailored investments, talent initiatives and bursaries.

Case study:
Man Like Mobeen
BBC Comedy, Tiger Aspect and Film Birmingham funded a training scheme to offer eight entry level positions for young Midlands talent from a range of different backgrounds on the BBC Three comedy. The aim was to give first-hand experience of the TV industry by working behind the scenes. The trainees worked across a number of departments including directing, producing, costume, make-up and camera work.

Four of the placements were funded by BBC Comedy, two by Film Birmingham and two by Tiger Aspect.

Other key investments in 2019
BBC Drama supported Turbine Studios to run a scheme on Steve McQueen’s \textit{Promised Land}, focused on developing mixed race and female directors.

-case study continued-

£2m Portrayal Fund*
To strengthen diverse portrayal on screen from entry level to showrunner across all genres – both editorial and craft. We support emerging talent to continue their progress across the BBC.

Case study:
Guilt
The Neil Forsyth penned Scottish Comedy/Drama was the biggest single portrayal fund investment.

A BBC Scotland and BBC Two co-commission, it also secured backing from Screen Scotland and supported the sustainability of Happy Tramp North as a key Comedy producer in Scotland. Casting agents worked across the whole of the UK, searching for Scottish actors from all backgrounds to ensure strong on screen portrayal. The production provided training opportunities for people from socio-economically diverse backgrounds as well as neurodiverse filmmakers.

The series won critical acclaim and was watched by three million people, more than half a million of those were in Scotland. Guilt 2 has been commissioned and will go into production in 2020.

Talent development

Talent is the lifeblood of creativity and excellence – we actively nurture and support new faces and voices. We invest in or manage multiple schemes from entry level to showrunner across all genres – both editorial and craft. We support emerging talent to continue their progress across the BBC.

BBC Elevate
Launched December 2019 to give bespoke experience to disabled production talent to work with suppliers on big BBC shows.

Programmes include: The Apprentice, Strictly Come Dancing, EastEnders, Call the Midwife, Who Do You Think You Are? and Pointless.

30+
Bursaries, talent schemes and targeted initiatives

300+
Applications
8
Production partners

Directors

1/3rd
BAME and disabled

300+
Applications
8
Production partners

Case study:
BBC Writers Room

- Aims to broaden the talent pipeline for BBC Drama and Comedy – especially young, diverse and outside London.
- The flagship TV Drama Writers Programme places 12 promising writers a year with A-list indies to develop a fully funded episode script for an original TV drama series. The scheme averages 60% female, 50% BAME.
- A Comedy extension of the scheme in Scotland led to Bryce Hart Davies being commissioned to write the pilot \textit{Reel} for BBC Two.
- The CDS Directors Scheme won the Creative Diversity Network Award 2019. Of the directors 54% were BAME, 57% women, 3% trans. Of 32 directors, 31 have been called back for their own block.
- Recent Native Voices credits include: Alan Harris, Wakes, for \textit{The Left Behind}, BBC Three; Michael Patrick and Oisin Kearney, Belfast, for My Left Nut, also for BBC Three, and Tony Schumacher, Northern Voices, for \textit{The Responder}, BBC Two.

Comedy

We set up the BBC Comedy Association to discover under-privileged and under-represented young talent. We ran the BBC Comedy Writers Room, alongside the Felix Dexter and Caroline Aherne bursaries – to discover new writing and performing talent.

16
New Comedy writers developed

New talent

Several schemes are aimed at discovering new voices and faces – giving them their first break in TV. These range from Comedy Slices and First Timers, through a Daytime Drama craft trainee scheme to BBC Three Pitch, placing new Documentary talent with a Northern indie.

2
Comedy bursaries
10
New talent schemes

Writing schemes

500+
Writers supported

60+
Writing schemes Development programmes, script-reading, talent searches and workshops across all four Nations

5
Bases
London, Salford, Cardiff, Belfast, Glasgow

Director schemes

12
Director schemes

• Aims to develop emerging and established writers.

Applications
1,000

Final schemes
169

Applications
800

Final schemes
61

20
Writers Programme alumni in current development On BBC Drama slate

* 19/20 was the final year of this three-year investment.
What we do with others

The BBC is proud to partner with other specialists in the sector to further support ideas, talent, skills and businesses across the UK. We do so where our ambitions and values align, and where there is clear strategic benefit, outcomes and value for money.

Talent development

ScreenSkills
To support production training initiatives across the UK, targeted at skills gaps:
- **35%** BAME
- **19/20 Series Producers Programme**
- **70%** Nations and Regions
- **19/20 Production Co-ordinator Programme**

National Film and Television School
To support high-end education opportunities in film and TV programme making:
- **32 MAs and Diplomas**
- **50%** Short courses outside London

BFI
To develop and support new UK talent through ifeatures and other projects:
- **12** Initial filmmakers supported through ifeatures
- **3** Films taken into production

TRC
To strengthen skills and development in the Nations and Regions:
- **12** Development executives
- **8** Diverse trainees researchers
- **19/20 RAD scheme**

Q Case study: TRC SuperSizer

The aim of SuperSizer is to strengthen the quality of ambitious ideas in development from the Nations and Regions to increase the ability of companies to win bigger, higher value commissions.

12 Factual Development Executives receive monthly training sessions on idea development, pitching and negotiation, with commissioner sessions to gain insight on how to tailor ideas for UK broadcasters.

In 2019 the BBC hosted the SuperSizer delegates for a day of in-depth sessions with the Head of Content for iPlayer, Head of Planning and Scheduling as well as Commissioning Editors for Documentaries, Popular Factual and Factual Entertainment.

All delegates reported their skills, knowledge, confidence and relationships had strengthened.

"Spending time in the company of experts is always a privilege. The clarity and rationale behind commissioner thinking – provided sound starting points for new ideas.”

Louis Ramber, Button Down (York)

Strategic partnerships

NI Screen
Partnership agreement and shared initiatives to support the strategic development of the sector. In 2019, launched BBC Three Youth Development Partnership with Factual Entertainment and Comedy, was launched.

10 independent producers in paid development on BBC Three schemes

Screen Scotland
Partnership agreement and shared initiatives to support the strategic development of the local sector. In 2019 the BBC met or exceeded its MOU commitments.

70k BBC investment in Scottish portrayal projects in 2019

Pact
BBC co-funds a Diversity Exec to support independent producers to deliver on diversity goals. Workshops included: Inclusive Leadership, Inclusive Casting, Hiring for Disability and Unconscious Bias.

12 Workshops in four cities
170 Attendees on 2019 courses

Indielab
Business accelerator programme to help small indies supercharge their growth.

Masterclass series with industry leaders to inform growth and investment plans.

16 Producers
50+ Industry leaders

Creative Cities Convention
Annual event to strengthen and celebrate production in the Nations and Region, hosted in Cardiff in 2019. Senior industry leaders debate topics to support creative health of OOL companies to drive growth.

156 Productions Albert certified in 19/20

Albert consortium, hosted by BAFTA
Specialist team working closely with productions to encourage greener ways of working. Provides free tools, training and resources to help producers reduce their carbon footprint.

2 Pilots
1 Guaranteed commission

Hometown, BBC Three, Forest and Wonder Television – RTS Best Presenter

Case study: BBC Three Northern Ireland Creative Partnership

The Youth Development scheme launched in September 2019 to enhance the volume and quality of factual entertainment production from Northern Ireland and develop a talent pipeline for BBC Three. After an initial creative and audience brief, expressions of interest were assessed, eight companies were given paid development, and two pilots were commissioned, one of which will be commissioned to series.

A second round of the scheme was launched in May 2020, and BBC Three creative partnerships have now been extended to the North of England, Scotland and in discussion in Wales.

Case study: TRC SuperSizer delegates 2019
Delivering our ambitions and commitments

Our creative footprint is broader and deeper than any other UK broadcaster. We work with more producers, in more locations, and are constantly refreshing the talent we work with. Our commissioners are hungry for the best ideas, and open to where they come from. Creative competition enables us to drive innovation and quality across the sector.

In 2019 the BBC worked with more producers than ever before – significantly more than any other UK broadcaster. We also increased the number of new producers we worked with and more than half were in the Nations and Regions.

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<td><strong>Channel 4</strong></td>
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**Volume of suppliers**

**Breakdown of suppliers by substantive base**

- London: 42%
- Scotland: 19%
- Wales: 11%
- Northern Ireland: 10%
- North of England: 6%
- Midlands and East of England: 5%
- South of England: 4%
- Non-UK: 1%

* Data not yet published for 2019.
Section 3: Delivering our ambitions and commitments

In 19/20 the majority of our programme hours were made by independent producers. The volume of business won by non-qualifying independent producers continues to grow (up 1 percentage point to 19%). However, this year saw a greater increase in the volume of qualifying independent producers (up 4 percentage points to 36%). BBC Studios’ level of business fell by 5 percentage points and Public Service is up 1 percentage point*. The biggest change in volumes of business was in comedy and drama.

Levels of business by genre

- Drama: 54%
- Children’s: 46%
- Comedy: 36%
- Factual: 10%
- Entertainment: 8%
- Daytime: 7%
- Sport: 6%
- Mix: 5%

* Active ideas are ideas where a decision is possible. Ideas are classed as inactive when they are stalled waiting for confirmation of component elements, e.g. access or talent availability.

Speed of response

There is parity in the speed of decision making between independent producers and BBC Studios. Decisions are taken on eight out of 10 active ideas* within 20 weeks for both supply groups. The remaining ideas were subject to further development or funding dependencies. This is an overall drop year on year and we aim to improve our speed of response on BBC Pitch during 2020.

82%

Final decisions in 20 weeks. On active ideas: independent producers and BBC Studios
**Section 3: Delivering our ambitions and commitments**

**Suppliers**

In 2019 we exceeded all our supply quotas.

- Independent production quota
  - 32% Productions made by qualifying independent companies
  - 51% Network spend qualified as Out of London
  - 62% Network hours qualified as Out of London

**Independent production quota**

In 2019 we exceeded the independent production quota by 7%.

- 30% of programme hours on BBC One were made by qualifying producers (exceeded quota by 5%)
- 38% of programme hours on BBC Two were made by qualifying producers (exceeded quota by 13%)

**Out of London production quota**

In 2019 we achieved all our Nations and English Regions spend and hours quotas. We spent more than 20% in the three devolved Nations and nearly a third in the English Regions outside London.

**Yearsly trend by Nations/English Regions**

- Scotland: 8% (up 1%)
- Wales: 5% (up 3.2%)
- Northern Ireland: 3% (up 3.5%)
- English Regions: 28% (down 25.4%)
- Multi-Region: 0.6%

Total OOL Spend: 50% (up 5.7%)

**Levels of competition**

Competition of ideas is baked into our business model. All ideas are treated on merit with decisions made on consistent criteria and creative judgement.

- Having exceeded our interim target in 2018, this year we have focused on progress to our 100% target by the end of the Charter period. As required, we removed the In-house Guarantee for Children’s, Sport and non-news related Current Affairs by December 2019.

**2019**

- 62% Hours contested in 2019
  - 2018: 56%
  - Target: 100%
  - Hours to be contested by 2027

**Out of London**

- Essential Royal Ballet, BBC Four, The Royal Opera House

**Supply milestones**

Since the 2018 Supply Report, we concluded the Countryfile tender which was awarded to BBC Studios. We asked for feedback from all those who had taken part in our second round of tenders, and updated our processes with any lessons learnt. A planning exercise has been completed to look at the phasing of future activity.

**Complaints**

In 2019 we had one formal complaint which was not upheld, and one informal complaint seeking clarification of issues raised after a tender award which was resolved.

Nations

BBC Nations and Regions continues to invest in creativity across the UK and is working to increase the diversity of its output – to attract audiences we find it harder to reach, the less secure and the young.

All four Nations have strong partnerships in place with a mix of established and new companies, and are working to secure more as they increase the number of co-commissions and continue to broaden their slates into other genres.

Developing talent and ideas is key for the division and the teams are also working closely with the network commissioning team to ensure there is increased representation for all four Nations.

Introduction

In 19/20 we produced 1,400hrs of originated programming across BBC One Scotland and the new BBC Scotland Channel. The BBC Scotland Channel transmitted 890 originated hours (50% of its schedule). This was provided by around 80 suppliers from across the sector, representing a mix of both established and new companies.

99%
Of first run originated programmes made in Scotland

1,400 hrs
Originated programming Across BBC One and BBC Scotland

61%
Of Factual made by independent producers

Communications

We held two industry-wide briefings attended by 132 and 113 producers.

Our Head of Audience Research presented an overview of the TV landscape and local performance at both.

Our website is kept up to date and all Commissioning Executives regularly meet with suppliers.

Competition

Hogmanay Live was tendered in March 2019 and won by BBC Scotland Multiplatform Production.

The launch of the BBC Scotland Channel has seen a significant increase in the number of originated slots available – excluding Sport, around 70% of these slots are contestable.

Ideas and business development

We’ve supported Studio Something to transition from podcasts to TV with A View from the Terrace.

We’ve invested in three sitcom pilots on BBC One Scotland, with The Scotts commissioned for series.

We work with BBC Writers Room Scotland, to support young writers.

Collaboration with BBC Four included Susan Calman’s Fringe Benefits and The Snow Queen, a Scottish Ballet production.

Talent development, diversity and portrayal

We held a Youth Day with BBC Scotland commissioners and a commissioner also attended the Creative Media Network.

Talent partnerships

Shadow/trainees on Guilt were accessed through an organisation working with people from different socio-economic backgrounds (EMAC).

Screen Scotland invested in Love Song and Night at the Museum.

Strategic partnerships

BBC Scotland ran a theatre partnership scheme which resulted in the NTS trans project Adam being adapted for BBC Scotland.

Our new partnership with Screen Scotland has resulted in eight co-funded projects.

We continue to work with Screen Scotland and the Scottish Documentary Institute to deliver six documentaries over two years and partner with MG ALBA to support Gaelic language programming for BBC ALBA.
BBC Wales

Communications
BBC Wales operates rolling commissioning including regular meetings with producers across the year. Two sector briefings were held first in Cardiff then Bangor. The BBC Wales commissioning website is also updated with any significant commissioning requests or announcements.

Competition
Commissioning briefings during the year included the announcement of potential seasons and the Invitation to Pitch for The Royal Welsh Show.

Ideas development
Drama and Comedy continue to be key strategic aims within our commissioning portfolio. We have also ring-fenced spend for younger skewing series and impactful Factual content which forms part of our nation to network pipeline.

Talent development
BBC Wales has targeted spend on the New Director’s Initiative aimed at finding talented individuals with real potential to become series producers of the future. These short feature films are shown at film festivals and can become a stepping stone towards a fully financed longform feature film.

Strategic partnerships
BBC Wales works closely with a range of partners to ensure it commissions content from a diverse range of perspectives. BBC Wales’ partnership with It’s My Shout has continued to provide a pipeline of new talent into the sector. Birth in short-form Drama and Documentary formats, this initiative has developed exciting new voices that have gone on to work on longer form BBC Wales content. Drawn together as a New Voice from Wales boxset on iPlayer, these voices have been widely shared by a younger, less traditional BBC-audience.

In partnership with Pfilm Cymru, BBC Wales has also contributed to the Reoan Initiative – a scheme aimed at developing some of the brightest and best writers and producers coming out of Wales today. These short feature films are shown at film festivals and can become a stepping stone towards a fully financed longform feature film.

BBC Wales has also taken steps during the year to develop the next generation of content producers. In April 2019, it joined forces with S4C and Channel 4 to boost Factual TV production training in Wales. The Factual Fast Track scheme provides tailored development and training to individuals with real potential to become series producers of the future.

100% Drama produced by independent production companies
2 Commissioning briefings

BBC Northern Ireland

Communications
We issued two industry-wide briefs across the year. Over 60 suppliers were invited to our autumn briefing at which the new Head of Commissioning discussed audience performance and wider ambitions for television and digital content.

Commissioners continually meet with suppliers and we update our commissioning website in line with briefings and any new programme requirements.

Introduction
Additional investment in 2019 for local television services in BBC Northern Ireland resulted in more content supplied across a greater range of genres – it was a year of historic Documentaries, local Drama and great sporting events. This was enhanced by strong partnerships and continued growth in co-commissioning.

In particular, we marked the period of The Troubles in Northern Ireland with a series of landmark Documentary singles and series for local and network television and a special collection on iPlayer showcasing the work of a wide range of producers.

75 Commissions
Of which eight were co-commissions

Talent development and diversity/portrayal
The True North, Our Lives and Arts NI strands of programming reflected the diversity of specific individuals and communities across Northern Ireland.

60 Producers attended two commissioning briefings

Strategic partnerships
We match funded the development of Documentaries and Drama scripts with Northern Ireland Screen. BBCH NI has an expanding strategic partnership with BBC Three and Northern Ireland Screen for the local independent sector. We support local to network pipeline.

Our work with NI Screen’s Irish and Ulster-Scots Broadcast Funds has supported a range of minority language output from the local independent production sector.
**BBC England**

**Communications**

England has a new [TV Commissioning webpage](#) which sets out current priorities and how to pitch.

The Head of TV Commissioning and Head of Development have attended a range of industry events, including the Sheffield Documentary Festival and Edinburgh TV Festival. Over the year, individual face-to-face meetings were held with around 20 indies across England.

**Competition**

Rather than ideas being pitched through individual regional in-house Current Affairs Editors, England TV Commissioning is now centralised, to consider the best ideas across the Nation as a whole, with submission through BBC Pitch. The new commissioning team is working with an increasing number of independent producers and is looking to broaden the England slate.

In September 2019, an Invitation to Pitch for the Our Lives strand on BBC One resulted in 34 pitches from 26 separate indies and resulted in three commissions, two in-house and one independent producer.

A second-round Invitation to Pitch took place in November 2019. We received 28 ideas from 22 suppliers and commissioned an in-house pitch on that occasion. Earlier in the year indies were invited to pitch for a series called [The Great Staycation](#) with one company awarded a commission in each of 11 different regions. The commissions went to Factory Films, Denham Productions, Gosh TV, Robin Hood Media, Button Down, Air TV, One Tribe TV, Screenhouse Productions, Saffron Cherry TV, Topical Television, Tin Can Island.

**Strategic/ideas development**

BBC England supported Atypical, a small Leeds-based indie, who secured a commission for the [Yorkshire Walks](#) series on BBC Four. The company has since secured a follow up series called Winter Walks, using 360 degree cameras and high-altitude drones.

BBC England began partnering with BBC Three, co-funding content for young people from England outside London including [Factual Entertainment series Angels of the North](#) from Newcastle made by indie Twenty Six 03 and in-house series [Step into the Ring](#) for transmission in 2020.

**Section 4: Nations, Children’s and Sport**

**Children’s**

Through our commissioning rounds and targeted briefs BBC Children’s stimulated competition, creativity and diversity at all levels. We have forged relationships with new suppliers, implemented content strategy for new parents and iPlayer bridging shows, and created impactful content across all genres.

[Children’s programmes made out of London](#)
The BBC is committed to working with sports rights holders to ensure we open up as many production opportunities as we can, whilst maintaining our ability to broadcast the events themselves. However, the sports right element will always mean BBC Sport works differently to other genres.

**Section 4: Nations, Children’s and Sport**

**Competition**
We held two Commissioning Rounds in 2019: April (New Ideas) 78 submissions (54% indie and 46% in-house). Of the ideas submitted 50% of indie proposals were commissioned and 33% of in-house. September (Returners): 22 submissions (48% indie and 33% in-house). Of the ideas submitted 50% of indie proposals were commissioned and 67% of in-house.

**Targeted briefs**

- **Teen Monologues:** This brief was specially designed to bring both under-represented voices and new suppliers to the department. As short 10-minute pieces we were able to take more risks and all five indies commissioned were new in some way, with three new to Drama, one new to the BBC, and one company receiving their first ever TV commission.

- **New School Drama:** This brief was also looking to bring under-represented voices and communities to the network. Stipulating the need for authenticity and representation it resulted in submissions from a broad range of suppliers, from established Drama indies working with newer talent, to smaller companies making their first steps in the genre. Of the eight shortlisted suppliers, six are either new to the network or to drama, and all are working with new talent behind and in front of the camera.

Both schemes have been very positive, not only for these specific opportunities but also our commissioning relationships going forward, and we’re confident that will in turn produce more distinctive, representative and engaging content for our audiences.

**Development**
In 19/20 we committed development funding to more than 32 companies. The pot is fully contestable. This year 35% was committed to in-house public service production teams and 65% to independent production companies. Nearly 70% was spent out of London.

We continue to reserve a small pot of funding for diversity which is open to both in-house and independent producers. It was increased slightly in 19/20 and we have seen a significant increase in the number of applications from the indie market. The fund supports placements or additional support for individuals in under-represented groups in the industry. This year it funded BAME talent across a multitude of disciplines, female writers, directors and deaf production staff. We also support the Edinburgh Television Festival Network Scheme and are an active employer of scheme delegates.

**Communications**
We held two commissioning briefings in 2019 – one in Salford in January and in Belfast in April.

Our Audience Insight team presented a segment of the brief where they shared insights into CBeebies and CBBC audiences’ attitudes and needs.

We discussed Children’s priorities at industry events including the Children’s Media Conference in Sheffield. A Top Ten email is sent to around 1,000 children’s suppliers every week. This includes any general updates from the Children’s senior team and the top 10 linear and iPlayer brands for CBeebies and CBBC. There is also a seasonal newsletter sent out on behalf of the Director of Children’s. Last year this was published twice (summer and winter). The commissioning website was updated to reflect the new briefing and priorities information.

**Development spend in Nations and Regions**

- **Almost Never, CBBC, Dynamic Television and Salt Beef Television**
- **Blue Peter, CBBC, BBC In-house**

1,000 Producers and individuals receive weekly audience information

70% Development spend in Nations and Regions

**Sport**

Sports Personality of the Year, BBC One
The BBC has tendered the rights to produce sporting programmes from the independent sector for well over a decade. In 2019, the BBC’s snooker, darts, women’s football, bowls, women’s rugby union and selected athletics coverage was produced by independent companies. The most watched sporting event on UK television in 2019, the Women’s World Cup, was produced for the BBC by Input Media.

Partnerships and diversity

BBC Sport works in partnership with a number of third parties to promote participation and inclusion. The Couch to 5k app, for example, is the result of a partnership between BBC Sport and Public Health England, and has been highlighted as a landmark partnership by PHE. Since the partnership launched four years ago, around 53 million runs have been recorded, with nearly five million coming in the first three months of lockdown. One of the reasons for the success of the Couch to 5k app has been its ease and accessibility as people are looking for simple and regular exercise. BBC Sport’s partnership with the Football Association creates the opportunity for free-to-play five-a-side football. In 2019 we had 33,000 players register, in categories ranging from Walking Football 50+ to disability categories. All categories cater for male and female players, and in 2019 we introduced additional women’s categories to double female participation to 22% from previous years.

470 hrs
Sports coverage produced by independent companies

7 Applicants for Sports Personality of the Year tender

BBC TV Commissioning Supply Report 2019

Looking ahead

We are proud of our performance in 2019 – but will seek to improve in areas where we have slipped below what we set out to achieve, or where we want to go further to deliver on our strategic ambitions.

In Network TV in 2020 our main focus will be to take action to deliver against our commitments in the Annual Plan to increase our appeal to the young, diverse and the Nations and Regions audiences – as well as doing more work to strengthen our long-term production and commissioning footprint outside London. We will also aim to improve our speed of response on BBC Pitch. BBC Children’s aim to broaden the range and diversity of the suppliers they work with, and BBC Sport will continue to engage with third-party sport rights holders about competition for production. In the Nations and Regions we aim to improve appeal to young and diverse audiences as well as strengthen the impact of local programming, and in addition BBC England will look to further expand the range and volume of genres commissioned in partnership with Network to strengthen portrayal of the English Regions.

Our ability to deliver progress in 2020 across all commissioning teams will be significantly challenged by the sector-wide disruption caused by Covid-19 – but we will continue to take action to support the sector through the pandemic – and bake our strategic priorities into the post-Covid recovery.

About this report

The BBC TV Commissioning Supply Report is published annually, in line with the BBC’s Annual Report and Accounts.

Appendix

For more background on how we work please see the following:


BBC Commissioning website: https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/

How we work: https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv/articles/who-we-are-our-work/commissioning

Diversity: https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv/production/articles/diversity

BBC England commissioning: https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tyb/bbc-england

BBC Wales commissioning: http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/cymruwales/commissions/7

BBC Scotland commissioning: http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/scotland/commissions/

BBC Northern Ireland commissioning: http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/commissioning/

BBC Sport commissioning: https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv/articles/sport

BBC Children’s commissioning: http://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv/childrens

Top ten suppliers

By spend

Bad Wolf

Remarkable Productions

Mammoth Screen

Boundless

Hungry Bear Media

Tailback

Wall to Wall

STV Productions

Shine

Red Production

By hours

IMG Media

Remarkable Productions

Cactus TV

Wall To Wall

Boundless

Lion Television

Mentorn

Input Media

STV Productions

BBC Sport