STRATEGIC PLAN

2027-2030

Develop talent. Transform lives. Create careers.

bigcreative.education

BIG CREATIVE
EDUCATION
FOUNDATION

Big Creative Education was founded on a simple belief:

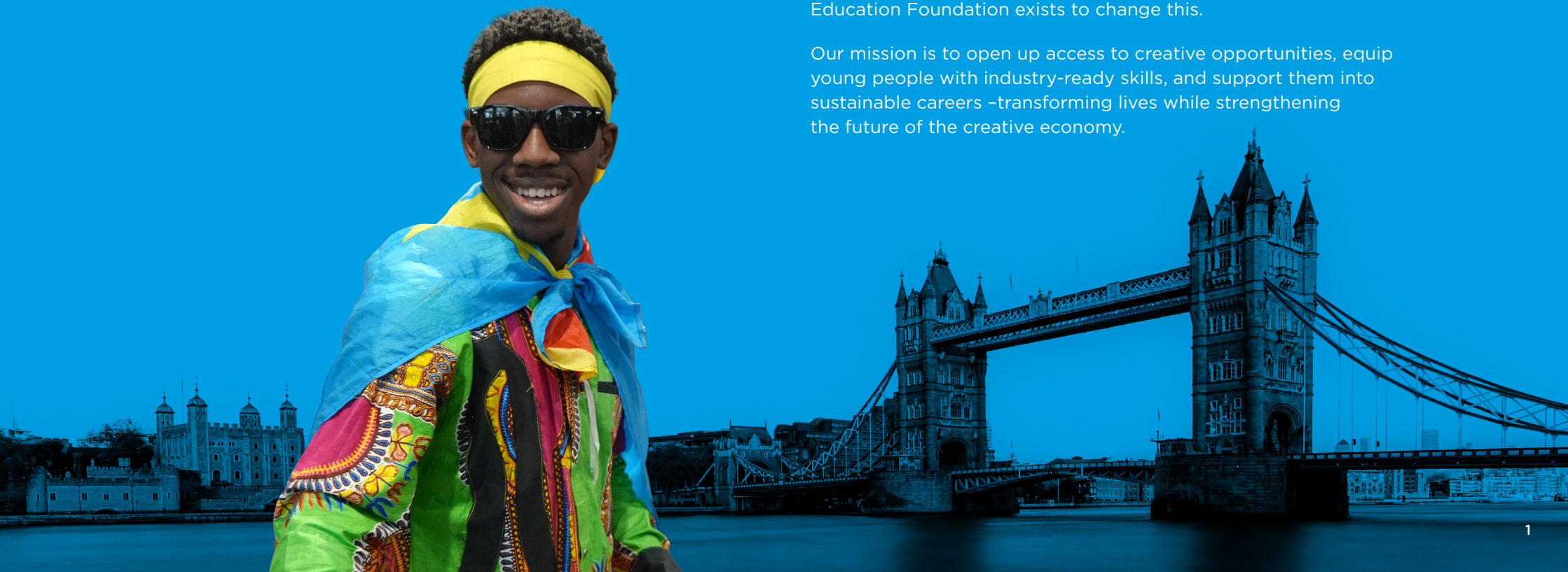
TALENT IS EVERYWHERE. OPPORTUNITY IS NOT.

Since 2000, Big Creative Education (BCE) has supported thousands of young people – many from low-income and underrepresented backgrounds – to access high-quality creative education. Today, 70% of BCE students progress to higher education, with half being the first in their families to do so.

Across London, 95% of creative roles are held by those from advantaged backgrounds, underscoring persistent exclusion from opportunities, networks, and financial support.

At the same time, the UK's creative industries – worth over £120 billion – face a growing skills and diversity gap. Investing in the next generation of creative talent is essential not only for social mobility but for the long-term success of the sector. The Big Creative Education Foundation exists to change this.

Our mission is to open up access to creative opportunities, equip young people with industry-ready skills, and support them into sustainable careers –transforming lives while strengthening the future of the creative economy.



WHO WE SUPPORT.

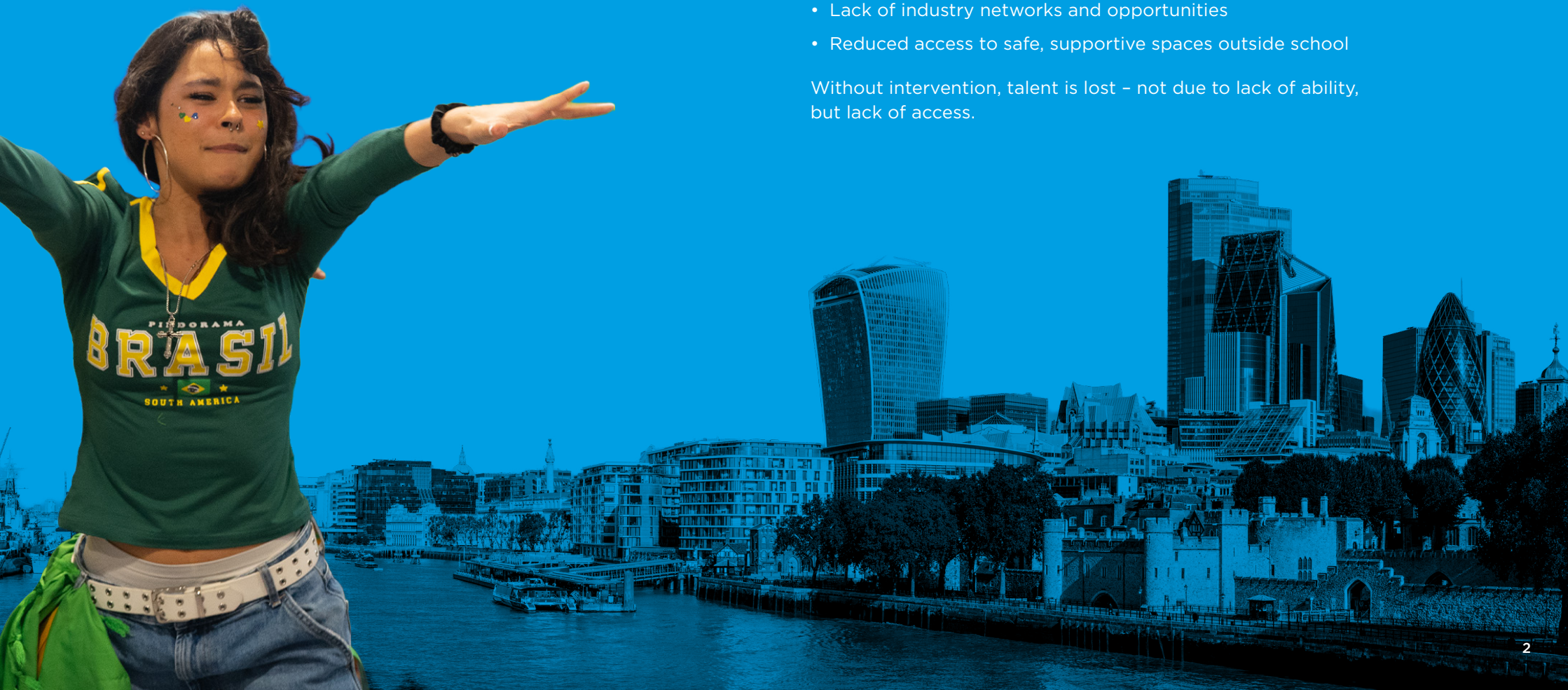
The Foundation is focused on supporting young people from disadvantaged and underrepresented communities across London, particularly those facing barriers to accessing creative education and careers.

We work primarily in East London boroughs including Waltham Forest, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Haringey and Enfield – areas where access to arts provision and youth services has significantly declined.

These young people face multiple challenges:

- Limited access to creative education and enrichment
- Financial barriers to progression
- Lack of industry networks and opportunities
- Reduced access to safe, supportive spaces outside school

Without intervention, talent is lost – not due to lack of ability, but lack of access.

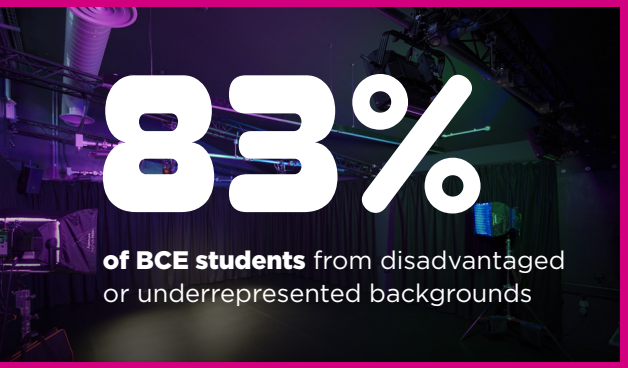


OUR TRACK RECORD.

Big Creative Education is an established, trusted provider with over two decades of delivering high-quality outcomes.

12000+

young people educated since 2000



83%

of BCE students from disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds

95%

progression rate into higher education, apprenticeships, or employment



This track record shows BCE's ability to deliver measurable impact at scale. Its programmes combine academic excellence with direct industry engagement, preparing young people for real-world careers.

The Foundation builds on this model by expanding access and removing the financial and structural barriers that still hold many back.



200+

industry partnerships with leading employers

OUTSTANDING

Ofsted rating across all areas

4

industry-standard campuses with professional facilities



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.

1 ACCESS
Creative outreach and community access

The challenge
Access to arts education and creative opportunities has declined, particularly in disadvantaged communities. Cuts to school provision and youth services have widened this gap.

Our response
To deliver free, high-quality creative programmes across East London, including:
- Holiday programmes
- Weekly Saturday creative school (ages 7–16)
- Community arts and cultural events

KPIs (years 1–3)
- Engage 500+ young people annually in outreach programmes
- Deliver 20+ workshops per year
- Reach 12 London boroughs consistently
- Achieve 85%+ participant satisfaction rates
- At least 60% of participants progress into further creative activity or education

Impact
Young people develop confidence, creative skills, and pathways into further education and training.

2 INDUSTRY SKILLS
Access to industry-ready skills and facilities

The challenge
Young creatives often lack access to facilities and training, leaving them underprepared for employment.

Our response
To help young people compete on an even playing field and have a real impact in the sector, we will invest in:
- Industry-standard studios and equipment
- First-class digital tools
- Employer-led learning environments aligned with industry needs

KPIs (years 1–3)
- Invest £250,000+ in facilities and equipment upgrades
- Support 1,000+ students annually with access to industry-standard resources
- Achieve 90%+ student satisfaction with facilities
- Ensure 80%+ of students meet industry-ready skill benchmarks
- Deliver 20+ employer-led projects per year

Impact
Young people graduate with the skills, experience, and confidence to compete in the creative workforce.

3 PROGRESSION
Progress to higher education and apprenticeships

The challenge
Financial barriers prevent many talented young people from progressing into higher education or apprenticeships.

Our response
We will provide:
- Targeted bursaries
- Financial and pastoral support
- Access to essential equipment and learning resources

KPIs (years 1–3)
- Award 60 bursaries over 3 years (20 per year)
- Maintain 95%+ progression rate into HE, apprenticeships, or employment
- Ensure 70%+ of students progress to higher education
- Support 50+ apprenticeship learners annually
- Reduce dropout rates among supported students to below 5%

Impact
More young people progress into higher education and employment without financial disadvantage.

4 CAREERS
Alumni and career development

The challenge
There are significant barriers for young people transitioning into the creative workforce, including lack of networks, experience, and financial stability.

Our response
To establish a Creative Careers Programme, including:
- Access to mentoring from industry professionals
- Paid freelance opportunities via a dedicated Creative Agency
- Start-up grants
- Artist development and management support

KPIs (years 1–3)
- Provide 50 mentoring placements annually to BCE alumni
- Support 60+ young people into paid work each year
- Deliver 10 start-up grants per year
- Establish a creative agency supporting 60+ freelancers annually
- Achieve 75%+ sustained employment after 12 months

Impact
Young people secure paid work, build networks, and develop sustainable careers.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY.

Our approach

The Foundation will operate through two complementary funding routes:

- Direct delivery funding to design and run programmes
- Grant-making to support aligned organisations and partners

All funding decisions will be overseen by Trustees, with clear governance, accountability, and impact reporting.

Founder funders

We will secure initial 'pump-priming' investment from a small group of Founder Funders – individuals and organisations committed to expanding opportunity in the creative sector.

Our target is to raise £100,000, with 5-6 funders contributing £20,000-£25,000 each to establish the Foundation and enable early delivery.



Income strategy

Our fundraising approach focuses on high-impact, mission-aligned income streams, prioritising:

- Trusts and Foundations (primary early focus)
- Corporate partnerships (financial and in-kind support)
- Major donors and high net worth individuals

Over time, we will build additional income through individual giving, legacy support, and community fundraising.

This phased approach balances short-term income generation with long-term sustainability.

In-kind support

The Foundation will benefit from significant in-kind support from BCE, including office space, operational infrastructure, and senior leadership input – ensuring that early investment is directed towards programme delivery and impact.



What this will fund

Initial investment will enable:

- Recruitment of a Foundation Director
- Dedicated fundraising capacity
- Launch of core programmes and pilot initiatives
- Development of operational and delivery infrastructure

Year 1 priorities

- Secure £100,000 in founding investment
- Recruit key staff
- Launch initial pilot programmes
- Engage 500+ young people

Growth plan

From Year 2 onwards, the Foundation will:

- Expand programme delivery
- Increase grant-making activity
- Grow corporate partnerships
- Scale impact across London and beyond

Our goal is to build towards £2 million in income by 2030, enabling long-term, sustainable impact.

The impact of your support

By 2030, your support will enable:

- 30 university bursaries annually
- 20 start-up grants each year for emerging creatives
- 100 freelance work opportunities annually
- 100 mentoring placements per year
- 50 international work placements annually
- 300 community programme places each year

A complete pathway from early engagement to sustained employment will ensure young people not only access opportunities but also succeed in them.

PARTNERSHIP THAT CREATES REAL IMPACT.

There are multiple ways to support the Foundation:

Founding supporters

- Help establish and launch the Foundation
- Direct impact on early programmes and delivery

Corporate partners

- Engage with emerging talent
- Support projects, facilities, and real-world opportunities

Strategic partners

- Collaborate on long-term initiatives
- Help scale impact and reach

All partnerships contribute to expanding access and building sustainable creative careers.



BCEF TRUSTEES.

Board of Trustees



Dr Kienda Hoji
Former Deputy Vice Chancellor / CIISA / Music Law and Business Consultant / Artist Manager / Board Director at Archery GB

Kienda is a founding member of the UK Music Diversity Task Force. A board member of Black Lives in Music, a member of the co-creation Council of the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA), and an International Ambassador for the Lang Lang International Music Foundation.

Kienda's mission is to empower and inspire the next generation of music professionals and entrepreneurs, and to advance the knowledge and practice of music law and business.



Andy Varley
Insanity Agency Founder and CEO

Andy Varley is the Founder and CEO of Insanity, a B Corp Certified, dynamic global entertainment company redefining how talent connects with the world. Insanity represents an elite roster of game-changers across entertainment, creators, music, podcasting and brand partnerships.

With over 28 years of experience, the company, led by Andy, have been honoured with multiple accolades, including Entrepreneur of the Year at the 2019 Artist & Manager Awards, Management Agency of the Year at the 2023 bCreator Awards, Employer of the Year (Gold) at the 2023 SME Awards, Talent Agency of the Year (Silver) at the 2025 Global Influencer Marketing Awards and more recently were included in The Sunday Times Best Places to Work.



Jo Royce
Communications Lead for WACL (Women in Advertising and Communications Leadership)

Jo Royce is a prominent marketing strategist, learning specialist, leadership coach, and inclusivity advocate who was appointed as the first head of Brixton Finishing School's outreach programme, ADventure.

As a marketer, strategist, learning expert, and leadership catalyst with experience spanning Unilever, Google, Dentsu, Brixton Finishing School and Kimberly-Clark driving growth, expertise and learning. Additionally, Jo is a Board Director for The Marketing Meetup, and an advisor to Spikes Agency and the DCA. As WACL's (Women in Advertising & Communications Leadership) communications lead, Jo also coaches with The Marketing Academy Foundation, Creative Mentor Network and Leaders Plus.

Jo bridges industry and education, supporting young talent and fostering diverse, high-impact cultures. Her work aligns with empowering underrepresented groups, connecting women-led initiatives across media, marketing and tech and is recognised for turning complexity into clarity.



Ben Caddy
Evoke Management, Fractional Commercial Director, CRO and CMO

Over thirty years, Ben Caddy has worked with organisations at almost every point on the spectrum. From early-stage startups finding their feet to some of the world's most recognised brands and institutions. By finding the idea that others missed, shifting the perspective when something feels stuck, Ben helps businesses, brands, and leaders understand their own story well enough to tell it to someone else.

As an entrepreneur, executive, and advisor, these instincts have taken him to Africa, the Middle East, Asia, North America, and back to the UK. He has built significant creative businesses from the ground up including a creative agency that scaled to sixty staff, serving some of the world's biggest brands and a live events business that delivered cultural experiences in the Middle East at new levels of scale.

With clients ranging from one-man startups to the United Nations, he has worked on complex problems across brand, marketing, product, and strategy for over two decades.



Amani Simpson
Founder and CEO of AVIARD

Amani Simpson is an award-winning youth coach, filmmaker and social entrepreneur, and an alumnus of Big Creative Education who has served as a Trustee of Big Creative Academy for almost five years. His journey reflects both the values of the organisation and the power of long-term investment in young people facing barriers to thrive.

Drawing from his lived experience, Amani has built a mission focused on helping young people, professionals, and institutions spot risk earlier and respond more responsibly. He is now recognised as a leading voice in prevention, impact storytelling and purpose-led leadership, working across education, youth justice, local authorities and corporate partners.

As Founder of AVIARD, Amani has developed high-impact programmes and campaigns with partners including the Mayor of London, Goldman Sachs, using storytelling, film and digital tools to move people beyond awareness into ownership and action.

TEAM OF ADVISORS.

The Foundation will also draw on the advice and expertise of Alexis Michaelides, Managing Director of Big Creative Training, and Sacha Corcoran, Principal of Big Creative Academy, who collectively have led Big Creative Education to be recognised as an outstanding provider of a Creative education.



Alexis Michaelides
Managing Director of Big Creative Training

Alexis founded Big Creative Education in 1999 and has been Managing Director of Big Creative Training (part of Big Creative Education) since its inception. Under his leadership, Big Creative Training has expanded across three specialist creative campuses. Alexis also spearheaded the launch of Creative Works in 2018 – a shared workspace for creative professionals, offering apprenticeships, mentoring, and training. He continues to drive BCT's strategic mission to deliver high-quality training, fostering ambition and creativity in underserved communities.



Sacha Corcoran, MBE
Principal, Big Creative Academy

Sacha has been the Principal of Big Creative Academy since its inception in 2014 and also sits on the governing body. A single mum and homeless at 16, Sacha's own success story is inspirational. She started as a PE teacher and has now been involved in education for more than 25 years. Sacha assisted in establishing BSix College and was Deputy Director for Learning at City and Islington College. She also worked for the Sector Skills Council, developing the first national Creative Apprenticeship project. Sacha has taken the Academy to the grade of Outstanding by Ofsted in all areas, delivering an inspiring and innovative creative curriculum offer.

WHAT OUR EMPLOYERS SAY.

BCE has been at the forefront of ITN's drive to provide opportunities for young people from diverse and challenging backgrounds. Skills acquired on their programmes are second to none and has been successful in helping ITN grow talent and develop technical competence through its apprenticeship scheme.

Matt Brindley, Managing Editor, ITV News

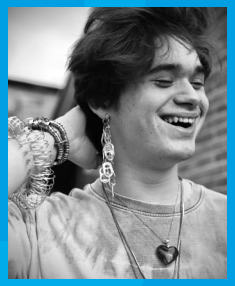
We have partnered with BCE in establishing a programme for people who are typically under-represented in our industry. BCE is brilliant to work with, and we couldn't be happier with our super talented video editor apprentice, who we hope will be with us for many years to come.

Charlotte Phillips, Head of People, MATTA

Talent is everywhere. Opportunity isn't. That's why organisations like Big Creative Education matter. Their work goes beyond apprenticeships. They create pathways into careers, remove barriers that hold people back and help employers discover talent they might otherwise never meet. If we want industries that truly reflect the communities they serve, we all have a role to play. BCE is proving what's possible when education and employers work together with purpose.

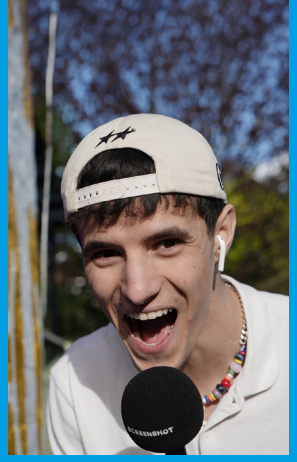
Lucy Ferguson, MBE, Mediorite

WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY.



"I graduated in 2023 and went on to study Costume for Performance at the London College of Fashion, UAL. I'm now a student ambassador for LCF and also work in tailoring at Ralph Lauren."

Owen, former Fashion Design student



"I studied Media at Big Creative, where I built a strong foundation in production and learned the importance of working fast and meeting deadlines. I'm now a social media video editor and presenter for SCREENSHOT MEDIA. One of my strongest memories from BCE is staying late to use the school computers to edit my projects, since at the time I didn't have one and was editing everything on my phone."

Alin, former BCE Media student



"During my time at BCE, I exhibited my work in two national art shows, which gave me valuable exposure and confidence as an artist. The experience helped me develop my own creative voice and build a strong portfolio, leading to my progression to the Chelsea School of Art, where I'm now studying Fine Art and continuing to refine my practice."

Jack, former Art and Design student

"Former BCE Performing Arts learner Shea is a freelance Afro dancer currently showcasing her talent at the prestigious Move It Championships. Her performances highlight her distinctive style, rhythm, and creativity, gaining attention from audiences and industry professionals."

Shea – Former Performing Arts student











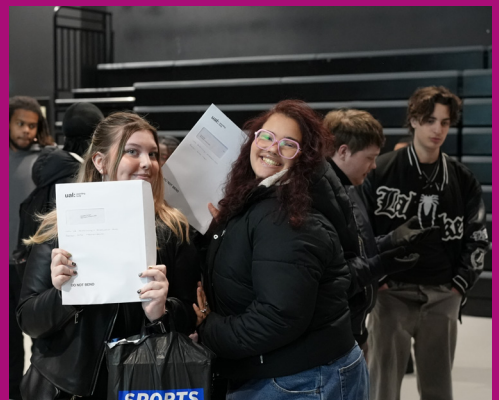
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Lucy Ferguson MBE, Mediorite











We would be happy to discuss this report in more detail with you and would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in donating or becoming a trustee for the foundation. Yo can get in touch at foundation@bigcreative.education



Alexis Michaelides
BCE Founder Advisor



Sacha Corcoran
MBE Advisor

Useful links

Alumnis on why they chose BCE

Watch now >

Current BCE learner one word

Watch now >

Student spoken word

Watch now >

Ruby's testimonial

Watch now >

BCE breakfast pots

Watch now >

Ronnie Scott's

Watch now >

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