



create studios

## ***Producing the Next Cohort of Creative Talent***

Shahina Johnson is the CEO and Artistic Director of Create Studios in Swindon, she talks about Create's beginnings and mission: "Create began over 35 years ago funded as a government initiative aimed at allowing access to film and video-making equipment, providing training to the community and in particular; young people. It was initially part of Swindon Borough Council (SBC) until 2014 when it was spun off as an independent Community Interest Company (CIC). **Create operates as a not-for-profit, social enterprise**, funded by providing film and digital services and supported by Arts Council England as one of their National Portfolio Organisations, and a small grant from SBC."



Shahina Johnson

Shahina continues "the profits from our paid professional commissions, grants from Arts Council England, Lottery Heritage Fund and SBC support our Talent and Outreach programmes, which link to local communities and young people's groups. Our Talent Development opportunities run from primary school age right through to people going into higher education or apprenticeships. Returning graduates enter into our Create Futures programme, which has been supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. These young people are bridged into their first paid employment and they also mentor younger ones through the outreach programmes and talent development."

One of Create's most famous prodigies is David Yates who is now a patron and was one of the first young people they funded to make their own short film. David went on to the National Film and Television School and then went into broadcast work and eventually directed the latter four Harry Potter films!



Swindon Heritage Action Zone

Tom Arthur, Freelance Associate, says about working with Create: "Having taken part in the Create Futures programme, I really wanted to be a part of Create Studios moving forward as I love working with all the team here. Everyone in the team is really great at what they do and I feel like I can learn from all of them. We get to work on some really exciting, meaningful content which is great and I love how we're always striving to make better and better content with every project we embark on!"

Create have continued to be involved in several high profile projects during the pandemic including:

- Historic England and The Mechanics Institute commissioned a [Swindon Heritage Action Zone film](#) for Heritage Open Day 2020.
- Chelsea Football Club, a film focused on their Academy players who were now playing for their first team; [The Pride: Mason Mount](#)
- A [5 Steps to wellbeing animation](#) for NHS CCG Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire

As a media organisation Create Studios produces an environment to let people develop skills and tell their stories around real issues by having access to a voice within moving image. Shahina is a great believer that bringing the ethos of Inclusion and Talent together via a diverse workforce is key to enriching their creative output. "We tell compelling stories with creativity and compassion, and that comes from placing a focus on a diverse workforce, including ethnic diversity, gender and orientation diversity, as well as ensuring Create is a mental health inclusive workplace. As a result, it enables us to bring real empathy and professional skills to all our projects."

Moving forward into 2021 Create plans to further diversify its team, thanks to the DCMS/ACE Cultural Recovery Fund, Create will be taking on two new apprentices and through the Kickstart programme, four new full time roles will be formed. Shahina is excited about what this means for Create: "They'll be industry entrant roles for young people that are going to enrich our team during our super busy time as we get back on top of production post-COVID 19. This is what it's about for us; making real opportunities for people."



Mason Mount



Kiara Wakeley is the first Production Manager Apprentice: “Create is at the heart of the community with everything they do and this is so apparent in the projects chosen and their work with young people. I instantly felt a sense of warmth and belonging when I started this apprenticeship and it gave me confidence to know I would be guided along a career path I could thrive on. On a regular basis I am supported by industry-led experts and a very supportive team.”

Charlotte Capener, Account Manager and Canisha Chakadya, Marketing Lead are the newest team members to join at the start of 2021:

Charlotte says, “Create’s commitment to supporting the local community and developing talent in our town drew me to the role. As a proud Swindonian, it’s great to know our work is having a positive impact and providing opportunities in the area.” Canisha adds: “My first involvement with Create was on a summer internship during my studies at University. I instantly felt aligned with the social aspect of the work at Create and the creative projects we worked on daily. It felt natural to start my career here after graduating to support their ongoing commitment to the community.”

### Find Create & Make Contact

**Create Studios:** Theatre Square, Swindon, SN1 1QN  
**Tel:** 01793 486108  
**Web:** [createstudios.org.uk](http://createstudios.org.uk)  
**Email:** [info@createstudios.org.uk](mailto:info@createstudios.org.uk)

Presented by the [Swindon Social Enterprise Network](#)



**The SSEN** is a virtual, community-based, voluntary network of like-minded individuals and organisations who are here to:

- **Support** existing Social Enterprises to grow and flourish and those contemplating starting one
- **Assist** charities who wish to create a new trading revenue stream
- **Encourage** existing, profitable businesses to deliver social/environmental impact for market advantage