

Course Outline: The Business of the Creative Industries (MA) - 1-Year Full-Time

The MA in Business of the Creative Industries is a specialisation within the broader MA in Film, Television and Games.

This intensive 1-year MA trains you how to lead, manage, finance and grow projects and businesses across film, TV, games, music, publishing, live events, and digital media.

You'll graduate with an investment-ready business plan and the skills to build it. This could be for a project within your organisation or a new production company, studio, or business.

What You'll Achieve

By the end of this course, you'll be able to:

- **Create business and financing plans for individual projects** – Develop comprehensive plans to take a film, TV series, game, theatre production, or digital content from concept to audience
- **Launch your own production company, studio, or business** – Build it with a slate of projects, a realistic business plan, financial model, and investor pitch deck
- **Lead and manage within existing companies** – Progress to management or executive roles with the strategic thinking, project management, and leadership skills to lead teams and drive growth
- **Turn creative ideas into sustainable, profitable businesses** – Pull together a slate of projects or a new innovation into a company built to last
- **Solve real business problems for entertainment companies** – Use consulting and project management techniques to transform creative organisations
- **Navigate a changing industry** – Use AI and emerging technologies to enhance storytelling or reduce costs, while building businesses that last

The programme combines the core areas of creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation with the critical elements of project management, business, legal affairs, intellectual property, and leadership, which are required to turn ideas into reality.

By the end of your studies, you will have developed a comprehensive Business Plan, Investor Deck and Pitch Deck for a project within an existing company or to create a brand-new business from scratch.

You will also create your own Business Library of business case templates and financial models, enabling you to fast-track the implementation of new ideas and innovations in the creative industries.

Course Structure

Term One: Building Your Foundation (c.10 weeks - January to March)

The first term is an intensive foundation containing two assessed modules. You will also begin contributing to your 'Master's Portfolio', a reflective account of your professional and creative practices that spans the entire programme. The schedule includes a wealth of team-based exercises, masterclasses and workshops.

MA in The Business of the Creative Industries
Commencing January 2027

- **Module 1:** The Business of Film, TV & Games
- **Module 2:** AI, Digital Media & Agile Innovation
- **Springboard Cross Specialisation Introductory Workshop**

Term Two: Putting Skills into Action (c.14 weeks - April to July)

The second term includes two assessed modules plus further development of your 'Master's Portfolio'. You will use all the skills learned in Term 1 to complete real projects for industry.

- **Module 3:** Creative Leadership & IP Strategy
- **Module 4:** Project Management & Media Consulting

Term Three: Your Final Business Plan (c. 14 weeks - September to December)

The third and final term includes one assessed module plus the final delivery of your 'Master's Portfolio'. You will follow a step-by-step process to create a final business plan for presentation by the end of the year.

- **Module 5:** Media Entrepreneur & Executive Programme
- **Master's Portfolio** completion

Term One

The first term is a 10-week intensive foundation containing two assessed modules. You will also begin contributing to your 'Master's Portfolio', a reflective account of your professional and creative practices that spans the entire programme. The schedule includes a wealth of team-based exercises, masterclasses and workshops.

Module 1: The Business of Film, TV & Games

Module 2: AI, Digital Media & Agile Innovation

Springboard Cross Specialisation Introductory Workshop

The course begins with the NFTS' all-school cross-specialisation and interdisciplinary introduction to film and television, looking at cinematic and televisual language through the prism of storytelling. It investigates how the main crafts of cinema and television - screenwriting, cinematography, visualisation, editing, sound, and music - respond to how filmmaking delivers narrative ideas. This is an opportunity for you to meet and collaborate with your peers across the school.

Module 1: The Business of Film, TV & Games

This foundation module offers a dynamic introduction to the business of storytelling across film, television, and games. Designed as a creative alternative to a mini-MBA, it explores how compelling stories become sustainable businesses and how individual projects can scale into fully-fledged companies.

You will develop essential expertise in finance, legal frameworks, intellectual property, and project management, alongside practical skills in idea development, lateral thinking, leadership, and communication.

Seminars and workshops include opportunities for you to engage directly with visiting industry practitioners, including producers, studio executives, game publishers, distributors, investors, and entrepreneurs.

Throughout the module, you will work in teams to create treatments and pitch decks that demonstrate how ideas are transformed into valuable intellectual property.

The module culminates in your individual Company Case Study and Presentation - a substantive research project analysing a creative industries business that fascinates you. You will examine how its founders applied their mission, values, business model, and strategy to succeed (or sometimes fail). This research informs the business plan you develop later in the course and serves as the assessed deliverable for the module.

The module is supported by the Business Forum, where you will develop critical analysis and debating skills by presenting your most intriguing industry discoveries. Throughout the course, you will build your own "business library" of templates, models, and resources to support your future professional endeavours.

Module 2: AI, Digital Media & Agile Innovation

Building on Module 1's foundations, you will study the practical application of innovation, emerging technology, and digital media monetisation.

Technology has long shaped creative expression and business models, from the printing press revolutionising publishing to digital workflows transforming film production. This module provides insight into what drives sustainable innovation and what derails it, emphasising that successful technology adoption begins with human needs, not technological capabilities.

You will apply Module 1's financial skills to analyse the return on investment (ROI) and the commercial viability of new technology. Building on Module 1's legal foundations, you will explore AI ethics, data protection, and IP compliance for digital workflows and innovations.

The module covers digital media monetisation strategies, including YouTube's creator economy, platform-based revenue models, and scaling digital content businesses. Through design thinking approaches, you will learn to evaluate emerging tools (AI, blockchain, AR/VR) by first understanding customer and audience stories and requirements and then assess how technology can enhance creative value creation and business growth.

The module culminates in your creation of a multimedia technology review (vodcast or podcast) examining an innovative technology or platform of your choice. You will analyse the potential impact on storytelling alongside commercial viability.

Term Two: Putting Skills into Action

The second term includes two assessed modules plus further development of your 'Master's Portfolio'. You will use all the skills learned in Term 1 to complete real projects for industry.

- Module 3: Creative Leadership & IP Strategy
- Module 4: Project Management & Media Consulting (including a Project for Industry)

Module 3: Creative Leadership & IP Strategy

Learn how great stories become global franchises. This module shows you how to find IP with potential and develop it across different platforms and brands – like Wallace & Gromit partnering with TikTok, or The Last of Us going from game to TV series.

Building on Module 1's exploration of film, TV, and games, you will expand your industry knowledge by studying how theatre, live music, and publishing make money. This gives you the complete picture of how stories work commercially across all creative sectors.

You will learn how to turn creative ideas into valuable IP while keeping the original vision intact. By studying successful franchises like Wallace & Gromit, The Last of Us, Barbie, Lego, and Pokémon, you will discover how great storytelling, smart branding, and creative leadership create both cultural impact and commercial success.

The module culminates in a presentation where you demonstrate how a story could expand across multiple platforms and revenue streams using our 'Everything Everywhere, All at Once' approach.

Module 4: Project Management & Media Consulting

Learn how to solve real business problems for entertainment companies. Just like great stories need characters who overcome challenges, successful businesses need people who can identify problems and create solutions that work.

Working in small teams, you will act as consultants for real companies, tackling actual business challenges and developing recommendations that make a difference. You will learn how major consulting firms like Deloitte and KPMG break down problems, carry out research, and present solutions that companies actually use.

You will master project management skills that get things done on time and on budget. Industry experts from leading consulting firms will teach you how they approach problem-solving in the creative sector.

The module culminates in a presentation of your recommendations for an actual business challenge set by a real company. Previous clients have included Sky Studios, ITV Studios, Territory Studios, and innovative startups.

Term Three: Your Final Business Plan

The third and final term includes one assessed module plus the final delivery of your 'Master's Portfolio'. You will create a final business plan for presentation by the end of the year.

Module 5: Media Entrepreneur & Executive Programme (MEEP)

Turn your creative vision into a real business. This final module brings together everything you've learned to create an investment-ready business plan.

You will learn how to build businesses that last – whether that's starting your own production company, developing new formats and franchises, transforming an existing organisation, or creating something completely new using emerging technology.

Using proven startup methods, you will identify real market opportunities, test your ideas, and create business plans that can survive tough investor questions. You will also develop leadership skills, including how to build creative teams, create innovative company cultures, and balance artistic vision with making money.

The module takes you step-by-step through creating a complete business plan: market research, launch strategies, financial planning, and investor presentations. You will learn from successful business founders, investors, and tax specialists about different ways to fund creative businesses – from equity investment to government grants, crowdfunding, and tax relief schemes.

You will learn how successful entrepreneurs and creative leaders build teams, make difficult decisions, and manage the tension between creative integrity and commercial success while working with boards and investors.

The course culminates with your final presentation – you will pitch your comprehensive business plan and investor deck to a panel of industry professionals and investors. This final presentation demonstrates your ability to present a compelling business opportunity with solid market research, realistic financial projections, and a clear plan for making it happen. Your project will also be presented at the prestigious NFTS Grad Show, giving you valuable exposure to potential investors and industry partners.

The NFTS Master's Portfolio

As part of the work necessary to qualify for an MA, you are required to produce a Master's Portfolio that documents and critically reflects on your professional and creative development across the course. Acting both as a record of work and a reflective analysis, the portfolio ties together learning from all modules, showing how ideas, skills, and business practices have been developed and applied.

You are expected to begin gathering material from the start of the course, with structured check-ins and written submissions due at the end of each term to guide progress and provide feedback. A final equivalent of 5,000–7,000 words, incorporating visual, audio, or video elements where appropriate, is submitted ahead of the final review.

You may present the portfolio as a document, blog, or other agreed format and are encouraged to make it visually dynamic and professionally presented. Throughout the course, tutorial support will help you frame your portfolio work against real-world case studies, business practices, and the personal projects you are developing.

The portfolio should demonstrate your engagement with the key themes of the programme – such as intellectual property, leadership, innovation, and sustainability – and show how academic insights and industry experiences have shaped your creative and entrepreneurial identity. Ultimately, it is designed to support you in making the transition from learning to leadership, articulating your professional vision as you grow your career in the media and creative industries.

Timetable & Location

The course is an intensive, full-time programme with seminars and tutorials scheduled on two specific days each week, providing a structured learning environment with dedicated time for personal study and project development.

Two-Location Model: You will study at both locations each week:

- **Beaconsfield campus:** One day per week (plus optional Screen Arts on Mondays)
- **London Soho office:** One day per week (with some variations depending on the module and guest speakers)

Location Benefits:

- Beaconsfield: Access to NFTS's state-of-the-art production facilities and close collaboration with creative students across all film and TV specialisms
- London Soho: Direct access to the heart of the UK entertainment industry, where deals are made and many companies are based

Important Practical Considerations: You will need to factor in travel costs and time for commuting between both locations throughout the year. Many students choose to:

- Live near Beaconsfield to maximise campus access and creative community connections
- Live in London for industry networking and career opportunities
- Find accommodation that balances access to both locations

Weekly Rhythm

The following programme structure gives an indication of how each week will work, with time for seminars, 1:1 tutorials, time for working in teams and working on independent project deliverables to achieve the MA Award.

Term One: Building Your Foundation

- **Monday:** Screen Arts (optional for Business students)
- **Wednesday & Friday:** Module 1: The Business of Film, TV & Games seminars and workshops (Weeks 1 – 8) and then Module 2: AI, Digital Media and Agile Innovation (Weeks 9 & 10 concluding at the beginning of term 2)
- **Tuesday & Thursday:** Self-directed study on research, set reading and deliverables with 1:1 tutorials

Term Two: Putting Skills into Action

- **Monday:** Screen Arts (optional for Business students)
- **Wednesday & Friday:** Creative Leadership & IP Strategy and Project Management & Media Consulting seminars and workshops with independent time for Project for Industry work
- **Tuesday & Thursday:** Self-directed study, industry project development, and 1:1 tutorials
- **Reading Week:** Mid-term break for independent study and project development

Term Three: Your Final Business Plan

- **Monday:** Screen Arts (optional for Business students)
- **Wednesday & Friday:** Media Entrepreneur & Executive Programme seminars and workshops
- **Tuesday & Thursday:** Self-directed study, individual business plan development and 1:1 tutorials
- **Reading Week:** Mid-term break for business plan development and Master's Portfolio completion

Other Seminars and Opportunities

Alongside and in between the modules, there are a number of exercises, workshops and seminars, including:

Screen Arts

During Term 1, you are invited to attend Screen Arts on a Monday (optional for Business students). This is an opportunity to network with all the other courses at the school during a unique programme that engages with the history, contemporary experience and wider culture of the moving image. The talks, discussions and screens all focus on "story", which is an area of shared significance across all MA courses. Storytelling is a crucial part of running for-profit or non-profit organisations, attracting audiences, partners and customers to new disruptive products and services.

Leadership and Organisational Culture

Each module throughout the course introduces you to the leadership skills and strategies needed to create entrepreneurial, innovative, and happy organisations. Through training sessions, seminars, and 1:1s with practitioners in coaching and media, you will study personality types, influencer styles, and role modelling. Teaching also includes some of the pastoral side of management, including coaching and mentoring techniques, as well as organisational culture as a leadership tool.

Communication Skills

Each module and experience at NFTS also delves into communication styles to develop your presentation and pitching skills. This training includes dedicated seminars and recording presentations on camera so that you can give feedback to yourself and gain feedback from colleagues, tutors, and industry practitioners.

Work Experience

You are welcome to seek out work experience throughout the course either to fit around seminar days or to complete during the summer and winter breaks. Whilst work experience is not a requirement of the course and cannot be guaranteed, the Head of Department and/or tutors will support you with their advice, contacts and tutorials.