



Leadership and Resilience for Creative and Cultural Work Skills Bootcamp

An 8-week Skills Bootcamp designed to build leadership, business, and resilience skills for freelancers and SME employees in the Creative Industries sector.

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Helping the Creative Industries Sector to Thrive

The creative industries in the West of England is a thriving sector, employing talented professionals and contributing significantly to the region's economy. As this dynamic sector continues to evolve, the **demand for skilled leaders whether within organisations or running their own businesses** will be greater than ever to navigate the challenges of the modern creative landscape.



By developing future leaders, we aim to ensure **long-term resilience and success** for organisations and freelancers across the creative industries, helping them **thrive in a competitive market and build sustainable futures**.

If you want to play a leading role in the growth of your organisation, join us to unlock your leadership potential and make a **lasting impact on your career and the creative sector**.

Helping the Creative Industries Sector to Thrive

Our Skills Bootcamp is built for **ambitious professionals in the creative industries**—whether you're employed by an SME or working as a freelancer.

For **SME employees**, the programme will strengthen leadership and management capabilities, preparing you to step into senior roles and contribute to business growth.

For **freelancers**, it offers a practical toolkit to enhance your business strategy, client relationships, and long-term sustainability.



Our 8-week, funded programme

The programme will develop a holistic skillset, encompassing business management functions (understanding financing, contracting, pitching and marketing approaches), alongside core leadership capabilities to create a climate for creativity and innovation across the organisation

Who is it for?

*Note: Freelancers must have a track record of securing clients in the past two years and ideally be currently working on a contract; have repeat clients or be actively looking for new contracts.

Aspiring Freelancers and SME leaders

Designed for individuals currently working in an SME organisation ready to progress into leadership or senior management roles or for freelancers and self-employed creatives looking to sharpen their business skills and grow their client base.*



Benefits to you as an individual

- Develop your ability to lead creative teams
- Help your organisation or business grow in a competitive environment
- Learn transferable skills that will benefit your day-to-day work
- Network with other leaders in the creative industry

Benefits to the employer

- Invest in the future of your business
- Help your business to grow through effective management
- Develop effective leaders
- Support the continuous professional development of your workforce

What will I learn?

You will develop fundamental transferable project management and associated softer skills valued by UK managers including:

Effective negotiation skills

Leadership, motivation and collaboration

Managing client relationships

Advanced pitching and networking

Tools for self-leadership and resilience

Building a competitive brand

Programme Structure

Live sessions



The programme is delivered through 8 full-day tutor-led interactive sessions, which will walk you through the different aspects of leadership and resilience with tools and techniques to implement immediately into your business.

Final Event



Learners consolidate learning and put it into practice by delivering a confident pitch, receiving feedback, and networking with peers and industry guests. This final session is a chance to showcase growth, make meaningful connections, and leave with renewed clarity and confidence in their creative leadership.

Creative Industry Network



Learners will benefit from access to a dynamic creative network, which they can engage with during the final session's networking event, providing valuable opportunity to connect with industry professionals and peers, fostering collaboration and future career development.

Self study resources



Learners will have access to a range of self-study materials to support learning.

Session Outline

Session 1

MORNING

Introduction to Skills Bootcamp

In this introductory session, you'll meet your fellow learners, get familiar with the programme structure, and explore how the Skills Bootcamp will support your growth journey. We'll run through the key systems and platforms you'll be using and set shared expectations. This session also marks the start of your personal development planning, as we begin capturing key data to tailor your experience.



Session 1

AFTERNOON

Getting the most from the programme

In this session we will begin to outline what your expectations are for the programme and, most importantly, how this learning aligns with your career goals. We will develop an action plan that you will revisit towards the end of the programme. This action plan involves: (1) Personal audit and SWOT: Map skills, projects, and existing networks. Identify key strengths, gaps, and niche. (2) Industry mapping: Identify key buyers, funders, commissioning bodies, and agencies in your field (arts councils, TV commissioners, brands, etc.). (3) Setting goals: Define 3 realistic contract/funding targets for next 3-6 months.

Session 2 MORNING

Networking Skills

In this session you will explore practical techniques for confident and effective networking with industry colleagues, potential investors and key stakeholders. You'll learn how to make strong first impressions, start conversations, and build authentic professional connections. This session will build the foundations needed for the advanced pitching and negotiating for success session later in the programme.



Session 2 AFTERNOON

Pitching for success

In this hands-on session, you'll master the art of crafting and delivering a compelling pitch that captures attention. Learn key techniques for writing a captivating narrative, refining your message, and editing for impact. Through practical exercises in voice, body language, and delivery, you'll gain the confidence to sell yourself and your business effectively. You'll also discover how to tailor your content to resonate with your audience and leverage storytelling techniques to make your pitch unforgettable through clarity, confidence, and creativity.



Session 3

MORNING

Empowering Creative Teams through Effective Leadership

In this dynamic session, you'll explore how effective leadership can empower creative teams to thrive. You'll dive into different leadership styles and learn how they shape team dynamics, gaining insight into the balance of power and influence to inspire and motivate your team. We'll introduce the concept of "unleadership," where fostering autonomy and innovation takes centre stage, and explore strategies to encourage your team members to take initiative and contribute groundbreaking ideas. Leave equipped with the tools to lead in a way that fuels creativity and collaboration.



Session 3

AFTERNOON

Cultivating a creative and innovative organisational climate

In this session, you'll learn how to foster a team environment that sparks creativity and innovation across all levels. You'll identify and overcome common barriers to innovation, enabling your team to thrive. By exploring the power of diverse, collaborative teams, you'll uncover how they drive creative problem-solving and breakthrough ideas. Additionally, we'll dive into the pivotal role leadership plays in nurturing and sustaining this innovative climate, equipping you to lead with creativity and purpose.



Session 4 MORNING

Co-creating value in client-agency relationships

In this insightful session, we will discuss the concept of value, and how to co-create value, in business relationships. We will also explore the potential "dark side" of long-term relationships and how to mitigate relationship decline. You will leave with a deeper understanding of how to foster mutually beneficial relationships that stand the test of time, deliver lasting value, and result in positive client experiences.



Session 4 AFTERNOON

Building a brand in the creative industries

In this session, you'll learn how to stand out in a competitive marketplace. Explore the psychology behind how customers perceive brands and discover innovative, creative strategies to communicate your unique identity. Whether you're refining an existing brand or building one from scratch, this session equips you with the tools to craft a memorable brand that captivates and connects with your audience.



BREAK WEEK



W/C 27 OCT 2025

Session 5 **MORNING**

Different typologies of contractual agreements

In this session you will get an overview on the different typologies of contracts prevalent in the creative sector. These will include: Commissioning Agreements (for specific works/projects); Licensing Agreements (for use of IP); Employment vs. Freelance Contracts; Collaboration Agreements (shared projects or co-productions); Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) and Agency or Representation Contracts.



Session 5 **AFTERNOON**

Contracts

Written agreement: the importance of contracts

In this session, you'll dive into the importance of solid contracts in creative partnerships. Learn how to identify your focus metrics and set clear goals to ensure alignment between parties. We'll explore strategies for identifying and reducing risks while negotiating comfortable terms that work for everyone. With a focus on safeguarding both sides, this session equips you with the knowledge to create contracts that foster trust, protect your interests, and set the foundation for a successful collaboration.

Session 6 MORNING

Personal and professional resilience

In this session we will have a guest speaker who will discuss the importance of personal resilience as creative and cultural workers in this field. We will also look at organisational resilience and use an Online Resilience Toolkit to identify specific areas that you or your organisation either do well in or might need to improve in order to increase your level of resilience.



Session 6 AFTERNOON

Advanced Pitching & Negotiating for Success

In this session you will build on your networking skills by developing strategies to pitch your ideas with confidence and negotiate effectively. Through practical exercises, you'll refine your communication style and prepare to make a strong impression at the final event, where you will have the opportunity to network and pitch.

Session 7

FULL-DAY

Sources of funding

This session will explore practical strategies for generating grant income to support your creative projects. Learn how to navigate the world of grants, from identifying opportunities to crafting successful applications. Additionally, you'll discover how to take full advantage of HMRC incentives, unlocking valuable financial benefits for full applications. Whether you're seeking grants or leveraging tax opportunities, this session will equip you with the knowledge to maximise funding and fuel your creative ventures.



Session 8

FULL-DAY

Next steps and future developments in the creative and cultural sector

In this session we will revisit the action plan developed earlier in the programme. Here we will identify specific areas that are both successes and challenges and think through ways to increase contract development and continuation.

What is my Commitment as a Learner?

For our Skills Bootcamp you will be required to:

- ✓ **Attend all live sessions, held in-person or online**
- ✓ **Complete self-study activities between sessions**
- ✓ **Provide mandatory personal and employment data for up to six months following completion of the Skills Bootcamp**

What is my Commitment as an Employer? (if applicable)

Employers are able to utilise this Skills Bootcamp to upskill existing staff and provide development opportunities within their organisation. As an employer you will be expected to:

- ✓ **Release your employee(s) to attend all sessions**
- ✓ **Provide opportunity in the workplace for your employee to develop skills acquired from the Skills Bootcamp**
- ✓ **Attend a short online employer interview to understand the Skills Bootcamp requirements and the employer agreement document**
- ✓ **Pay the 10% programme fee contribution**
- ✓ **Within 6 months of completion, provide one of the following:**
 - A salary increase linked to new skills
 - An interview for a promotion or new responsibilities
 - Additional responsibilities aligned with their new skills
 - Evidence of role enhancement based on Skills Bootcamp learning

Programme Dates and Fees

October 2025 Cohort

Session 1	Wed 1 Oct, 09:30-16:30	Frenchay Campus
Session 2	Wed 8 Oct, 09:30-16:30	Frenchay Campus
Session 3	Wed 15 Oct, 09:30-16:30	Frenchay Campus
Session 4	Wed 22 Oct, 09:30-16:30	Frenchay Campus
Break week	W/C 27 Oct	

Session 5	Wed 5 Nov, 09:30-16:30	Frenchay Campus
Session 6	Wed 12 Nov, 09:30-16:30	Frenchay Campus
Session 7	Wed 19 Nov, 09:30-16:30	Frenchay Campus
Session 8	Fri 28 Nov, 09:30-16:30	Arncliffe Campus

Fees



This Skills Bootcamp is heavily subsidised, with the government covering 90% of the total cost for eligible learners applying through their SME employer. The full course fee is £3,540.50, but SME employers pay just 10% – only £354.05 per learner.

For freelancers and self-employed creatives, this Skills Bootcamp is fully funded, with no cost incurred by the learner.

Note: Open only to freelancers and SME-sponsored applicants. For independent learners or employees in larger organisations, please contact bootcamps@uwe.ac.uk for future opportunities.

Funding Eligibility

Due to funding restrictions all learners must meet the following criteria:

- Be aged 19+ Live and/or work for an organisation based in Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Bath and North East Somerset or North Somerset (we will consider applicants living close to these boundaries)
- Not currently in full-time or part-time education
- Have the right to live and work in the UK
- Have not registered and attended (including partial completion) any other Skills Bootcamp in the current financial year from any provider
- Have your employer's agreement to attend and achieve the required outcomes (if applying with an SME employer)
- **IMPORTANT:** Freelancers must have a track record of securing clients in the past 2 years, and in the process of currently working on a contract or have repeat clients



WEST MAYORAL
OF ENGLAND COMBINED
AUTHORITY



The Skills Bootcamps Programme is funded and managed by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, and delivered by UWE Bristol (The University of the West of England).



Apply Now

If you have any questions, please email the team at bootcamps@uwe.ac.uk or call 0117 32 86303