

Under embargo until 10:45 Thursday 12th May



BBC Comedy announces details of Regional Partnership Scheme with Northern Film + Media and Hat Trick Productions

BBC Comedy are working on a brand-new Regional Partnership Scheme co-funded with the North East of England's creative industries development agency Northern Film + Media. The Regional Partnership Scheme has been established to support the growth of the scripted comedy supply base in an underserved and underrepresented region.

The partnership will see the companies co-develop a slate of original comedy projects over an initial 6-month period to help strengthen and enhance the local talent and project development in the region, with the aim of getting more of the North East seen and heard within the BBC's comedy output.

Northern Film + Media have selected Hat Trick Productions as the established comedy supplier that will be working with an emerging indie based in the North East of England. Hat Trick will be spending time in the region working with the selected indie to develop projects and talent, while providing business support and mentorship to help bolster the North Eastern company.

The announcement was made during the Regional Partnerships Panel at the inaugural BBC Comedy Festival which is currently taking place in Newcastle.

Emma Lawson, Commissioning Editor, BBC Comedy Commissioning says: *"The North East is the best place on earth and a hot bed of exceptional comedy talent. I'm thrilled that we are supporting Northern Film & Media and Hat Trick on a scheme that gets us closer to the regions best comic voices and stories. It's a dream come true to be collaborating on home soil and I can't wait to see what brilliant new shows and talent will emerge from the partnership".*

Alison Gwynn, Chief Executive of Northern Film + Media says: *"We are delighted that comedy in the region is being supported in such a huge way. We hope by working closely with BBC Comedy and comedy giant Hat Trick we can bring opportunities to regional talent developing knowledge, skills and networks. The partnership will be a catalyst for growth in the sector and we're excited to see local talent flourish."*

Jimmy Mulville, Managing Director of Hat Trick Productions says: *"Hat Trick is honoured to be working with BBC Comedy and Northern Film and Media on this fantastic project. The North East has a rich legacy of iconic comic talent both in front and behind the camera and we can't wait to get stuck in to find the next generation of hit comedies!"*

The North East Regional Partnership Scheme is part of the BBC's commitment to making its biggest investment in the North East of England for decades as part of a new partnership with the region.

The BBC last year announced it will spend at least £25m over the next five years right across the North East to fund network TV production, talent development and support for the creative sector.

Notes to editors:

Applications are now open for North East based indies to apply, more details can be found here: <https://northernmedia.org/regional-partnership-scheme-with-northern-film-media-and-hat-trick-productions/>

Hat Trick will be in the North East of England to run a session with Northern Film + Media and The North East Comedy Hot House on the 23rd May. There will be an opportunity for North East talent to hear from Jimmy Mulville, one of the founders of Hat Trick, about developing distinctive and popular comedy series and the journey that led them to become one of the leading producers of comedy, drama and entertainment in the UK.

Northern Film + Media is the North East of England's creative industries development agency. We work with businesses and professionals specialising in film, TV and screen-based arts, primarily through our talent development projects, events and production service. In addition, we drive regional commercial film and television production and attract inward investment by promoting the region as a base for incoming film and TV production.

Hat Trick Productions is an independent production and distribution company co-founded and led by Jimmy Mulville with offices in London and Belfast. Established with the principle of putting writers first, they continue to nurture both new and established creative talent.

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