



the Bottle Yard
STUDIOS

Covid-19: A message to self-employed and freelance workers in Bristol's film, TV & moving image sector

25th March 2020, 5pm

COVID-19 has caused unprecedented changes to film and TV production around the world. In the UK, nearly all production has halted. At this time of extreme uncertainty, we know that many of you in Bristol have either lost work, or face losing work. We know that the [Government measures announced on 20th March](#) do not go far enough to provide the vital support needed by self-employed workers and freelancers in this sector.

We want you to know that [Bristol Film Office](#) and [The Bottle Yard Studios](#) (divisions of Bristol City Council) are lobbying on behalf of Bristol's production community at the highest level. We are liaising with Bristol City Council's Economic Development team, senior leaders, councillors, local MPs and local/national sector bodies, to make sure the needs of the workforce in this sector are fully represented during city and regional planning.

Yesterday, the Chancellor said that he is looking at support for self-employed in "intense detail" and that he is "in dialogue with all the key stakeholder groups". An amendment to the Coronavirus Bill has been put forward, proposing statutory self-employment pay to cover the lower of £2,917 or 80% of a self-employed/freelance person's monthly earnings, averaged over the last three years. The Chancellor is expected to make a further announcement on this tomorrow (26th March). We will update you as the situation develops.

Please read our latest update about restrictions on location filming in Bristol [here](#).

If you'd like to reach out to us with your comments, please email bristolfilmoffice@bristol.gov.uk.

Bristol Film Office & The Bottle Yard Studios

Hardship support

- A new [Covid-19 Film and TV Emergency Relief Fund](#) has been announced, to be delivered by The Film & TV Charity in partnership with the BFI, with a £1m donation from Netflix. Eligibility criteria is yet to be announced but the Fund will be open to those working in production, distribution and exhibition. [Register for the charity's mailing list](#) to be first to hear when the Fund launches.
- Those in immediate need can apply to [The Film and TV Charity's existing Hardship Fund](#), which offers grants of up to £500 to provide stop-gap support.
- Art Council England has announced a [£160m emergency support package](#), which includes [£20m allocated for individuals \(artists, creative practitioners and freelancers\)](#). Grants of up to £2,500 are available to creative practitioners whose main work is focused on: Music, Theatre, Dance, Visual Arts, Literature, Combined Arts, Museums. More details will be released on 30 March, applicants will need to register on the application portal by 3 April.

Further information

- Association of Independent Professionals & the Self-Employed (IPSE): [Covid-19 Hub](#)
- BECTU: [Covid-19 advice for freelancers working in film & TV](#) and [email your MP](#) tool
- BFI: [Answering questions from the screen sector](#) – information for freelancers, self-employed, productions, cinemas and venues
- Creative Industries Federation: [Covid-19 guidance from the sector](#)
- Directors UK: [FAQs for members and freelancers](#)
- Equity: [Guidance and financial support](#)
- The Film + TV Charity support line (0800 054 0000) and [web chat](#), open 24/7 to offer advice, signposting and a listening ear
- Pact: [Covid-19 update for indies](#)
- The Production Guild of Great Britain: [Covid-19 advice](#)
- ScreenSkills: [Supporting our workforce during the Covid-19 crisis](#)
- The Writers' Guild of Great Britain: [Guidance and financial support](#)

