



**NATIONAL
FILM AND
TELEVISION
SCHOOL**

Course outline: Creative Business

The MA in Creative Business is a specialisation within the broader **MA in Film and Television**.

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

- Media Management & Intellectual Property
- Creativity & Lateral Thinking
- AI, Innovation and Technology
- Business Models and Monetisation
- Business Affairs, including Finance, Law, HR and Marketing
- Project Management and Media Consulting, with industry projects
- The Business Plan, investment and fundraising
- Communication, Pitching and Presentation Skills.
- Management, Strategy & Leadership in Media

By the end of their studies at the National Film and Television School, students will have developed a comprehensive Business Plan following the 'NFTS pre-incubator process' with designs/prototypes for a new entrepreneurial venture for an existing organisation or a brand-new start-up. They will also create their own Business Library of seminar notes, business case templates and financial models, enabling them to fast-track the implementation of new ideas and innovations in the creative industries.

Year One:

The first year contains four assessed modules. Students will also write a proposal and a first chapter for their dissertation. The schedule contains a wealth of team-based exercises, masterclasses and workshops.

Module 1: Media Management and IP Creation

Module 2: Project Management and Media Consulting - Foundation

Module 3: Finance and Business Affairs

Module 4: Creative Leadership

Springboard Cross Specialisation Introductory Weeklong 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, relate to how filmmaking delivers narrative ideas. This is an opportunity for Creative Business students to meet and collaborate with their peers across the School.

Module 1: Media Management and IP Creation

Springboard is followed by an introduction to how each media domain – film, television, games, music, live performance, publishing, and digital entertainment / online innovation – turns ideas into valuable Intellectual Property. In the first module, students meet dozens of practitioners across these industries, giving them current insights into market practices across the value chain, from ideation/development and production to distribution, with an emphasis on monetisation. Each media domain is covered over four weeks, and students study the underlying value chain, history, business models, culture, and cross-media potential of each domain.

The seminars for the module are across Terms 1&2, culminating in submitting **The Media Management & IP Essay** in Term 3, which compares two or more creative industry domains along with a presentation. Throughout the module, students will also work in teams to present the key methods of how an idea starts to be turned into IP. These presentations will include the creation of a treatment/pitch deck that outlines this plan (for film, this might be a film proposal; for theatre, this might be an investment pack; for games, this might be a game financing plan, etc.). Students will present their treatment to their fellow students, with verbal feedback from tutors, course leaders and cohort members.

The module is supported by the **Creative Business Forum**, which runs throughout the course. This is where each student presents their favourite and most surprising analysis, piece of news, or podcast episode about the creative industries. This develops critical analysis, debating, feedback skills, and the habit of staying on top of industry developments in this fast-paced environment.

Module 2: Project Management and Media Consulting – Foundation

The key to implementing innovation and entrepreneurial ideas is a strong command of project management and consultancy techniques. Therefore, alongside Module 1, students will be introduced to various project management and creative problem-solving methodologies, including PRINCE 2, to build confidence in managing major projects and multiple projects simultaneously, which are essential skills for entrepreneurs or executives.

Towards the end of the module, students will apply what they have learned to a project. During term 1, this will be a team-based task to project manage a mock vodcast episode from ideation to production and a plan for distribution.

In term 2, students will join a team as entry-level Media Management Consultants supporting the second years to complete a Project for Industry. This is where the School or an organisation in the Creative Industry (the Client) presents students with a project/ problem that they need to solve. Supported by mentoring from experienced management consultants, students immerse themselves in researching the problem, interviewing key experts, and producing a report and recommendation. The Project for Industry is explained in more detail in the Module 8 section. This shows that students will progress to a leadership role in the team in Year 2.

Module 3: Finance and Business Affairs

Also taught alongside Module 1, in this module students will learn the financial, commercial and legal underpinnings of profit and not-for-profit firms in the media and entertainment sector. It will provide seminars and case studies on finance, media contracts and corporate analysis, the knowledge necessary to start or join a new start-up or to progress towards an executive level (e.g. COO or CEO) in an established media and entertainment firm.

The module includes a substantive individual research project, which is also the assessed deliverable for the module: the Company Case Study and Presentation. Students will build up their own 'Business Library' of seminar notes, business case templates and financial models that they can take into their professional journeys.

Module 4: Creative Leadership

Having explored the 'ecologies' and business dynamics of the seven creative industry domains in Module 1 and the basics of finance and law in Module 2, this module is dedicated to the **Creative & Corporate Director** skills required to develop strategies for successful franchises like Wallace and Gromit, who were conceived at the NFTS.

The Creative Leadership module introduces the skills and values exhibited by Creative Directors and Executives across the Media Industries. It will teach students the academic theory behind creativity with tools for lateral thinking, creative producing, storytelling, brand creation, and marketing. The module, and Year 1, conclude with a pitch deck and presentation for a new franchise based on IP created at the School or externally.

Year Two:

The second year includes four assessed modules plus the final dissertation delivery.

Module 5: AI, Innovation and Technology

Module 6: Fundraising, Investment & Strategy

Module 7: Project Management and Media Consulting - Practitioner (including a Project for Industry)

Module 8: The Graduation Business Plan

Module 5: AI, Innovation and Technology

Given the pace and scale of change, companies need to double down on technology-driven innovation to drive business growth. Therefore, this module outlines how companies are introducing disruptive technology to the workflows for each part of the value chain. The latest examples and innovations across development, production, distribution, marketing and sales will be analysed, focusing on commercial benefits such as monetisation, increased quality and efficiency. On top of collaboration and production tools, the module will also look at innovations such as VR, AR, XR, Web 3 and the Metaverse. The seminars and workshops for this module start in Term 3 of Year 1 and conclude in Term 1 of Year 2. The module culminates with students writing a newsletter article and presentation that reviews an innovative product, process, or change, including the successes and challenges and the impact it's had on business growth, company culture, and sustainability.

Module 6: Fundraising, Investment & Strategy

This module presents each chapter of a business plan, including market analysis and Go-To-Market and the key documents required to gain investment from private equity and other funding bodies. With experts and practitioners including successful business founders, venture capital fundraisers, angel investors, tax credit experts and public funding bodies, the module covers:

- Writing a Business Plan
- Completing a Market Analysis
- Venture Capital – the different stages of investing and investment incentives SEIS/ EIS
- An introduction to the stock market
- Exit routes, including Mergers and Acquisitions
- Co-production and International Financing
- Application of the Creative Industry Tax Relief (CITR)
- Government, charity and other funding
- Crowd Funding techniques

The module also introduces students to building a strategy in the digital age and managing a Board. The assessed assignment for this module will focus on creating a market analysis, which is a key part of business plan development to assure investors. This combines first-hand original research into a sector that students choose to work on with their tutors. The document the students produce can provide primary evidence to support their final graduation business portfolio.

Module 7: Project Management and Media Consulting - Practitioner

Including a Project for Industry.

This advanced module builds on the 'foundation' project management and consulting skills from Module 2 to reach 'practitioner' level training. It offers a deeper dive into consulting techniques and project management tools, including Agile. Juggling multiple responsibilities is critical for entrepreneurs and executives. Advanced project management skills are essential for future executives and reassuring potential investors.

This module includes completing a second industry-facing project. This time, the students will use their leadership, coaching and mentoring training to act as leaders in a small team. The course team will reach out to the School or industry partners to identify a project that could solve a problem for the Creative Industries, including live entertainment, publishing, music, film, TV, games and digital entertainment. A project could include:

- How to transition to a creator-based media economy less reliant on traditional commissioning?
- How best can a publishing firm work with AI?
- How to create a more inclusive recruitment policy?
- A strategy for growth for a specific audience – i.e. younger people.

Using all the skills and tools taught throughout the course, students will immerse themselves in research, interview key stakeholders, produce a report, and present a recommendation for the

client who has set the task. This is an opportunity for students to combine all their skills and build a network directly with the media industry.

Module 8: The Graduation Business Plan

The course concludes by following the NFTS Pre-Incubator Process to produce the Graduation Business Plan. This brings together all the student's entrepreneurial skills to produce a business plan and final pitch for a new venture, start-up or intrapreneurial endeavour within an existing company.

Starting with workshops on team building, students will go through the stages of ideation, development, validation, and pitching. Throughout, students will develop a comprehensive business plan as their graduation project, demonstrating market need, financials and commercial awareness. The module and the course conclude with a final pitch/presentation to an industry panel, which will also be presented at the NFTS Grad Show.

The Creative Business Dissertation

As part of the work necessary to qualify for an MA, each student is required to produce an independent written dissertation or video essay. This runs from the start of the first year to July of the second year. Following discussions with the Creative Business Department Dissertation Tutor, and Screen Arts tutors in the first half of the first year, students deliver a 500-word outline proposal by June of the first year; a 2000-word detailed proposal and structure by October of the first year (students may not progress into the second year if they fail to deliver this). A full draft dissertation of 7,000-10,000 words (including sources and bibliography) must be delivered by April of the second year, and following discussion with tutors, the final version of the dissertation by the end of July of the second year.

An alternative option of a twenty-minute video essay is also available to MA students.

The aim should be to undertake original research of an investigative nature, which extends the boundaries of specialist knowledge within particular areas of Creative Business. The dissertation may encompass any aspect of the creative industries. Students are advised to use the dissertation to help explore and develop their own practice, interests and identities as future entrepreneurs and executives.

Timetable & Location

The course structure is designed to allow students to work on projects and build new businesses alongside the course. The seminars and tutorials are, therefore, on set days of the week throughout the course, and personal study time is flexible.

The course's main base is the NFTS campus in Beaconsfield. On one day a week, seminars are delivered at the NFTS office in the heart of London's Soho, right where many entertainment firms are located. This way, students benefit from London's 'global hub' and the school's state-of-the-art facilities. Seminars in London start at 11 a.m. to avoid peak travel costs.

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, all first-year students are required to attend Screen Arts on a Monday. 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. Screen Arts can also assist in developing ideas for students’ dissertation or other research.

Leadership and Organisational Culture

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

Communication Skills

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

Work Experience

Students 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 students with their advice, contacts and tutorials.