



Press Release
For Immediate Release

Wednesday, 17th May 2017

Directors UK Inspire: A Mentoring and Career Development programme

Directors UK, the professional association for British screen directors, is pleased to announce the launch of **Directors UK Inspire: A Mentoring and Career Development Programme** for Directors UK members.

The new mentoring programme aims to inspire and encourage directors across genres to seek structured support to enhance their career opportunities.

As part of our dedication to the development and success of directors in the UK, we work to encourage and support directors at every stage of their careers. We aim to provide efficient training schemes, better access to employment and raise the bar of excellence among the industry's varied talent to help create a truly diverse and inclusive workforce for the future.

Throughout the year, Directors UK Inspire will support peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and are encouraging a variety of talent from different backgrounds and a range of experience working closely with a mentor, who will provide regular guidance and support. Successful applicants will have their opportunities shaped based on their needs and the arrangement with each mentor and may include opportunities to shadow on set, access to a production, general advice and guidance, support with your CV, pitching, gathering and maintaining contacts, networking and more.

Directors UK will cover costs up to a maximum of £1,000 to include travel, accommodation, expenses for food and sustenance, childcare or any other access needs.

This programme follows on from the pilot scheme in 2016, which saw Directors UK member Lotus Hannon shadow Christine Lalla for several days on the set of Channel 4's flagship soap *Hollyoaks*. Both members, when interviewed about the scheme, spoke highly about the opportunity and positive outcomes gained from the experience.

Lotus Hannon said: "I shadowed Christine for four prep days, four shoot days and one edit day on the set of *Hollyoaks*. As a mentee, the experience keeps you fresh and gives you an insight into how another director might do something completely differently, which can then become a tool you can use and apply yourself."

Christine Lalla said: "When I offered to help Lotus I didn't realise I'd also be helping myself. It's rare to have another director by your side who is looking at the production from a similar point-of-view as you. I believe a good mentor shares knowledge, offers tips on how to solve inevitable problems that arise during shoots and helps the mentee navigate the unique process of their particular production."

Andrea Corbett, Training and Career Development Manager at Directors UK, said: "We're incredibly pleased to be officially launching the Directors UK Inspire Mentoring and Career Development Programme. From our recent commissioned research and reports, and member narratives, we understand that career development schemes are vital and can have positive mutual benefits for both mentors and mentees. Our new programme aims to inspire and provide members with better access into networks and opportunities, through shared the knowledge and experience."

Laura Adams, Head of Member Services at Directors UK, said: "It's great to be able to build on the informal mentoring that a lot of the industry does at the moment; whilst offering guidance, structure, and importantly, funds to make new connections and opportunities possible. We hope that this will encourage Directors to reflect on the skills they have, and offer a way to access advice and experience."

Directors UK continues to work with broadcasters, production companies and key industry influencers to help increase visibility and access to work opportunities, to create fairer employment and career progression for all directors in UK television is invaluable.

Applications for the new Directors UK Inspire Mentoring and Career Development Programme are open to all qualifying Directors UK members, and will be accepted all year round, with regular quarterly deadlines to enable as many mentoring opportunities as possible to flourish.

The programme also invites directors who are interested in becoming mentors and encourages interested parties to get in touch for year round opportunities.

The first deadline for applications is **Thursday 1 June 2017**.

Full application details and additional information about the scheme can be found at <https://directors.uk.com/news/directors-uk-inspire-a-mentoring-and-career-development-programme/>

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Notes to Editors:

- **DIRECTORS UK** is the single voice of film and television directors in the UK, with over 6,400 members. Directors UK campaigns for the rights, working conditions and status of directors in the industry, and promotes equal opportunities for all and excellence in the craft of direction. www.directors.uk.com
- Directors UK has a number of career development projects and initiatives with a range of broadcasters and producers to help change the industry and address under-representation.
- Applications will be accepted all year with regular quarterly deadlines to enable as many mentoring opportunities as possible to flourish. 2017/18 deadlines are:
 - 1 June 2017
 - 1 September 2017
 - 1 December 2017
 - 1 February 2018
- Read Directors UK Inspire Interview with Directors UK Members Lotus Hannon and Christine Lalla at <https://directors.uk.com/news/mentoring-scheme-lotus-hannon-christine-lalla>
- Further information about Directors UK's career development projects and initiatives can be found at www.directors.uk.com.
- Directors UK Social Media handle: **@directors_uk**
- To become a member of Directors UK visit www.directors.uk.com/join or contact us directly at membership@directors.uk.com

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