

BBC Trust 2008/9 Workplan Consultation

A submission by the UK Film Council

April 2008

The UK Film Council welcomes the opportunity to make this short submission to the BBC Trust on its 2008/9 workplan.

The UK Film Council is the Government backed lead agency for film in the UK ensuring that the economic, cultural and educational aspects of film are effectively represented at home and abroad. Our goal is to help make the UK a global hub for film in the digital age, with the world's most imaginative, diverse and vibrant film culture, underpinned by a flourishing, competitive film industry.
film in the digital age.

We welcome the creation of the BBC Trust as, in the words of the Workplan, the “sovereign body” of the BBC.¹ We support the Trust’s mission as described in the Workplan to “ensure the BBC is independent, innovative and efficient: a creative and economic force for good in the UK, and for the UK internationally.”²

The BBC has a very important role to play in stimulating culture, education and learning as well as contributing to the creative economy. In a digital age, the BBC has a particularly important contribution to make through its online services. We look forward to studying the BBC’s contribution to Ofcom’s Review of Public Service Broadcasting, as flagged in this Workplan.

The UK Film Council recognised the role of the BBC with regard to the UK film industry and film culture by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the BBC in 2006.³ We believe that the BBC’s ability to work effectively with partners will be one of measure of its success in delivering upon the mission described above to ensure that it is “a creative and economic force for good in the UK.”

We would note that under the Agreement attached to the current Charter the BBC Trust must have regard to “the need for the BBC to have a film strategy.”⁴ We will be looking to the Trust to hold the BBC to account on this.

We are pleased that we are working alongside the BBC as joint founding members of the Media Literacy Taskforce, together with Channel 4 and the British Film Institute.⁵

We welcome the current Work Plan, and its emphasis on holding the BBC to account on its core mission while ensuring that the BBC delivers value for money. We are also pleased to see the inclusion of the “aim for the Trust’s work on public value to lead best practice in the UK and Europe.”⁶ The BBC’s work on public value has been highly influential and the Trust has a role to play in helping to develop this work to the benefit of the public interest both in the UK and Europe.

¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/about/workplan2008.pdf> p.2

² Ibid., p.2.

³ <http://ukfc.artlogic.net/usr/ukfcd Downloads/247/BBC-UKFC%20MOU%20FINAL%20SIGNED%20COPY.pdf>

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http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/regulatory_framework/charter_agreement/bbcagreement_july06.pdf p.4.

⁵ <http://www.medialiteracy.org.uk/>

⁶ Workplan, op.cit., p.14.

We look forward to separate discussions with the Trust on the BBC's film strategy, as described in the Agreement, in due course.