

MIF ANNOUNCES NEW FACTORY ACADEMY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2021/22

* **The 2021/22 Factory Academy programme will provide free creative training for over 250 Manchester and Greater Manchester residents who are currently unemployed or on low wage contracts**
* **During 2020/21, over 150 local people benefitted from the award-winning training programmes**
* **To date, 50% of graduates from the Factory Futures Academy 2020/21 course have progressed into work or further study within three months**
* **Over the next five years the Factory Academy will deliver around 1,400 fully funded training opportunities**

Manchester International Festival (MIF) has today announced its latest Factory Academy programme for the 2021/22 academic year, providing skills and training programmes for the creative industries for people in Manchester and the wider city region.

Launched in 2018 by MIF, in partnership with a consortium of cultural organisations in the city, the award-winning Factory Academy is a key part of the vision to put skills and training opportunities at the heart of The Factory, Manchester’s landmark new arts space. Over the next five years it will deliver around 1,400 fully funded training opportunities, creating accessible pathways to work in an increasingly important sector and supporting the region’s economic recovery.

In 2021/22 the Factory Academy will offer places to 250 people across a range of programmes including bespoke pre-employment academies on subjects from construction to broadcast and film production, industry traineeships designed to immerse students in the creative and cultural industries, and opportunities to manage creative projects to develop key skills. Alongside this, it will offer Kickstart Wraparound Support to creative and cultural employers, aligned to the government Kickstart Scheme, combining students’ on-the-job learning and unique opportunities for personal development in a workplace setting.

The latest opportunity is a new 15-day training academy developed in partnership with Laing O’ Rourke and Ryder Architecture and other companies who are working to bring The Factory to life. Students will discover what goes on behind the scenes at an innovative construction project, receive first-hand guidance from industry experts and develop new skills for working in construction. The course, which takes place 11 - 29 October, is fully funded, with no cost to participants, and is open to anyone in Manchester or Greater Manchester aged 19-24 and on Universal Credit. On completion of the academy, students will have the chance to apply for a six-month paid Kickstart role with organisations working on the design and construction of The Factory.

Last year, over 150 Greater Manchester residents benefited from the Factory Academy – its first year as an independent training provider. Despite the challenges of the pandemic period, an average of 50% of students have progressed into work or further study within three months of completing the Factory Futures Academy course in the past year. In June 2021, The Factory Academy was awarded the Marquee Award at the inaugural Manchester Adult Education and Skills Awards.

Ten students graduated from the Broadcast and Film Production Traineeship in April, a partnership with Toasted Productions, Near-life, Dock 10, Jist, Title Role, The Gate Films, Delaval, Vision in Colour and Eight Engines. To date, six of the ten graduates have progressed into paid employment with organisations such as Badger and Combes, Toasted Productions, MIF and BBC Studios.

One of the graduates, **Daniel Goodchild** said: “*The access and the resources that The Factory Academy gives to be able to apply for these jobs is just so important. I completed the Broadcast & Film Training Academy and got a BTEC out of it, was selected for a placement at Toasted Productions and then they invited me back so I’m working here full time now. There was nothing else that I had on my resume that could even get me close to a job like this.”*

**Simon Marsland**, Director of Toasted Productions said: “*It’s had a really positive impact. Businesses should get involved in The Factory Academy because everyone wins out of it.”*

**Madison Freeman** was one of ten graduates who completed paid internships at Manchester International Festival in the lead up to and during the 2021 festival. Speaking about her experience, she said: “*The contacts that I’ve made that can help me in the future has definitely boosted my confidence. It’s just proved to me that there are no boundaries and I can do whatever I want - and think big!”*

**Gary Briggs,** Acting Head of Skills and Training at MIF said: “*The Factory Academy creates unique opportunities that aren’t offered elsewhere through the partnerships we’ve developed with employers and the support we offer to help open their doors to trainees. Our courses are bespoke, not off the shelf, developed with industry experts with specialist knowledge and experience from a range of sectors, from illustrators to military trainers, sustainability experts to musicians and arts technicians.*

“*Our aim is to reach people that wouldn’t usually consider a career in the cultural industries and to remove some of the traditional barriers, including offering open recruitment days instead of written application forms, giving the highest quality experience with a focus on experiential learning and self-development.  All the skills and knowledge you’ll acquire at a Factory Futures training programme align to employment within the creative industries and beyond and are transferable across the sector*.”

**Randel Bryan**, Executive Director at Manchester International Festival, said: “*The Factory Academy is a key part of our vision to put skills and training opportunities at the heart of The Factory. From 2023, The Factory will become a major training centre for local people wanting to work in a huge range of roles in the creative industries, meaning people can pursue careers, working alongside world-class talents, without having to leave the region. There will also be opportunities for local artists to develop and grow with the support of the MIF and the partners of the Cultural Skills Consortium.*

According to research by the CBI published in the months just before the pandemic hit in March 2020, Manchester is the second largest creative city in Europe after London, at that time bringing in £1.4bn to the city's economy.

***Sir Richard Leese,*** Leader of Manchester City Council, said: "*In Manchester we've never doubted the power of culture and creativity to help change lives and this is why we continue to invest in it, and why the city has been recognised as the second largest creative city in Europe after London.*

*"By providing new and innovative training and development opportunities for local people in the cultural and creative industries the Factory Academy has a key part to play in helping us grow our own highly skilled workforce here in the city and in supporting the continued growth of the sector."*

Applications for the 2021/22 programme open from September.For more information please visit: <https://mif.co.uk/get-involved/creative-development/the-factory-academy/>.

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**About the Greater Manchester Cultural Skills Consortium**

Initiated by MIF, the Greater Manchester Cultural Skills Consortium was set up to collaborate on the provision of structured training and skills development in the region. Members include Brighter Sounds, Contact, HOME, Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester Jewish Museum, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester Museum, Manchester International Festival (MIF), Octagon Theatre Bolton, Oldham Coliseum Opera House, Palace Theatre, People's History Museum, Royal Exchange Theatre, Royal Northern College of Music, Science and History Museum, The Lowry, Walk the Plank and Z-Arts.

**About The Factory**At 13,300 square metres, The Factory is a world-class cultural space being developed in the centre of Manchester, which will commission and present the world’s most exciting artists, attracting up to 850,000 visitors a year, from across the city, the UK and internationally. Its development is being led by Manchester City Council in partnership with Manchester International Festival (MIF), who will operate and create the year-round programme for the landmark building, as well as delivering the citywide Festival every other year.

The Factory builds on MIF’s success and Manchester’s long history as a centre for culture, creativity, innovation, and production and will play a key role in the life of the city and the residents, bringing up to 1,500 direct and indirect full-time jobs and adding up to £1.1 billion to Manchester’s economy over a decade. It is designed by world-leading architects Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), founded by Rem Koolhaas and will be their first major public building in the UK.

The majority of funding for The Factory is coming from HM Government, managed by Arts Council England. It includes £78.05m in HM Treasury investment, which is money that would not have otherwise been available for the cultural sector or the region, and £21m from the Government’s Culture Recovery Fund

Link to CBI report 'Centre Stage' published Oct 2019: <https://www.cbi.org.uk/media/3857/12527_creative-industries_hyperlinks.pdf>