

If I could ask the industry to do one thing to support trainees, it would be...



"To encourage crew to look upon trainees as a golden opportunity to train the next generation of creatives and allow trainees to learn by doing rather than just watching. By utilising them and making them feel part of the team rather than just someone watching from the side-lines, you will eventually create a more skilled, confident, and able trainee who will thrive in this competitive industry."

Mentoring a trainee should also be looked on as an opportunity to improve your own skills. Even though a trainee is at the beginning of their creative journey, you should never be afraid to learn from them. They may offer you a different perspective or bring a fresh new idea to a project. Allowing a trainee to teach you something new not only improves their experience, but also further adds to your skills as a professional.

Recruiting trainees from a diverse range of backgrounds is also vitally important in this industry. I believe we should be targeting as many people as possible, especially those who are overlooked and believe the industry is a closed door for them. The industry as a whole would benefit from encouraging and including a creatively and culturally diverse generation of future professionals, trained by those already respected in their fields."

Allison Dowzell, managing director, Screen Alliance Wales



"To stop asking trainees to fit into your existing culture and to instead explore how different ways of working can enhance your working environment. If they do things differently, don't always assume it's because they're not up to the job. Think about whether the job they are being asked to do should be done differently. A new entrant comes into our industry with an innocence and optimism that too often is swiftly knocked out of them, instead of being nurtured and valued as a fresh breath of air. Invest in them and they'll invest in you. Understand and support them through their personal and professional challenges and they will support you to build a better, more inclusive, more accessible, more equitable workplace and sector for us all."

Dominique Unsworth MBE BEM MBA MIoD FRSA, CEO, producer and trainer, Resource Productions CIC



"To work with us at ScreenSkills – the skills charity for the UK's screen industries. Contribute to the ScreenSkills Skills Funds that help pay for the work we do in careers information and training in the industry. We offer a range of support and training for new entrants (as well as for people at all stages of their career)."

And please offer work opportunities, for example, through our Trainee Finder paid placement programme that operates across film, high-end television and children's TV, so that new entrants can receive proper hands-on experience, working alongside industry practitioners, building their understanding and skills in a practical and supported environment. All our Trainee Finder trainees receive an induction with advice on set etiquette and health and safety and managing your finances as a freelancer so that they stand the best chance of doing well. On an individual basis, also consider volunteering as a mentor through the ScreenSkills Mentoring Network."

Gareth Ellis-Unwin, head of film and animation, ScreenSkills



"To contribute budget and time to taking on more trainees, more than you think you need and across all roles within the department, creating extra opportunities for young and diverse talent to get hands-on experience, network and push forward with their careers. With supportive HoDs and mentors on set, this extra resource can add real value to the production as well as allowing trainees to secure those vital credits and contacts they need to move from show to show."

We hear the industry calling out for diverse talent (which you can find at all career stages if you look outside of your core network), but to get continuous diverse talent coming through and up in the industry we need to go out of our way to create opportunities, implement equitable hiring practices, and make the working environment we offer truly inclusive and sustainable for all people. We must listen and act urgently, and put money and energy behind our good intentions, including partnering with and directly funding the training and diversity and inclusion organisations already doing amazing work in this area."

Kate Rolfe, Digital Orchard Foundation