



Delyth Jewell MS  
Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations  
Committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

8th April 2022

Annwyl Delyth,

I am writing to you in response to your letter dated on the 29th March 2022 regarding the closure of the BFI Young Audiences Content Fund.

As many others, we were disappointed to hear about the closure of the fund, as it's been helpful to showcase the value and importance of Welsh public service broadcasting in the children's sector in particular.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of Public Service Broadcasting in all of our lives, and this has been particularly true for children as well as adults. At a time when diverse representation is needed more than ever in the entertainment and media industries, this fund has helped to ensure that the diverse experiences of young people across the country are represented on screen.

ITV Cymru Wales secured funding from the BFI's Young Audiences Content Fund in partnership with S4C in 2021 to produce bespoke content on the Wales Election for first time voters, including the 16 and 17 years olds who were given the right to vote for the first time. With an emphasis on reaching the diverse communities in Wales, "*Etholiad '21 : Taswn i'n Brif Weinidog Cymru...*" captured the views of the youth of Wales about politics and the issues that matter to them. The BFI funding allowed us to create a high quality programme that represented diversity and alternative viewpoints, and helped younger people to understand the importance of voting in elections.

ITV Studios company Boom Cymru is one of the largest producers of Children's TV content by volume in the UK, and has benefited greatly from the BFI Young Audiences Content Fund. Boom Cymru provides their pre-school (Cyw) and older children's (Stwnsh+) services for S4C, who are a significant PSB investor in children's content given its crucial cultural importance to the Welsh language.

The launch of the BFI Young Audiences Content Fund enabled Boom Plant to pitch and win more ambitious projects for both S4C and Channel 5, which previously wouldn't have been affordable by the Broadcasters based on their existing tariffs, in particular children's drama and more ambitious live action series. YACF funding criteria, i.e. free to air PSB content with UK indigenous language applications being strongly encouraged, means that S4C and the Welsh production sector are significant beneficiaries of the Fund. The funding criteria has



also helped provide more co-production opportunities for S4C, and Welsh producers, given the strength of their involvement, will add to applications.

To date Boom Plant have produced three YACF supported projects and are currently in pre-production for a fourth:

- Drama, Y Gyfrinach (S4C)
- Meet the Experts (Channel 5)
- Byd Tad Cu (S4C) as a co-production of Saffron Cherry's "The World According to Grandpa" (Channel 5)
- Drama, Y Goleudy (S4C)

These projects have combined revenue of c. £2.5m with the vast majority of the spend and employment in Wales.

Meet the Experts and The World According to Grandpa have both performed well, with the latter already recommissioned for series two (with a commitment from YAC). We are currently awaiting a decision from the Fund as to whether they will contribute towards the making of a second series of Meet The Experts which has been green-lit by C5.

Together with the availability of Children's Tax credits, the YACF has been critical in reversing the reduction in investment in PSB Children's content nationally, increasing plurality, upping the quality and ambition of Children's content with the associated cultural benefits for Wales, and at the same providing significant economic growth to the sector in Wales.

I hope these examples will support your efforts in highlighting the importance of the fund in Wales, and do feel free to get back in touch if you require any further information.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Henfrey'.

Phil Henfrey  
Head of News and Programmes  
ITV Cymru Wales