



# One Stop Doc Shop Live Sessions

## Week 4. Kimberley Warner, Allison Dowzell & Jude Lister



### Introduction

*(Intro music starts – cinema film reel whirring, and countdown beeps)*

Hello and welcome to One Stop Doc Shop Live, a series that celebrates and encourages diversity in non-fiction filmmaking. In each episode, our guests share their secrets on how to produce award-winning documentaries.

I'm your host Angela Clarke and this session was made possible with the support of Screen Alliance Wales, Ffilm Cymru Wales and BFI Network funding from the National Lottery.

This week we have not one but three podcast guests joining us to discuss their experiences in the documentary film industry. Kimberley Warner, Head of Production at Ffilm Cymru Wales leads on strategy for talent development.

Jude Lister, Manager for BFI Network Wales, supports filmmakers at the start of their careers, as well as managing an array of talent initiatives.

And Allison Dowzell Managing Director at Screen Alliance Wales helps grow and support talent and crew in both the film and television industry.

Collectively, they talk about the current funding opportunities and support available in Wales for documentary filmmakers.

I hope you enjoy listening.....

**Angela Clarke** - Before we get going, I just wanted to say, first of all, could you each tell me, briefly, how did you get into the world of film? If I start with Kimberley, first - how did you get into the world of film?

**Kimberley Warner** - So it's hard to remember that far back! So essentially, I had a job in a bar. And then I did a little bit of running on a production, for just a couple of weeks, and I really tried to just network as hard as I could in those couple of weeks, because I was paid like £5 a day. It was terrible. And I managed to find some short-term work in accounts in a sales agent. And, I took that opportunity, and essentially, I ended up going in the sales and distribution route, which is more reliable, potentially. You know, you have a full-time job, but I always wanted to do my stuff on the side, but it gave me that, kind of, reliability that I definitely needed after graduating.

From sales, I was Head of Acquisitions in two documentary sales agents - Journeyman Pictures and Mercury Media. I've set up two video-on-demand platforms, specifically for docs. I moved into feature film gradually, and mainly at Ffilm Cymru, starting as Development Exec, and I'm now, I'm Head of Production there.

**Angela Clarke** - Okay. Super. Well, there you go. And it's a great thing to do as well in terms of getting into sales and distribution because it gives you that sense and understanding of how it all works which, as we know, is a massive, big part of it, isn't it, in terms of getting things off the ground and understanding what sales and distribution agents are looking for as well. I can imagine that was very useful.

Jude, how did you get into the industry then?

**Jude Lister** - I didn't study film at all, didn't come from a film background or anything like that. But I had a real interest in it. I started out, at first, by volunteering for some film festivals and just watching as many films as I could in my free time.

And then my first paid job was a kind of... It was run through a European program called European Voluntary Service, but it was essentially a paid internship where you did 6-12 months in a not-for-profit company, generally. So I did 10 months in a not-for-profit company in Paris. And it was basically, at the heart of this European network of associations, so it was all young people aged around 18 to 30 who were just into making stuff, into making films. So we did a lot of workshops with loads of different countries involved.

A lot of the funding for that kind of thing was through either the Media Program or kind of culture programs, so it was all about European integration and young people seeing themselves as European citizens. Obviously, now the situation is very different for the UK, but I had my real, first opportunity through that program and then I had a permanent job, offered to me with that company. I stayed on, and I was in Paris for about five years. And then, I decided to take a bit of a swerve, and I started working for a festival in Bristol called Encounters. So I did marketing and, kind of, lots of other things - marketing and development, essentially, for them for a couple of years. It was a really small team so I got to do lots of different things.

13 And then, yeah, I started working more in the training side of things and then swerved a little bit again towards...um... still working with new and emerging filmmakers, which I think has been the common theme in all the jobs I've done, but working a little bit more on the, kind of, funder side and, professional development support and things like that. So yeah.

**Angela Clarke** - There you go, another varied route, isn't it? And what about you, Allison, how did you get into it?

**Allison Dowzell** - Well actually, I was very lucky to get a training scheme in the BBC many, many years ago. I mean, I didn't even know where the door was in this industry, let alone you could get in it.

14 And something that we try to get away from now, is that a friend of my mum and dad knew somebody in the BBC who was looking for somebody, so I went and interviewed for a job, and I got it. It was in the Accounts Department of BBC Outside Broadcasts that was based up in London in Acton. Very quickly, I graduated into scheduling outside broadcasts, which was amazing in the days when the BBC had *Match of the Day* and the great, sort of, flag pole or tentpole events as you call it, which was massive, so I was scheduling that.

And then, I joined a facility company based in Pinewood Studios, up in London, Iver Heath, called Michael Samuelson's, they were... I think they developed the first camera, and then they went heavily into lighting, and he got a contract with the BBC and everywhere there was a BBC, they had to open a branch, so I came down to open up Wales.

15 I then went into Wales Screen, which was then attached to Screen, which was the forerunner of Ffilm Cymru, and that was to encourage people to come and film and shoot in Wales, using Welsh crews and labour.

I did a stint in BAFTA. I met you, Angela, when I worked for a documentary company or worked with my partner, Amanda Reece in Tifini. And then I was offered the chance, really, via the Welsh Government again, to set up Screen Alliance Wales, which does training, education, leading through to a professional career in the film and TV industry. So quite a varied but every, sort of, all routes led to the ultimate goal, really, which is the job that I absolutely adore, which is bringing young people in and helping people realise their potential.

16 **Angela Clarke** - I don't have a film background either. I studied Social Anthropology. I took a "squatters' rights" route into TV so I just applied for work experience at a company in Cardiff. I did two weeks and then I offered to do a day a week while I was still working in my other paid job. I did that for about eight months until I finished my contract in the other job and then I went with the TV company and stayed and got in that route. I suppose that's the thing. I think that's what I've learned most, is that everyone in the film and TV industry seems to have all come from all varied backgrounds, so it's always quite interesting to hear how people have got through.

13 Kimberley, can I come back to you then? Today, there are certainly a few students who are online, who may not be as familiar as some people that are more experienced in the industry and might not know. Can you explain a little bit about Ffilm Cymru – who you are, what you do?

**Kimberley Warner** – I should say that Jude and I work together! We might seem, like we work for different organisations.

**Angela Clarke** - I know, it's kind of complicated. That's why, I think, it'd be good today to explain how they all sit next to each other, as it were.

14 **Kimberley Warner** – So, yeah, trust me, when I first came into the public funding world, I found it difficult to keep track. Essentially, Ffilm Cymru is a development agency for Welsh film. And what that means is that we don't just fund film projects, it's obviously a lot of what we do. And we don't just fund exhibitors - that cinemas, film festivals, pop-up screenings and film education activity. We also look at ways that we can develop the sector, so direct training, and also supporting others to deliver training skills activity or, really, just events, which look to create a sustainable film sector in Wales.

And what we mean by that, is really innovative, diverse, entrepreneurial, all of those things, environmentally sustainable. So we have quite a huge remit, similar to Allison, and we do our best with a fairly small amount of money. So about £900,000 is all we have for investing in our projects, our core activity. It's Arts Council funding. And then we're also the BFI's delegate so I'll let Jude talk about that more for Wales. I'm trying to think of what else would be helpful.

15 We've been around for about 15 years. And when we started, there really wasn't much film activity. When we say film, we're trying to open up that definition, tentatively. We do mean feature film in cinema, or short films when it's looking at developing careers. We also mean documentary and animation, so it's feature-length work; primarily for cinema. Those are kind of historic lottery funding rules. Basically, the National Lottery funds the BFI, funds ourselves and other organisations. And they have quite strict rules on, like, theatrical cinema release.

We have experimented with supporting games and we are, more and more, looking at how do we support cross platform and experimentation, but it's something that we have to do quite gradually because of lottery funding and cinema - it will always be our core.

16 **Angela Clarke** – Well, before you explain what kind of development you've got, Jude, can you explain where you sit within Ffilm Cymru, because obviously you technically fall under the mantle of BFI Network Wales. I know, like myself, I'm sure there are other people, you're always slightly confused as to how all those pieces of the jigsaw fit together? So tell us, tell us how that works.

**Jude Lister** - Sure. So BFI Network is a UK-wide initiative from the BFI. The BFI delegates portions of funding to different regions and nations. So, there are BFI Network hubs across the English regions. Ffilm Cymru is the Welsh partner for BFI Network so

we deliver all BFI Network activity, funded by the BFI, which supports new and emerging talent from Wales.

So, yeah, I mean, obviously, as I say it's new and emerging talent - what do we mean by that? Well, basically, it's not, it's not really entry-level but it's for people who maybe have made a few student shorts before, some self-funded work, or perhaps who are crossing over from another medium like TV or we get a lot of people crossing over from theatre or other creative forms, from making their first industry-funded short films that have that cinematic ambition and up towards those who are embarking on developing their first feature film.

**Angela Clarke** - Ok.

**Jude Lister** - I mean, technically, we have a bigger development pot, which perhaps Kimberley can talk about, but our distinction between that and something like the BFI Network Wales fund is that the emerging filmmakers we would fund at BFI Network Wales haven't yet made a feature of, say, over a million pounds, which for documentary feature filmmakers is actually, obviously, quite high bar.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah, it's a beast! In fact, we were talking, two live sessions ago, we had Andee Ryder on, who produced the *McQueen* doc. Andee was explaining that the *McQueen* doc was a million-pound budget and she was talking us through how they funded that. It was a quite interesting session, because she does it quite differently from how most docs usually fund it piecemeal. They did it like film funding, where they get all the money up front so it was quite an interesting session to hear such different kind of approaches to it, but yeah, but she was acknowledging that that's the stuff of dreams. Those budgets don't come along that often.

**Kimberley Warner** - Oh, gosh, no! It's a nightmare - documentary budgeting. And for us, because we can't fully finance, I think that's an important thing to note. So we're not a Commissioner, we don't necessarily have fixed things we're looking for and we'll go to you and say to you, you need to make this and we will fully fund it like a broadcaster. We have a kind of investment we make. We work with Dee (Andee) on two projects now and she's amazing. One of the best documentary producers I've worked with, certainly.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah, she was fab and she was really generous with her time and also talked through like, you know... As we've talked about recently, I think Jude and I were talking about the fact that each film is so different and, you know, there is no one tried and tested model, which, to some degree, is what makes film interesting but it's also what makes it complicated in a way when you're trying to get into the industry and you're trying to find your feet and work out what you need and what you don't need.

Kimberley, can you talk us through then, first of all, in terms of if I was a new and emerging filmmaker, which I suppose technically I am, and I was looking for funding, what, in terms of development, what pots of funding, do you have on offer in terms of Ffilm Cymru? What would you be looking for and what could I apply for?

**Kimberley Warner** – So first things first, we're really accessible. We pride ourselves on that. Some people, it can be hard to know who works there, how do I get a meeting? Although we're fairly small as a team, we do have surgeries, you can have a chat with us, fairly easily. And then, Jude and I would probably be thinking about where, where they best fit in terms of the different funds that we have available.

So, for Jude's side, obviously, there's career progression funding from Horizons and often, that can be a good first port of call. Maybe you haven't landed on the project that you want to be your first documentary feature yet, or you're just not sure about the idea, but you have an idea of the steps you need to take in your career, so we'd support a lot of mentorship. Or on the flip side, if it's somebody who comes to us who has got a big career in TV, in factual for example, probably we would talk to them more about the development funds.

The Arts Council funding which is a larger amount, and just talk to them about their ideas, really. We're very person-orientated, so we'll think about getting to know that individual - what do they need in their career, and how the project fits into that? So we really have been with people from the start of their careers through to establishing a really successful production company or their third feature. We try to be with you on that journey, even if we can't always offer the finance.

**Angela Clarke** - In terms of, like, a specific pot of funding. Say, I had an idea and I had done the research, at least some of the research and I had scoped out that there hasn't been another film made like that. I know that this is new territory. I know that this is a particular angle that I want to take, but for example, I need a little bit of development money because I need to get something on tape or whatever.

The vibe seems to be, when you're trying to get any sort of film away, people need to see, you know, at least a couple minutes of, some sort of, footage, ideally. Something that you've got, just to use as a, kind of, visual calling card to go along with the treatment. So if I was applying to you, or I was approaching you, and you thought, 'Ok, she's got enough experience, we can fund, you know, we can give her a little pot of money', what would I need to put forward and what would be the best pot for me to go to if I was new and emerging, let's say?

**Kimberley Warner** – Yeah, so I'll try to be brief, talking to all the funds. So we have, currently, a two-year partnership with the BBC on a scheme called Ffolio. It's a broader initiative, new creatives nationwide and, you know, Ffilm Cymru is the Welsh partner for BBC Arts, and that can be documentary, it can be any genre, it's looking at making your very first work for screen. So that's, at the moment, the very first kind of entry-level project funding that we have available.

And beyond that, we obviously have Jude's funds, so Beacons is a short-film scheme which is annual, and we also always have at least one documentary in that mix. We have tried to do some work this year to stimulate more applications. I think, and it's on us, and that's my through-line of this whole session, really, it's not that everyone needs to always do a better job, we also need to do a better job, in saying that this is not just for live action with Beacons.

13 And then, we have Horizons, which is your first feature, documentary feature or career progression. And so it could be... we've funded people to attend Sheffield Doc Fest. We actually had a delegation there this year, virtually, and we funded mentorship on docs.

I think a key differentiator between that and the Arts Council Development Fund - the Arts Council Fund is normally around £25,000 and normally, wouldn't be above that for a specific stage of development for a feature doc. Jude's would be more up to £10K. However, we're also looking at supporting people with the Arts Council Development Fund, where there's probably a producer on board, for one, and with docs, this is an interesting point to talk about.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah.

14 **Kimberley Warner** - You know, I mean, we do prefer on docs, a different producer to a director, and we have had most success, understanding why the roles have been merged historically - just finance, amongst other things. So we do prefer to have a dedicated producer, but equally, I think, we would be supporting someone with a larger amount where they have got maybe slightly more experience. It isn't as hard and fast as how many credits have you got, we're trying to keep an open mind. But primarily, you'd have made something for screen in the role you're applying for.

15 We do support people from very early on with the development fund though. So treatment is something we require. Again, interesting to have that conversation around docs. We can have a whole session around it. But we do really encourage people to submit something that not only tells us what they think might happen, because obviously the more observational you get, the more assumptions you have to make, but also tells us how *you* want to tell that story, and why. Again, we're all about the individual and supporting you as the Wales-born or based talent. And so we want to know what your point of view is. We do support more authored documentaries rather than things where it's, it's maybe more on commission.

**Angela Clarke** - Yes.

**Kimberley Warner** - So I think that's something we see sometimes in treatments, that maybe it's a little bit more about a list of contributors or a list of things that might happen, but we don't always get a clear sense of what the director is wanting to bring to it...

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah.

16 **Kimberley Warner** - ..and what it would look like, visually. And again, we're looking for things that are new to us and that we haven't seen before. And that aren't necessarily just looking at replicating what was successful for Netflix recently, or it's something that is maybe even pushing boundaries for a documentary film.

**Angela Clarke** - When film funds are limited, or, you know, they're finite pots, you have to find something that is a bit more original, that is going to be something different. I think also, maybe, I think it is something that all of us are guilty of doing

sometimes, as well, as when an idea is in your head, and you think it makes sense to you, you don't always get all of that on paper to somebody reading it with fresh eyes.

And is that something, Jude, is that something that you experience, as well, when you get applications in? Is it something that you're aware of when you think, 'Well, I can't see it. I can't close my eyes and see what it is that you're trying to do with this'? Is that something that people struggle to do in your applications, as well, sometimes?

**Jude Lister** - Yeah, I would say it's quite common. I think what we see a lot of is that people don't quite understand the remit of Ffilm Cymru, which is why it's really important to do events like this and to talk about what our remit is and what we do support.

We get a lot of projects that just don't come across as a creatively-led or, kind of, something that's worthy of the big screen, rather than something that's more factual or potentially journalistic, so that's what we see a lot. Or, you know, perhaps, the feeling of a lack of ambition from the filmmaker to really progress to cinematic features. Here, I'm probably talking more about the shorts, short proposals that we get through. On something like Beacons, which is our BFI Network Wales short-film fund, we do partner with a broadcaster, so we work with BBC Wales, but we are still looking for work for the big screen and future feature doc filmmakers.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah.

**Jude Lister** - So I think it, it can just be quite... some people fall at that first hurdle because they don't quite understand what we're looking for. I think there are some really basic things as well, like submitting a show reel rather than full-length examples of work, that's something that we see surprisingly often and it's really hard to judge somebody's skill based on a show reel.

Not submitting enough detail in the pitch, as you say, Angela, assuming that we will understand the intention without articulating it quite clearly enough. Giving us anything visual to go on; that's always incredibly helpful, even if it's just, kind of, a mood board.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah.

**Jude Lister** - Yeah.

**Angela Clarke** - Because I was going to ask that actually, you know, obviously, if you are, especially if you're applying for something like development funding, you know, and the reality is that, as we know, especially if you're starting off, that you don't always have huge amounts of money or huge access to things, so sometimes in that instance, from the filmmaker's point of view, you can be reaching out to ask for cash to be able to go and make a taster.

So in the instance, that if I was turning up with, what I thought was, a great idea but I didn't have anything in taster tape form... I was going to say, in terms of like what mood boards or even if it was submitting something slightly more shonky, like on, you know,

mobile phones or something... Would you accept any of that just to help paint the visual picture, as it were, for people?

**Kimberley Warner** – Yeah.

**Jude Lister** - Yeah, it's funny because visuals are helpful but, to a certain extent, you want to be careful about what you're showing early on because it's going to colour the perception of what it is you want to put on screen. And I could potentially recommend, you know, being really clear in your application that this is about the ideas and not how I plan to film that.

**Angela Clarke** - I'm curious about when you're pitching things like this because you think like do I take the chance and do something? Because, you know, sometimes... For example, especially at the moment, with things like Covid, you can't always get a hold of participants, it's not as easy to travel around as it was, so you're kind of relying on things like Zoom, which let's be honest, aren't the prettiest of setups in terms of, so that can become quite difficult in itself, isn't it?

So Ffolio has a short duration cut on that, isn't it? Is that about five minutes - the films? What's the length?

**Kimberley Warner** – Yeah, they're really short and more destined for online. It's quite a departure for us...

**Angela Clarke** – Yeah.

**Kimberley Warner** – ..but we will work with partners to enable new opportunities and that's where that came around. With Beacons and all of our other activities, it's much more about festival cinema.

**Angela Clarke** – Yeah.

**Kimberley Warner** – Whereas this is looking at, you know, future content creators, digital micro-shorts and without any experience, kind of, creatively leading on screen, because for us, it's always our responsibility to be supporting those voices that haven't been supported.

And I think this is a key differentiator - the lottery funding is there normally to support projects with that cultural impact and also that the market wouldn't ordinarily support. It's a very tricky thing to define, particularly when you get to docs, and you're a minority funder, because of course, we want the projects we support to get financed. And so we need to see that there's a hope. But we also need to be there to support those projects that are not the easy wins.

So it's difficult, but I think to speak to what you were saying around visual materials, perhaps less than broadcasters, we wouldn't see as much filmed material in applications. We would like to see lookbooks, but we really recognize that if you haven't

got Photoshop or you haven't got those kind of technical skills, it can be quite difficult to put together something impressive.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah.

**Kimberley Warner** – But we do encourage, kind of, steal reels or something that gives a sense. I'd probably rather see, kind of, a mood reel with clips that you've grabbed that gives me a sense of what you want to say about the world and your point of view as a director and a filmmaker, than something that's on a phone and just tells you who the character is. I think we can get that from the written materials. What I really want to know is what is your unique point of view and how this will look and feel... because we can query all the other stuff verbally.

**Angela Clarke** - I think that's interesting to hear, though, because if there are people out there... As you say, especially with Ffolio and stuff, people who have worked in other fields. If you're coming from a background of TV, some of those things would be the complete opposite, so it's trying to work out what each of those different genres, as it were, between, like, independent film and TV are looking for something different, so that's quite interesting in itself.

And then, Jude, in terms of Beacons then, so you would be on the assumption that you would have had to have done a couple of, student films, so you're not going to be a complete newbie, as it were. But if you were turning up, say for example, as a director but you didn't have a producer attached, how does it work, in terms of, if I was submitting something but I didn't have a team, would you hook me up with a team, how would that work out? Would I need to know who I'm putting down on the production, when I'm submitting for the application, how does that all work?

**Jude Lister** - So for Beacons you don't have to have a producer attached at the application stage. We absolutely recognise that a lot of people might not have that relationship in place. And rather than panicking and trying to just attach somebody for the sake of applying, we'd much rather that they found the producer that was the right fit for the project.

So our kind of stance on that is that if, you know, if we take the project onto our slate, we will help facilitate finding a producer. We wouldn't dictate who that producer would be. Obviously, we can suggest people to talk to you, but ultimately the filmmaker has to find the right fit for them in that collaboration, that trust and for the project itself. So, yeah, you don't have to have a producer attached.

And I think if you're applying to something like Horizons, which is the feature Development Fund for the BFI Network, if you're at quite an early stage with your documentary development, again, we wouldn't necessarily expect for a producer to be attached just yet. It, kind of, depends what stage you're at and what the next steps are.

**Angela Clarke** – Obviously part of what Screen Alliance Wales do is you guys help pull crews and people together, in terms of the film industry across Wales, as well, so both for fiction and non-fiction. Sometimes when you're starting out, especially if

13 somebody's just come from university and you're not as familiar with the landscape and who's who in Wales. Can you tell us a bit about what you offer in terms of a service? If I was somebody, again, coming to Wales, if I was in the industry, what can I do, how can I get into your organisation, how do I sign myself up etc?

**Allison Dowzell** - Well, we have a registration page and, you know, we have been guilty of concentrating on drama and high-end TV drama. We're based in Wolf Studios and predominantly, I suppose that's why we were setup, was because there was a massive crew shortage and facilities shortage to service the production.

14 However, now we're moving a lot more into non-fiction to non-scripted. And so we offer a series of help that you can sign up on to the registration page; that's about to be launched shortly actually, for a whole registration on non-scripted so you can put your skills down.

You can also go in and find out about lots of things that we do; we have Careers Cafes where we get all sorts of people coming in to talk about their career, how they started, where they got to, some interesting tips and tricks and etc and how you get into there. We offer a series of master classes with people from various different areas of the profession.

15 We do workshops. We do work shadowing experience, and we try... Obviously, we've done it here on the high-end TV dramas, but we're now looking at other production companies, not in the scripted market, to look if they'll take on some work shadowing, shadowing the Director, if possible. I mean, it's, you know, it's hard to do, because obviously everybody's on a tight budget on a very tight timeline/schedule, and it's persuading people to give other people that opportunity to come and shadow.

We try and get trainees on if we can. We're, at the moment, we've helped I think it's about 80 trainees to get paid traineeships on various productions. I think we're up to about well over 200 on work shadowing experiences.

16 So we don't offer funding, but we do offer support throughout your career. As we work, getting into classrooms at the age of nine, showing the different areas that are available to people for a career from, should it be, you know, in every single department. I don't think people realise how many departments there are on a production both scripted and non-scripted.

We are about to go into a series of True Crime Master classes. I think the first one starts on the 22nd of July. We've already hosted one with the University of South Wales, and we're looking to get into more of these master classes and getting people from all over the world to talk about their experiences and give a real insight to what they do.

So you can register, we can help you. We do CV clinics. So many people send in the same CV for different jobs, but they'll send the same CV in, but they'll send the same cover letter. You know, just basic things, like looking at your email address. What does your email address say about you? So we just try and offer advice on that.

13 So it's a whole package really and we've just, you may have seen our Step Across where we've tried to target people from the theatre, live events and music industry to step across. The lines are so blurred now you can work across so many disciplines. And then when you can, you can step back into your, your career of choice. So that's what we do in a nutshell.

**Angela Clarke** - I know, I used to have quite a ropey email that was 'angelwings', so I mean...

**Allison Dowzell** - I do remember that, Angela.

**Angela Clarke** - I was going to say, I thought you might.

14 **Allison Dowzell** - I use that as the example!

**Angela Clarke** - "Don't do that!" I mean, it served me well! I was, I was very under pressure in a café when I did that in Australia many years ago. *(laughs)* If I wrote to Screen Alliance Wales, and I said, I want to hook up with somebody... Because I often find there are some people willing to, kind of, share skills but it's just like reaching out to them to, saying, 'Can you do a bit of camera and I can do a bit of editing'. Do you have a facility whereby if I was to ask - 'Can you put me in contact with some camera people, is that something that Screen Alliance Wales can do as well?

15 **Allison Dowzell** - Yeah, we would do it through the proper channels, you know, we'd find out exactly what you wanted to do and we'd make the introduction. We'd ask that person if they're happy to talk. And as I said, so many people, you know, I don't think people realise how many people want to give something back and that's, you know, that's how we exist is because our facility companies in Wales support us. The broadcasters, HBO are very keen to find out about the talent in Wales, and we're going to be launching something with them in the next few months. And also, we're working with S4C, as well. And we're moving into the non-scripted because that's an area that Wales is so punching, again, above its weight.

But again, we don't shout about it, and the work, obviously that Ffilm Cymru are doing is fantastic in this area and it's just so exciting to see that, you know, a documentary such as *Dream Horse* can go on to be a feature film. And that, to me, just shows the opportunity and the potential of what somebody can do.

16 **Angela Clarke** - So Kimberley, can you talk to us about, if somebody is, kind of, at the more experienced level then what pots of funding have you got, in terms of film funding, as it were, and how does that work? If you're someone with more experience, maybe you've got one feature under your belt, what kind of things do you offer at Ffilm Cymru?

**Kimberley Warner** - Well, the Production Funding is interesting, because it's actually not so much that you need to have made a couple of documentary features before. It's more that... It's a large amount of money, and so we'll need to see certain other things in place that you've attracted before we could commit finance.

13 So we support a lot of documentaries, a lot of international co-productions on the documentary side, and beyond, actually, but we would be expecting to see a producer, probably, separate from a director, particularly the documentary, speaking as, so I'll be an Exec Producer on the project or Bizzy my colleague, on the ones we give production funding to. The docs are the hardest to close and obviously they're the lowest budget. Always piecemeal finance and so just that huge job of producing docs, we do find it's helpful to think of it as a, it's a separate role, and to have a separate Exec Producer who is more seasoned. So it's about the overall package. We'd hope to see sales agent interest. We are in this, kind of, difficult position where as a fairly small film fund, and a public funder, we still need to think about who's going to see this.

14 So we can't just attach the money just based on, like, loving the project, or the talent. When it gets to that production funding where it's between £100-200,000 we will need to see a certain, kind of, understanding of audience. What is your strategy for reaching them? Do you have a letter of intent from a sales agent, in the least; sales estimates would be great. It gets very complex and the business affairs side has to work with the creative much more when you're making a production funding application. Whereas with development and certainly with Jude's funds, we can go a little bit more on wanting to support the talent, wanting to help them to develop something...

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah.

15 **Kimberley Warner** - ..that they can show people even if it doesn't get fully financed, you know, whether it's a script or it's a teaser, that they can show out of that development award. There's still value there. But when it comes to the larger production funding and it goes to the Board, of course, they'll be expecting to see certain things in place that will give comfort really for public funding and to make sure that it's going to reach *an* audience.

I think a mistake that we often see; it's not restricted to documentaries, but we see people saying that it's for everyone, a lot, still, and so we are actually much more driven to focus on underserved audiences, similarly to the BBC and those organisations. We have that responsibility so it's not always about you saying, 'we're going to get these like mass numbers of people coming'. Let's be realistic, typically in cinemas, it's very, very tough for a feature doc, to get into a cinema. And the numbers are not going to be as high. So we more want to know what is your understanding of your specific audience that you want to speak to and are there any different things that you can do that might develop that audience early?

16 I think a challenge we have is that because of the way docs are not very well funded across the board in the UK, we will have a fair amount of people coming to us with lots of stuff they've already shot. So for completion funding more.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah.

**Kimberley Warner** - And then I think there's a natural frustration if we don't end up financing it, but I would really encourage you to have a conversation with us early if we're going to be an important part of your finance plan, because we just have a finite

13 pot of funding, and it's not that we need to own the projects; we try not to be too controlling with the creative, but we'll give notes, it's more just, it's very difficult and very risky if you spend significant amounts of money before you come to your key financiers.

14 So again, I think the main thing with documentary is just esteeming the business affairs knowledge, and the finance understanding at the same level as the creative, because it is complex and it's just important for us to see that knowledge is there, if not you, then within the team. And I think the documentary community are so generous, so I'm not advocating people working for free, but going to an Exec Producer and saying, 'I want to work with you because I like this that you've done in the past and I feel like you'd be a real asset, can I put you on this funding application', that's fairly normal, and you will find that people are quite generous in saying, 'Yeah', as long as they feel, like they understand your project and what you're about, and it will give us, as funders, that comfort where we're looking at what's the track record? What are the risks? And there's always loads of risks and so we're very much in the business of just minimising the risk slightly.

**Angela Clarke** - Well, I suppose that's the thing, isn't it? It's easy when you, you come from a background that's largely creative I think sometimes you forget that, ultimately, people with film funding finance are looking at it as an investment. There's still a large chunk of money being put in and therefore people have expectations of how their money is going to be managed.

15 But one of the things I wanted to ask you, then, so if you were coming to get the more significant pots of funding, is that something that, in terms of, if you are attaching other execs or producers, would those execs and producers have to just be based in Wales or could you have, if you had established relationships with execs or producers outside of Wales, would you be able to hook up with them, or if the money is from Ffilm Cymru does it have to be, all the talent has to be from Wales?

And then secondly, if I didn't know sales producers and I had come to you quite early on with an idea, would you hook me up with a who's who, because again, the world of sales producers and distribution is quite, quite specific.

**Kimberley Warner** - I'll answer your second question first because it'll be shorter. We wouldn't be able to hook everyone up who applies or thinks about applying with sales agents or wider contacts, we would give advice. And we might suggest applying for career progression funding or just give some advice that's hopefully helpful, although it never is if you want the cash.

16 But generally, with the talent that we are supporting, we only have the resources where we're able to, kind of, put the most of our energy into them, so if they are on the slates, then we'll make those connections and we will help with raising the additional finance for films that we invest in as well, because it's difficult, and we're here to help and we want it to be made. And so we put most of our, kind of, hands-on energies into the projects that are actually on the slates. But we do give lots of advice to people who are thinking of applying or who are unsuccessful.

13 Your first question around the Welshness. So a lot of the films that we've worked on, and particularly the docs, they didn't seem Welsh at all. The main thing for us is Wales-born or based lead writer, director or producer. So, director or producer with docs, although some of them will have writers. And so you can just have one of those. And we really encourage, actually, organic co-production relationships or just relationships with producers who bring you different things to the table.

And so it could just be one of those roles that is the Welsh/Wales-based talent, but at production funding level, we will look more closely at other value, just because we can maybe only support, like, six features, including docs, a year. So we would look at, we always ask for three trainee positions.

14 On *Dream Horse*, we actually had 35 through our *Foot In The Door* scheme. That focuses specifically on socio-economic disadvantage. So, it's a whole, discrete, ambitious programme, but on all of our features we have three trainees.

So that would need to be something the budget could hold, and we will also look at spend in Wales more broadly and whether there's any, kind of, heads of departments. Again, more difficult on docs, but it's a complex weighing up of different factors. You've got the talent and fundamentally the Welsh talent is who we're focusing on.

15 We're thinking - how does this get you to the next stage in your career? Then you've got the project and hopefully it's exciting and it makes sense as part of a slate and seems like it has a shot of being financed beyond us. And then you've also got other elements around that that we will look at secondarily, so how can we create/join up to make sure that this investment in this film also has a bigger ripple effect, whether it's looking to trainees, in terms of crew or also looking at shadowing placements, employment in Wales, but we're also really keen on supporting co-productions, so sometimes the spend in Wales on docs doesn't end up being huge, but there's a lot of other value. We support a lot of docs, it's quite a passion for us.

**Angela Clarke** - And then, is there a good example of, like, a doc film. I think, Jude, you were talking about something about... Did you say, *Men That Sing* or did I make that up?

**Jude Lister** - *Men Who Sing*.

**Angela Clarke** - Yes. I thought I'd dreamt that! Can you tell us a bit about, you know, because it'd be good to hear just like what was the process of a film like that? When did it come to you guys and how did it evolve? If you're able to talk about that.

16 **Kimberley Warner** - Shall I take that, Jude?

**Jude Lister** - Yeah.

**Kimberley Warner** - So, *Men Who Sing* is an interesting one, because Dylan, the filmmaker, made *Men Who Swim*, which was made into not one but two feature films.

**Angela Clarke** – Oh, ok.

**Kimberley Warner** – So, in some ways, it was a follow up. It started off. This is not the best way to do things, I would say, but it started off as something that was more personal, about his father, and a choir in his hometown, near Rhyl, and how they were struggling to find “brown-haired men”. But then what emerged... Young men, was what they called them.

**Angela Clarke** – Oh, I see!

**Kimberley Warner** – But it's basically something that ended up being very, kind of, uplifting and universal and you can see, you know, when he pitched it to us, which is probably five years ago now, and it had that kind of three-act structure, potentially, because he knew that they were going to go and compete again in a major way; you've got a Choir Mistress who is incredibly charismatic. She is the one woman in the film, but we'll let them off, because it's a male-voice choir. And, and they did go on to win, sorry I'm ruining the film for you, but it's important when you're pitching things to tell people, if you can, what you think might happen, rather than pitching to us like we're an audience.

Dylan had managed to capture early on some very stylised individual portraits with members of the choir. So for me, I'm actually a little bit wary, when people come to us and think we only want stories about Wales. I mean, we do, but we want stories of Wales that we haven't seen before. And, and so when a male voice choir comes, as it does very regularly, we're not overly excited, even though people might think that's a home run for Ffilm Cymru.

But when we saw the material and there was something very stylised about these portraits even though he'd just done them in a rough way. It was definitely something that changed our mind and got us really excited. We thought this could be a key Welsh stock but also something that is trying to sell a universal story. Actually, it premiered at Sheffield Doc Fest and Melanie picked it up. And so we're happy about that.

But I think, another example that's quite useful would be probably *Donna*, which was supported out of Jude's department before it came through the rest of our funds.

**Angela Clarke** – Yeah, so Jay's film. Jay Bedwani.

**Kimberley Warner** – And Dee Ryder (Andee Ryder) is an Exec on that.

Yeah, I guess we had a long journey with that project but if I could try to boil down the elements at production funding stage. You've got Jay Bedwani, a very talented filmmaker we've supported on a couple of shorts in the past and we could see creatively, the through-line between this feature and the work he'd done in short form.

He's a really lovely, modest person which does help, but he also still had a clear point of view of what he wanted to say, and why. You've got a producer there who's also worked, primarily in co-producer roles on other feature documentaries and definitely a

13 natural fit for this project. And then you have an Exec Producer who is bringing, you know, **McQueen** and finance savvy and all of these ingredients, along with the fact that it was just an incredibly moving pitch of a trans person coming out later in life and trying to reunite with their family, so you've got an engine there, even if it doesn't work out quite as neatly as we'd like in fiction.

There was an engine driving the pitch in a narrative way, but there was also photographs that Jay had submitted that just looked incredibly poetic and beautiful of the key character Donna Persona, and that just, kind of, gave a sense of his poetic style of storytelling and how this wasn't just about a fly-on-the-wall, following her, there was going to be something more of a mood that he was going to bring to it. So a lot of different elements in its favour but it's, it's taken a long time for that one to come together.

14 **Angela Clarke** - Yeah, Jay had put... There was a shorter version of **Donna**, wasn't there, that won the Iris a few years ago and I've spoken to Jay quite a lot about **Donna** of late. And I think it is interesting, because it'd be easy to make an assumption that your story maybe always had to be in Wales, or have to have some sort of Welsh connection, but **Donna** is a good example, because Donna's in San Francisco, isn't she?

**Kimberley Warner** - Yeah.

**Angela Clarke** - So there's absolutely no connection, other than Jay being a Welsh filmmaker, who happened to have met Donna on his travels when he, I think it was when he lived in San Fran for a bit, wasn't it?

**Kimberley Warner** - And a Welsh producer.

15 **Angela Clarke** - Yeah, Dewi. I suppose that leads me to my next question what are the universals, if there are any, in terms of when you look at what you've got on the slate, in terms of documentary, whether it be short-form or longer-form? What are those, key components that keep coming up for you guys at the same time, what are the things that you find yourself gravitating towards? How do you make those decisions, you know, what swerves you in one particular way and not another?

**Kimberley Warner** - Do you want to go for that, Jude?

16 **Jude Lister** - I think we want to be funding lots of different kinds of documentaries for the big screen, you know, I think we have quite diverse projects on our slate from super personal docs to much more... It's really difficult without talking about examples, but I don't want to take too much time, but... I think, it's just seeing that there's a unique perspective and that there's that authorship there. Just coming back to, kind of, what we, kind of, said at the beginning, about what we're actually looking for.

We're never that prescriptive about the subject matter, or, you know. Yes, we are attracted to, kind of, exploring progressive ideas and things like that and I think we have a responsibility to the National Lottery funding distributor in terms of the cultural

13 relevance of the films that we fund, but we are absolutely not prescriptive. We are not a commissioner.

**Kimberley Warner** – And obviously we're always looking at under representation, both in terms of the filmmakers we support, but also on-screen stories. And so that's something that we're always keen to see.

But I also think that links through to what we've been saying around originality, you know, we haven't seen these stories before. So, something that seems a bit challenging, come to us about it. Maybe I shouldn't say that!

**Jude Lister** – I like to be surprised. I like to be thrown off a little bit if I'm reading a pitch document, personally. I like something that is, like, 'Oh, I never even thought about that before'.

14 **Angela Clarke** - Yeah. And what about in terms of timeline, because obviously one of the things that Andee Ryder was talking about was how sometimes it can be much easier to get a retrospective film pitch because obviously you've got less unknown quantities in that. So, for example, she was talking about the fact that both *McQueen* and the Paralympic documentary that she made were easier propositions to pitch in terms of you knew exactly what you were going to get and there weren't as many unknown factors to have to try and gauge etc. If somebody came to you with an idea, is there a particular timeline framework that you're kind of thinking, well, ballpark, that's what we're kind of looking to fund? Just in terms of funding rolling over multiple years, can be complicated for a number of reasons. So what would be a duration that you'd think that might be a bit too long?

15 **Kimberley Warner** - On production funding, it's reviewed every six months, so this is also difficult for the docs, but it's related to just not tying up that public funding when there are other projects that could be using it. So it will be reviewed after six months of us making the offer for production funding, so when we should be able to go into production. It's obviously very different with docs. So, it is something we're actually working out at the moment of how we try to be a bit more flexible, given the parameters of lottery funding.

16 Obviously, throughout development, the docs we support will be in production, and then they'll not be in production, so we kind of try to flex around them as much as possible, but there are always outputs from the development investments we make, so it will be a report, it'll be a treatment that's refined, it might be some visual materials that we've supported, so we'll see that still as, you know, that's their outputs, and if they then develop the projects again or raise finance further on down the line, they'll just come back to us. We do live with projects for a long, long time and not all of them make it. I think the industry standard is, like, one in ten. We're little bit better than that. But ultimately, we hope there's still been value for that filmmaker. And I don't know if that helps in terms of timeline, Jude? Did you have anything else to say?

**Jude Lister** – Well, I guess on the shorts it's just a little bit different because we work on a certain timeline with BBC Wales because the hope is that the films, they get a kind

of festival window to secure their premieres and all of that, but then they get broadcast on BBC Wales, and we aim to do that as a package of say five or six films in a round and then they go and IPlayer, and we promote them as a package. So I guess we are on a bit more of a timeline with that, in theory, although things can always crop up in production and especially with Covid. And I hate to mention the C word but you know obviously there are some documentaries that are on our slate that just haven't been able to progress, because of that.

But generally when we're commissioning, the Beacons short films, the delivery date is within a year.

**Angela Clarke** - Okay. And then, out of interest just, I mean, you might not know the answer entirely off the top of your head, but out of interest, of the films that you've got both short and longer feature length on the slate at the moment, how many of them are unfolding narratives and how many of them are potentially just retrospectives? Do you know that off the top of your head?

**Kimberley Warner** - I don't think we've got any retrospective, sadly. Have you, Jude?

**Jude Lister** - No. I mean, I don't think we have any fully archive films.

**Angela Clarke** - Interesting.

**Jude Lister** - It's not to say we wouldn't fund that.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah.

**Kimberley Warner** - We have in the past. So films like *Dark Horse* which *Dream Horse* is based upon and *Rockfield* but at the moment, all of them have been unfolding narratives...

**Angela Clarke** - Jude mentioned Covid there. I was thinking in terms of, again, something that Screen Alliance offer, I think as well, you guys have got information on Covid safety and filming and stuff as well, haven't you, at the moment? If somebody was looking for advice or help from yourselves, is that... could they come to you to ask about what the rules and regulations are with Covid, at the moment?

**Allison Dowzell** - Yeah, I mean, we've launched, we have had on our website on our e-learning platform, a Covid health and safety course which is written with Welsh Government guidelines, videos etc and it is bilingually available as well.

We're about to launch a health and safety, in a similar vein, and also a cyber security one because I think all of us need to learn a lot more about cyber security, and I had a presentation on it the other day and I'm going to change the way I work as well.

So we're doing those and also because a lot of what we do is education, so there are resources on there for younger people coming through on Locations, Art Department,

13 etc and more and more will be put on. Covid had a massive impact on us in enabling us to let people into the studio.

But however in the next vein, we sort of superseded everything we did before because we offer everything we do, virtually. And just to say for everybody, please do keep an eye on the website because since January, we've had 140 jobs advertised and that's not just here, it's all over Wales.

We're advertising jobs more and more now, and every week there's more coming on. And, you know, it is a resource, it's a resource to learn and if there's something you need to do, like, we offer camera breakdowns so you can go to one of our facility companies and breakdown a camera. You can go to one of the lighting companies and look at how lightning works, which way you can best use lighting.

14 You know, there's a lot more we offer than what you might think is sort on the box, so to speak, so we can do bespoke things for people if there's a need.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah, well that's the thing I think the reality is, especially in documentaries, when you're starting out, in those early stages, you're kind of having to do lots of bits and bobs yourself, which means that, you're having to kind of muddle by, so any kind of free training like that, I know I did lighting courses and stuff and it does make a massive difference because there are things that you just think, I probably won't work that out on my own. Again, it's just having the resources to do it. Unfortunately, with the industry being hit the way it's been, it's difficult for people at the moment. Not everyone's got spare cash to go and do those other bits and bobs.

15 In terms of Ffilm Cymru and BFI, I know you used to be able to book the drop-in sessions, can you do them online now? Like, how does that work for yourselves if there was new filmmakers looking to, kind of, just touch base and introduce themselves, so how do they work?

**Jude Lister** - Yeah, so for Network, so for new and emerging filmmakers, we do, at the moment, monthly, bookable advice sessions, it will be either with myself or my colleague Gwenfair, who is our Development Executive at Ffilm Cymru, who works with me across the Network funds.

16 But also, I think as Kimberley said at the beginning, we're a very friendly fund; all of our emails are on the website. If you can't make one of those bookable sessions, or you just want to set up a chat with us or you have some questions that you'd like us to respond to you by email even, just get in touch with us, we do this every day. We talk to filmmakers every day and that's what we're here for, you know, especially on the Network side.

And I know that it's really difficult to navigate the mysterious world of film funding. We don't expect people to get it straight away, so we're very much here to explain what we do, explain our funding and help people put in strong applications.

**Angela Clarke** - I know, speaking from own point of view, having come from a TV background for years, the thing that was new to me was working out the end point of a

13 film and then working backwards from that, and understanding that I wasn't delivering to a channel anymore that I was, as Kimberley said, I was having to work out, well who is the audience for my film? What are the film festivals that I want to go to? Where's the end destination I want that film to get at and then working backwards from there to try and work out a timeline and trajectory.

Also trying to navigate filming and funding pots and, and all the different bits and bobs. And as you say, Jude, each one is so different that you're learning something new along the way as well, so I think it is useful to reach out and speak to different people and organisations because if nothing else, you can learn, you can get examples as you were saying, Kimberley, like, you know, *Donna* took a while, there will be others are, you know, the *McQueen* one, for example, was, from commission to delivery was 16 months, which is practically unheard of for a feature doc, but they had a ridiculously fast timeline so it changes constantly, doesn't it?

14 Kimberley, I wanted to ask just quickly then before we wrap up, if you're new to this world, what's the best way of trying to get a handle on what sales and distribution do and how they differ? Is there somewhere that explains succinctly how those different areas work and how best to, kind of, get into them?

**Kimberley Warner** – I'm trying to think if there is. I mean, obviously, BFI's Doc Society have a lot of resources specifically for docs. Generally, ourselves and others will put events on sometimes with sales and distribution experts where they'll talk through what they want. Ultimately, they want you to do well as they live off, you providing them with content that they can sell. So they'll be fairly free with giving their time to keep an eye on organisations like ourselves who will bring in experts from different organisations.

15 Also, the BFI Statistical Yearbook. So there's resources like this where, even if you go to a film festival or a Doc Fest, you're not necessarily knowing which ones are in competition. You've got to look at the top films, because there'll be various sub-strands of docs which will never see the light of day anywhere other than that festival. And that's not to say that they're not "good" or they're not valuable in some way, but if you want to found somewhat more of a sustainable career, then you want to look at the ones like *McQueen* that actually get cinema release and obviously there's a very structured narrative to that, that an observational doc wouldn't be able to mimic, but at the same time I think it is helpful to look at the actual figures, sales.

16 Like, I always think that being a Creative Producer is essential, so you could be across the creative but you've also got to not be bored by the numbers – they're just essential, and I don't say that without knowing how huge a task that is, particularly for docs. It's extremely hard, and you're not just having to pitch it to one broadcaster and develop a relationship there, you have to pitch it to hundreds of people to get your finances together. So refining those kind of skills is important. And, and I think the Doc Society is a good first port of call. A lot of the organisations in Wales will have various things coming up, so follow us, and the BFI Statistical Yearbook and things that come out through Comscore. Look at what's actually getting deals, because it's still quite rare for documentaries to break even financially.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah.

**Kimberley Warner** - I know this is really depressing. It's also one of the most vital genres, and I think the talent from docs, are the most innovative and entrepreneurial when it comes to building audiences. So we really do love our doc filmmakers but it's rare that you'll make a lot of money out of it, so to speak to what we do with organisations like Allison's, do consider a below-the-line role as well, you know, like, just getting that experience in crew roles. It's slightly more reliable than trying to pitch that debut feature doc that maybe without any network or track record, it's going to be difficult, and a long time to get off the ground, but working your way up in production you'll make those connections that are still pretty crucial. I don't know, Allison, if you want to speak to that?

**Allison Dowzell** - Oh, absolutely, Kimberley. You're so right. I mean, we see here, some of the guys getting together and having their own little writing clubs, and that's through networking, and writing docs, it's not just about scripted and it's so great to see. You know, network as much as possible. You know, keep your contacts. I mean, Angela, I've known you for a number of years, we reach out to each other when we need to find out something that one of us may not know, and that's so important as well. But as Kimberley said do consider a below-the-line role because they can add so much value to your CV and to your, to your thought process as well.

**Angela Clarke** - And also I think, as well, because the other thing, you know, when you work in a combination of development and production you also, I always think, you can develop but if you never work in production, you never really understand, you sometimes only ever look at the hypotheses of how things work, and when you're on production, you see the reality of, like, well actually, that's not achievable in this particular period of time and especially, I think, the other thing that is sometimes difficult for new filmmakers as you come out as well is the notion of like trying to work out budgets. Because, you know, you can be creative, but you just... And again, I appreciate that, obviously, when you get to that stage where you can have a producer and somebody can come onboard, but in those early stages, and I think sometimes that's when it's really difficult is making that first leap from, you know, being somebody a bit more junior into that first role, because you, kind of, have to have a little bit of an understanding to some degree of all these component parts.

If you're making something where you don't have a basic understanding of clearances for archive or costs or music, and all the other bits and bobs and I think that's the thing that will be useful in the future as well as trying to fill, you know, and hopefully that's something maybe a S.A.W or somebody can help fill those gaps between us, because it's really difficult. I think part of the knowledge that I have has come from being in television where those are direct transferable skills because you know you do understand what is to buy archive and how much it costs and what kind of contracts you're going to negotiate, but I think for other people that haven't come necessarily from that background, I think that can be a difficult thing. So if you are moving into the world of this, I think there are benefits that you can have, you know, because I think probably... I'm trying to think, actually, of all the people that I've spoken to certainly in the podcast series, I think everyone's done a bit of TV at some point and then

13 transferred and then as you say, you know, you develop and become more cinematic and your stories become bigger, but there are certainly some skills that are definitely... that you can take from each pot, as it were.

And as you say, Kimberley, you have to earn a living, somehow, you know. As we were laughing - you're not going to make massive bucks on this. You do it and if you can get funding to make your film, then great and you can go round the film festivals, but it isn't something unfortunately at the moment, hopefully things might change in the future, but you know it's a harder place to kind of plug away.

14 But I was gonna say, as a sum up, if you could give one piece of advice to somebody, what would you advise somebody, if it was a filmmaker starting off then, Kimberley, what would you say? What's the most important thing to try and work out? Just a small question for the end!

**Kimberley Warner** – Ah... Find a mentor. I think, find someone whose work you admire. Write them a really thoughtful and polite email, particularly if you're within Wales, approaching someone else within Wales, sometime that helps. And, and then ask them only for, you know, a call, once every three months, of an hour, give it some structure, so it doesn't get unwieldy or too much. And then you'll find that they probably want to give more. They might even end up Exec Producing your projects. We've had that happen in the past, but they'll also open you up to other relationships. I think working in isolation, as we all do now to some extent, it can be very hard to know what the next step should be, and having that objectivity on your own career and your own work is very hard. So I think that would be my best piece of advice.

**Angela Clarke** – Okay doke. Jude?

**Jude Lister** - Um, I think I would agree with that and I would add, attend film festivals. Watch work, find out what you feel is exciting. If there are people making films who you feel, could be interesting to work with, get in touch with them be proactive, whether it's as a potential mentor or whether it's somebody who's, kind of, at your level and ready to take the next step with you on a new film.

15 But yeah, try and try and connect with the industry, because otherwise it can be quite isolating when you're plugging away on your own. So try and just make sure, obviously, at the moment, it's all online but there's an awful lot of free content as well, whether that's from funding bodies or whether that's from festivals. You know, you were just talking about sales and distribution and a really good way, if you don't know anything about it, is to watch a panel. It's really low risk, all you have to do is sit there and listen to some people talking on a panel, you know, and you can start to get a sense of how people in these areas of the industry talk about film and what kind of values they place on it. So, I think if you're just starting out, that can be a really, really helpful thing to seek out.

**Angela Clarke** - Yeah, for sure. And what about you, Al?

13 **Allison Dowzell** - Oh, well, all of what Kimberley and Jude have said, but, you know, be ambitious in your project and don't be put off, you know, reach for the stars, because I know this sounds a bit cliché, but it is, it is achievable and network, network.

Do your research, you know – exactly, a mentor; if you can get a mentor, that's brilliant, but really do your research on that mentor and have three key things that you want to ask them. And, you know, so they're not put off by you suddenly bombarding them with a load of questions, just be clear and concise, of what you want and they will as Kimberley said, they love to be told that their work's appreciated. Everybody loves that. Everybody loves to know that they're doing a good job and to be able to then help you, I think, is something that they would want to do.

14 **Angela Clarke** - So just stalk, but stalk carefully. That's what you're telling us! Don't go crazy stalker. Don't go Single White Female! Ok. Well listen, thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate it everybody.

And obviously, as well, part of the reason for starting the One Stop Doc Shop was to help reach out, so if anyone wants to, get in contact or join or follow on Twitter, whatever then, you know, I've tried to, kind of, share or put people in contact as much as I can as well just of the people that I know so far.

15 But yeah, because I think it is, it's really difficult. It can be quite a lonely business especially an independent film as well. It feels very different to doing TV because when you're in TV, you're tending to be in a company and you've got, there's a bigger structure round there and you've got usually faster turnaround times or deliverables. So, I suppose there's more of an infrastructure there but when you're doing this on your own, sometimes it can feel a bit like you're swimming in the sea and bobbing around and you can't quite see anybody else to wave at.

Well, thank you so much for that and if anyone wants to go and find out any other additional info on all of your websites, you can go to Ffilm Cymru website or Screen Alliance Wales website. You've also both got blurb on other training courses and things as well that you can do for that. And as I say, you can reach out and book into one of the virtual catch-ups or meetings.

I appreciate we've gone a bit over; apologies for that and my bad time keeping. But, ok, well thank you so much, everybody. And then, yeah, Take care. Then, thank you for coming.

**All** – Thank you. Bye-bye.

16 **Angela Clarke** - Thank you.

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