

ITV announces new regional development pilot - Amplify: The Regions

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Following on from Kevin Lygo, ITV's Managing Director, Media & Entertainment, and his Commissioning Team giving an in person Producers' Briefing at HOME Theatre Manchester yesterday, ITV can today announce a brand new development initiative being piloted in the nations and regions - Amplify: The Regions.

The aim of the pilot is to further strengthen and accelerate ITV's relationships with the regional independent production community. Independent production companies based wholly in the regions (in each of the UK's nations), and not part of a larger corporate group, are encouraged to apply.

Five companies will then be chosen who will each be matched with a genre Commissioner at ITV, receive a brief and then take part in a pitch. As part of the initiative, each chosen company will be given £5,000 to develop any potential ideas. If the ideas are greenlit, the next step will be to go through the standard ITV commissioning process. If ideas are not right for ITV then the production companies are free to pitch their ideas to others.

Applications can be made at [itv.com/commissioning](https://www.itv.com/commissioning) with a deadline of Friday November 10.

This new initiative is based on ITV's Diversity Commissioning Fund's Amplify: The Companies, our pilot to accelerate relationships with diverse owned indies, and we will be announcing the names of these companies that have been selected in November.

Kevin Lygo, Managing Director, Media & Entertainment ITV said:

“For both linear and ITVX, ideas can and absolutely do often come from the nations and regions. ITV wants ideas from the regions, about the regions and produced by the regions in the regions. Which is why we’re excited today to be launching a brand new development initiative specifically for regional indies - Amplify: The Regions.”

The Producers Briefing in Manchester yesterday was also attended by Polly Hill, Head of Drama; Nana Hughes, Head of Scripted Comedy; Sue Murphy, Head of Factual Entertainment; Katie Rawcliffe, Head of Entertainment; and Paul Mortimer, Director of Reality Commissioning & Acquisitions and Controller ITV2 & ITVBe, plus their teams. The Commissioning Heads spoke alongside Kevin about what they’re looking for in commissioning terms - and how commissioning the very best content continues to be at the heart of ITV’s strategy.

As the biggest commercial PSB, for linear ITV wants the best and most unmissable, scalable ideas for a mass market audience. For ITVX, the team wants to continue to attract lighter, harder to reach audiences to premieres and then get users to stay on the platform to watch other things. And that strategy is working...

For January - August this year, ITV’s overall performance is flat which is outperforming the total broadcaster market (-1.9%). The launch of ITVX has been strong this year too and has seen significant growth in digital viewing. In August, ITVX reached a record 2 billion streams and the lighter audience is up 93%.

As part of this visit to Manchester, Kevin and the team took the time to to emphasise how ITV is open to indies of all shapes and sizes. They want the best ideas wherever they come from and if smaller companies come to them with big ideas, they have very experienced commissioners who can help shape it and put the right team together to bring it to life.

Why are the regions important to ITV? Regional commissions provide the opportunity to inclusively reflect the society within which we all live. They provide diversity of talent, both on and off screen; diversity of ideas; plus diversity of voice, opinions and experiences.

At ITV, the Regions have always been hugely important - not least in Manchester with the Granada legacy and over 450 staff producing the UK's biggest soap, Coronation Street. And not forgetting ITV produces news in 18 regions, unlike any other commercial broadcaster.

ITV spends more on programme making (including regional news) outside of London than Channel 4 and Channel 5 combined. In 2022 - 44% of ITV1 hours and 54% of ITV1 spend was OOL (quotas are 35% for hours and spend).

Recent regional commissions for ITV Drama include Sir Lenny Henry's Three Little Birds made in Birmingham and new Martin Clunes thriller, Out There is being made in Wales in association with Creative Wales. For Factual there's the Social Media Murders from CrackIt North and for Entertainment, Big Zuu's 12 Dishes in 12 Hours which is a co-pro between Two Four in Plymouth and Big Productions.

Also yesterday, a new regional commission for factual was announced. Tik Tok: Murders Gone Viral is produced by Nine Lives from Greater Manchester and Birmingham. This new true-crime series explores three tragic murders that each went viral on TikTok, including the recent shocking British case in which influencer MayBVlogs was convicted alongside her mother of a double murder.

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