

2025 IMPACT REPORT

for the Scottish Youth Film Foundation



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The Story So Far...

Welcome to our 2025 Impact Report!

The mission of the Scottish Youth Film Foundation (SYFF) is to improve the life outcomes of young Scots through film.

We believe that every young person should have access to the vast benefits and joys of film and filmmaking whether as a career, a hobby or a process-based learning tool. We are a valued-led organisation who strive to weave inclusion, creativity, responsiveness and collaboration into everything we do, from our operations to our strategy.

We focus our work on young people aged 26 and under in Scotland who may not otherwise have the opportunity to participate in film. Some of our projects are targeted to specific groups (Eg. Young people who are Care Experienced, Low Income, LGBTQ+, Ethnic Minorities, etc) and some are open to all, such as the Scottish Youth Film Festival and Films of Scotland competition.

The founders of SYFF come from a working class background where filmmaking was difficult to access and the creative industries strongly discouraged as a career choice. Because of this, SYFF has been built on the principal of equity of access. We understand that finances can represent a significant barrier to participation, so all of our projects are free to participate in. Wherever we can, we also provide support for travel and catering costs.

Since its inception in 2014, with the first Scottish Youth Film Festival, SYFF has grown and evolved into a national charity with a wide-ranging impact.

2025 saw the charity undergo an intensive period of strategic development, with the aim of increasing the sustainability of the organisation so that we can continue to positively impact young Scots in the years to come. We look to the coming year feeling inspired and all the more dedicated to empowering young Scots to tell their stories, develop their creative potential, and contribute to Scotland's cultural landscape.

We have produced this, our first programme-wide Impact Report, as a way to reflect on and celebrate the positive impact of our work and the collaborations and community that make it all possible.

We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we have enjoyed being a part of the story!

Heather, David and Scott at SYFF.

Impact Snapshot

Our year in numbers

1800+

Young people engaged in SYFF projects

Over the course of the year, we have had the privilege of working with over 1800 young people through our various projects.

2

New free-to-access national initiatives for young filmmakers in Scotland

2025 saw the incorporation of two exciting new projects into SYFF's programme of activity: Films of Scotland and the Sean Connery Youth Talent Lab.



7

Flagship projects. Reaching young people across Scotland, from primary school age up to 26, and at various learning stages – from beginners to career development.

Our 1st

Comprehensive Carbon Baseline Report

We were fortunate to work with BoxFish to create a comprehensive carbon baseline report early in the year, which will allow us to more closely and accurately evaluate our environmental impact.

500

Storyboards created

We love seeing the creative (and sometimes wacky!) story ideas come to life in our primary school workshops. Storyboards are a great way of introducing visual storytelling concepts as well as an important filmmaking tool.

133

Trees Planted

As part of our sustainability strategy, we prioritise mitigation over offsetting, but where we have necessary emissions we plant trees with Trees for Life – A Scottish rewilding charity.

How we achieve our aims

SYFF aims to offer-accessible provision for young people, so that they can access film at any point in their life up to 26 years of age.

We aim to break down barriers to inclusion and participation.

We do this through:

OUTREACH

SYFF TV regional groups

Targeted Outreach Workshops

Pinewood/CMSI Trip

Films of Scotland

EDUCATION

Film in a Year

Film Education Days

School Workshops

SCOTTISH YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Sean Connery Youth Talent Lab

Festival of Politics TV

We value

Creativity | Inclusivity | Collaboration | Responsiveness

4.1 Scottish Youth Film Festival

The **Scottish Youth Film Festival** takes place annually and moves location each year to allow young people from all across Scotland to take part. It's free to attend and lunch is provided. We run a free-to-enter **film competition** throughout the year, which is judged by a youth jury and industry pros. The shortlisted films are shown at the festival and awards given out. It's both a big celebration of the creativity and achievements of young Scottish creatives, and an opportunity for them to learn and network!

The 2025 Festival was held at Dunfermline Learning Campus in Fife and saw **over 300 young people** attending **screenings, panels, Q&As, 1-1s with industry pros and workshops** in editing, acting, film as activism, sound design, VFX, animation, making the most of film festivals, ask the industry and virtual production.

▶ Festival Highlights Video

“
I learned so much, had good fun and really got a chance to express myself.
”

95% of attendees surveyed said that they felt that the Festival improved their knowledge of filmmaking



Many attendees said they they felt better prepared for a career in film, with the newly expanded Industry Exhibitors area, workshops and 1-1s with friendly and enthusiastic industry professionals being cited as particular highlights.

“
We covered a lot. There was a lot of industry stuff I didn't know before. We got a chance to experiment with different shot types, I got a great insight in a very fun atmosphere.
”

4.3 Festival of Politics TV

Delivered in partnership with the Scottish Parliament and Energy Saving Trust Foundation, Festival of Politics TV brought together 6 young video journalists from different backgrounds and experience levels, from all across Scotland.

- They attended an **intensive training residential weekend** at Lagganlia, working on skills such as writing, ethics and best practice in reporting, camera, sound and production.
- They then each spent the summer working on a **climate-themed film** on a topic that interested them, supported by SYFF staff and each other.
- In August, they formed the official youth TV broadcast team for the **Festival of Politics** at the Scottish Parliament, interviewing guests such as Clive Myrie, Professor Danny Dorling, Liz Lloyd, Humza Yousef and many more. They ended up producing so much content that they ran a special bonus show called "Festival of Politics Extra", which can also be viewed on our YouTube channel.
- In October, they had an exclusive tour and shadowing day with the Scottish Parliament Broadcast Team, during **First Minister's Questions**.

▶ Impact Video

"I struggle with confidence and self esteem, as a lot of young people do. I think this has really helped boost my confidence in a lot of things. People skills, being in front of the camera... I now tell myself - you are capable, so why not you?"

In their post-project reflections, all of the participants felt that they had:

- Learned **technical and theoretical skills** in both film and journalism.
- They noted an increase in **confidence** and a willingness to **try new things that they previously felt weren't "for them"**.
- They overwhelmingly mentioned a highlight being access to opportunities they wouldn't otherwise have, particularly to work in Parliament and have access to world experts and industry pros.



"The programme has given me a different perspective of the power of words and the power of film."

"I always tell people that I want to do something in the media, and now I can say that I actually have experience in that"

4.4 Films of Scotland

Films of Scotland was an historic organisation which, between 1938 and 1982, produced films showcasing Scotland for national and international audiences. In 2024, SYFF relaunched Films of Scotland, opening up a film competition for young Scots, 26 and under, to **make a film about their Scotland**.

This themed film competition was run in partnership with National Library of Scotland Moving Image Archive, National Museums of Scotland and Visit Scotland. Alongside the competition, we ran a series of **workshops** for pupils at Preston Lodge High School, where they were supported to make a film where we asked them **“What’s missing from the National Museum of Scotland?”**. A **screening** of shortlisted films was held to a packed and enthusiastic audience at the museum, giving the young people an opportunity to share their work, their ideas and express what’s important to them as young Scots. The films they created explored a wide range of themes, from **LGBTQ+ identity to rural Scottish life**,



“We had two finalists age 10 to 12 and they just loved going to the Festival and the whole ambience of meeting other film-makers. Thanks so much to the Scottish Youth Film Foundation for helping us help youngsters find their niches and joy in life.”

Les Ellis, Cromar Future Group

“There was a common glow of delight and passion in the eyes of all the young filmmakers.”

Douglas Mackinnon, Director



4.5 Pinewood & CMSI Trip

In February, we took a group of 6 young filmmakers to the Pinewood Futures Festival and Creative Media Skills Institute (CMSI).

We travelled to London and spent a day at **Pinewood Studios**, where the group attended the Futures Festival and spoke to various **career and training focussed** organisations and individuals, and even got **hands on experience** of being on a live set and using high-end film kit.

They then visited the CSMI and spoke to Production Manager and 1st AD Terry Bamber about life in the industry and how to access the jobs they are interested in as a young person. One of the young filmmakers, Ruben, made a video diary of the trip as part of his coursework. You can watch it here:

[▶ Ruben's Video Diary](#)

The participants noted some particular highlights of:

- Learning about parts of the film industry they didn't previously have knowledge of.
- Getting hands-on with high end film equipment.
- Learning from established professionals.
- Getting to rehearse a scene and act on a sound stage with professional cameras.
- The opportunity to interact with film companies they were interested in, and learn about new ones.



“

I didn't really feel like someone like me could work in the film industry, but now I know I can.

”

“

I feel a lot more confident.

”

4.6 SYFF TV Regional Groups



Skye Young Filmmakers (Skye) –

We have supported this group since 2023 and run an annual filmmaking week with them. They produced a short mockumentary called “Hooked” about fish farming. This was recently **screened at Skye Cinema**.

WLTV (West Lothian) –

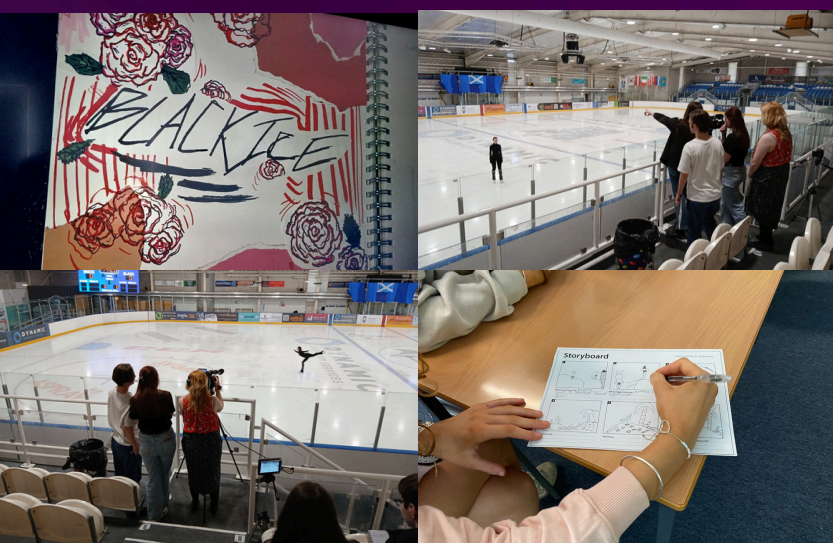
WLTV were formed for our 2024 Festival in West Lothian. This year, we have continued working with them alongside our partners at Firefly Arts. Since beginning working with them, the group have found the confidence, skills and inspiration to also independently produce **3 short films and a feature**, which were entirely youth-led with SYFF acting as advisors. They currently have a Western script in development, for which SYFF are providing editing advice.



DGTV (Dumfries & Galloway) –

This project is delivered by our partners at SouthWest Media Factory, and supported by SYFF. This year sees a continuation of previous years work, with regular **filmmaking clubs** in Dumfries and the production of a **short film called ‘Black Ice’**.

SYFF staff also delivered 4 day-long “Film Education Days” reaching a total of **400 primary school pupils** across the region. The attendees rotated around **workshops** covering topics such as storyboarding, silent film, shot types and films of Scotland.



4. Key Projects Overview



PKTV (Perth & Kinross) –

This legacy group was formed for our 2023 Festival in Perth. Since then they have had the opportunity to film at the **Virtual Production** stage at Abertay University and this year have completed **scripts** and **short films** both individually and as a group.

Fife TV (Fife) –

As part of the work surrounding this year's Festival in Fife, Fife TV was formed alongside our partners at YouthSpace Fife. This group of 12 young people trained in filmmaking technique, made **short films** and **broadcast live from the Festival**. They interviewed guests such as Sanjeev Kohli and explored local history in their short films.



"It was really good to finally meet people who were similar to me."

"I learned how to work well in a team and be able to blend well with people."

"One of the best experiences I could ever have."

"I learned how to make different genres of film."

Feedback
from
SYFF TV Regional Groups

"I learned different camera techniques."

"I'd never done anything on screen before. I've definitely improved my acting on screen".

"Working with FifeTV was amazing fun and felt great to do something more professional."

4.7 Passion4Fusion

▶ Impact Video

Through IntoFilm's 'Every Child a Filmmaker' initiative, we delivered a series of **filmmaking sessions** and a **filming week** for Passion4Fusion, an organisation supporting **Black & multi-ethnic communities** in Edinburgh & Lothians. This partnership successfully helped us reach and collaborate with underrepresented communities, and for Passion4Fusion to further their commitment to promoting **inclusion, equality and active citizenship**, in this case through **creative learning, exploration and collaboration through film**.

"I've seen them come out of their shells and really learn a lot in a short space of time. Some of them who were quiet, not communicating with anyone have now even go as far as bringing or inviting more young people to join the group"

Justine, Youth Group Leader, Passion4Fusion

"It's given opportunities to young people to do things that originally they wouldn't have very easy access to, for me it reaonsates to well to the principles and vision of P4F to give opportunities to everyone"

Angela, Youth Group Leader, Passion4Fusion



"I really liked recording the scenes and taking different shots at different angles."

"I was the cameraman, and I really hadn't handled a camera before, so I was really excited to learn"

"This has been such a big opportunity"

"Everybody was so cheerful, no bad vibes at all"

"Filming brought them together"



"It's a safe space for everyone, especially those from deprived communities & underrepresented minority ethnic communities. So that everyone can have a sense of belonging, grow their confidence & be able to do well & contributw to the greater good of community & society in Scotland "

In summary

When looking at the impact data we've collected over the entirety of our 2025 project roster, some overarching themes shone through:

Connection & Community

Meeting **likeminded young people**, many of whom formed **friendships** and went on to **collaborate** on further creative projects together.

Connection to a **supportive network**. Even post-project, SYFF remain available as mentors, advisors and a connection point to the industry.

The opportunity to **network** and develop networking skills in a **safe, friendly, inclusive and undaunting environment** was mentioned by many.

Access

Most participants told us that they would not normally have **access to the opportunities** SYFF provide.

Access to **peer learning**, through SYFF Youth Board members and previous participants who are in the industry, and through working alongside other young people with a different skillset to them.

Access to friendly, knowledgeable **industry professionals**.

Access to **platforms** to share and celebrate their work & values.

Personal Development

All participants felt they had **learned something new** or **expanded their knowledge** of an area they were interested in.

Feedback highlighted both **technical skills development** (like camera work or sound design) and **core skills development** (confidence, team building and taking initiative were frequently mentioned).

SYFF exists to break down barriers and improve equality of access. This year, our outreach and talent development projects included young people who identify as:

Global Majority 12.3%

Disabled 5.3%

LGBTQ+ 14%

Neurodivergent 14%

Low Income 29.8%

Geographically Isolated 24.6%

Non-Binary/Other 4%

Male 29.3%

Female 66.7%

Partnership working and community-building is integral to achieving our intended impact and we would like to thank each and every individual and organisation who has supported us throughout the year.

Our Core Funders

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

The Robertson Trust



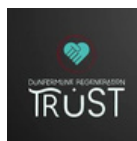
Elizabeth Lornie's Charitable Trust

The Princes Exchange Foundation

Our Project Funders



Our Project & Development Partners



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