

Train the Trainer 2022

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StoryFutures Academy Train the Trainer 2022

Train the Trainer Call Out

StoryFutures Academy's Train the Trainer scheme is pleased to announce a *third call out* for university educators keen to bring immersive production into their courses and teaching materials.

Building on the success of the first two cohorts, made up of 14 university projects across the UK, Train the Trainer will support a further five academic projects to explore innovative ways to develop courses to train students in immersive production.

Train the Trainer was launched in 2020 in response to a skills shortage and a critical need to build a talent pipeline for the UK immersive industry. The overall aim of the initiative is to support the growth and development of UK trainers and talent so that immersive production can fulfil its potential in the UK with a creative workforce that is highly skilled in the use of VR, AR and MR.

The scheme provides a unique opportunity for university educators from institutes all across the UK to work together collaboratively, so headway can be made more rapidly to open doors and develop innovative new courses for this new and growing sector.

Working closely with industry partners, teams have created modules, full courses and workshops on subjects including virtual production, immersive sound, augmented reality and user-centred design. These courses are groundbreaking in their innovation and research, with an emphasis on cross-departmental work such as mixing live performance with immersive production, or teaching science and engineering students to communicate using immersive techniques.

Talking about Queen Mary University of London's Train the Trainer project, team leader Dr Tina Chowdhury, Senior Lecturer in Regenerative Medicine at QMUL, said: *"Engineer The Story helps students build confidence, tell stories, improve learning, and develop relationships at university. When we share stories with engineering students, the audience discovers new connections, builds trust and develops greater resilience. I am blown away by the power of storytelling."*

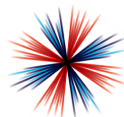
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“New partnerships have arisen specifically because of our StoryFutures project. These relationships are currently in development with content makers and Virtual Production studio operations across the UK and potential academic collaboration and consultancy partnerships.. These opportunities could manifest as co-delivered courses online or student exchange programs with international industry partners.”

- Jodi Nelson-Tabor, Senior Lecturer Digital Film & TV Production, University of Greenwich.

Executive Producer Mary Matheson says, *“We’re thrilled to see the success of the Train the Trainer projects. These interdisciplinary teams have trained over 225 academics/trainers and produced more than 50 courses benefitting nearly 3000 students across a wide range of immersive techniques. In many cases, the teams are working closely with industry partners to create brand new frameworks for immersive production workflows, giving students cutting edge skills and knowledge at the coalface of this emerging creative industry.”*

StoryFutures Academy’s Train the Trainer scheme offers researchers and teachers in UK Higher Education to receive funding, training and mentorship for a project centred around research **and** teaching development in immersive storytelling.

The aim is for educators to develop or lead a project that allows them (and their team) to interrogate a range of emergent challenges in immersive experience creation, and to create teaching materials (and learning logs) from that learning.

Importantly, educators must be able to show how the project will feed and integrate into courses for any of the following levels: undergraduate, postgraduate, further or widening participation education students.

Funding amount: The scheme supports applications in the range of up to £17,000

Call Timing: The call opens Monday 17th January 2022 and **closes Midnight Sunday 27th February 2022.**

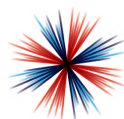
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Background

StoryFutures Academy is led by the National Film & Television School and Royal Holloway, University of London. Our overall aim is to support the growth and development of a UK-wide talent-pipeline to help make the UK a world leader in immersive storytelling. Much of that work includes training and upskilling those from film, TV, and games, to harness the talent of established storytellers, and to provide as many onward opportunities with funded professional placements on immersive productions, Kickstart and Production Booster funding schemes and Co-production opportunities.

We also carry out work on skills analysis. Of 100 companies surveyed and from interviews with 25 industry leaders, our research indicated that **44% were worried about the lack of graduates** and the supply chain. Full findings can be found in our first published report, *Skills for immersive experience creation; Barriers to growth in the UK's Immersive Economy*, [here](#).

The Train the Trainer scheme aims to help build the talent pipeline so that immersive can fulfil its potential in the UK.

Two types of project funding

Teaching-led: For UK teaching-focused staff.

For teaching-focused staff, the funding is to encourage the creation of workshops, training scenarios and the use of tools that explore emergent challenges in immersive storytelling. These are aimed at helping to develop a UK skills base by enabling teachers to explore how to train students and other trainers in immersive storytelling.

Research-led: For UK research-focused staff.

For UK staff on research contracts, the funding is to encourage the creation of an immersive experience or prototype that will explore emergent challenges in immersive storytelling. These are aimed at helping to develop a UK skills base by enabling researchers to explore student participation on the project and how to train other trainers.

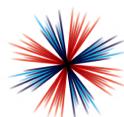
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Key Themes

All projects must address immersive storytelling challenges – broadly conceived – such as exploring established or emergent storytelling forms e.g. point of view, editing, spatial sound and attention, haptic engagements etc. Successful projects will demonstrate these key themes:

- 1. Interdisciplinarity, from STEM to STEAM:** Projects or workshops that deliberately fuse arts with the sciences to promote interdisciplinary team building, bring together teams from disciplines such as computer science and media; engineering and drama; art and design; and physics.
- 2. Game Engines in new contexts:** Projects or workshops that use real-time game engines and/or gaming mechanics in collaborative storytelling contexts with other screen industries, such as film, television, theatre and music.
- 3. Key Skills:** Projects or workshops that address areas where skills are seen as crucial to successful projects and/or gaps have been identified as an industry concern, such as programming, business development, real-time game engine technical artists, interaction designers, creative directing, producing, UX Designer, Motion/Volumetric capture artists, or interactive writers. Projects that tackle more than one key skills role are welcome.
- 4. Industry Partnerships:** We encourage a close working relationship with an industry partner to ensure that the course materials/framework is up-to-date and relevant for industry technical standards.

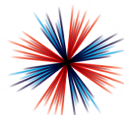
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Application Eligibility

Funding will only be provided where the applicant can demonstrate that the project proposed is deliverable for the money requested within the defined time period, and where the project specifically addresses the criteria set out below:

- The scheme is open to educators in HEI whether they are on teaching-led contracts or research-led contracts. Applicants should ensure the project they are proposing is fitting to the contract they hold (i.e. those who are on teaching-led contracts should consider submitting a workshop-led project, while those on research-led contracts (or practice-led) may be more suited to a prototype/(practice-led project).
- Priority will be given to projects that support immersive storytelling and production within disciplines such as computer science, engineering, digital and media, design, virtual production, animation etc and to those with an interdisciplinary approach.
- We welcome applications from all UK HE Institutions. However, priority will be given to projects from or partnered with [Creative Cluster Universities](#). We encourage HEIs outside of the Creative Clusters to seek partnership with a Cluster University where feasible.
- Applicants are encouraged to apply as a collaborative team from more than one Educational Institute, but there must be a lead institution that will contract with StoryFutures Academy who will receive and administer the grant, including arrangement of any collaborative agreements or subcontract as necessary.
- Applications must be made by a Principal Investigator employed at a UK registered Higher Education Institution.
- Applicants and all team members must be age 18+.
- Applicants are expected to grant StoryFutures Academy the use of anonymised data related to the project in academic and industry-facing research publications.
- Applicants are expected to share with StoryFutures Academy the learning from the project in the form of a learning log, in order for StoryFutures Academy to create a database of teaching modules.

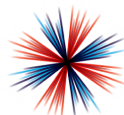
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Budget

The following costs are eligible for funding:

- Creative and development costs (e.g. writers, technical development);
- Equipment and studio hire;
- Equipment purchase (up to a maximum of 20% of total costs applied for);
- Residency fees to support producers working in relevant collaborative environments;
- Expertise and consultancy of freelance professionals or company partners;

All projects should include the following costs:

- Travel costs, including for attendance at 3 x workshops at StoryFutures Academy
- Allow up to £200 to purchase immersive experiences so that teams can develop a range of knowledge about AR/VR/MR;
- Behind the scenes or “how to” video capture;
- Time for (key) named trainers/researchers on the project, such as teaching relief, buyout or remission from administrative duties. (This could be an in-kind contribution by the academic institution).

Grant awards to successful projects are subject to the acceptance of the contractual terms and conditions of the Train the Trainer scheme, outlined by StoryFutures Academy.

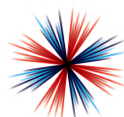
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Application Judging Criteria

Theme fit and innovation: The extent to which the application clearly aligns with addressing immersive storytelling challenges and one or more of the three [key themes](#) (priority areas) identified in the call in an innovative and rigorous manner.

Appropriate team skills: Applicants must demonstrate they have a team able to develop and deliver immersive experiences and workshops (as appropriate), including access to the necessary skills and tools to deliver the planned project.

Value for money and realistic timeframe: whether the budget proposed is reasonable with respect to being able to deliver the proposed project and required deliverables, and within the proposed [time frame](#).

Impact and deliverables: Demonstrate that the project can fulfil all required deliverables, especially that it will develop course materials and plans that can be integrated into at least one HEI institution, clearly identifying the course(s), type and size of student body that will benefit from the project. Plans might include, for example, the launch of new degree/course pathways; augmenting existing programmes; new HEI collaborations; new HEI and non-standard training collaborations. Institutional support for the application at department, school or faculty level is therefore necessary (please upload email/letter of support).

Industry partnership: Applications will be assessed according to the strength of that partnership or collaboration and the extent to which the project aligns with the identified industry need.

Commitment to diversity: the application should consider StoryFutures Academy's diversity commitment within its team or impact plan where possible. This is: StoryFutures Academy is committed to supporting storytellers from a range of diverse backgrounds to work with immersive technology. This includes a commitment to reach a minimum of 50% female and 20% BAME participants across our programmes. Applications will be asked to set out the gender and ethnic make-up of their teams with reference to these targets. We will take a portfolio approach to applications, ensuring that across supported projects this target is met.

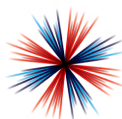
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Deliverables/Outputs

The key members of awarded teams must attend all workshop sessions listed in the [timeline](#).

A key output is the development and delivery of a range of teaching materials that can be used on future courses, modules or workshops.

Outputs

- A summary of your plans for the next steps of the project, including detail of how, when and on which courses the learnings will be integrated;
- Participation of students in project or sample test group (min. 12);
- A Learning Log summarising the outcomes of the project, detailing key lessons learned. This should include a summary of the results of any creative, technical or audience/trainer testing that has been carried out. A template will be provided;
- Sample course materials that show how your training or researching initiative can be taught more widely;
- Next steps on how you plan to integrate teaching materials into an existing module/course or to create a new module/course in the lead applicant's home institute (and any others);
- **For prototype focused projects:** A build or treatment of the immersive prototype or final piece, in a format which can be previewed in StoryFutures Academy Immersive Labs (wherever possible);
- **For workshop focused projects:** A record of the training workshop(s) in the form of video, audio or photographic record that can be shared in the StoryFutures Academy working labs (wherever possible).

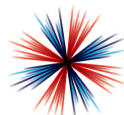
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StoryFutures Academy Support

StoryFutures Academy will provide the following support to each successful project:

Access to a team of industry mentors who have a range of skills in immersive production and in project design/management and who will:

- Deliver 5 days of workshops across the project cycle, including a kick-off workshop aimed at helping the cohort of winning projects to access best in class examples of Immersive work, to meet each other and share project ambition as well as benefit from inspiring 'how to' sessions from industry professionals;
- Offer more specific help in the design, development and delivery of the projects, including one-on-one project 'clinics' at workshops e.g. tech clinic, budget clinic, design clinic etc.;
- Specialist input will also be offered at regular stages throughout the project cycle with monthly scheduled virtual hangouts and phone calls;
- Offer a mid-project critical review;
- Provide access to a broader network of industry professionals for further advice and collaboration;
- Co-design or assist in the development of future learning materials;
- Showcase the project (Thursday 4th August 2022).

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Timeline

Call opens	Monday 17th January 2022
Call closes	Sunday 27th February 2022
Successful applicants announced	Thursday 10th March 2022
Workshop 1 <i>Held in-person at RHUL in Egham (2 days)</i>	Monday 21st March 2022 Tuesday 22nd March 2022
Monthly remote check-ins for cohort with mentors	
Workshop 2 <i>Held virtually (2 days)</i>	Tuesday 26th April 2022 Wednesday 27th April 2022
Midway Review Panel for cohort and mentors <i>Held virtually (1 day)</i>	Thursday 9th June 2022
Workshop 3 <i>Held virtually (1 day)</i>	Thursday 7th July 2022
Delivery of all project outputs <i>Final report, assets, deliverables and supporting material</i>	Sunday 24th July 2022
Final showcase <i>Held in person (½ day)</i>	Thursday 4th August 2022

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