

BFI Venue Education Fund Evaluation Year Two

Final report

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Pye Tait Consulting

info@pyetait.com

www.pyetait.com



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Report prepared by:

Pye Tait Consulting
Royal House
110 Station Parade
Harrogate
North Yorkshire
HG1 1EP

Tel: 01423 509433
e-mail: info@pyetait.com
web: www.pyetait.com

Commissioning contacts:

Keir Powell-Lewis
Evaluation Manager
BFI
Keir.Powell-Lewis@bfi.org.uk

Alastair Shibby Bromwich
Grants and Partnership Manager
BFI
Shibby.Bromwich@bfi.org.uk

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Executive summary

Introduction

The BFI is the designated UK-wide National Lottery distributor under the Act for film. In 2019, the BFI Future Film programme became part of a wider BFI Film Academy offer for young people. At the same time, just under £800,000 of National Lottery Funds were made available through the Venue Education Fund (VEF) to support venues across the UK to engage more 16–25-year-olds in opportunities with independent cinema and/or to develop filmmaking skills. The overall aim of the VEF is to:

- set up a network of regional partnerships that engages diverse young people and provides them with development opportunities which engenders a pipeline of talent between BFI's Film Academy and NETWORK offers.

The VEF was launched as a two-year pilot programme which finished in April 2023. Each of seven existing regional Hubs across the UK were tasked, as part of the VEF, with developing a suite of relevant activities for the young people in their region: South East England, South West England, East Midlands, Northern England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The VEF has several specific objectives, which are:

- to offer engaging education and skills opportunities for a diverse group of aspiring filmmakers aged 16–25,
- to establish and promote progression routes for aspiring filmmakers into the industry, increase their confidence in pursuing a career in film, and,
- to broaden offer of film screenings and film activities across the UK for young adults.

Evaluation Methodology

The process and impact evaluation methodology comprised monitoring data analysis capturing number of activities planned and delivered and number of attendances, qualitative in-depth interviews with the Hubs and the BFI NETWORK Talent Executives (TEs), and monitoring and analysing the participant feedback online survey which ran from summer 2022 until April 2023. A total of 434 responses were received to the participant survey. Additionally, the evaluation included two discussions with the regional Hubs in October/November 2022 and again in March/April 2023.

Findings

Meeting targets: Overall, the target number of attendances has been achieved across the programme, but some Hubs exceeded their target comfortably, while others slightly missed the mark. There are specific activities that have been successful in some regions, such as filmmaking activities in the Northern England

and South East England, for example, and DIY challenges which were popular in Year One, and again in Year Two.

Changes reflecting the findings from Year One: There were some changes in the Year Two activities compared to Year One, especially around in-person versus online activities. In Year Two the delivery Hubs put substantial effort into ensuring that the accessibility of the online activities was maintained whilst trying to support the 'venue' aspect of the VEF. The monitoring data show an increase in overall number of participants in in-person activities from Year One to Year Two for approximately 30%. The online activities in Year Two also saw an increase in number of attendances, though it is notably smaller (approximately 5%).

Variety of activities: Overall, the variety of activities on offer within the VEF has proven to be helpful for young people. It has enabled them to explore a range of career possibilities in the film industry by participating in different types of activities and learning about film festivals, film making, production and other elements of the industry.

Engagement with young people: The Hubs implemented a combination of personal approaches, e.g., engaging with young people at the activities, attending career fairs or visiting schools and colleges, and actively seeking feedback from young people, while making use of a varied range of marketing tools such as newsletters and social media posts and audience targeting. Some Hubs mentioned they found the use of physical promotional in-venue material to be a successful means of attracting young people.

Reaching out to diverse and underrepresented groups: In Year Two most Hubs achieved their set diversity targets by having 20% or more of participants from ethnic minority groups. It implies that the Hubs have been targeting the right audience for the VEF, and that their engagement and marketing strategies have been effective.

The Hubs used these to meet their targets by reaching out to underrepresented groups, such as people with disabilities and young people living in rural areas. Engagements with underrepresented groups worked particularly well in South West, South East, Wales and Scotland these Hubs made targeted efforts to reach out to specific groups, such as young people with disabilities or those who have been in care.

Partnerships and working with the TEs: In Year Two of the VEF the Hubs developed more partnerships with relevant organisations and venues whilst sustaining the collaborations set up in Year One. New partnerships enabled wider geographical reach of the VEF, specifically in South East England and Northern England. Additionally, new partners brought in skills and knowledge for young people that perhaps were not brought to the fore in Year One of the VEF, for example, virtual reality technology in filmmaking.

The involvement of the BFI NETWORK TEs in design and delivery of the VEF has increased in Year Two and has worked well in several regions, particularly in East

Midlands, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The strength and advantage of the TEs is their ability to act as facilitators, offering connections or opening lines of communication between the VEF manager and industry names in the region. There is potential to spread this benefit wider over time.

Learning and skills development: It appears that in Year Two there were more learning and networking opportunities for young people than in Year One. There could be several reasons for this, but most Hubs report having repeat VEF participants taking advantage of different activities.

In Year Two it has been more straightforward to make career entry level pathways accessible to young people. Our evaluation has found that young people in most regions got involved in the VEF programme design and delivery as interns in the Hubs or partner organisations, or they were participating in film making and film festival planning activities under mentorship of industry professionals or the BFI NETWORK TEs. Additionally, the evaluation survey findings show that participants rate their knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation to pursue a career in the film industry higher following their attendance of the VEF activities.

Long-term impacts: Even though it is too early to evidence its long-term impacts, it looks like the VEF is on course to, at least, partially achieve its impacts, which are to:

- increase number and diversity of filmmakers across the UK successfully applying to BFI NETWORK and other BFI programmes, and
- increase the numbers of 16–25-year-old audiences attending screenings and events in venue and online.

Recommendations

Programme design and delivery

1. Consider reviewing the performance reports with the Hubs and explore in further detail why some activities met or did not meet attendance targets (exploring factors such as population, accessibility, and type of activity) and using the additional insight to inform how targets are set in future.
2. Organise more in-person meetings with the Hubs, e.g. a once-a-year (minimum) in-person full day meeting or a workshop. They see in-person work as more effective and believe it has greater potential to enhance engagement with other Hubs, and consequently increase likelihood of achieving the programme's intended impacts.
3. Consider how to ensure achievement of the longer-term impacts and make progression routes between the VEF and other BFI programmes clearer and more accessible, for example by working more closely with BFI NETWORK and Talent Executives.
4. Discuss with relevant Hubs issues around reaching diversity targets and how they can be supported by the BFI in achieving them for Year Three and beyond.

5. Discuss, define, and share with the Hubs best practice for securing attendance and participation in activities.

6. Continue encouraging involvement of the BFI NETWORK TEs in the VEF as their collaboration with the Hubs seems to have worked well in several regions. This could be done by more successful regions, e.g. Scotland and East Midlands sharing best practices/experience of their collaboration between the Hubs and the BFI NETWORK TEs.

Evaluation

7. The Hubs could clarify to the BFI and to an independent evaluator how they collect monitoring and participant data. In their end of year reports, some Hubs refer to the participant feedback survey instead of the monitoring data and it appears that they use the survey data. The purpose of the survey was for collecting the participant feedback for the evaluation rather than for monitoring purposes (not all participants complete the voluntary survey). It is also not clear how data on diversity is collected and collated by the Hubs.

8. Related to recommendation 7, the BFI could provide clearer and more robust guidance to the Hubs on how to collect data and report on it to ensure consistency and coherence. For example, within the reporting template, the BFI could articulate what data they need from the Hubs, so that the Hubs and an independent evaluator can gather the data in the required format. There is an opportunity to consider whether the currently collected data is useful in its entirety, and if refinements could be made to reduce the burden further.

9. Having established what data are needed, the monitoring report could include clear tables for the target number of activities and young people attending and actual achievements with opportunities to clarify discrepancies.

10. We understand that for future evaluations, in line with the BFI's approach to monitoring and evaluation under the new Screen Culture 2033 strategy, the BFI wants to take ownership of gathering quantitative data, e.g., via a participant feedback survey. It is suggested this is initiated with a review of how all data about participants are gathered to ensure they include data on diversity etc., and also include a review monitoring data to ensure this focusses on BFI priorities.

11. Additionally, our understanding is the BFI wants to commission an independent evaluator approximately once every three years to review the collected data, and to undertake qualitative research among the Hubs, participants, and any other relevant stakeholders from the BFI. However, budget permitting, we recommend a continuation of yearly qualitative research among the Hubs at the end of the programme's year. This approach has worked well in the last two years and has yielded meaningful and important findings of Hubs' perceptions of the VEF design, delivery, and impacts achieved. The qualitative data from the interviews could be utilised for short mid-term and end of year reports produced each year, and they

could be used as part of larger scale evaluations which would be conducted approximately every three years. This data could be valuable in demonstrating long-term and longitudinal impacts of the VEF.

12. Future evaluations could also include an assessment of the cost of activities and outputs, e.g. average cost per attendee by Hub/value for money. Although it will be important not to expect that all Hubs will incur the same costs (and this is an important component of the independence of the Hubs to judge how best to deliver the VEF within their own region), this will facilitate target setting and monitoring for the BFI.

1. Introduction

1.1 About the report

This report presents findings from the process and impact evaluation from Year Two of the Venue Education Fund (VEF) programme and its delivery of activities.

The Venue Education Fund programme is designed to promote young people's interest, engagement, knowledge and skills in film, while ensuring localised cultural and educational provision specific to each of the seven participating Hubs (listed in Figure 1).

This evaluation is structured around a logic model (detailed in section 2.2 - Figure 2), developed by Pye Tait Consulting, in collaboration with the BFI team, at the start of the first year of the evaluation. The logic model outlines the main programme activities, outputs, outcomes and desired impacts. It has been used to develop the evaluation plan and to guide the measuring of achieved outcomes and impacts of the VEF.

This chapter describes the VEF, the context surrounding the programme, and our approach to Year Two of the evaluation. The findings of the evaluation are aligned to the objectives of the VEF and include the longer-term impacts of the programme. The report includes conclusions and recommendations about the VEF for the BFI.

1.2 The VEF context

Under the National Lottery etc. Act 1993¹, proceeds from the National Lottery are divided amongst “good causes” such as the arts, sports, and national heritage. The BFI is the designated UK-wide National Lottery distributor under the Act for film. It operates under a strategy² and is guided by National Lottery policy directions³.

Since 2012, the BFI Film Academy has been providing opportunities for young people aged between 16-19 to develop new skills and build a career in the film industry, regardless of where they live or their background. There are around 9,000 alumni in the BFI Film Academy network.

In addition, the BFI runs a programme of activities for 16–25-year-olds including the BFI Future Film Festival which is about supporting creative aspirations and encouraging a greater interest in cultural cinema. This offer has mostly taken place at London’s Southbank, with more recent iterations having an online strand of content.

In 2019, the BFI Future Film programme became part of a wider BFI Film Academy offer for young people. At the same time⁴, just under £800,000 of National Lottery

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/39/contents>

² In this case the BFI2022 strategy: <https://www.bfi.org.uk/strategy-policy/policy-statements/bfi2022>.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/british-film-institute-policy-directions-for-the-national-lottery>

⁴ It is worth noting that the VEF launched in the following financial year (2020).

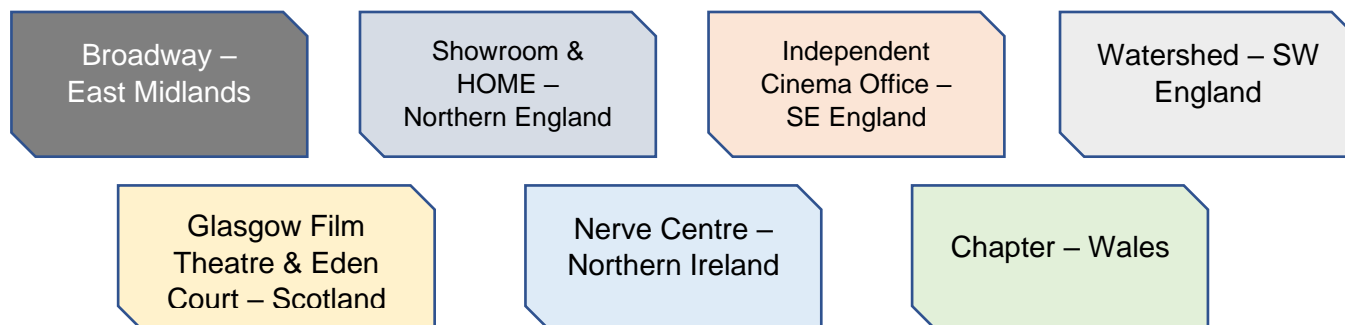
Funds were made available through the VEF to support venues across the UK to engage more 16–25-year-olds in opportunities with independent cinema and/or develop filmmaking skills.

The VEF was launched as a two-year pilot programme which finished in April 2023. It provides an important pipeline between young people engaged in BFI Film Academy and the BFI NETWORK (which supports emerging filmmakers to fund their short and first feature films).

The VEF is designed, therefore, to nurture the next generation of film talent by encouraging 16–25-year-olds to participate in courses, workshops, online activities, and masterclasses that would help them take their first steps into, or develop their skills for, the film industry. It creates support spaces where young people can develop their creative voices without any prescribed teaching or learning outcomes and given opportunities to watch a variety of films and develop critical viewpoints. It is intended to improve understanding of the business of film (distribution, funding etc.) and build professional networks.

Each of seven existing regional Hubs across the UK were tasked with developing a suite of such activities for the young people in their region. Using the local experience and knowledge of Hub teams means that the seven programmes are more relevant to the talent and young people in the region. The names of the Hubs and the regions they cover are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The seven BFI Hubs in the UK



Each BFI National Lottery activity was, broadly speaking, given a one-year funding extension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, the BFI announced an extension of the VEF beyond its two-year pilot, now under the umbrella of the BFI Film Academy Plus programme, which has funding for a further three years.

1.3 Objectives for the VEF

This evaluation is to examine the process and impacts of the VEF delivery to date, at the end of the pilot, against the objectives of the VEF, as laid out by the BFI team.

The overall aim of the VEF is to:

- set up a network of regional partnerships that engages diverse young people and provides them with development opportunities which engenders a pipeline of talent between BFI's Film Academy and NETWORK offers.

The VEF has several specific objectives, which are:

- to offer engaging education and skills opportunities for a diverse group of aspiring filmmakers aged 16–25,
- to establish and promote progression routes for aspiring filmmakers into the industry, increase their confidence in pursuing a career in film, and,
- to broaden offer of film screenings and film activities across the UK for young adults.

The VEF pilot operated under the BFI 2022 strategy, and its objectives align with the National Lottery Strategy⁵ from the BFI, particularly regarding inspiring children and young people, and encouraging new talent, innovation, and excellence whilst helping develop new skills. Moving forward, the VEF will be delivered as BFI Film Academy Plus under the new BFI Screen Culture 2033 strategy.

The evidence gathered through our evaluation will be assessed against these objectives in the following chapters, taking into account the varying ways regional Hubs chose to ~~could~~ implement the programme, based on the needs and preferences of young people in their region.

1.4 VEF's first year evaluation

The evaluation of the VEF's first year began in September 2021 just six months after the VEF started. That evaluation involved:

- scoping interviews with BFI staff,
- two waves of interviews with each Hub,
- group discussions with BFI NETWORK⁶ Talent Executives,
- interviews with VEF participants, and
- reviewing the seven Hubs' reports that informed the evaluation analysis.

Due to the relatively short period of delivery up to that point, the first-year evaluation focused on the implementation of the programme and early evidence of impacts on the young people taking part. A report was compiled for the BFI on conclusion of the first year at the same time as adjustments were being made to the applications for the second year of the VEF.

Results of the Year One evaluation indicated that the VEF was having a positive impact on young people in terms of developing their confidence, skills and

⁵ The BFI (2023), National Lottery Strategy (2023–2033), available at: <https://blog.bfi.org.uk/long-read/national-lottery-strategy/background-and-context/>

⁶ BFI NETWORK exists to discover, develop, and fund new filmmakers looking to start their career. Also made possible through National Lottery funding, the BFI NETWORK supports creators aged 18 and over.

knowledge about film making and careers in the film industry. The Hubs made the VEF activities accessible to young people and formed successful partnerships with venues in their regions. Pye Tait Consulting as the evaluators provided several considerations for future, for instance, about ensuring greater consistency in monitoring and evaluation data.

Following on from the Year One report, changes were made to the evaluation (outlined in the methodology chapter) such as the Hubs' data monitoring requirements and the approach to monitoring. The monitoring data documents and the participant feedback survey were redesigned to ensure that more effective data collection would occur and be easier for Hubs to organise across the seven regions.

To prepare for Year Two of the VEF, each Hub created or adapted activities that would firstly fit their region's interests and secondly slot into the other suite of activities that run alongside the VEF funded activities. Activities prepared for the VEF meet the objectives of the overall programme and are discussed further in the following chapters.

2. Methodology

2.1 Our approach to the second-year evaluation

For ease we have provided the Logic Model in section 2.2. The logic model was developed in discussion with the BFI in Year One of the VEF in preparation for the evaluation.

The evaluators helped launch, in early summer 2022, a survey of participants which ran until 10th April 2023⁷ at the conclusion of Year Two of the VEF. This was a different approach to the group interviews of participants held in Year One. The survey was designed in collaboration between the BFI and Pye Tait, with its foundation being a participant survey that Hubs were independently running during year one of the VEF (reducing the burden of conducting the survey on Hubs).

Key changes made to the survey for the second year included:

- redesigning the questionnaire to be short but capturing as many outputs and outcomes defined in the logic model (Figure 2) as possible (e.g., skills development, diversity data), and,
- centralising data capture such that all stakeholders (the Hubs, the BFI and Pye Tait) could access the data. To ensure that, the survey was hosted by the BFI via Microsoft Forms.

The Hubs sent participants the survey link and/or its quick response (QR) code via email. They could also share these links during activities, within the activity documents, e.g. presentations, or printed them on a paper and display them in venue during the VEF activities to enable participants to scan the QR code and access the survey.

There was a total of 434 responses to the participant survey. Table 1 details number of responses received in each region. The number of participants who received an invite to complete the survey is unknown at this stage, so the survey response rate has not been calculated. However, there is an indication of a minimum possible response rate of 5%, which has been calculated by using the total number of attendees reported by the Hubs (8405). It is important to note that, the actual response rate is likely higher because the survey will possibly not have been offered to every single attendee (e.g. when there was no requirement to register to participate in an activity or the Hubs did not have contact details of the attendees).

⁷ The survey was open for additional ten days after the end of the VEF delivery period to receive any delayed responses.

Table 1. Number of participant survey responses by region

Region	Number of participant survey responses received
Scotland	93
SE England	53
E Midlands	102
Wales	83
Northern Ireland	69
N England ⁸	0
SW England	34
Total	434

To support the assessment of impact, two rounds of interviews were held with the key stakeholders of the VEF delivery in which all seven Hubs participated. Additionally, the BFI NETWORK Talent Executives participated in a group interview who have been, to varying degrees, involved with the provision of the VEF activities to aid in the transition through the pipeline from Film Academy activities to BFI NETWORK activities.

The Hubs are required to report on their activities through a prescribed template which the BFI created for year one of the programme. This indicates to the BFI how many activities are planned, take place, and what kind of accessibility options are used, for example. The monitoring data template was updated prior to the second year to further align with the Year Two evaluation needs, as suggested by Pye Tait. These changes consisted of addressing the programme objectives in questions more clearly, and part of the monitoring data template was changed to use Microsoft Word rather than a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, to allow the Hubs provide more descriptive responses.

In preparation for Year Two, Pye Tait also encouraged the Hubs to learn more about the planned survey in advance of its launch, and the BFI organised a group and individual calls with the Hubs to go through the survey questions.

The evaluation fieldwork included two discussions with the regional Hubs in October/November 2022 and again in March/April 2023. Interviews in 2022 focussed on changes in Year Two, set-up and evidence of medium-term impacts on Year One participants. Interviews in 2023 focussed on the process of delivery of Year Two and impacts on Year One and Year Two participants.

The survey of young people participating in VEF activities ran concurrently to these other activities with the output of the survey forming part of the analysis of the VEF's objectives and impact.

⁸ N England did not have any participant survey completions in Year Two. At this stage it is unclear why this has been the case.

The final aspect of the approach to this evaluation was the reporting stage, which began with an interim report in November 2022 (following initial fieldwork), and ends with the final report (this document, May 2023).

2.2 The VEF logic model

To inform our evaluation approach and method at the start of Year One, we developed a VEF logic model, consistent with standard evaluation practice, such as seen in The Magenta Book⁹. This model was developed with the programme and evaluation objectives in mind and did not require any changes between years one and two.

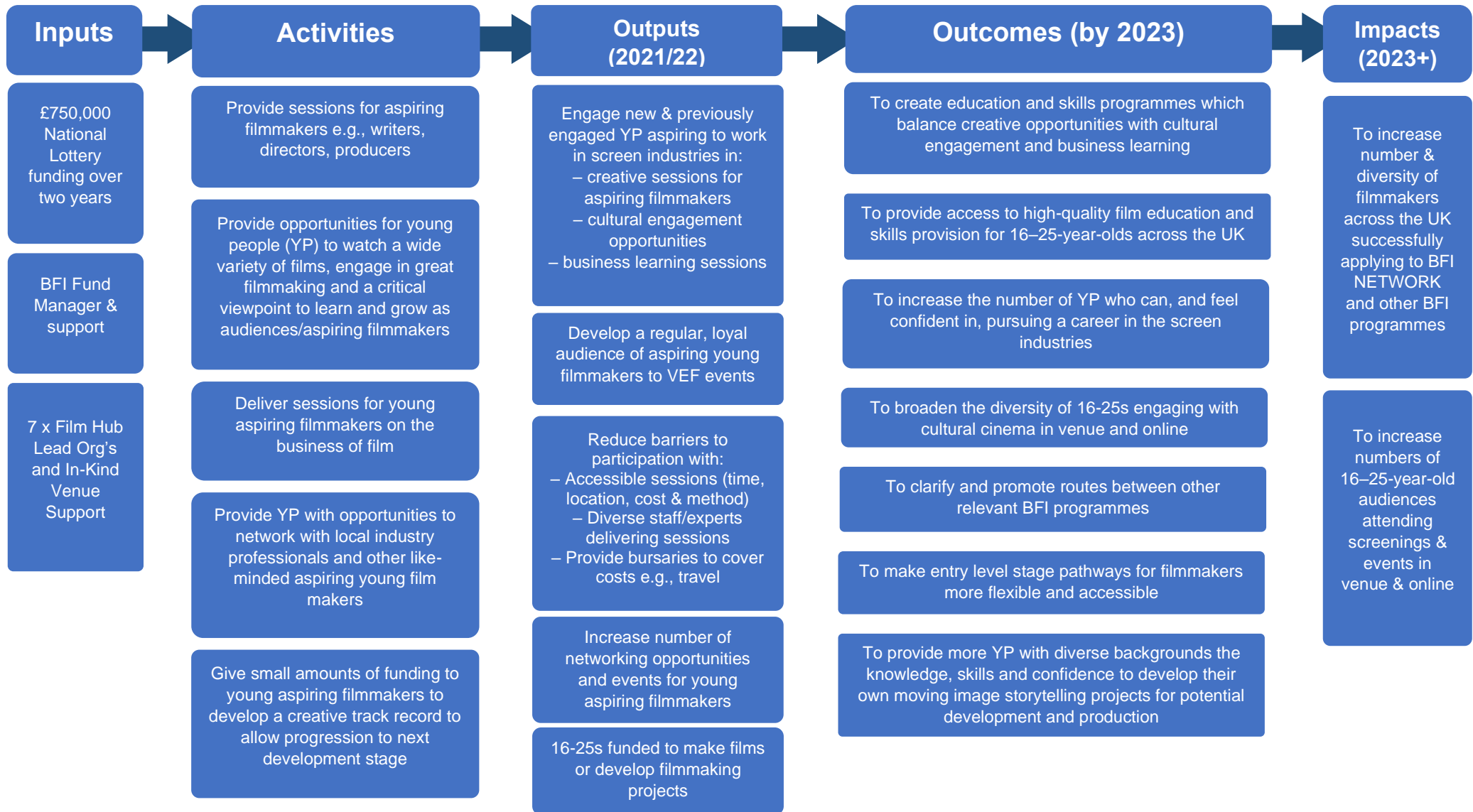
This logic model shows how the design of the VEF (the inputs and activities) are intended to achieve the longer-term objective/impacts of the VEF through a series of outputs and outcomes, which can be tested through the evaluation.

The logic model (see overleaf) therefore:

- provides a theoretical framework for the VEF and the evaluation,
- defines the intended outputs, outcomes, and impacts as well as the intended date of achievement,
- identifies what features of the VEF could contribute to desired impacts, and,
- outlines connections between each activity, output, outcome, and impact.

⁹ Gov.uk, The Magenta Book, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-magenta-book>

Figure 2. VEF Logic Model



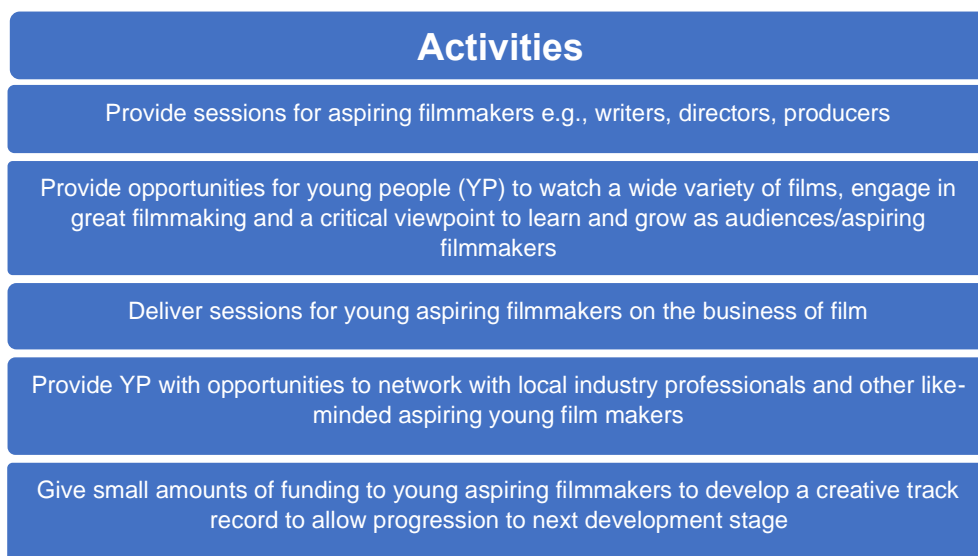
3. The VEF in numbers

3.1 The VEF activities planned and delivered

In this subsection, focussed on the VEF activities, we outline key numbers of the VEF based on data from the Hubs' reports in terms of:

- activities planned and delivered broken down by type,
- attendance achievements,
- partnerships established by type of organisation.

Figure 3. The VEF activities (an extract from the logic model)



The monitoring data compiled by the Hubs in Year Two of the VEF (from August 2022 to April 2023) show the numbers and types of activities held and number of attendances. These can be assessed against the targets set at the beginning of the contracting period.

Overall, the target number of attendances has been achieved across the programme, but some Hubs exceeded their target comfortably, while others slightly missed the mark.

Table 2. The Hubs' target attendances and achieved attendances

Hub	Target attendances	Number of attendances	Difference from target
Scotland	1520	1976	+456 (+30%)
SE England	1325	4375	+3050 (+230%)
E Midlands ¹⁰	1904	1533	-371 (-19%)
Wales	965	845	-120 (-12%)
Northern Ireland	730	1136 ¹¹	+406 (155%)
N England	580	398	-182 (-31%)
SW England	847	2350	+1503 (+177%)
Total	7871	12613	+4742

There is a wide discrepancy in the initial targets, ranging from 580 to almost 2000 and similarly, a wide range in achievement, with data suggesting that perhaps some targets were set too low and others too high. On the other hand, the set targets may be part of the BFI's intended long term deep engagement with young people, in which case they could be monitored going forward and assessed for longer term achievements. This is something the BFI may want to consider going forward – i.e., setting targets in line with what can be attributed to key factors such as population, accessibility, type of activity, resources.

Analysis of a sample of the Hubs' target and achieved data does not provide firm conclusions about the type of activities that may be more likely to achieve the target number of audience.

The Hubs' instructions were to select activities that reflected gaps in the provision of their areas, rather than follow a prescriptive set of activities from the BFI, which is perhaps part of the reason it is difficult to draw a firm conclusion, as each region's audience are different and therefore have different desires in film activities.

Table 3. The Hubs' delivery of activities by activity type

Hub	Activities delivered						Total
	Master classes	Workshops	Screenings	Networking	Mentoring	Young Programmers	
Scotland	6	20	50	4	1	23	104
SE England	14	48	59	13	13	32	179
E Midlands	5	22	13	6	78	20	144
Wales	5	2	20	6	0	6	39
Northern Ireland	5	1	6	7	8	1	28

¹⁰ In E Midland's report they included hosts, mentors and deliverers in the numbers attending. This number is derived from the Events Plan + Log which excludes these.

¹¹ Data in their narrative report seemed to understate the number of attendees so this is taken from the Events Log.

N England	1	5	5	5	8	0	24
SW England	6	11	4	6	56	4	87
Total	42	109	157	47	164	86	605

Examples of activities and attendances:

- South East England delivered twice the number of scheduled activities and achieved 2.3 times higher a number of attendances.
- East Midlands had a standard target of 20 for most workshops (none met this target), but with higher and bespoke targets for some activities. It is not clear on what basis targets for individual activities were set, e.g., a film screening in Birmingham had a target of 30, with 90 attendees, while other film screenings had higher targets which were not met. Overall, over 60 activities were planned and around 40 delivered.¹²
- Northern England delivered around 20 activities and exceeded film screening targets in most cases (40), did not achieve higher targets for workshops (30) and Masterclasses (60).
- Northern Ireland set targets of 20 – 40 for film screenings depending on location and 20 for Masterclasses. A higher number of activities were delivered, and targets exceeded, for all types of activity.

Actual attendance of an individual activity against target is just one success metric but it's important to note it does not take into account the impact of that activity or the combination of activities individuals might have attended. For example, the Hubs have seen a growth in attendances to VEF activities over multiple sessions and over the last two years, receiving feedback from young people that the networking was particularly useful (a metric hard to pin down from simple attendance).

Recommendation: Consider reviewing the performance reports with the Hubs and explore in further detail why some activities met or did not meet attendance targets (exploring factors such as population, accessibility, and type of activity) and use the additional insight to inform how targets are set in future.


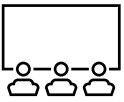

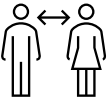
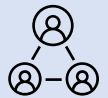

¹² In E Midland's Events Plan + Log each mentoring session was recorded as a separate event. Improvements to the monitoring template in Year Two should be reflected in Events Plan + Log and through review of alignment across documentation and guidance.

There were multiple cases where the Hubs were able to build up relationships with the attendees, and seeing those same people return for future activities was particularly gratifying for the Hubs. In our interviews, several Hubs reported having returning participants, for example:

- South East England had as high as 87% returning participants for a filmmaking activity,
- East Midlands saw approximately 60% young people returning to their screening events, and
- South West England had 25%-33% previously engaged participants for some of their workshops, masterclasses and networking events and up to 50% in another masterclass.

The Hubs could deliver different types of activities.

Figure 4. Types of activities delivered in Year Two

	164 mentoring sessions
	157 film screenings
	109 workshops
	86 Young Programmers/producers meetings
	47 networking events
	42 masterclasses

There are three broad categories of VEF activities, which Hubs must use to classify their activities. These categories are in line with the BFI-designated branding and classification for these types of Film Academy activities, and are:

- Labs: which include masterclasses, workshops and discussions by industry experts and filmmakers focusing on writing, directing and producing,
- Recommends: curated cultural film activities and screenings, including new and challenging material plus archive film,

- Scene: which are networking and screening opportunities for young filmmakers and their films.

In total, there have been 174 Labs activities, 106 Recommends screenings and 36 Scene activities with 77% of Hubs being able to record attendance at activities held in venue.

The monitoring data shows the type of partners the Hubs work with and that some Hubs use different types of partner organisations to a greater or lesser extent:

Partner organisations worked with:

- 64 partner venues, of which 27 are in South East England,
- 78 screen industry organisations where there was a reasonably even spread across the seven Hubs,
- 43 Community organisations, of which 25 are in East Midlands and,
- 93 Education organisations, of which 39 are in South West England and 30 in East Midlands.

3.2 The online vs in-person activities

There were some changes in the Year Two activities compared to Year One, especially around in-person versus online activities. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted strongly on which activities could go ahead and how.¹³ In Year Two the delivery Hubs put substantial effort into ensuring that the accessibility of the online activities was maintained whilst trying to support the ‘venue’ aspect of the VEF. This appears to have worked well, and attendance has been good as demonstrated by a number of participants outlined in Table 4.

The monitoring data presented in Table 4 and Table 5 show an increase in overall number of participants in in-person activities from Year One to Year Two for approximately 30%. The online activities in Year Two also saw an increase in number of attendees, though it is notably smaller (approximately 5%).

Table 4. Number of in-person activities and attendees (based on the monitoring data)

Hub	Number of Activities			In-person Attendees		
	Year One	Year Two	Change	Year One	Year Two	Change
North	4	10	+6	70	340	+270
East Midlands	24	25	+1	1032	1108	+76
South West†	6	9	+3	63	397	+334
South East	97	63	-34	1230	859	-371
Northern Ireland*†	20	14	-6	532	550	+18
Wales†	21	16	-5	129	965	+836

¹³ It is important to note that the VEF was never intended to be delivered online, however, due to the pandemic, the adaptations have been made throughout, such as online delivery of planned activities.

Scotland	29	33	+4	849	1340	+491
Total	201	170	-31	3905	5559	+1654

Table 5. Number of online activities and attendees (based on the monitoring data)

Hub	Number of Activities			Online Attendees		
	Year One	Year Two	Change	Year One	Year Two	Change
North	18	4	-14	579	240	-339
East Midlands	5	40	+35	50	800	+750
South West†	7	4	-3	883	600	-283
South East	76	15	-61	935	466	-469
Northern Ireland*†	0	15	+15	0	560	+560
Wales†	0	6	+6	0	720	+720
Scotland	9	6	-3	255	180	-75
Total	115	84	-31	2702	2846	+144

*Northern Ireland's and Wales' Year One entries are based on interim data due to lack of available data at the end of Year One.

† Some activities for Year Two were labelled as blended (in-person and online) and were counted twice.

Recommendation: Discuss, define, and share with the Hubs best practice for securing attendance.

3.3 The VEF participants

The monitoring data provide some information on the protected characteristics of the young people attending activities, although this is not available for all attendees. The table below shows the proportion of ethnically diverse attendees against diversity targets set for Year Two. The participant survey data demonstrates similar extent of participant ethnic diversity, with 20% of respondents being ethnically diverse. There are over three-quarters (77%) of White respondents, 9% of those from mixed or multiple ethnic groups, 5% of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, 4% of Asian/Asian British, and 2% of those from other ethnic groups.

Table 6. Proportion of attendee ethnic diversity

Hub	Year Two diversity target	Year Two diversity achievement
Scotland	20%	40%
SE England	20%	26%
E Midlands	20%	18%
Wales	20%	20%
Northern Ireland	20%	5%

N England	20%	15%
SW England	20%	23%

In addition, the monitoring data gathered by the Hubs show the proportion of women varies between 40% (Northern England and Northern Ireland) and 62% (East Midlands) with the proportion who are D/deaf and Disabled varying from 12% in East Midlands, South East England and Northern England to 31% in South West England.

Among survey respondents, there are 48% of women, and 27% of those who reported having some form of disability. More details of respondent profile are available in Appendix 1.

To further illustrate the VEF diversity achievement, Table 7 shows the latest census data from 2021, published by the Office for National Statistics. For example, the South East and the Wales Hub ethnic diversity achievements are higher than the proportion of ethnic minorities in these two regions. Additionally, the South East, East Midlands, and Scotland Hubs diversity achievement in terms of women is greater than the proportion of women in their regions.

Table 7. Census data showing population of female and ethnic minorities for the VEF target audience by age group

Population of 16-25 year olds		
Region	Female	Ethnic minorities
North	50%	23%
Midlands	49%	30%
South East	49%	25%
South West	49%	16%
Scotland	50%	-
Wales	49%	13%
Northern Ireland (15-24)	49%	-

Recommendation: Discuss with relevant Hubs issues around reaching diversity targets and how they can be supported in achieving them for Year Three and beyond.

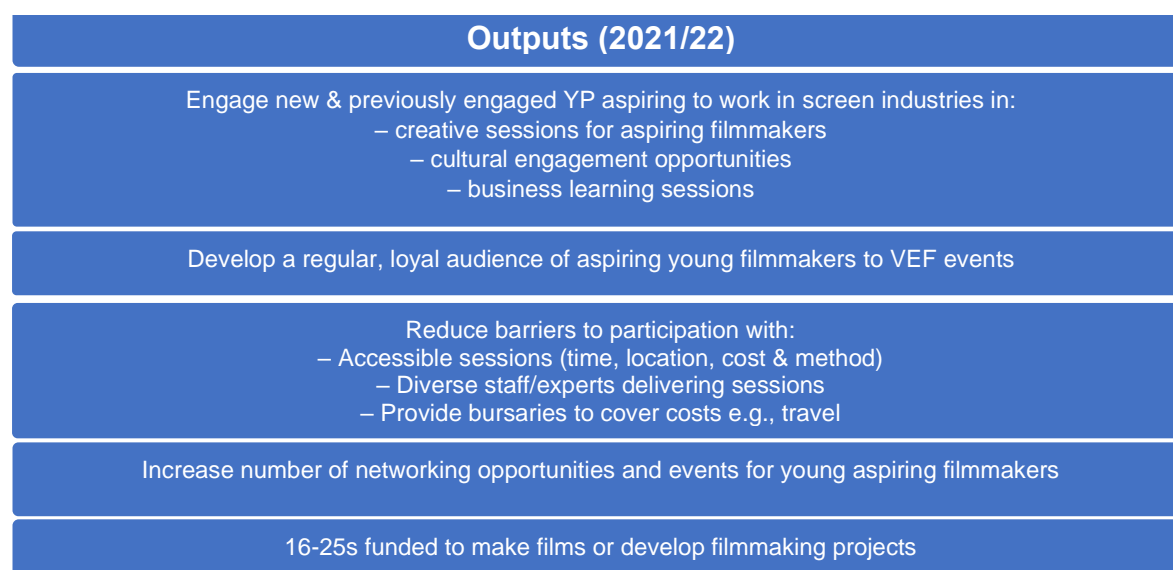
Recommendation for future evaluations: The Hubs could clarify to the BFI and to an independent evaluator how they collect monitoring and participant data. In their end of year reports, some Hubs refer to participant feedback survey instead of the monitoring data. The purpose of the survey was for collecting the participant feedback for the evaluation rather than for monitoring purposes (not all participants complete the voluntary survey). It is also not clear how data on diversity is collected and collated by the Hubs.

Related to this, the BFI could provide clearer and more robust guidance to the Hubs on how to collect data and report on it to ensure consistency and coherence. For example, within the reporting template, the BFI could articulate what data they need from the Hubs, so that the Hubs and an independent evaluator can gather the data in the required format. There is an opportunity to consider whether the currently collected data is useful in its entirety, and if refinements could be made to reduce the burden further.

4. Addressing the VEF outputs

In this section we present findings from primary research undertaken for this evaluation, i.e. the interviews with the Hubs, interview with the BFI NETWORK Talent Executives and the participant feedback survey. The findings are outlined in a form of analytical discussion of the stakeholders' perceptions and the survey results, covering the items from the VEF outputs (Figure 5 below).

Figure 5. The VEF outputs (an extract from the logic model)



The elements of the outputs from the logic model have been grouped into the following themes:

- The VEF activities, including their type, delivery mode, planning and branding,
- Engagements with underrepresented groups,
- The VEF programme accessibility,
- Partnerships, and
- The role of the BFI NETWORK Talent Executives.

4.1 The VEF activities

The Hubs shared their thoughts on different aspects of the VEF activities in Year Two and made some comparisons with Year One achievements. For instance, in terms of type of activities delivered, one Hub mentioned that their screening events were better attended than other events they organised in Year Two. There were regions where screenings did particularly well, as the young programmers were able to choose films that were interesting to a young audience.

Some regions held industry days which had a higher turnout than other activities. Others held a series of workshops for screenwriters which, according to the Hubs,

did particularly well. Another Hub reported that their filmmaking activities were very successful and effective in terms of reach and engagement with young people, because they had planned around issues such as limited time and human resources in their region. In Northern England for example, activities, such as DIY film challenge, that were successful in Year One have come to a greater focus in Year Two.

In general, the Hubs feel they have implemented lessons learned from Year One to generate successes in Year Two. For instance, they:

- focused more on the activities that were successful in Year One,
- designed activities (e.g. DIY film challenge) which are in alignment with other BFI programmes they are involved with, such that participant progression is encouraged and becomes more straightforward,
- included young people and the BFI NETWORK Talent Executives (TEs) in the VEF delivery where possible which proved to be beneficial both for the programme and for participants.

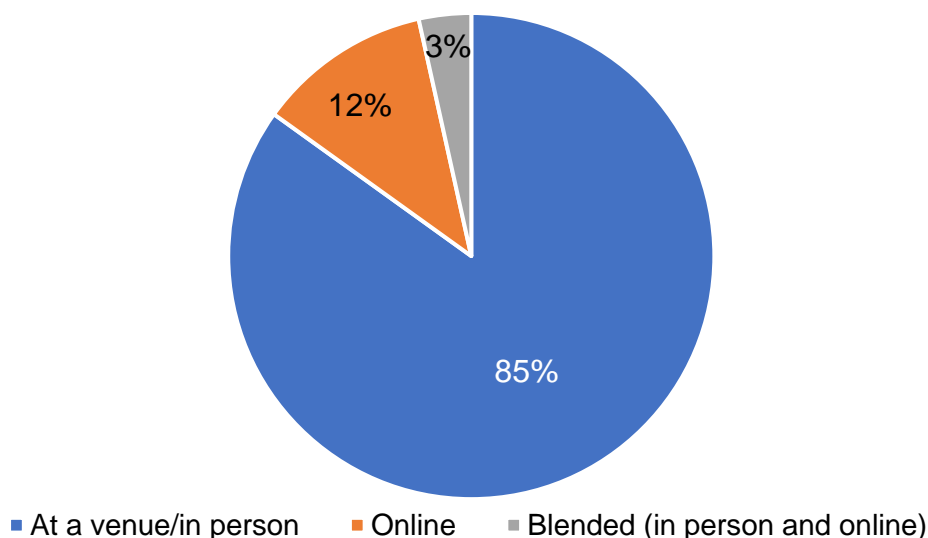
Many Hubs mentioned that they were doing more in-person activities in the second year due to perceived increased young people's interest in in-person activities towards the end of the pandemic. These findings align with the BFI's recent research, which revealed that young people (aged 16-24) were the first cohort to go back to cinemas following lifting of the pandemic restrictions in the entertainment venues.¹⁴ However, the Hubs noted putting substantial effort into ensuring that the accessibility of the online activities was maintained whilst trying to support the 'venue' aspect of the VEF. This seems to be an effective way of delivery of the VEF activities because both in-person and online activities were well attended, as described in the previous section (3.2).

Year Two survey analysis shows that 85% of the young people responding to the survey, attended an in-person activity, with only 12% attending an online activity.¹⁵ People in older age brackets (aged over 25) more commonly attended the online activities (43%) than those delivered in person (29%).

¹⁴ The BFI (2023), Watching films in the UK: how often, how many and how?

¹⁵ This data primarily shows that participants attending in-person activities were more likely to complete the survey, which is noteworthy for the evaluation methodology and the survey participant engagement techniques the Hubs used in Year Two.

Figure 6. How was the activity delivered?



Base: 431 respondents

In terms of branding and adhering to the three activity categories (Labs, Recommends and Scene), one Hub pointed out that after completing Year One, their understanding of the categories has developed and it has become easier to place activities in the correct category for Year Two. Other Hubs echoed this, but noted there were still cases where branding had caused issues, particularly when in ‘conflict’ with similar types of activities at the same venues that exist under different branding.

In general, the Hubs have given their attention and effort to elements that worked well in Year One. This includes sustaining their partnerships, and expanding on activities which were well received by participants in Year One, and this has proven successful.

“The varied types of activity that are being delivered [is working well in the Year Two delivery]. There is something for everyone, and if people are interested in a sector of film making there’s something for them to try and see if they do enjoy it”. – Hub representative

“[We are] building on the success of the first year. That’s always important. But it is not just a repetition of the first year. We are very pleased with the numbers engaging with the programme. From the venue’s perspective, it’s working”. – Hub representative

4.2 Type of engagement with participants

The VEF delivery includes different types of engagements with the target audience, (people aged 16 to 25) e.g. recruitment for participation in the programme activities, effective participation encouragement during the activities, or follow up communication and relevant guidance and information sharing.

The Hubs implement a combination of personal approach, e.g., engaging with young people at the activities, attending career fairs or visiting schools and colleges, and actively seeking feedback from young people, while making use of a varied range of marketing tools such as newsletters and social media posts and audience targeting.

They utilise different ways of engagement with young people and VEF participants, and are using communication channels such as social media, particularly Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, whilst noting that Instagram has proven to be the most fruitful social media platform. Some Hubs even invested additional financial resources in their Instagram posts to promote their VEF activities, with one saying they are focusing on creating an “engaging and colourful” presence there.

Another commonly used engagement channel is the Hubs’ own newsletters, reaching out to people on their mailing lists. Two Hubs reported having more streamlined and more effective mailing lists since the start of the VEF, as the programme enabled them to expand the pool of contacts, particularly those within the target group for the VEF.

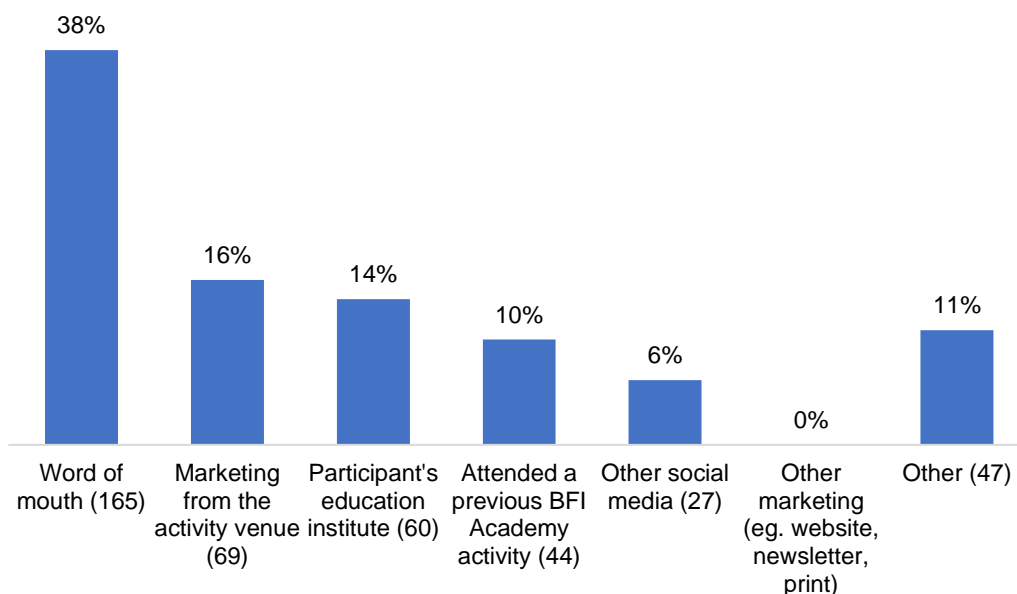
“We’ve had an increased engagement with repeated young people, via our mailing list. Over the last two years, I made adjustment to the visual part of our VEF marketing and we have received some positive feedback on that and also keeping on top who’s coming to the screenings and events has been helpful, because before these mailing lists haven’t been updated for years.” –
Hub representative, Scotland

Some Hubs mentioned the use of physical promotional material, for example displayed in their venues, as well as at least one Hub who was printing flyers for a local community centre.

From the participants’ survey, around 38% of responses indicated they heard about the activity they participated in via word of mouth, one in six (16%) mentioned that direct marketing from the venue told them of the activity, 14% heard of the activity through their education institute, and one in ten (10%) participants had attended a previous BFI Academy activity (Figure 6).

Around one in ten (11%) indicated “Other”, meaning they heard of the activity through a format not listed in the survey. Of these, 11 heard of the activity through direct contact with BFI staff and TE’s. The same number (eight) found out about the activity via email or through another organisation or activity, including BFI venues and other initiatives, and five saw information about the activity on the BFI website.

Figure 7. How did you hear of this activity? Tick all that apply.



Base: 435 responses

Partner organisations have an important role in engagement with young people. In some regions they have helped with communications and recruiting a diverse cohort of participants, with reaching out to underrepresented groups such as people from an ethnic minority background or working class people. The Hubs also made use of the partners’ websites and postal information about the VEF activities, as well as use of partner organisations’ websites.

“With all partners we do training on engagement and recruitment through the lens of diversity, we have a lot of resources we offer to facilitators.” – Hub representative, South East England

One Hub highlighted that a lot of young people are still affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, in the sense that they are suffering from anxiety and worry about being in person or around new people. One of the VEF managers is addressing this issue with their friendly and reassuring presence to engage participants. They also note that it takes time to develop those personal relationships with the young people, but it is something they are aiming toward to encourage further engagement. This finding is consistent with the latest BFI Film Academy review, which revealed that mental health is one of the three most cited barriers to entry into the film industry, along with geographic location and gender.¹⁶

¹⁶ The BFI (2023), The BFI Film Academy 10-Year Review

4.3 Engagements with underrepresented groups

We reported the proportions of women, people with disabilities and those from ethnic minority backgrounds (Chapter 3) and in this chapter we explore the VEF engagements with underrepresented groups in greater depth.

In the interviews, the Hubs reported making some targeted efforts towards rural populations in Year Two as they found in the first year that there were challenges in reaching out to these audiences. Rural communities can be deprived areas, if not economically, then culturally, and the Hubs were eager to work with partners that enabled further engagement with these young people in Year Two. The Hubs described aiming to host activities in different venues across their regions, though they may not be as regular in rural areas as in urban. They feel that the activities in urban areas were better attended – this was specifically noted in Northern England and Scotland.

Some Hubs mentioned they were able to focus on deprived areas within the city their main venue is in, providing opportunities for those young people who might not otherwise have attended an activity. This went hand-in-hand with free admission to activities as a way to increase attendance from the more deprived areas of residency.

The Hubs highlighted working more on securing diversity targets, or have modified their approach to some of their activities (e.g. Labs workshops) to ensure more engagement and networking between participants, or have taken a more bespoke approach in line with the needs and interests of the young people. In order to achieve their set diversity targets, they implemented different engagement techniques, tailored to reaching out to underrepresented groups. The following two examples demonstrate success of designing specific activities for underrepresented groups, and can be useful for future planning on how to meet diversity targets.

Successes in the groups of young people engaged include one stand-out case for the South West Hub, in which they were able to organise a workshop day with the Aardman Academy, focusing on participants who are neuro-diverse filmmakers from Bristol. By targeting a specific audience, the Hub felt they were able to present the best opportunity to the young people possible as well as work towards achieving their diversity targets. In another case, there are community groups that the Hubs are able to work with that help specific audiences of young people attend activities, such as those who are disabled.

For the Wales Hub, there has been focus on multilingualism, as a micro short grant scheme allowed entries in Cymraeg (Welsh), British Sign Language, or English, and applications were translated for judges when they were received in Cymraeg. The Welsh Hub believes that the number of applications it received in Cymraeg were good relative to the number of speakers in the region but did not provide exact numbers. To further engage with Welsh language groups, the Hub was able to create activities that spotlighted Welsh writers, such as Roger Williams, writer, and producer of *The Feast* (2021), who contributed to a screenwriting masterclass.

Another Hub established more partnerships with local organisations, in order to engage diverse groups of young people, e.g., ethnic minorities, or young people who have been in social care.

The Hubs also highlighted the importance of bursaries in achieving the VEF objectives, particularly around reaching diverse groups of young people. This was achieved by financially supporting them in their participation in the VEF and easing the access to activities they perhaps would not have attended otherwise.

Some challenges with engagement were identified by the Hubs, including noting, retrospectively, some of the targets that they had set were actually difficult to achieve. Some Hubs noted the lack of attendance by participants who had already signed-up particularly with online activities. The interviewed Hubs feel a fatigue among young people for online activities. Young people seem to be, post pandemic, preferring in-person activities, as referenced in 4.1.

4.4 VEF programme accessibility

In Year Two the Hubs continued to make the VEF activities accessible to a wide range of young people. In our interviews they reported having done so in several different ways:

- free activities, or a low fee (c. £3–5) for activities which for example involve using professional equipment,
- travel bursaries offered for each activity,
- combining online and in-person activities to increase flexibility,
- refreshments, i.e., food and drinks provided at the screening activities, and,
- discounts for their organisations' members.

“We catered all Behind the Scenes activities and unexpected outcome of that networking lunch was that young people talked more in relaxed atmosphere.”
– Hub representative, Scotland

In the context of the programme accessibility, it is worth noting that in-person activities increased in Year Two delivery compared to Year One, and the Hubs described that the young people participating were appreciative of the networking opportunities present when going to in-person activities compared to online ones. They added that sometimes interaction and discussion that happen at such activities are far more effective in person.

However, the Hubs are also keen to show they are committed to continuing the greater accessibility of online activities for those who are disabled or unable to reach the venue. In-person activities were recorded and uploaded online for participants and other people to view afterwards. Our interviews with the Hubs found that this was particularly valuable in the regions which are larger geographically, such as Scotland, or difficult to access, such as Wales where travel can be difficult between certain areas of the nation.

For those workshops that were recorded, the Hubs hired contractors for closed captioning, which allows greater accessibility online for people who are D/deaf. One Hub mentioned the offer of BSL at activities, but ultimately participants did not request this accommodation and it was not used.

The Hubs offered travel bursaries for audiences to attend activities in person where possible, and this was the most common accessibility option offered to the young people for Year Two. Alongside this, by offering the travel bursaries for attending in-person activities, the Hubs mentioned that they were trying to ensure that the venues they were offering transportation to were also physically accessible. This was a challenge in some of the more rural venues, especially those with fewer resources to change or adapt to more accessible entryways.

4.5 Partnerships in Year Two

In Year Two of the VEF the Hubs developed more partnerships with relevant organisations and venues whilst sustaining collaborations set up in Year One. New partnerships enabled wider geographical reach of the VEF, specifically in South East England and Northern England. Additionally, new partners have brought in skills and knowledge for young people that perhaps were not brought to the fore in Year One of the VEF, for example virtual reality technology in filmmaking.

In our interviews with the Hubs, we discussed the perceived success factors to the partnerships in Year Two. The following elements were most commonly mentioned:

- working with venues in larger cities which are reaching bigger audiences,
- greater access to diverse groups of young people, e.g., the VEF target age group (16-25) or those from rural areas,
- improved communication due to staff number increases in partner organisation,
- specialist partnerships in new disciplines proving popular and effective, such as animation, which is encouraging a niche of the screen industries in some regions,
- supporting partner organisations via in person visits which enhances their feeling of being part of the VEF, and,
- the Hubs reducing administrative burden for partners they collaborate on the VEF with, to reflect the level of funding they receive and to make the VEF a more attractive proposition to them.

The Hubs experienced some challenges in working with their regional partners, and these were mainly around team coordination, which seemed to be an issue because of temporary understaffing on both Hub and partner ends. This barrier was overcome once the new staff were employed, and the workload spread more evenly across the teams.

Another downside noted is working with a large number of partners with what is perceived as a relatively small amount of funding, which presents a burden primarily in terms of paper work and time and resources needed for it. The Hubs perceive the funding available within the VEF to be small compared to other similar programmes they are involved in. Furthermore, because the funding for the programme is seemingly small, there are Hubs that feel the only partners they can effectively work with are those that can match funding with their own resources. This has reportedly reduced the pool of available partner venues.

4.5 Involvement of the BFI NETWORK Talent Executives

The BFI NETWORK Talent Executives' (TEs) involvement varied across the regions. However, their involvement has increased compared to Year One, and the reasons for this might be:

- staff changes within BFI NETWORK Talent team with new TEs being more willing to engage with the VEF, and
- the Hubs feeling more confident about their VEF programme which enabled them to invest more time into collaboration with the TEs.

Three Hubs have had continuous successful relationship with the TEs, and the TEs have helped with the VEF participants' recruitment, signposting, and further engagement with other BFI programmes. This is important given the VEF is intended to act as a pipeline into BFI NETWORK.

Some of the challenges the TEs reported have continued from Year One, however. For instance, the lack of time for TEs who are employed full-time on the BFI NETWORK programmes, and for whom the VEF involvement is perceived to be additional work. Part of the challenge in this regard is that each region approaches their collaboration between the TEs and the VEF managers differently. In some Hubs, the TE and the VEF manager are seated in the same office and report to the same line manager, in other regions they reside in different parent organisations in separate buildings. This separation makes it more difficult for the TEs to be involved with the VEF delivery in a simple, integrated manner. It would appear that those Hubs where the TEs and the VEF managers work in close contact report better engagement between these staff members.

Another challenge highlighted by the TEs is that the VEF and BFI NETWORK programmes have overlapping areas of eligibility for the talent pipeline. Whilst the VEF works with young people aged 16 to 25, BFI NETWORK is generally open to those above the age of 18. The TEs mentioned that, as part of their BFI NETWORK tasks, they engage with a lot of film makers that are 23- or 24-years-old, who are

also eligible for VEF activities. The perceived overlap in target audience, and participation in multiple BFI programmes comes with positive and negative sides to it. The benefit is the talent pipeline might be stronger than it would be otherwise because young people would have a chance to participate in several BFI programmes. On the other hand, the main perceived disadvantage is the potential for the narrow reach to see the same participants in both programmes.

One of the TEs provided an example of practice in their region, which they see as an effective way of engaging the VEF delivery team, the TE and young people, as well as achieving the VEF objectives, specifically those around enabling progression between BFI programmes and making film career pathways more accessible.

A suggested form of good practice might be as one Hub did which was to hold roundtable activities with young people where engagement with the TEs and the VEF activity was mixed so that a wider range of audience members could attend. This enabled the Hub to deliver against several objectives of the VEF. In this case, the activity improved engagement with and among young people, it offered networking opportunities for participants, provided learning opportunities relating to knowledge of careers in the film industry for young people, highlighted progression routes between BFI programmes, and helped to make entry level pathways into filmmaking more accessible.

The strength and advantage of the TEs is their ability to act as facilitators, offering connections or opening lines of communication between the VEF manager and industry names in the region. This highlights how the VEF is able to act as a transition for participants from watching film to participating in the filmmaking industry. Strategically, the VEF and the position of the TEs and their work alongside the VEF managers have been well considered, as overall the VEF plugs a potential gap between children and young adults' provision in the sector.

Further examples of the successes of working with the TEs are set out below:

Two Hubs were able to coordinate development of activities so that the TE's support made the activity stronger and more effective. For example, one TE was a speaker at activities and provided young people 'insider' knowledge on topics such as how filmmaking funding works in the film industry; or the TEs were able to participate in roundtables or run DIY filmmaking challenges, to provide a link between these activities for young people and opportunities following participation in the VEF. This helped to highlight the link and progression routes between VEF activities and BFI NETWORK.

One Hub worked with the VEF manager to create a bespoke mentoring scheme, placing BFI talent with a mentor for two remote sessions, spread weeks apart. This gave VEF participants something concrete to work towards between sessions and allowed for their skills and knowledge development.

Another success is the organisation of one Hub, who has their TE and VEF manager in the same management structure, including being in the same office location. This allows the TE to be more connected with the VEF manager, leading to weekly operations meetings, and discussing the various projects and ongoing activities on an ad hoc basis which improves cohesion for that team. Both the TE and the VEF manager are of the opinion that such an arrangement enhanced their reach to the target audience.

Recommendation: Continue encouraging involvement of the BFI NETWORK TEs in the VEF as their collaboration with the Hubs seems to have worked well in several regions.

4.6 Region specific challenges and lessons learned

The Welsh Hub found there were challenges with using Welsh feature films for activities, specifically when relying on their release and being at the mercy of release schedules, in some ways. This can be seen as a legitimate problem for independent cinema. When an activity for a minority group is delayed due to external factors, there are knock-on effects on the diversity and inclusion of the Hubs, particularly for a region such as Wales where the bilingualism of the country is a government policy.

This challenge is difficult for the VEF programme to address, as out of the seven regional Hubs, less than half are likely to come across this issue (Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland). Because the other Hubs do not focus on feature films with languages beyond English, there is more resilience compared to when regional Hubs rely on a small pool of films in a minority language.

There may be measures that could be put in place to ensure that an activity is not solely reliant on a single feature film which might apply across all seven Hubs, and therefore is relevant for all the BFI Film Academy Plus programme moving forward, but it seems clear that though there are challenges in this area, the Welsh Hub is still keen to promote and utilise the local talent they have access to for their screenings and other activities moving forward.

In another devolved nation, a lesson learned was that it takes time to build an audience and learn what the target group of young people likes and wants to see. The Scottish Hub is confident they have now achieved this having developed a regular audience for the VEF over the last two years. However, on the downside they encountered challenges in their partnerships with the national cinemas who had expected greater numbers of young people to their screenings - it was a matter of managing partners' expectations, which was actually successfully completed.

Other lessons learned for the Hubs were understanding on how to approach aspects of the programme's development and delivery that take up time, e.g., when to

contact partners or guest speakers to secure their involvement. These are all elements that take experience in the programme to learn, and the Hubs themselves admit that they are continually improving year on year.

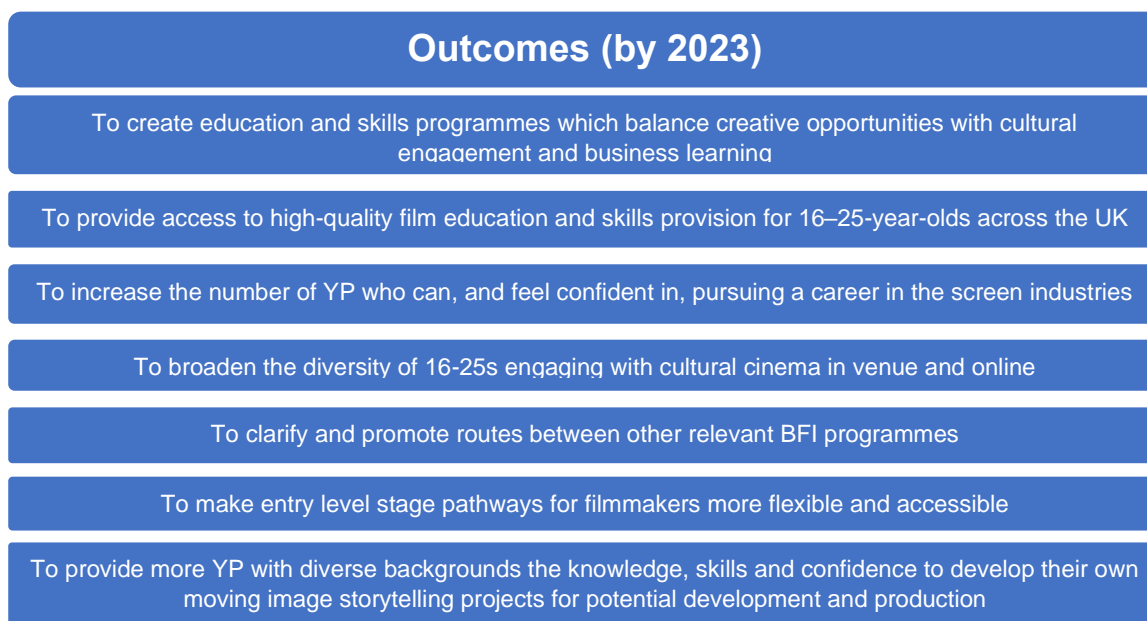
5. The VEF outcomes

In this section we present outcomes for young people, in line with the logic model (see Figure 8 below), grouped as follows:

- increase in learning and networking opportunities,
- making entry level stage pathways for filmmakers more accessible and,
- level of knowledge and skills gained through participation in the VEF.

This includes young people's confidence in pursuing film career following participation in the VEF, potentially greater knowledge of the industry as a result of attendance of the VEF, and skills acquired in relation to filmmaking, business of film, and networking.

Figure 8. The VEF outcomes (extracted from the logic model)



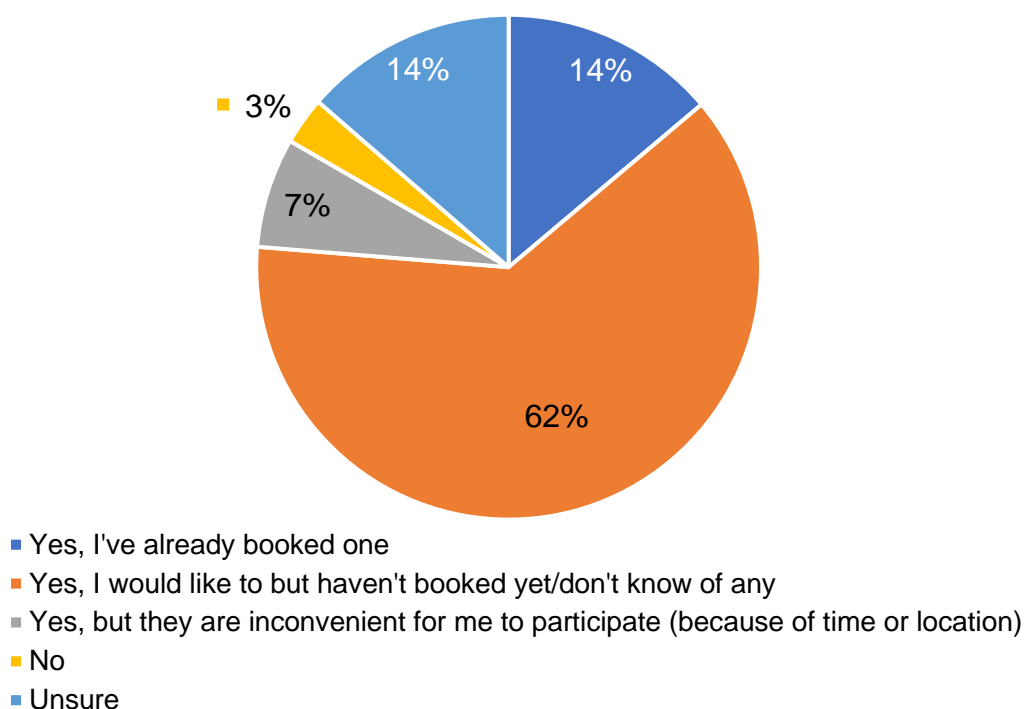
5.1 Learning and networking opportunities

Overall, it appears that in Year Two there were more learning and networking opportunities for young people than in Year One. There could be several reasons for this, but most Hubs report having repeat VEF participants taking advantage of different activities. This is a useful goal as the Hubs say it is easier to engage with those young people who visit the Hubs' venues regularly. Participant survey data supports this statement to some extent; around a quarter of respondents (24%)

heard of the activity they participated in either via the venue marketing or because they attended a previous BFI Film Academy activity.

In the context of the repeat attendances, just over three quarters (76%) of survey respondents indicate that they are either already booked on another activity or would like to attend another activity and had yet to book; and a further 7% on top said they would like to but cannot participate due to time or location challenges. These data indicate the participants were engaging with multiple activities or were keen to do so, especially as only 3% of responses indicated they would not want to participate in further activities.

Figure 9. Do you plan to attend another BFI course or activity?



Base: 426 respondents

5.2 Making entry to the film industry more accessible

In Year Two it has been more straightforward to make career entry level pathways accessible to young people. Our evaluation has found that young people in most regions (e.g. South East, South West, North, Scotland) got involved in the VEF programme design and delivery as interns in the Hubs or partner organisations, or they were participating in film making and film festival planning activities under mentorship of industry professionals or the BFI NETWORK TEs.

Example successes are laid out below to amplify these claims:

VEF participants have closely collaborated with the festival director in running Thurrock Film Festival, in the South East region. This is an example of young programmes, a cohort that has worked well in the region from Year One, getting more involved in the design and delivery of the VEF, by which they gained a valuable insight into working in the film industry, and they also supported the Hub in terms of resourcing limitations.

The Northern England Hub was actively looking to hire film industry professionals who are at earlier stages of their careers to support their VEF delivery. The Hub wanted to try 'grassroot' level approach to the programme design and delivery, by providing employment opportunities to young people who are at the start of their careers in the film industry, as well as enabling industry career starts for VEF participants who were involved in activities such as DIY film challenge.

The Scottish Hub has enabled young programmers to gain work experience and help with the VEF screenings by undertaking programming work. This has been beneficial for the young people by building their skills, knowledge, and confidence. They also offered mentorship to those young people who have been interested in pursuing a career in film.

Finally, collaboration with the BFI NETWORK TE has been particularly successful in Scotland and has contributed to achieving the objectives of the VEF.

“BFI TE has been talking to young programmers, so they present them the steps that young people can take in Glasgow to work in the film industry, they help them to decide what they would like to do and show them the options and paths.” – Hub representative, Scotland

“A lot of short film prize winners, we are offering them ongoing support in terms of advice, reference. One of them went to a mentorship scheme and that's been a huge achievement for him. And through that, he's got continued support from our team, and we asked him to co-host one of our master classes. Another participant from last year, now has got a job at our partner venue, and she got funding from another partner organisation, and she's hosting a masterclass for us tonight!” – Hub representative, Scotland

5.3 Industry knowledge and skills opportunities

The activities that the young people around the UK participated in were designed to provide a way to offer engaging education and skills opportunities to a diverse group of young people. The extent of the achievement of this outcome was assessed via participant survey and interviews with the Hubs.

Survey respondents were asked to rate their skills and knowledge for four different objectives of the VEF: film making skills, knowledge of careers, motivation to pursue careers, and motivation to watch independent films.

Table 8. Average ratings of survey responses

	Average before VEF activity	Average after VEF activity
Film making skills Base: 201 respondents	2.9	3.8
Knowledge of careers in the film industry Base: 144 respondents	2.9	4.0
Motivation to pursue a career in the film industry Base: 304 respondents	3.7	4.3
Motivation to watch independent films Base: 276 respondents	3.6	4.4

Overall, the VEF activities seem to have had a positive impact on participants’ skills, knowledge and motivations, as they demonstrated increase across each of the four surveyed aspects from the start to the end of the activity. For example, knowledge of the film industry careers rating has seen the largest increase (+1.1), from 2.9 to 4.0. Motivation to watch independent films and film making skills have a similar proportional increase, indicating that the activities presented were as motivating as they were useful for gaining skills.

Respondents who answered the question about their motivation to pursue a career in the film industry were asked about a reason for this motivation, and 227 provided further comments. Of these, over a quarter (28%) of respondents felt that the activity inspired them and provided confidence to pursue a career in the film industry. Around two fifths (41%) use the word “inspired” or “inspiring” (unprompted) specifically within the response. For example, they report having left the activity ‘inspired’ by other likeminded people’s stories (27%) and they describe feeling inspired and motivated to explore film further (20%).

A fifth of respondents (20%) stated that they had a pre-existing motivation to be involved in or to pursue a career in the film industry. For the majority of these, (62%) this is an existing passion and goal, and six (13%) are already pursuing a career or work experience in the industry. A fifth (22%) specify that they are keen to be involved with filmmaking, and the activities have built upon this interest.

“I’ve always wanted to go into the filmmaking and this workshop really ignited that passion again and taught me that, despite it seeming like a dream, it is possible to do.” – Respondent, East Midlands

“I’ve always had the desire and the BFI has made it seem a lot more accessible.” – Respondent, Wales

The activities provided greater clarity of the path into a career in the film industry for 42 (18%) participants. This has left participants feeling more confident to pursue this and provided a different outlook and approach to becoming a professional. All respondents who voiced this showed an improvement in their scores, illustrating an increased feeling of opportunity and accessibility into the industry.

In contrast, 14 (6%) claimed that the activities had no impact on their motivation to pursue a career; half of those 14 felt certain that this was a career they would like to pursue and did not need further convincing, whilst others left disappointed with the amount of information they received and the length of the course. This shows that, of the 227 respondents commenting on this question, only 3% felt disappointed with the course they attended.

“I joined to learn more about film which I have through this activity however it was only around an hour so not long enough to influence my career choice and it wasn't tailored towards that either.” – Respondent, South East England

The opportunity to have scripts performed on stage provided greater motivation for nine (4%) respondents with one noting that “Having my writing showcased by the BFI is a cool credit that makes me more inclined to think connection/progression in the industry is possible”.

Further, of those 276 respondents rating their motivation to watch independent films, there were 184 who provided a reason for changes in their motivation following the attendance of the VEF activity. Of these, most (30%) reported that the activity did not impact their motivation to watch independent films due to their existing interest and passion for watching them.

The VEF activities have left a fifth (20%) of participants interested in watching more independent films. This stems from gaining a new appreciation of the work that goes into independent film production and a wish to support them in the future. Some participants name independent directors and producers whose work they are keen to watch more of, including Ania Przygoda and a recent BFI Film Fund-backed release Rye Lane.

A similar proportion of respondents (18%) feel that the activities allowed them to gain a greater awareness and understanding of techniques used in independent film and how the sector contrasts with commercial and blockbuster films.

“It made me realise that independent films are underrated, and they deserve every bit of support more mainstream ones get.” – Respondent, South East England

Around 13% of participants were left inspired after watching and learning about independent films to continue to watch and produce their own. Insight provided by critics at the start of films made the films more engaging for one participant, who is now seeking to continue watching independent films to gain further inspiration for their own work, for example.

One in ten (10%) stated that their activity was not applicable to this question, with a third of them (33%), the largest proportion, having attended workshops that did not relate to watching independent films. One webinar participant noted that the talk did not focus on independent films and a mentoring participant commented that their call was specifically about producing short films, rather than watching them.

Some respondents (8%) are now more motivated to watch independent films as they enjoyed attending the screening, with a “good” selection of films that they had not seen before. One highlighted that the film is not something they would have considered before, but they really enjoyed the screening.

5.3.1 Participants’ suggestions for improvements

Following questions about industry knowledge and skills development opportunities, the evaluators also asked participants whether there were elements that could be improved from their point of view. To that end, 184 people (of 434 total survey respondents) suggested something which could be improved (described below) about the activity they had attended.

Timings

Various areas for improvement were given by respondents; the largest proportion of respondents referred to requesting more time for the activities and for the activity to be spread across multiple days, instead of a single day.

An additional 14 people expanded on this and would like to see more, or in some cases any, time allocated for Q&A sessions to talk with directors and producers. This was most commonly reported by participants of film screening sessions (five). Six other participants requested further opportunities for open discussion after screenings and provide longer sessions for this.

“I think there were too many activities in one day, so I had to leave early as I was tired from watching so many films and I knew I wouldn’t be able to concentrate on the 2-hour feature film followed by a Q&A. I was really excited to watch the feature, but I felt like I could only watch so many films in one day without getting overwhelmed.” – Respondent, Wales

Networking and interaction opportunities

The implementation of more interactive activities throughout the session was asked for by 16 respondents. They reported that this might include more audience interactivity, hands-on approaches in workshops, demonstrated activities, and a greater frequency of activities.

Ten people feel that networking should be improved at these sessions, with opportunities to attend both structured sessions with prepared questions or allocated seats, and non-structured informal sessions being offered. They noted that the structured approach would be helpful for participants who are not as confident and would encourage networking and mixing out of existing groups of friends.

“More accessible networking opportunities maybe? As an entrant into the film industry, I find it quite nerve wracking to just go up to people much further along in their careers than me to try and get a role on their projects. Obviously, confidence is needed for the role, but I think this type of networking is unnecessarily daunting, in a way it isn't in other non-film careers.” – Participant, East Midlands

Activities organisation and experts involved

The same proportion of respondents (ten) suggested improvements to the panel, hosts, and overall running of the activity. Four said the panel could be improved by increasing the number of experts present, including introducing others that are not directly related to the activity, and allowing participants to view the experts' work. Two highlighted that the activity could have been more organised, and that display names across multiple venues could have been clearer. Technical issues at two activities delayed the start of the activities, and one person noted “it would be nicer to have that all sorted before the activity”.

Venues

Issues with the venue or its location were raised by ten respondents overall. The quality of the cinema room was noted by six people, poor sound, seating, or lighting quality in the room was mentioned, notably a lack of blackout blinds in rooms with windows during daylight hours. Two participants requested refreshments to be available at the venue, and another participant suggested offering quiet rest areas during breaks. Finally, there was a request for a venue to be opened in the south west of Scotland to help reduce travel time.

Access to materials used in the activities

Furthermore, another ten respondents requested access to more resources upon the completion of the activity, this included providing PowerPoint slides or notes from the sessions, contact details of speakers and hosts, and providing links to speakers' work. Two provided suggestions for how resources during the course delivery could be improved, with further information to be provided about child safeguarding, and relevant advice and information for older participants.

Other comments

Eight respondents suggested that a higher attendance rate would have improved the activity, with all respondents who gave that information being from a film screening session. They suggested increasing activity promotion and advertising to reduce the number of empty seats. This is something that cannot be actively controlled by the Hubs because even when participants sign up for activities they may not show up, but it is something that is on their radar and is always being considered.

More films and showings were requested by seven respondents, including additional showings on Friday nights and including a more diverse range of films, for example including Afro-Caribbean films.

The facilitation of more in-person meetings was suggested by five respondents, three of whom attended online. They voiced that this would help the flow of conversation and allow the activity to be more productive and interactive.

6. Achieving longer term impact

The VEF programme in scope of this evaluation was designed as a two year pilot programme which has been successful in that it will continue to be funded for another three years. However, moving forward, the VEF will be delivered as BFI Film Academy Plus under the new BFI Screen Culture 2033 strategy.

The overall aim of the VEF was to influence individuals at a pivotal moment in their cultural upbringing and career path. Even though it is too early to evidence its long-term impacts, it looks like the VEF is on course to, at least, partially achieve its impacts outlined in the logic model and which are expected to start from 2023 onwards.

These are to:

- increase number and diversity of filmmakers across the UK successfully applying to BFI NETWORK and other BFI programmes, and
- increase the numbers of 16–25-year-old audiences attending screenings and events in venue and online

At this stage, the evaluators cannot measure ‘increase’ as there are no baseline numbers available for either impact. However, this evaluation provides the baseline for future evaluation work.

Overall, however, there is evidence of the desired impacts being achieved. For example, the Hubs are reporting an increased number of 16–25-year-olds attending screenings and other activities in venues and online. It is worth noting that in Year One there were more activities delivered online, largely because of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, including national and regional lockdowns with a greater focus on online work in general. The Hubs also feel that the VEF has notably improved the educational offer in their regions, and consequently across the UK.

Surveyed participants largely report improvements in their skills, knowledge, motivation and engagement with the film industry and independent cinema, following attendance of the VEF activities.

Additionally, in Year Two particularly, young people seem to be more actively involved in the VEF participation and delivery, and, as a result, applying to other BFI programmes after finding out about them via the VEF. The progression routes are working both ways, i.e., there are people who are participating in the VEF following completion of the BFI Film Academy.

“We had people moving from the VEF to BFI Film Academy, and one person who won the first challenge - to be the Behind the Scenes filmmaker on the Film Academy.” – Hub representative, Northern England

“A lot of people who haven’t made films before have made them now, and the short film festival of £2k, that was great for young people who finished the BFI Film Academy and were ready for the next step.” – Hub representative, Northern England

“Young people are seeing that our region is an area in which they can make a start in their career in the film industry.” – Hub representative, South East England

However, the Hubs questioned how much young people differentiate between BFI programmes. Based on their experience of working with young people and other similar programmes, they assume participants do not pay much attention to branding, especially if there is only a subtle distinction between them. This is exacerbated in some regions by the large number of brands that are competing for space in activities because they all contributed.

One Hub noted that the BFI should be more involved in promoting progression routes, stressing that there are not enough resources for such exercise under the VEF.

Recommendation: Consider how to ensure achievement of the longer-term impacts and make progression routes between the VEF and other BFI programmes clearer and more accessible by, for example, working more closely with BFI NETWORK and Talent Executives.

Two Hubs mentioned a notable increase of numbers of applicants to their VEF filmmaking activities in Year Two. The Scottish Hub has reported that the VEF enabled them to reach the audience they previously had no contact with, specifically those from the age of 18 to 25, which for them were more challenging to engage with as they did not have activities appropriate to that age group in terms of maturity and progression opportunities.

It is important to highlight that the Hubs say the impacts their regions have achieved would not be possible without the VEF. The VEF has enabled the Hubs to 1) establish new partnerships with venues in their regions, 2) maintain their valuable and experienced human resources dedicated to the VEF, as well as other BFI programmes, and 3) enable signposting and clarifying progression routes to young people.

“It wouldn’t have happened without the VEF. We wouldn’t be able to run something like that. I just don’t think we’d have the budget.” – Hub representative, Northern England

“We wouldn’t have been able to do the work without the money and also it comes from the benefits of being part of this nationwide network where we do get to talk to other hub members that are doing the same work.” – Hub representative, South East England

7. Conclusions

The evaluation has found different aspects of the VEF that have worked well, as well as those that could be improved in terms of programme design and delivery.

Conclusions are presented in two broad sections, describing what has worked well, followed by what improvements could be made in future.

7.1 What has worked well

7.1.1 Achieved target attendance

Most Hubs achieved their set target attendance numbers and the overall VEF target attendances have also been exceeded. However, there is considerable variation between targets and achievements across the regions.

This could be considered and monitored going forward to ensure that targets are proportionate to regional population characteristics. Analysis of the Hubs' target and achieved data does not lead to firm conclusions about the type of activities that are more or less likely to lead to target audience numbers being achieved. Indeed, the instructions the Hubs received for VEF design and delivery were to select activities that reflected gaps in provision in their areas, rather than to follow a prescriptive set of activities from the BFI.

7.1.2 The effective activities selection

Overall, a variety of activities offered through the VEF has been effective in achieving the programme objectives. It has proven helpful for young people to explore a range of career possibilities in the film industry by participating in different types of activities and learning about film festivals, film making, production and other elements of the industry.

As demonstrated by our survey and interview findings (sections 4.2 and 5.1), participants have been returning to the VEF activities, and some of them, depending on their age, have gained their first work experience, or even found internship placements or jobs in the film sector. Additionally, the evaluation survey findings show that participants rate their knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation to pursue a career in the film industry higher following their attendance of the VEF activities.

There are specific activities that have been successful in some regions, such as filmmaking activities in the Northern England and South East England, for example, and DIY challenges which were popular among young people and raised a large amount of interest in Years One and Two. These activities appear to have encouraged networking among participants (for example via the Young Programmers group) which was important in achieving the programme objectives. Similarly, a short film festival was another successful activity, and one Hub particularly tried to ensure greater recognition of young filmmakers, so they awarded all those shortlisted films, not just the winning one. Another Hub saw a lot of success

with an animation-focused workshop day, where neurodiverse students from local colleges were invited to an animation academy.

In terms of types of activities, in Scotland for example, screenings appear to be more popular in Year Two, and networking at those has worked well, including an engagement strategy, such as refreshments provided for young people attending the screenings.

7.1.2 Engagements with underrepresented groups

In Year Two most Hubs achieved their set diversity targets by having 20% or more of participants from ethnic minority groups. This has been an important achievement for the VEF programme delivery and longer-term impacts, and it suggests that the Hubs have been targeting the relevant audience effectively.

In their activities, engagement and marketing strategies, they were trying to reach out to more underrepresented groups, such as people with disabilities and young people living in rural areas. Engagements with underrepresented groups worked particularly well in the South West, South East, Wales and Scotland, as these regions made targeted efforts to reach out to specific groups, e.g. young people with disabilities or those who have been in care.

7.1.3 The accessibility of the VEF programme

The Hubs tried to increase the accessibility of the VEF in Year Two, by implementing lessons learned and maintaining best practices from Year One.

For example, they continued with free or low cost activities, a combination of in-person and online activities, ensured travel bursaries for young people, and provided refreshments at some activities. The latter also helped in achieving other objectives of the VEF, including enabling networking among young people, and providing opportunities for building their knowledge and confidence about a career in the film industry.

7.1.4 Partnerships

Another element that has worked well for the Hubs are their partnerships, primarily those established in Year One which have been sustained in more effective ways in the second pilot year. However, there were some new successful partnerships established in Year Two, which have notably contributed to the Hubs' network expansion in terms of diversity of partnership groups, as well as to greater geographical reach of the VEF.

7.1.5 The involvement of the BFI NETWORK TEs

The involvement of the BFI NETWORK TEs in design and delivery of the VEF has increased in Year Two and it worked well in several regions, particularly in the East Midlands, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The strength and advantage of the TEs is their ability to act as facilitators, offering connections or opening lines of communication between the VEF manager and industry names in the region.

Strategically, the VEF and the position of the TEs and their work alongside the VEF managers have been well considered, as overall the VEF plugs a potential gap between children and young adults' provision in the sector.

7.1.3 Additional elements of success

Other aspects that worked well in the delivery of the VEF include 1) marketing of the programme, 2) the Hubs' delivery teams, and 3) being able to build on Year One successes.

The Hubs' marketing strategies seem to be organised well in Year Two, including a more focused approach to social media posts and targeting, and more streamlined mailing lists for sharing their newsletters. Following completion of the VEF Year One some of the Hubs' delivery teams now have greater experience and stronger communication and business-development skills.

The Hubs are building on the success of the first year. Having had the chance to refine the programme is seen as a benefit for the Hubs. It seems that, without the VEF, the Hubs would not be able to do these activities for young people, and they are keen to keep on supplying their regions with successful activities, great partnerships, and engaging networking opportunities for young people.

7.2 What could be improved

7.2.1 Online activities attendance

As reported in section 3.2, the online activities were not as successful in Year Two, compared to Year One. Young people reportedly sign up for online activities, but do not attend.

One of the reasons for this could be a fatigue caused by the sheer number of activities delivered online caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it is worth noting that most Hubs delivered a smaller number of online activities in Year Two compared with Year One. Additionally, most of these were free, so a combination of these factors likely contributed to slightly smaller success of the online activities in Year Two.

7.2.2 Human and financial resources for greater reach of the VEF

There is a perceived lack of capacity and human and financial resources to establish more partnerships and find similar and compatible venues and organisations across the region.

The benefits are well worthwhile in being able to work on the VEF together, share knowledge and experience with the aim of reaching wider groups of young people and increasing diversity of the VEF reach.

7.2.3 Other elements for improvement

Monitoring data

Despite the revisions made to try to ease the burden, there are still issues with data collection, and suggestions that it is a large, time consuming, and challenging task relative to the size of the programme.

The Hubs were struggling to answer questions about progress against their delivery and diversity targets. This suggests not having a consistent and continuous participant sign up and data monitoring system in place, and the guidance and requirements on capturing monitoring data not been sufficiently clear. As evidenced in Chapter 3, there are questions about the reliability of data received as part of their monitoring reports.

Relationship with the BFI

It has evidently been challenging to maintain a collaborative relationship between the individual Hubs and the BFI for different reasons.

These include a lack of in-person meetings; a perceived lack of guidance on survey data collection; delayed communication in terms of programme delivery and financial arrangements; and staff changes in the Hubs' and the BFI teams.

This could be improved with a greater BFI presence in some regions (e.g. Scotland and Northern England), with a once-a-year (minimum) in-person full day meeting or a workshop with other Hubs. This would be an opportunity for them to share best practice in a more meaningful and engaging way, as opposed to video calls with a lot of participants, which, as the Hubs say, tends to hinder group discussions.

8. Recommendations

In considering Pye Tait Consulting's recommendations, it is worth noting that in Year Three the VEF continues in a slightly revised form under the Screen Culture 2033 strategy as Film Academy Plus. As such, the recommendations have been tailored so that they will apply to the next iteration of the programme.

Programme design and delivery

1. Consider reviewing the performance reports with the Hubs and explore in further detail why some activities met or did not meet attendance targets (exploring factors such as population, accessibility, and type of activity) and using the additional insight to inform how targets are set in future.
2. Organise more in-person meetings with the Hubs, e.g. a once-a-year (minimum) in-person full day meeting or a workshop. They see in-person work as more effective and believe it has greater potential to enhance engagement with other Hubs, and consequently increase likelihood of achieving the programme's intended impacts.
3. Consider how to ensure achievement of the longer-term impacts and make progression routes between the VEF and other BFI programmes clearer and more accessible, for example by working more closely with BFI NETWORK and Talent Executives.
4. Discuss with relevant Hubs issues around reaching diversity targets and how they can be supported by the BFI in achieving them for Year Three and beyond.
5. Discuss, define, and share with the Hubs best practice for securing attendance and participation in activities.
6. Continue encouraging involvement of the BFI NETWORK TEs in the VEF as their collaboration with the Hubs seems to have worked well in several regions. This could be done by more successful regions, e.g. Scotland and East Midlands sharing best practices/experience of their collaboration between the Hubs and the BFI NETWORK TEs.

Evaluation

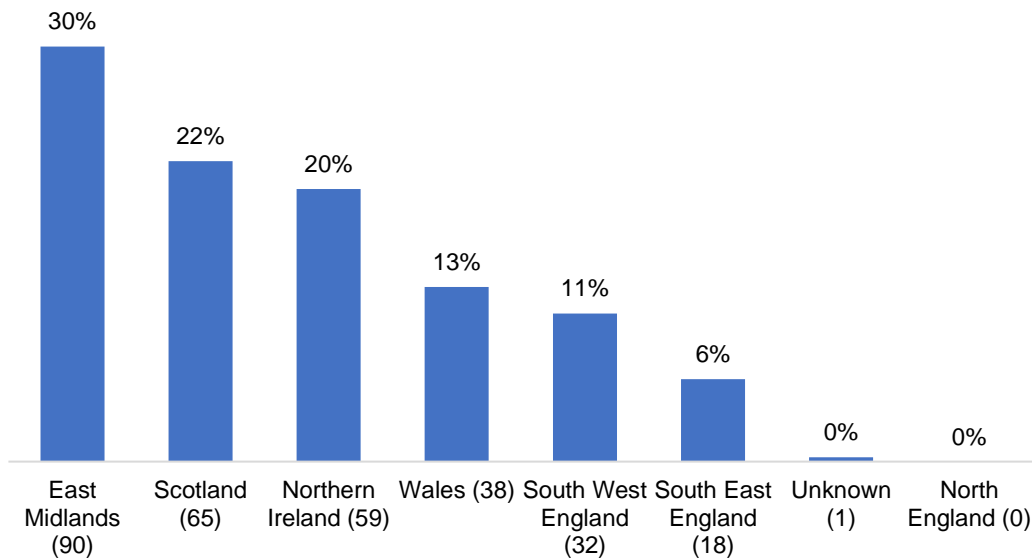
7. The Hubs could clarify to the BFI and to an independent evaluator how they collect monitoring and participant data. In their end of year reports, some Hubs refer to the participant feedback survey instead of the monitoring data and it appears that they use the survey data. The purpose of the survey was for collecting the participant feedback for the evaluation rather than for monitoring purposes (not all participants complete the voluntary survey). It is also not clear how data on diversity is collected and collated by the Hubs.

8. Related to recommendation 7, the BFI could provide clearer and more robust guidance to the Hubs on how to collect data and report on it to ensure consistency and coherence. For example, within the reporting template, the BFI could articulate what data they need from the Hubs, so that the Hubs and an independent evaluator can gather the data in the required format. There is an opportunity to consider whether the currently collected data is useful in its entirety, and if refinements could be made to reduce the burden further.
9. Having established what data are needed, the monitoring report could include clear tables for the target number of activities and young people attending and actual achievements with opportunities to clarify discrepancies.
10. We understand that for future evaluations, in line with the BFI's approach to monitoring and evaluation under the new Screen Culture 2033 strategy, the BFI wants to take ownership of gathering quantitative data, e.g., via a participant feedback survey. It is suggested this is initiated with a review of how all data about participants are gathered to ensure they include data on diversity etc., and also include a review monitoring data to ensure this focusses on BFI priorities.
11. Additionally, our understanding is the BFI wants to commission an independent evaluator approximately once every three years to review the collected data, and to undertake qualitative research among the Hubs, participants, and any other relevant stakeholders from the BFI. However, budget permitting, we recommend a continuation of yearly qualitative research among the Hubs at the end of the programme's year. This approach has worked well in the last two years and has yielded meaningful and important findings of Hubs' perceptions of the VEF design, delivery, and impacts achieved. The qualitative data from the interviews could be utilised for short mid-term and end of year reports produced each year, and they could be used as part of larger scale evaluations which would be conducted approximately every three years. This data could be valuable in demonstrating long-term and longitudinal impacts of the VEF.
12. Future evaluations could also include an assessment of the cost of activities and outputs, e.g. average cost per attendee by Hub/value for money. Although it will be important not to expect that all Hubs will incur the same costs (and this is an important component of the independence of the Hubs to judge how best to deliver the VEF within their own region), this will facilitate target setting and monitoring for the BFI.

Appendix 1: Survey respondent profile

The majority of survey respondents attended the activity in East Midlands (30%), followed by Scotland (22%) and Northern Ireland (20%).

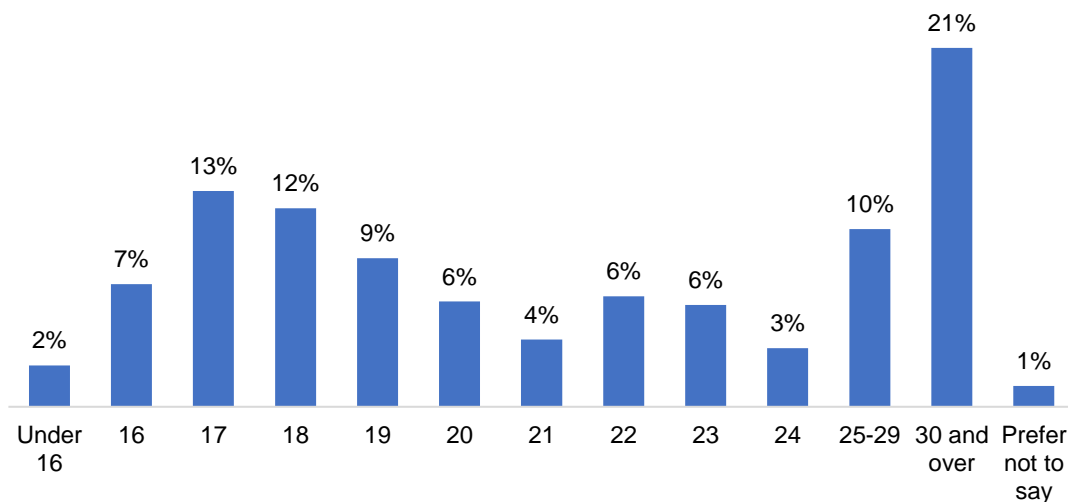
Figure 10. Number of respondents by UK region



Base: 303 respondents

The majority of respondents (65%) fall within the target age range (16-25). Around a fifth (21%) are 30 and over, and 2% of respondents are under the age of 16.

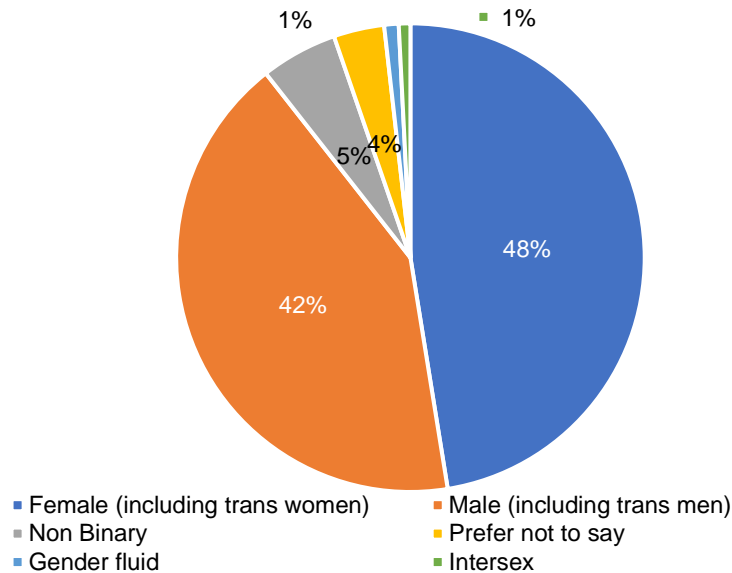
Figure 11. Respondents' age



Base: 409 respondents

Just under half of respondents (48%) identify as female (including trans women), and some 42% identify as male (including trans men), whilst 5% are non binary.

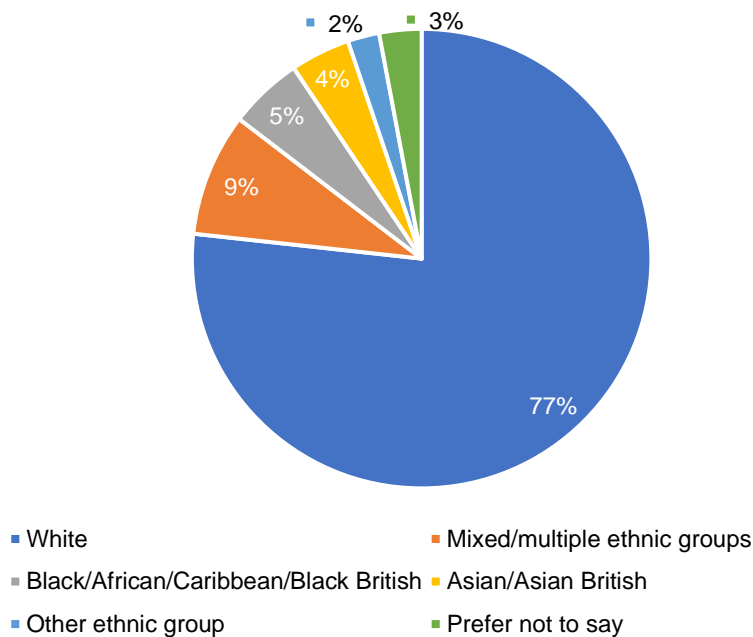
Figure 12. Respondents' gender



Base: 400 respondents

Around three quarters of respondents (77%) are white, approximately one in ten (9%) come from mixed/multiple ethnic groups, whilst 5% are Black/African/Caribbean/Black British and 4% Asian/Asian British.

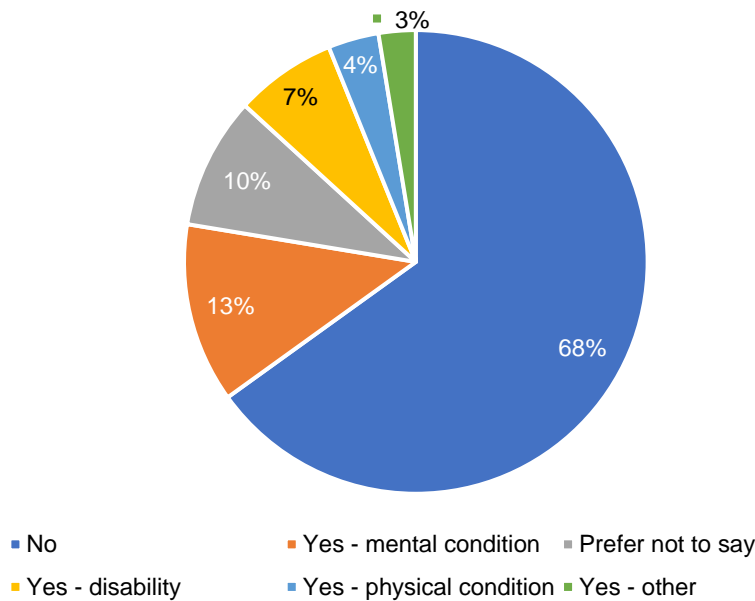
Figure 13. Respondents' ethnic origin



Base: 404 respondents

The majority (68%) of respondents do not declare having a disability, whilst just over a quarter (27%) reported having some form of disability. One in ten (10%) preferred not to answer this question.

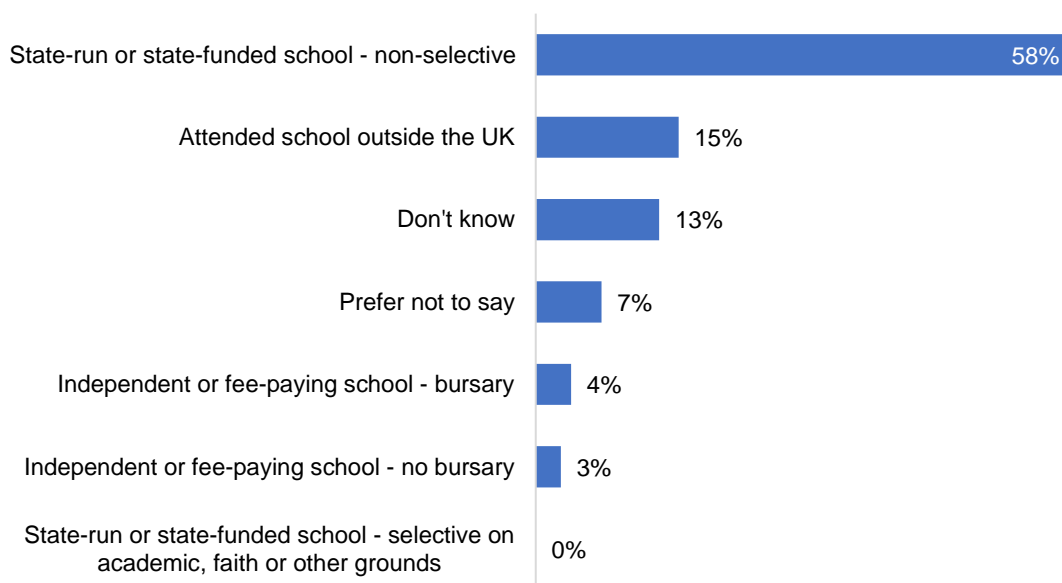
Figure 14. Respondents' disability



Base: 424 respondents

Most respondents (58%) went to state-run or state-funded schools, followed by those who attended schools outside the UK (15%). Around one in five (20%) said they either do not know or prefer not to say which school they went to.

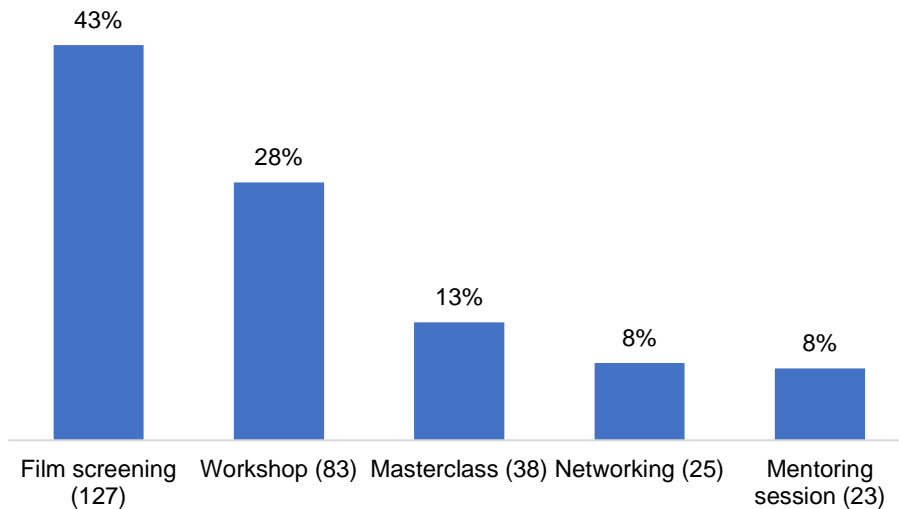
Figure 15. School respondents attended



Base: 338 respondents

Most respondents attended film screenings (43%), and workshops (28%).

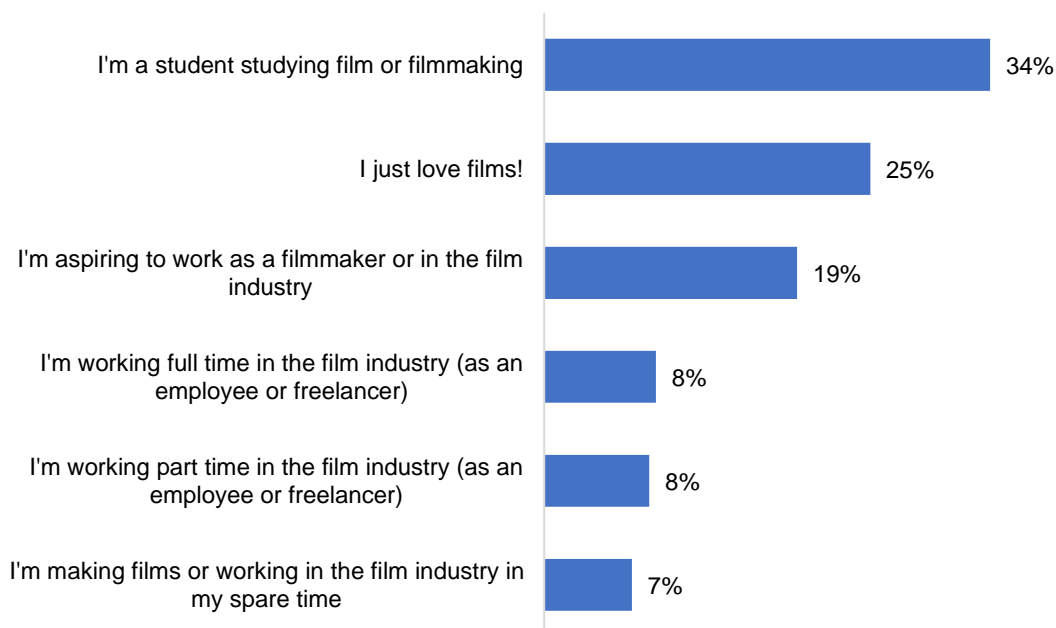
Figure 16. Type of VEF activity respondents attended



Base: 296 respondents

Respondents described their involvement with film most commonly as being a student studying film or filmmaking (34%). Around a quarter of respondents noted they just love films (25%), and approximately one in five stated they are aspiring to work as a filmmaker or in the film industry (19%).

Figure 17. Respondents' involvement with film



Base: 379 respondents