



National Film and Video Foundation

# The State of Skills

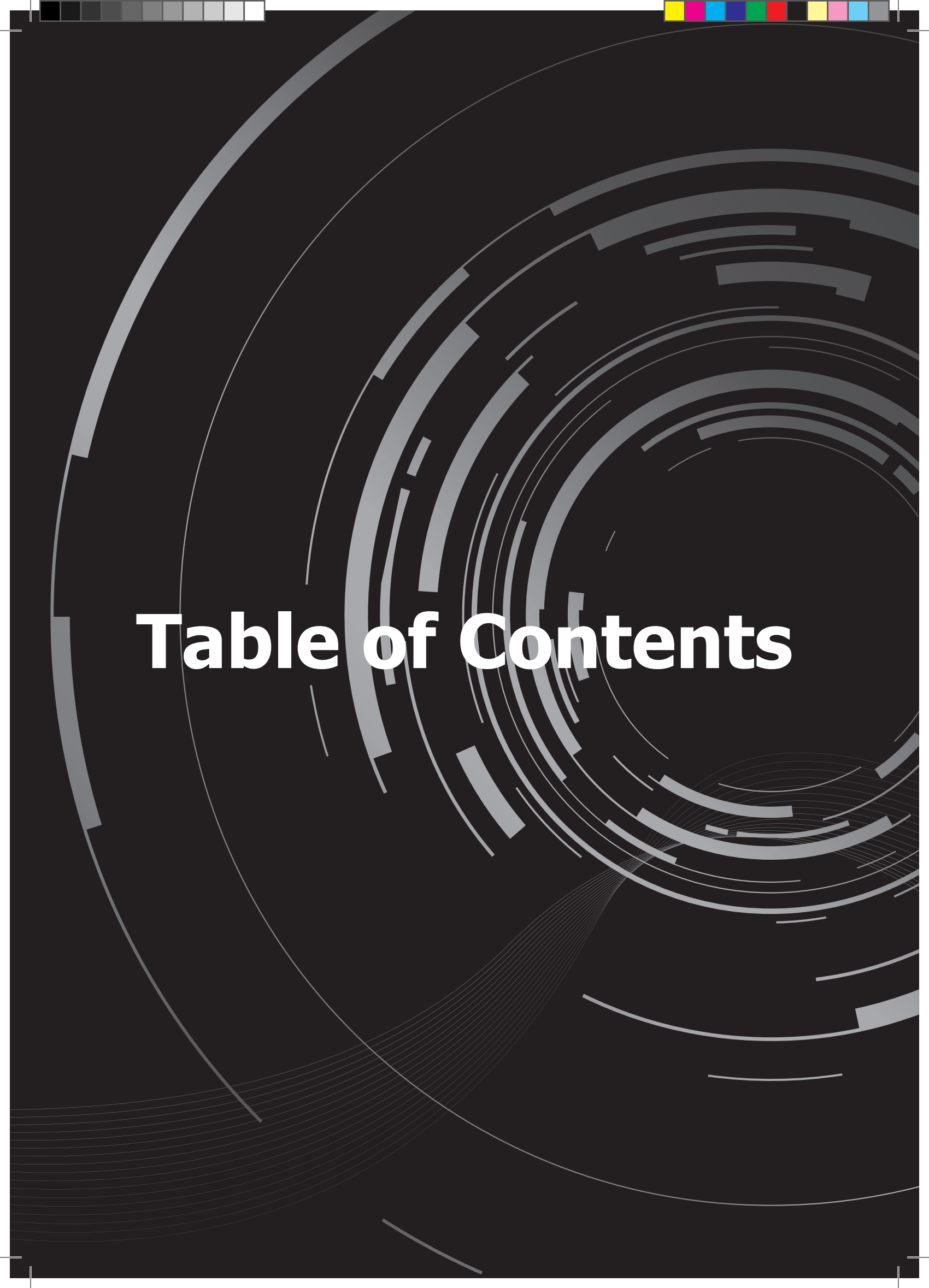
in the South African Film Industry.



**national film and video foundation**  
SOUTH AFRICA

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an agency of the  
**Department of Arts and Culture**



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## Terms

*The research team recognises that many of the terms used in this report are used by different stakeholders in different contexts to mean different things. The end result of this is often initial miscommunication and misunderstanding, where consensus is needed. During the sector workshops it was apparent that this was the case with a number of the terms used in skills development. With this in mind, when the report makes use of the following terms, the accompanying meaning is implied.*

### Employers and the professions

Those who could or do employ school leavers, graduates or university students across the film value chain. This includes all aspects of the film industry.

### Expert

A person in the workplace who possesses and generates advanced practice knowledge. Their practice is typified by automaticity grounded in wisdom of experience often referred to as “expert intuition”. An expert is also referred to as a “professional practitioner”. Benner (1984) argues that the development of expertise requires a minimum of ten years’ continuous practice.

### Government

National, provincial and local government that legislate for policy and funding at training institutions

### Higher education institution

Used interchangeably with university, academy and training institution.

### Host organisation

Organisation with which the university has a work-integrated learning partnership. Differentiated from “workplace”, since a single host organisation may have several workplaces in which students undertake their work-integrated learning experiences.

### Industry

Overarching term for a collective field of endeavour or enterprise. In this case, the film and video industry.

### Intern

Someone who has graduated from a training institution and is participating in the workplace on a full-time basis for a limited time period.

### Learners

The students undertaking work-integrated learning experiences. As students, they come to the workplace as learners. Used interchangeably with students.

### Learning guides

Professionals in the workplace who guide students in learning workplace practices. May also be called supervisors or co-ordinators or mentors.

### Mentors

See above concerning learning guides. Can be used interchangeably.

### Previously disadvantaged groups

The previously disenfranchised population groups in South Africa, i.e. blacks, coloureds, and Indians. The term “Previously Disadvantaged Individuals”, as broadly used by government, also includes women and the physically challenged of all races.

### Real world

The world of work and community life in general in contrast to formal university classes.

### Stakeholder

Generic term for all parties involved in the work-integrated learning process, including the university, university co-ordinator, student, workplace or employers, workplace supervisor/co-ordinator, workplace learning guides, host organisation and clients.



## **Stakeholder approach**

Rights and needs of all stakeholders are considered. All stakeholders are inducted into their roles and responsibilities in preparation for work-integrated learning. The approach is mutually beneficial, and has clear agreements and commitment between all parties.

## **Students**

See learners. The term “students” is used interchangeably with learners as our focus is on the students as learners.

## **WIL placement**

A type of work-integrated learning that requires the student to be situated in the workplace.

## **WIL staff**

Academic and professional staff who organise, manage and enact WIL activities.

## **Work-based learning**

Term for learning programmes that are instigated by, and begin within, a workplace. Industries and organisations negotiate with universities to accredit learning and accumulated expertise that has developed through practice within the workplace and professional development. This recognition of work-based learning is also enhanced with supplemental theoretical education provided by the universities. These programmes are driven by learning organisations that seek to enhance the capabilities of their existing workforce. Work-integrated learning has broader goals gaining a competitive edge in the student enrolment market, forging authentic, comprehensive industry and community partnerships, and producing work-ready graduates.

## **Work-integrated learning experience**

Time students spend learning in the workplace as part of the work-integrated learning component of their formal programme of study. Also referred to as placement.

## **Work-integrated learning (WIL)**

An umbrella term for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum. Other terms used to describe work-integrated learning include practicum, internships, fieldwork, co-operative education, field education, sandwich course, service learning, international service learning.

## **Workplace learning**

Learning that happens in the workplace. Interchangeable with work-integrated learning and learning in the workplace.

## **Workplace**

The context in which students undertake the work-integrated learning experiences that form part of their overall programme of study. It may be an organisation, a workplace that is part of an organisation with many workplaces, or a private workplace run by its own management, policies and ways of working. The workplace is a learning environment within which two learning agendas are pro-actively managed so that students work in order to learn and at the same time learn to work. These two different but complementary learning agendas are recognised in terms of the instructional and supervisory arrangements, and legal, ethical and duty of care considerations.

## **Work-ready**

Graduates with a combination of content knowledge and employability skills, such as communication, team work and problem solving, which enables effective professional practice.





## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This final report completes the study which was undertaken by Blueprint and provides an assessment of the existing and required skills situation within the South African film industry. The NFVF requires a deeper understanding of the state of skills in the South African film industry in order to fast track the development of critical skills. This report provides both research into the existing skills as well as a model for the development of skills which are responsive to industry needs. To this end the NFVF has contracted Blueprint to conduct a study into the current state of skills and the supply and demand specifically within the film sector.

### 1.1. BACKGROUND

The National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) is a statutory body created in terms of the National Film and Video Foundation Act 73 of 1997 to develop and promote the South African film and video industry. Section 4 (1) (d) of the NFVF Act mandates the NFVF to conduct research into any field of the film and video industry. The NFVF is furthermore mandated by section 3(e) of the Act to address historical imbalances in the infrastructure and distribution of skills and resources. The NFVF funds students to study in any field related to film and also allocates funding to organisations in the training and development areas of film as part of its mandate, section 4 (1) (f). The NFVF has entered into partnership with the Media, Information and Communication Technology Sector Education and Training Authority (MICT SETA) to fast track skills development.

It is therefore important for the NFVF to understand the current state of skills and the supply and demand specifically within the South African film industry. The demand comes from the personnel needs of the employers and industries in the sector and needs to be matched against existing provision of supply by relevant tertiary institutions and other training providers. Only then will it be possible to identify gaps and develop a plan to address these gaps.

The supply and demand for skills needs to be understood across the value chain. The South African film industry value chain is generally made up of four sections: pre-production, production, post-production and distribution. Each phase can potentially generate a range of employment opportunities provided that funding is available for industry expansion and the demand for local productions remains vibrant.

The availability of critical skills is a pre-requisite for successful investment and sustainable economic development in any sector. The Sectors and Skills report published by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2009 exposed a general lack of business and entrepreneurial skills within the creative sector. According to the report there are a large number of occupations within the creative industries, many of which are specific to individual sectors such as film production accountants and music publishers. In general, the majority of occupations in the creative industries are found in higher-skilled jobs, at technical or managerial level.

The NFVF requires a deeper understanding of this matter in order to develop plans to fast track the development of critical skills.

### 1.2. CONTEXT

Skills development in South Africa is guided by the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III, the pillars of which guide the skills development agenda for all skills stakeholders. One of the pillars focuses on the alignment of sector strategies to the strategies of government and industry whereby these projects are to be developed with, and supported by, the sector stakeholders. The critical stakeholder in this sector is the Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority (MICT SETA).

The MICT sector is made up of five sub-sectors that are varied but interconnected and at the forefront of technology. The five sub-sectors are Advertising, Film and Electronic Media, Electronics, Information Technology, and Telecommunications, and the products and services provided are complementary to one another. The MICT SETA serves as the catalyst for achieving South Africa's skills development potential and economic growth. Its role is to encourage and influence growth across all five sub-sectors through skills development programmes and initiatives and to develop and improve the skills needed within the sector. The MICT SETA intends to engage in learning programmes that lead to employment and new venture creation, whilst at the same time implementing programmes that assist in bridging the digital divide, especially in rural areas.

It appears that the areas of scarcity for most of the Film and Electronic Media occupations exists primarily in more technical roles specific to the sector and less on generic skills such as HR and finance. In addition, print journalists with particular specialisations were identified as scarce. There are 624 accredited training providers listed on the MICT SETA data base.



### 1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS ASSIGNMENT

The Foundation wishes to assess the existing skills situation within the South African film industry, and the extent to which the industry is responsive to its needs and match those needs with the skills required.

### 1.4. SCOPE OF WORK

It is envisaged that the research will provide a profile of the skills demand in the sector and therefore a better understanding of the skills needs. The following areas will also be addressed:

- The total population of learners enrolled at tertiary institutions within the media and film studies
- Demand and supply of skills within the sector
- Scarce and critical skills within the sector
- Profile of training institutions and of learning/courses provided
- The impact on institutions for sourcing skills
- Existing skills development strategies and interventions
- The role of MICT-SETA in the sector

To achieve these objectives Blueprint has carried out the following tasks:

- Development of a research proposal
- Design of a suitable methodology
- Review of literature relevant to the topic
- Determination of the skills needs of the industry using the research methodology
- Analysis to determine skills gaps
- Suggestion of a skills development plan to address the gaps in the industry
- Report on these findings to the Foundation and other invited stakeholders
- Recommendations with respect to future employment, and training and development practices within the sector.

This is the final report synchronising the primary and secondary research and providing recommendations and suggestions for implementation.

### 1.5. STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

The report comprises six sections as well as appendices:

- Following the introduction, section two summarises the research methodology.
- Section three describes the research findings on which the model will be based. Section four identifies the various components of the model and the role of respective stakeholders.
- Sections five and six examine the skills development plan, various options for the structure of the model and provide some suggestions for implementing the model through a phased approach. This is followed by a conclusion.
- Appendices, including the literature review, are attached to the electronic version of this report.



## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research project was separated into two distinct phases:

- A research phase, and
- A reiterative design phase

The research phase drew extensively on desk-top research conducted on skills development nationally and internationally. Numerous reports were made available to the researchers by the National Film and Video Foundation.

In addition to this secondary research, primary research was carried out through structured and semi-structured interviews with experts, graduates, employers, as well as private and public sector training institutions. The findings were presented to a stakeholder group in the reiterative workshops facilitated by the client.

Following from the findings and in keeping with the brief from the Terms of Reference, a model was developed in order to develop plans to fast track the development of critical skills. The proposed model was presented to the client in an internal meeting and then reworked following input and suggestions from the client. The proposed model was then presented at a public forum, facilitated by the client. Feedback was invited from members of the public and this feedback, together with additional thoughts and input from the client, was then incorporated into this report and into the development of the final model.

An internal meeting was held with the client to present these final results.

### 2.1. SECONDARY RESEARCH - LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was conducted with a view to determining current trends within the sector regarding skills needs as well as supply and demand. The literature review analysed skills development strategies both locally and internationally to highlight strategies that have worked as well as those that have been less successful in developing and promoting needed skills. The Foundation contributed to the literature review by providing the researchers with access to material and reports. Additional sources were obtained through online searches and by expert interview suggestions and recommendations.

### 2.2. PRIMARY RESEARCH - SURVEYS AND INTERVIEWS

Primary research was conducted using survey methodology and semi-structured interviews. All survey and semi-structured interview instruments were designed and tested by the research team before being signed off by the Foundation. In essence four population groups were defined: the experts, the employers, recent graduates who had been employed in the sector, and training institutions.

- **Experts:** members of this group were knowledgeable about the sector and included representatives of sector bodies, such as Government and statutory bodies, SETA representatives, and sector associations. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted; otherwise telephonic interviews took place.
- **Employers:** Members of this group are representatives of the Skills Development Levy (SDL)-contributors to the MICT SETA. These individuals are the ones at the forefront of the skills demand within the sector and are aware of the changes within the sector and the reflective changes in skills demand.

Drawing on the 2015 Whole Lot Directory, a trade directory for the film and video industry, 733 businesses were identified. From this, a sample of approximately 20% (151 businesses) were identified and contacted telephonically. This sample was identified as representative of their position in the value chain (pre-production, production, post-production and all stages of the value chain), as well as meeting provincial representation. These employers were contacted telephonically. They responded confidentially to a number of close-ended questions relating to skills development in the sector.

**Table 1: Employers' sample size by province**

Sample Size by Province	
Eatern Cape	5
Gauteng	60
KwaZulu-Natal	8
Western Cape	78
Total Sample Size	151

**Table 2: Employer sample size by position in the value chain**

Sample Size by position in value chain	
Pre-Production	49
Production	33
Post-Production	22
All stages of the value chain (largely production houses)	47
Total	151

- **Employed:** Recent employees moving into the sector are very likely to be aware of the skills that they were lacking on entry into the employment market. Using a list provided by the Foundation, recent entrants who had participated in an internship programme were contacted telephonically and asked to respond to a number of close-ended questions relating to their own level of skills in the sector. Twenty-five graduates were identified by the NFVF for this research. Of the 25 graduates we were able to contact 16 graduates, equivalent to a sample size of 64%. Just over half of the respondents were female (nine females).
- **Institutions:** Guided by experts and the Whole Lot Directory, we identified and contacted over 30 institutions which are registered as training institutions with the Department of Higher Education and which broadly provide training in the film and video industry. 27 institutions responded.

### 2.3. REITERATIVE WORKSHOPS

A series of workshops were held by the Foundation where the research team presented their findings. The purpose of these workshops was two-fold: to ensure that the findings and the interpretation of the research conducted to date are relevant and accurate, and to develop buy-in from the sector on the skills development process. Previous experience has shown that this process, involving the sector at intermittent stages of the research and design work, allows for changes to be made in the design process and reflects the real needs of the sector. The workshops are also useful for outlining different perspectives and viewpoints on the process, and to an extent, incorporating these viewpoints into the final design.

All the populations groups identified in the primary research were invited to attend workshops held in four venues: Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and East London. The workshops were held in February 2016, focused on the results of the literature review and the findings of the interviews and broadly tested a model.

Logistics for the workshops (invitations, RSVPs, venue hire, catering, etc.) were handled directly by the Foundation. The research team was responsible for the development of the agenda, facilitating and reporting on the workshops.



### 3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### 3.1. KEY FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is included in this report as an appendix. To provide some context to the suggestions and recommendations outlined below, however, the main findings of the report are summarised in this section.

A baseline economic study conducted by Deloitte on behalf of the NFVF found that during 2012 the South African film industry contributed R3.5 billion to South Africa's GDP and over 25 000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs— an increase of approximately 19 000 jobs since 1995.

The industry has been forecast to grow extensively over the next few years, and the value of television advertising and online television advertising could increase to R40,9 billion in 2019. In terms of government support, it more than pays for itself with a delivery back to SARS of more than R670 million (R420 million more than an estimated Film Incentive of R250 million paid out in 2012). Furthermore, the industry has an economic multiplier of 2.89, i.e. for every R1 spent in the industry, another R1.89 is generated within the South African economy.

Globally, the proliferation of connected devices such as smartphones will create both significant new opportunities and considerable challenges for companies creating and distributing filmed entertainment content. PwC notes that digital growth is likely to fuel the overall rise with Internet access and advertising set to increase. Online television advertising revenues are in their infancy but are expected to grow to R9 million by 2019. Unfortunately, while broadband coverage in South Africa is poor and expensive, penetration will remain constrained.

The growth of the film industry could introduce more business opportunities to more production companies and to new entrants, thereby facilitating employment opportunities and transformation.

Several strategies and schemes have identified ways of developing the potential of the industry:

- The Department of Trade and Industry (dti) in particular has been offering rebates to encourage local-content generation and production as well as to attract international productions and co-productions. It appears, however, that the benefits of this incentive are not high enough to attract foreign films away from countries with more competitive film incentives.
- The National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) supports South African-owned production companies, helps the industry access funds, promotes the development of South African film and television audiences, develops talent and skills in the country – with a special emphasis on previously disadvantaged groups – and helps filmmakers represent and market their work internationally.
- The Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) aims to develop a sustainable motion picture value chain in South Africa by supporting the development of digital cinemas in townships and rural areas. It invests in commercially-viable projects and provides funding in the form of equity investment, commercial loans and venture loans but it will not fund more than 49% of a project.
- Gauteng and Kwazulu-Natal have established regional film commissions to market the provinces internationally and locally as choice location destinations and to create enabling environments for film makers. Wesgro in the Western Cape is responsible for location marketing.
- The South African Revenue Service allows a film owner three special deductions relating to production and post-production costs, marketing expenditure incurred on a South African Export Film (SAEF marketing deduction), and print costs.
- South Africa has entered into a number of audio-visual co-production treaties that make provision for collaboration on film, television, video and multi-media distribution platforms with several countries.

The Industry Skills Analysis shows that there is generally a high demand for experienced, well-skilled personnel, particularly from previously disadvantaged groups. An overview of the industry shows inconsistent and non-existent career paths as practitioners move from job to job in search of a pay cheque and very little upskilling takes place. A second problem is that occupational descriptions are not standardised and although this may be difficult in the film industry, it is necessary.

The MICT SETA Strategy Plan for 2012 identified that new technological requirements call for constant upskilling across a range of areas. There is a critical shortage of technical roles specific to the film industry as technological advancements are happening at such a fast pace. The risk is that if South Africa is not able to manage this, the industry will not remain globally competitive. As it is there is a perception that South Africans do not have the high level skills that meet international standards. There is also a dire need for practitioners who possess good financial management and negotiation skills, as these form part of the value chain. Other skills shortages include script writers, film producers and creative practitioners.



Skills training ranges from on-the-job training to mentorships and learnerships. While these go some way to meeting industry needs they all have their own challenges. One relatively successful programme is SEDIBA: it relies on mentoring and skills transfer but has been criticised for a formulaic approach to scriptwriting and production.

Recruitment patterns and graduate absorption have not changed significantly: even today training and development of new film graduates rely heavily on the individual securing a junior position on set and learning on-the-job. The growth in the graduate labour force has not been matched by a growth in the industry and therefore in demand.

Many members of the film industry are self-trained and do not have formal qualifications and many consider current education and training far removed from the realities of the industry. Most believe that graduates from training institutions have little or no knowledge of the industry and have unrealistic expectations of how to fit into the industry. Graduates, on the other hand, expect to perform occupations they were trained in, are frustrated and are inclined to job hop. They believe that the key is a greater emphasis on practical experience while studying. In general, there is very little opportunity of entering the job market if you do not have previous work experience, have not been recommended by your training institution or do not have the relevant industry links. Furthermore, the South African film industry is largely comprised of small companies that are not always able to provide on-the-job training, mentorships or internships for learners seeking work placements.

The greatest challenges to the sustained development of skills are technological advances, which mean the need of constant (re)training of employees, potential employees and students, and the level of commercial success of the South African film and television industry itself.

Several factors influence skills development within the industry. These include:

- There is an uneven spread of infrastructure capable of supporting big content productions.
- Existing production companies have a competitive edge in winning projects, making it difficult for new companies to enter and stay in the industry.
- Small companies outside the main urban centres find it difficult to access development funding, and new businesses often cannot survive the inconsistent nature of work supply. Their sustainability is directly related to increased job opportunities for new entrants and to the production of more diverse content.
- Slow transformation in business ownership and a perception that black people are generally under-skilled and perpetually in

need of training exist.

- Opportunities to train new entrants and existing practitioners are limited. Low production volumes result in producers doing most of the work themselves, paying low rates and forcing shorter production periods.
- There is a need for extensive market research to identify content that would appeal to the existing audience and develop new target markets.
- More focus on marketing and creating audience awareness could encourage investment, and funds should be directed towards the distribution phase. In addition, it would help to introduce quotas for local content and encourage co-productions with foreign companies as they generate foreign exchange inflow, technology transfer and opportunities for the development of the skills-base of the South African filmmakers.
- A lack of development funding for concept development and for film production costs is apparent – despite the various incentives. Without the necessary growth in local content production, the skills base in South Africa will inevitably stagnate.

## 3.2. SURVEY FINDINGS

### 3.2.1. GRADUATES

A list of graduates' names was provided by NFVF. These graduates had all been placed on internships with various companies by the Foundation. We were able to contact 16 graduates for this survey. The research questions were structured in order to gain an understanding of the graduates' experience of their education and their entry into the workplace. Of the 16 graduates interviewed, 14 graduates or 88% were employed in the sector – 57% on a full-time basis and 43% on a part-time basis. Two graduates were unemployed and looking for employment within the sector.

Graduates had attended a broad range of institutions as seen in the table below. While the majority of them had qualifications in the technical aspects of the film industry or had broadly qualified in media studies, some had not. For example, one graduate had a BCom (Management Accounting) and another had an LLB (Law).

Graduates were asked whether they felt that the education they had received at their training institutions had been adequate. Respondents felt it had largely been adequate with only one person (6%) feeling it had been inadequate. Generally, respondents were pleased with their training but had suggestions for improving the curriculum – largely related to the need for more workplace exposure and a greater emphasis on practical work. One respondent noted that "it was not adequate because I feel it has not provided skills beyond theory that are needed in the workplace..."

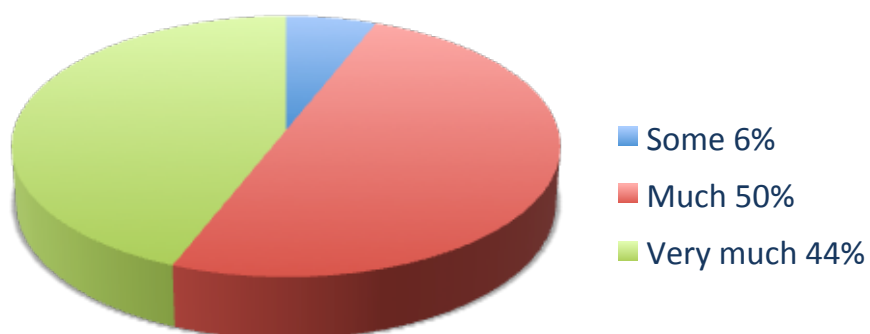


Figure 1: Has your education been adequate?

Training Institution	
NEMISA	2
Damelin College	2
Tshwane University of Technology	2
AFDA	2
University of Johannesburg	3
Boston Media College	2
Wits University	1
University of KwaZulu-Natal	1
Cape Town Film Studios	1
Total	16

Figure 1: Has your education been adequate?

### How has your education been adequate?



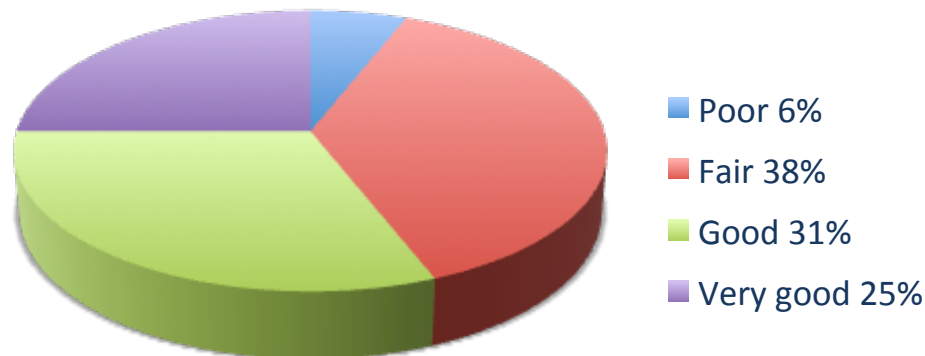
When asked whether the graduates' qualifications prepared them adequately for employment or the workplace, a quarter (25%) believed they were well prepared; 30% of the respondents felt that their qualification had prepared them; 38% believed that their qualification had prepared them fairly well; while one person (6%) did not feel it had prepared him adequately for the workplace.

When asked to substantiate their comments, the respondents who believed that they were well prepared explained that they had been provided with basic knowledge of the sector and could apply it. Some respondents were warned that the workplace differed from the theory which they were learning. Two of the respondents who felt their training had been good noted that they had used the same equipment as that used in the workplace. This made it easy for them to adapt to the workplace. Of the students who felt that the training was fair or poor, however, some noted that they felt they had struggled to adapt to the workplace for numerous reasons including insufficient practical experience; different terminology used at the workplace and in theory (A graduate pointed out that most of the books they were using at university are American-based. This makes it difficult to understand the South African industry because it is very different.); the need for them to multi-task and manage their time; and the difficulty of having to work as a team with different people.



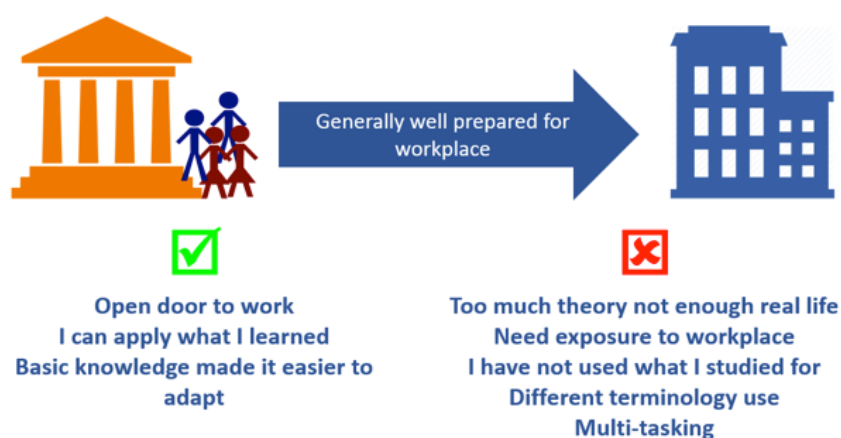
Figure 2: How would you rate your qualification in preparing you for employment?

### How would you rate your qualification in preparing you for employment?



Graduates provided suggestions of what could have been done better at the training institutions. These suggestions are similar to the reasons which they gave for struggling to adapt to the workplace and include a lack of networking opportunities and insufficient practical experience, e.g. "The institution should have provided seminars or interaction between students and people who are already in the field with experience to advise and equip us with ideas of how the industry operates in the real world." Another graduate felt that they could have been warned about the long hours expected of them. The need for students to learn the terminology used in the workplace was mentioned, and one graduate noted that courses should be broader "for example, if you're studying towards production, they should also teach you editing, scriptwriting and all. They should not focus on one thing because the media industry is way broader and bigger."

Figure 3: Findings: Graduates



Overall graduates valued their education as providing them with theoretical knowledge but they were frustrated as they also felt there could be more opportunities created for them to network and gain practical experience. Many of the concerns raised by the graduates - including the vast difference between the theories they are taught and the reality - can be learned through workplace exposure/experience. The importance of networking in the South African film industry cannot be ignored because it is a crucial path to employment in an industry that is generally considered difficult to break into. One respondent said: "Most production companies should try to give young South African film makers opportunities to discover themselves and get enough knowledge to break into the industry." More than one graduate recommended that all graduates should gain exposure to various activities or positions within the film value chain.



Figure 4: Findings: Graduates

## Findings: Graduates

Suggestions for improvement

- Interactions between students and industry networking
- Technical exposure to workplace including in-service learning & internships
- Exposure to all areas (from scriptwriting to post-production)

### 3.2.2. EMPLOYERS

Film production is cyclical, and as a result employment figures fluctuate, however, more than one third (36%) of employers interviewed had one full-time employee although there were very few companies with over 10 employees on a full-time basis (79%). During shoots, most employers contract freelancers – with major shoots employing up to 150 freelancers. The implication of this is that these businesses have limited capacity to absorb, mentor and guide interns or WIL candidates as stand-alone businesses; they tend to work in co-operation with a range of other single person operations. Consequently, this network is “closed”, and the only way to enter is through exposure to the network and by invitation. Therefore, any WIL-related solution needs to take these limitations and challenges into consideration.

Figure 5: Number of full-time employees

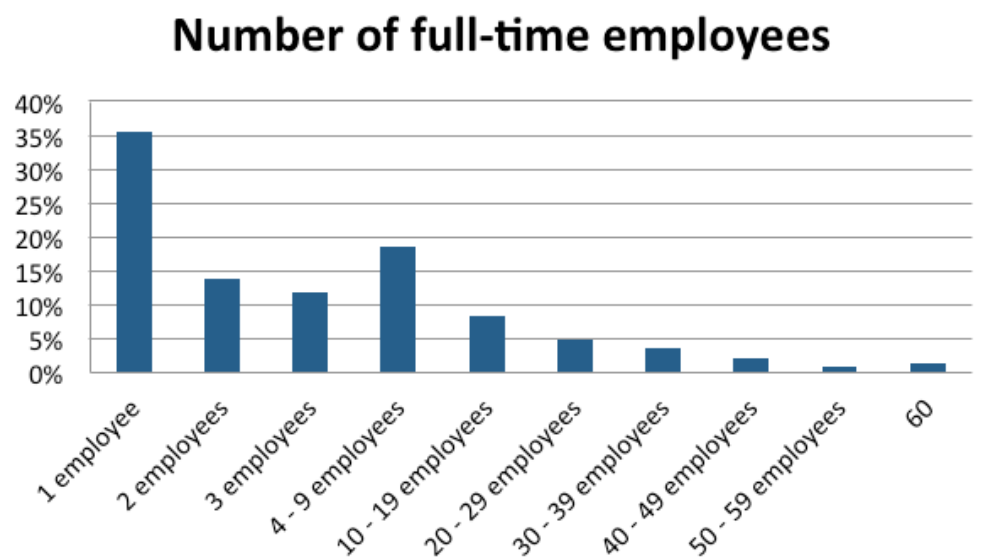
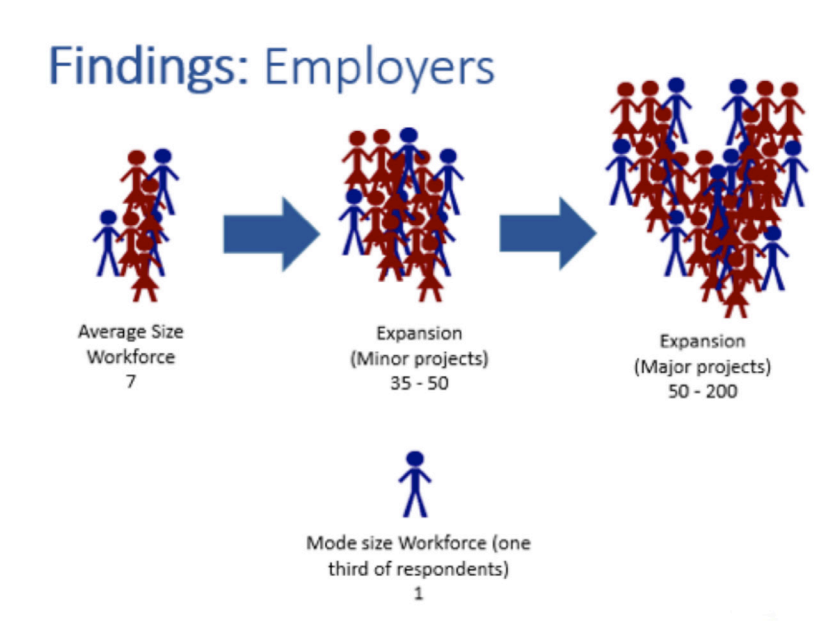


Figure 6: Findings: Employers



Employers were asked: “Which skills do you most struggle to find when recruiting people for your company?” The responses indicated skills shortages across the value chain and were dependent on the respondent’s position in the chain. Some of the most mentioned scarce skills include:

- production staff – especially producers
- editors
- camera operators and DoPs
- sound engineers
- writers
- lighting skills and engineers
- animators
- administrative skills (budgeting)
- and basic technical skills (examples provided are rolling up cables, cleaning cameras, handling video equipment and general knowledge of equipment and products).

In addition, a number of non-cognitive skills that are needed were identified. These include the ability to think for themselves, time management, problem solving, work ethics, attitudes and communication. As one respondent said: “Common sense. People do not know how to think for themselves.” An employer in Durban noted that in Durban, every department in the film industry lacks skills. Another respondent mentioned that even people who have been in the industry for a while do not update their skills as new technology becomes available.

When asked what the skills problems in the film industry are, employers generally felt problems were related to six areas:

- The model used by the learning institutions does not work as students need more practical training. “People go to all these film schools and training

institutions, pay over R100,000 per year and then don’t get practical training. They get misused when they get out, and they lose heart.”

- The people doing the teaching in the institutions lack technical knowledge and do not have first-hand experience within the film industry.
- Graduates tend to have theoretical rather than practical knowledge.
- Graduates have unrealistic expectations, poor attitudes and lack non-cognitive skills and workplace ethics.
- The administrative side of production is often forgotten but is crucial.
- People who have been in the industry for a while do not update their skills. “There are always new things happening, new technologies and new equipment coming out every so often, and people do not take the initiative to improve themselves and update their knowledge and skills.”

Employers were asked about the three most common obstacles they faced in employing staff straight from learning institutions. Responses varied but were largely negative with many saying that they tend not to employ new graduates because the new graduates need to be “retrained”. This is costly and time-consuming, particularly because the budgets and the deadlines are so tight that it is sometimes impossible to use people with no experience.

One respondent went as far as saying: “Students are not employable when they come from learning institutions. If you hire them, you should be willing to train them.” Other comments included: “They expect that this is an easy, glamorous industry to get into. They don’t understand and appreciate the hard work that is required and the long hours. They are often very disillusioned and then want to quit. Training institutions should prepare them for



this.” Non-cognitive skills were mentioned as a problem as was graduates’ attitudes and expectations: “They don’t know anyone and don’t know how things work. It’s very intimidating for them.”

When employers were asked whether they thought that institutions of higher learning (universities or other training institutions) adequately prepare graduates for working in their companies, the overwhelming majority (72%) said: “No”; 14% felt that they were somewhat prepared; and 14% thought that they were adequately prepared.

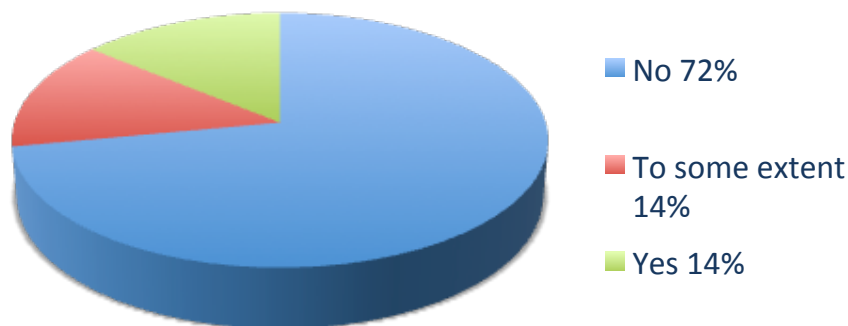
**Figure 7: Findings: Employers**

### Findings: Employers

- Skills shortages across the value chain
- Particular to respondent’s position in chain
- Reality of the industry is different to students’ perceptions
- In addition: Non-cognitive skills
  - ♦ Ability to think for themselves
  - ♦ Time management
  - ♦ Problem solving
  - ♦ Attitude
  - ♦ Communication

**Figure 8: Do institutions prepare employees adequately for the work environment?**

### Do institutions prepare employees adequately for the work environment?



Strategies recommended by employers to overcome these challenges included a collaborative approach between training institutions and companies in the industry, where employers offer a practical element to students. Respondents suggested that training be conducted by people who work in the industry, more practical training should be included and apprenticeships and internships were mentioned numerous times as options. One employer emphasised the need for the industry to continue generating income as that would be the only way he could employ people. This reiterates the literature-review findings and the need to develop a greater market for the industry.

The main problems and gaps in terms of skills development in the film industry are largely similar to the reasons mentioned above, e.g. insufficient practical training, and the vast difference between the training and the implementation. Some respondents mentioned a shortage of previously disadvantaged people in the industry. Many respondents did not know how these changes could be brought about in the future.



When the question, “What strategies, in your opinion, should be in place to assist the development of film-related skills in the country?”, was posed, employers suggested restructuring courses – possibly using overseas curricula; starting an agency to match skills demand and supply; developing more internship programmes; providing mentorship programmes etc.; and encouraging more international crew members to work in South Africa so that skills can be transferred. One employer suggested that learning institutions need to be more attentive to the needs of the industry. The responsibility for skills development was largely placed with the private sector, training institutions, the dti, SETAs and the NFVF. When asked how these stakeholders should co-operate with one another, no respondents provided clear suggestions.

Overall, the key points from the employer survey are that the workforce size is small, and that one third of the employers were one person operations. Employers identified numerous scarce skills along the value chain. There is a perceived gap between what the institutions deliver in terms of work readiness and what employers expect. The institutions may not necessarily have to change their delivery, but there is a need for better, ongoing communication between the institutions and the employers. Furthermore, there is a need for ongoing learning for people involved in the industry: exposure to latest trends, equipment, thinking and processes. Finally, as some of the respondents have noted, along with skills development, there should be an effort made to promote the South African film industry as a whole to create a greater demand for all the skills.





Figure 9: Suggestions for improvement: Employers



### 3.2.3. INSTITUTIONS

Twenty-seven institutions participated in the survey. The survey focused on institutional education, broader skills development and the institutions' perceptions of scarce skills in the industry. As per our objectives, we endeavoured to determine the total population of learners enrolled at tertiary institutions within the media and film studies. Institutions, however, were reluctant or unable to provide the research team with this information.

The profile of training institutions who participated include nine universities, three universities of technology, and the remainder are accredited private higher education institutions or a small number of NGOs. 26 of the 27 institutions provided a broad overview of the courses they provide. Few of these institutions were willing or able to provide statistics on students currently registered for their courses. The courses provided range from broad courses such as Marketing and Communications, Journalism and Media Management to more practical courses and those which focused specifically on the film industry such as camera work and lighting and animation.

Table 4: Profile of courses on offer

Advertising; Radio; Video & Television Marketing; Graphics & Creative Advertising; Animation & Audio Visual Multimedia; Public Relations Journalism
Cinematography; Directing; Editing; Film Theory and Criticism; Motion Picture Production; Producing; Scriptwriting; Sound; Technology
Directing Fiction; Documentary filmmaking; Music Video Research Project; Sound Design & Studio Production; Cinematography and Postproduction; Digital Animation and Digital Art theory; Experimental Film; Fact/Fiction: Blurring the Boundary; Creative Arts Management; Scriptwriting
Production; Animation; Cinematography; Data and Image Enhancement; Directing; Editing; Sound Design; Screen Writing; Visual Effects
Audio Visual Communication; Communication theory; Journalism
Camerawork and Lighting; Photography; Scriptwriting; Creative Writing; Digital Video Editing; Directing; Photo Editing; Presenting; Production; Web Design
Social Media; Audio and Video; Television Production; Video Editing; Television Interviews; Writing Procedures
Research; Proposal Writing; Scriptwriting; Production Processes; Production Budgeting; Directing; Camera; Sound and Audio; Editing and Film Analysis
TV and Radio Presenting, Corporate Media Skills
Adobe Software; Graphic Design; Photography; Illustration and Drawing; Social Media; Web Design; Web Development; Motion Graphics; Sound Design; Film Production; Game Design; Screenwriting; 3D Animation; Production Design; Acting
Acting; Scriptwriting; Composition; Media Theory; Languages
Drama and Performance; Acting and Dance; Scriptwriting; Directing; Choreography; Playwriting; Digital and Fine Art

Acting; Directing; Production; Fashion, Fine Art; Language and Media Communication; Video Technology; Visual Communications
Communication Science; Journalism; Media Studies; Public Relations; Marketing and Advertising; Writing; Oral and Digital Communication
Online Media Design; Writing and editing; Screenwriting; Production; Journalism; Political Communication; Mobile media communication; Visual Anthropology
Design; Graphic Design; Journalism; Photography; Video Film and Technology
Production; Directing; Entrepreneurial
Acting; Screenwriting, Presenting; Auditioning; Casting
Communication; Video; Photography; Digital Film; Design; Journalism
Copy Writing; Design; Marketing; Art Directing; Advertising;
Graphic Design; Video Production; Visual Communication; Lighting; Make-up; Animation; Photoshop; Presenting; Scuba/ underwater photography
Choreography; Dance; Drama; Theatre; Oral Communication; Video Production
Journalism; Media; Economic Journalism; Media Management; Digital Journalism
Camera; Lighting; Multicam; Production; Make-up; Stage Management
Journalism; Corporate Communication Management; Corporate media; Development Communication; Documentary Video; Graphic Design
Corporate and marketing communications; Journalism; Media Studies

Respondents from the training institutions or providers were asked what their graduates' expectations are on entering their institution and when they leave. Most respondents thought that their students expected to gain a qualification or receive a certificate (28%) and get training in the industry (21%). Many noted that their students were under the impression that their courses would be easy (15%) and would have a larger focus on the practical aspects, i.e. less academic focus (17%). Two respondents believed that their students expected to find employment (4%), and three believed that their students wanted to be employable and ready for the "world of work" (6%). The majority of the participants suggested that students did not anticipate the amount of time and hard work that is required before one can qualify.

According to respondents, graduates' expectations change upon leaving the institution as the majority of graduates expect to find employment straight after graduation (55%). 21%, however, seemed to think that graduates expect to enter into higher level or managerial positions in the industry (such as directors and producers). 9% believed the graduates' expectations are to be fully qualified and capable for the "world of work" while fewer graduates' expectations are to gain a qualification (2%). A couple of respondents felt that students expected to gain recognition in the industry as presenters, actors and actresses. Graduates believed the training provided would be advantageous to the type of jobs they received. Furthermore, respondents stated that graduates are dreamers and believe that they can enter into higher level positions with only a degree/diploma.

Respondents were asked: "Do you think your institution prepares its graduates adequately for the world of work in the film industry?" The majority of respondents (89%) thought that their institution prepared its graduates adequately to work in the film industry, while only three respondents (11%) felt that their institutions did not and recognised that there were weaknesses in the institutions. The participants who said: "No" explained that the institutions provided students with basic skills and training, however, students could not be taught everything. Other skills which they needed could be learnt through work and experience. An academic institution equips a student with knowledge and qualifications, but practical experience can only be taught in the workplace.

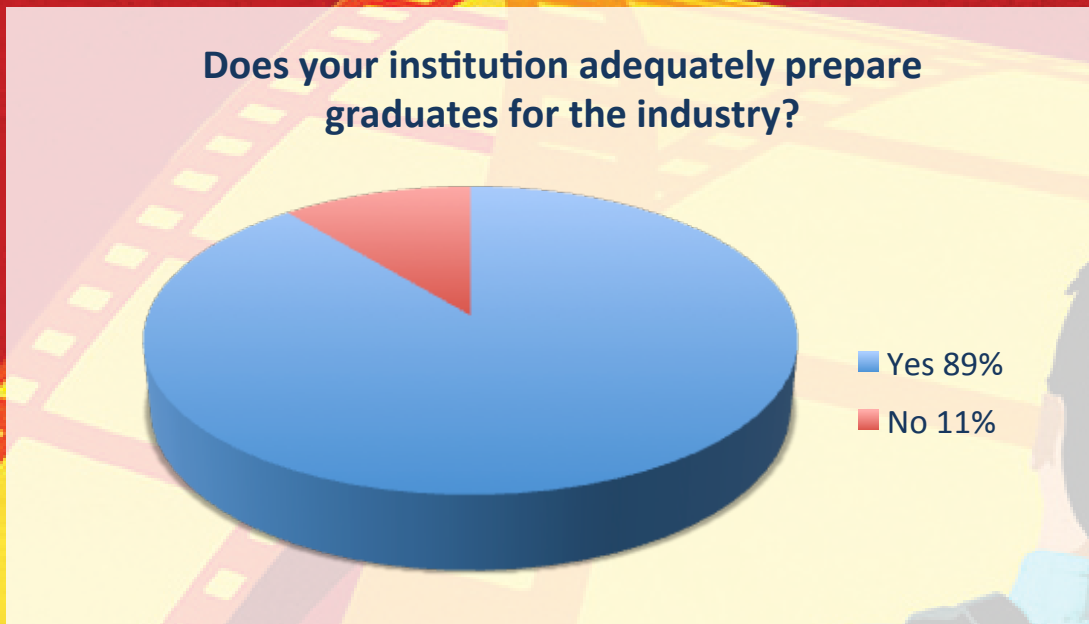
In response to the question: "What, in your opinion, is the role of your institution regarding skills development in the sector?" all institutions stated that their role was to train and provide students with the necessary skills required in the film and video sector.

Some of the comments from respondents include:

- Training graduates adequately
- Providing relevant training
- Preparing people who want to be in the industry and enhancing the skills of those already in the industry



Figure 10: Does your institution adequately prepare graduates for the industry?



- Providing graduates with the necessary skills to enter into employment; practical skills they will have to learn on the job.
- Training the students with skills to make a valuable contribution to the industry
- Providing the academic training for students
- Offering a skills development BA degree which is broad so they have a plan B

It would seem from these responses that some institutions believe they are training graduates to be fully employable when graduating, while others believe that they are providing them with basic knowledge but that practical skills development is the role of the private sector. Furthermore, the provision of a broad qualification implies that there is a likelihood that graduates will not be able to work in the film industry. Institutional respondents were asked:

“Which three skills do you think are in scarce supply within the South African sector?” Respondents identified directing (30%), scriptwriting (29%), producing (26%) and technical skills including using equipment (16%). The majority of institutions (16 participants) have plans in place to meet these demands. Some participants were reluctant to divulge plans, but others stated that their plans included changes in course work, incorporating building multi-camera and scriptwriting into the curriculum; making use of smartphones and increasing practical work experience. Some stated that they were making technological improvements on existing equipment to keep up with international trends, but this was a costly endeavour and would take time.

Three respondents said that they “are trying” and eight said that they do not have plans in place to meet these demands. The trying and no responses were substantiated by funding/budget constraints.



Figure 11: Scarce skills according to institutions

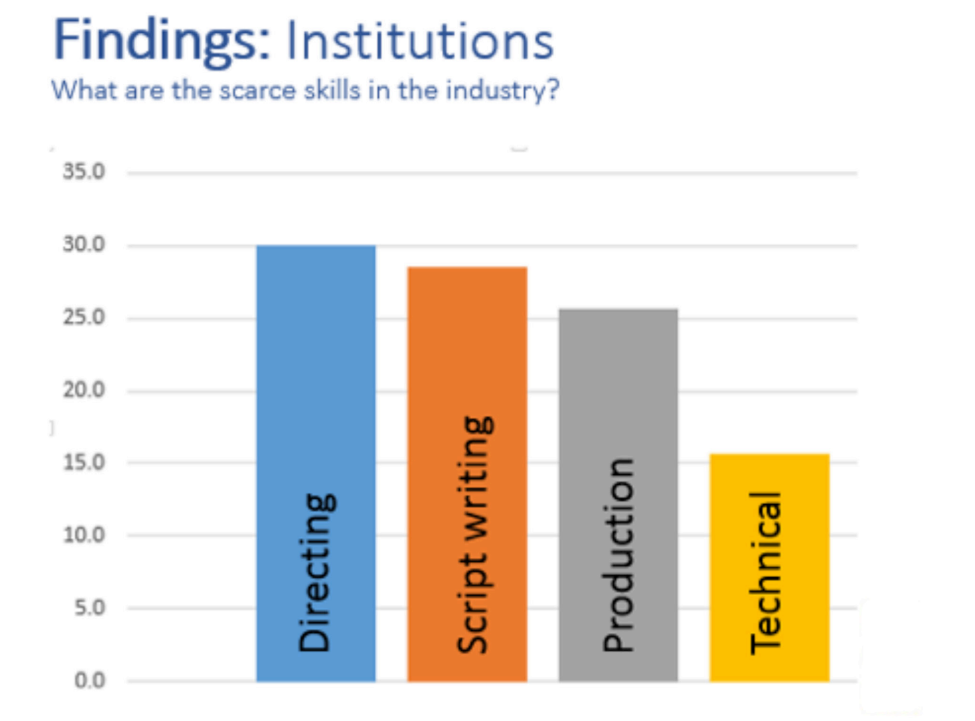
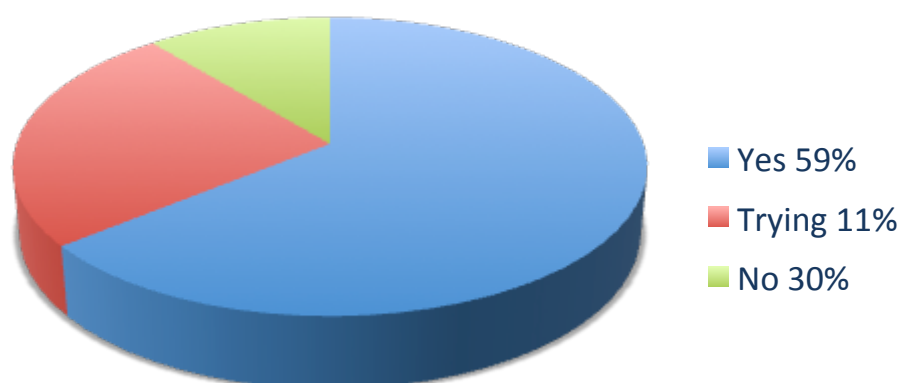


Figure 12: Does your institution have plans in place to address scarce skills?

**Does your institution have plans in place to address scarce skills?**





Respondents were asked: “What challenges do you think your graduates face in being absorbed into the sector, after leaving your institution?” The majority of responses were that graduates cannot find employment (44%). The other challenges include:

- Exploitation – Graduates are exploited in the industry because of their lack of experience.
- Competition – Graduates have to compete with already experienced people. The sector is not favourable to newcomers. Preference is given to the old and jobs seem to be kept in their own circles.
- Experience – Graduates do not have workplace experience and, in most instances, it is a prerequisite for getting employment.
- Gender discrimination – Women are still being discriminated against in the sector. Males are given preference in certain jobs, for example, in using technical equipment.

To overcome these challenges, respondents made three key suggestions, namely:

- It is important for the private sector, Government and training institutions to develop in-service learning opportunities for students. This allows students to gain on-the-job learning experience as well as network with relevant people in the sector. Additionally, the provision of internships for graduates provides experience and opportunities for graduates, and also makes them more attractive to employers.
- Funding/subsidies (by the dti) and sharing of resources within the sector will help overcome technical challenges faced in the sector. Subsidies make it possible for training institutions to be innovative and creative. This will allow the sector to become internationally competitive.
- There needs to be dialogue and collaboration between training institutions and the private sector about changes to the curriculum. The idea is to develop quality courses that produce graduates who meet the needs of the industry and to eliminate the poor quality of graduates produced as well as too many of the same.

Overall, institutions recognise the need for stronger links between Government, employers and themselves. They identified the need for internships or in-service learning opportunities, and some institutions have recognised the need for greater practical learning.

Finally, it seems that the sector tends to be isolated and operates in silos. Therefore, there is a need to collaborate and integrate more with other sectors, such as legal, financial, technical, HR, etc.

**Figure 13: Suggestions for improvement: Institutions**





### 3.2.4. EXPERTS

The lack of available work in the film industry, especially permanent positions, is of grave concern to industry experts. There are more graduates than there are jobs available.

- One way of rectifying this is to enable the making of more films by creating the audience – there is a huge potential audience. The idea of making films accessible and affordable is a common theme – take the films to the townships and the communities and exploit a wider market. The Government and the NFVF should encourage people to watch films by opening up a “Community Cinema” (whether in schools, community centres, etc.).
- More money should be spent on market research and marketing films through social media channels.
- The issue of local content and low rates of fees paid by the SABC were raised. Film makers would rather work for overseas productions.

The main themes in response to being asked: “Which three skills do you think are in scarce supply within the SA film sector?” were identified as

- Technical and production, and line producers
- Directors
- Editing
- Scriptwriting
- Animators
- Understanding distribution, and understanding target audience

Other scarce skills that were mentioned are

- Graphic design and special effects / visual effects
- Film accountants
- Sound
- Data wranglers
- Production co-ordinators
- Unit and transport people

When asked if these skills could be taught within institutions or whether they needed to be learned in the workplace, everyone interviewed said: “Both”. The institutions give the foundation, but graduates have to be given practical experience in the field and on shoots. For many, the long work hours, tedium, working conditions on some locations, etc. all come as a shock.

The actual application of learning in a workplace setting and structured mentoring by experienced people are vital. Having fieldwork experience and exposure to the industry are a huge advantage when the graduate is looking for employment as contacts within the film industry are most important – it is not what you know but who you know that counts.

There were varied responses to the question about what the sector should be doing to address these shortages:

- Exposure to the industry should be encouraged by institutions, even during vacation time.
- There was a suggestion that the Chamber of Commerce/NFVF/Government should pay for internships and mentorships as it takes time and effort so mentors should be given an incentive.
- More engagement between the private sector and the institutions is required – those working in the film industry need to give greater feedback on what skills are required.
- Workshops and training run by international industry professionals should be funded.
- The NFVF should have a central database for everyone to access (graduates and those in the industry), giving information for the graduates as to where to go and whom to approach; and for the industry, a database of graduates would aid in recruitment.
- Deserving students could be given bursaries to study at institutions that specialise in film production and training.
- SETAs, film schools, enterprise accelerators/propellers and incubation programmes should work together more closely to ensure there is a sustainable source of skilled graduates.
- There should be funding for transformation and support of smaller enterprises and business start-ups.

The recurrent themes emerging from the question about the three most common obstacles graduates face in entering the film sector looking for employment, include:

- Short term employment – more sustainable television shows are required.
- Transformation is not taking place.



- Graduates lack practical experience.
- There is also a lack of software experience and computer literacy.
- Market saturation, i.e. there are more graduates than there are opportunities.
- Graduates cannot access funding and stipends.
- The industry requires long and unsociable hours, and transport to and from shoots is a barrier.
- In the industry the right temperament and ability to work with people are key.

The main problems and gaps in terms of skills development for the sector elicited varied responses but chiefly these were identified as:

- Not enough internship or apprentice programmes
- The high cost of training and software
- A lack of proper state-funded support
- Training programmes not providing adequate entrepreneurial and business skills
- The need for greater computer literacy, and
- More experience in animation

The experts interviewed were asked about possible strategies to overcome the challenges listed. One of the main concerns was round the actual training itself. Software is expensive and fees are high so there should be more access to funding. The quality of training programmes should be monitored more closely by Government and the SETAs. The NFVF should take responsibility and set up a training panel or committee of sorts that comprises passionate and educated people. It could also insist that funding beneficiaries will only be paid IF they can prove that they have set up formal, recognised training where the learners can walk away having gained the knowledge and skills required in the industry.

The lack of work available in the film industry, especially permanent jobs, is of grave concern. There are too many graduates and not enough work. One way of rectifying this is to enable the making of more films by creating the audience. The idea of making films accessible and affordable to create a wider market would be more beneficial than opening up more film schools.

More money should be spent on market research and marketing films through social media channels.

The third possible strategy is for the Government to offer tax incentives to encourage investment by the big conglomerates, like Rand Merchant Bank, Investec and private investors, so that the private sector sees the film industry as a viable investment.

- The next question was about where the responsibility for skills development lies: “Would it be with the private sector, the National Government or one of its departments, a parastatal like the SETA or with industry institutions?” Experts generally agreed that it was a collective responsibility and all should be

held accountable. Their view was that generally the Government is supportive of the industry but needs to address issues already mentioned.

Respondents were asked for suggestions on how stakeholders should co-operate with one another. Several ideas were put forward:

- There should be workshops and ongoing round-table talks involving Government, the industry, organised industry bodies (Writer’s Guild, Documentary Filmmakers’ Association, etc.) and the NFVF.
- Multi-departmental meetings should be convened to understand and recognise the industry’s needs.
- There should be regular exhibitions to showcase and discuss opportunities.
- The NFVF should be the responsible body for the interventions and should adopt a more visible leadership approach that recognises the reality that different provinces have different dynamics.
- The Annual Provincial Coordinators’ Forum should be convened by the NFVF to stimulate effective policy planning and implementation proactively, as is done in the Business Process Services Sector. The forum would be instrumental in promoting the harmonisation of industrial priorities and annual targets.
- The NFVF should take a decisive lead on Policy Planning, Trend Analysis and Economic Market Research and share the outcome with Provincial Economic Development Agencies.
- A “cluster approach” is advised, i.e. working with Provincial DFIs to resource film cities/hubs/incubators.
- Informal meetings and focus groups should be facilitated as they might bring about more lasting results because often people are reluctant to speak up in large workshops.
- Consultation with new professional bodies such as SA Communications Industry Association (SACIA) should be scheduled.
- The formation of an industry body which co-operates on training requirements, research and skills audits, temporary visas, temporary import of equipment and tax issues was recommended.
- The NFVF should compile a database of alumnae and invite these individuals to the activities they stage in the various provinces to share their experiences first-hand. The National Arts Festival would be a good place to do this.



Figure 14: Findings: Experts

## Findings: Experts

- Institutions can give foundation, but nothing can replace practical experience
- Practical = Exposure = Networking
- Reality of the industry is different to students' perceptions
- In addition:
  - ♦ Ability to think for themselves
  - ♦ Time management
  - ♦ Problem solving
  - ♦ Attitude
  - ♦ Communication

Experts made no mention of scarce skills, but international trends are moving in this direction, and this omission begs the question of South Africa being left behind.

Figure 15: Suggestions for improvement: Experts

## Findings: Experts

**Suggestions for improvement**

- Learner exposure to industry
- Structured mentorship / Internships
- Greater communication between Institutions & employers
- Central database (NFVF hosts??)
- Specialisation bursaries
- Support for smaller enterprises and cooperation



### 3.3. REITERATIVE WORKSHOPS

Workshops were held in Johannesburg, Durban, East London and Cape Town. A mixed selection of stakeholders was invited and attended the workshops. The workshops had four key aims: to report research findings to stakeholders; to ensure that the research findings were accurate and useful; to propose a strategy and model; and to listen to commentary and feedback from stakeholders in order to align the strategy and model with stakeholders' needs.

It must be noted that despite the NFVF's best attempts to invite all the stakeholders, there were some critical stakeholders who had been invited but did not participate. Despite missing some critical stakeholders, the process provided a good opportunity to consult with the sector and get significant feedback.

Overall, stakeholders agreed with the concept but found it difficult to get their heads around how the model would be implemented. Some of the concerns and challenges identified by stakeholders were

- Interns are exploited.
- Employers cannot afford to take on students, and single employers do not have the time or capacity to take on people.
- The top HODs in the industry have only Grade 12 and need upskilling.
- New people continually enter the industry, but there is no additional training for people already in the industry.
- A few stakeholders expressed the need for a database with graduates' names so that they could employ them.
- Concerns about racial transformation were raised.
- South Africans do not have globally competitive skills.

While some members of the workshops suggested increasing legislation, a representative from the Department of Arts and Culture noted that "Throwing funding and regulation at the problem is not always the solution as we need to create strategic relationship with the stakeholders."

The stakeholders who attended the Johannesburg workshop generally supported the research findings. These stakeholders supported the proposed way forward and gave valuable, positive and constructive input.

The East London workshop consisted largely of emerging film producers who are supportive of the process. Their sentiment was that they would like more support on the ground in order to participate in the NFVF process.

The Durban workshop had an interactive and creative group of stakeholders which consisted of a mix of producers, training providers and independent small employers. Their comments were valuable and positive. They were highly supportive of the process and felt that a model going forward will be difficult to implement but very important.

The Cape Town workshop had communication challenges around logistics. This meant that some people arrived very early, while another group of people who had been attending the visual arts workshop joined the process in the last half an hour and kept taking the process back to issues that had been discussed previously. This made it difficult to keep the momentum moving forward through the planned process. The stakeholders who attended this workshop were very vocal and appeared to think that they had local issues which were different from everywhere else in the country. In general, they were in agreement with the findings and recognised the need for increased work experience of students. This, however, was a negative group who could see only the problems, making it difficult for them to look for solutions or positive ways forward.



### 3.4. SCARCE SKILLS

The primary research identified a number of scarce skills which the employers, experts and institutions identified and overlap/have in common. These are seen in the diagram below. Skills which we identified through the secondary research or through the reiterative workshops as being scarce are research skills (largely in the pre-production phase) and post-production skills. Business skills, computer skills and skills related to the digitalisation of the industry as well as CGI (computer-generated imagery) have been documented as scarce in South Africa. Finally, South Africa does not seem able to compete globally with its skills hence the large international crews being brought into South Africa. This issue also needs to be addressed.

Skills-related concerns that were raised by numerous survey respondents and through the expert interviews include non-cognitive skills and graduates' attitudes hence the need for skills development in life skills, work ethics, critical thinking as well as managing graduates' expectations and their sense of entitlement.

Many respondents, including the graduates, noted that they were unaware of how physically demanding, unglamorous and long the hours that they would be required to work in their industry were. Having a greater understanding of the industry could be remedied through practical exposure and workplace experience.

Figure 16: Scarce skills



### 3.5. SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### 3.5.1. DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF SKILLS WITHIN THE SECTOR

- The Industry Skills Analysis shows that there is generally a high demand for experienced, well-skilled personnel, particularly from previously disadvantaged groups.
- The growth in the graduate labour force has not been matched by a growth in the industry and therefore in demand. One way of rectifying this is to enable the making of more films by creating the audience. The idea of making films accessible and affordable to create a wider market would be more beneficial than opening up more film schools.
- Without the necessary growth in local content production, the skills base in South Africa will inevitably stagnate.

#### 3.5.2. SCARCE AND CRITICAL SKILLS WITHIN THE SECTOR

- Although training institutions tend to train for four specific areas which they think are scarce within the industry, the employers identified skills shortages across the value chain.
- There is a critical shortage of technical roles specific to the film industry as technological advancements are happening at such a fast pace. The risk is that if South Africa is not able to manage this, the industry will not remain globally competitive. As it is, there is a perception that South Africans do not have high-level skills that meet international standards.
- This implies that there is a constant need for (re)training of employees, potential employees and students.



- An overview of the industry shows inconsistent and non-existent career paths as practitioners move from job to job in search of a pay cheque, and very little upskilling takes place. A second problem is that occupational descriptions are not standardised.
- Practical workplace experience facilitates networking for students and exposure to the realities of the workplace without high costs.
- The growth of the film industry could introduce more business opportunities to more production companies and to new entrants, thereby facilitating employment opportunities and transformation.
- Finally, experts and employees indicate a lack of non-cognitive skills within the industry as well as attitude problems in graduates.

### **3.5.3. THE IMPACT ON INSTITUTIONS FOR SOURCING SKILLS**

- Many members of the film industry are self-trained and do not have formal qualifications and many consider current education and training far removed from the realities of the industry.
- Employers believe that graduates from training institutions have little or no knowledge of the industry and have unrealistic expectations of how to fit into the industry.
- Institutions have little to no contact with the private sector and seem largely unresponsive to the needs of the private sector.
- There is, thus, a need to increase communication between employers and institutions e.g. through teaching by employers.
- Graduates expect to perform occupations in which they were trained, are frustrated and are inclined to job hop.
- Graduates believe that their training requires greater emphasis on practical training.
- Graduates tend to lack non-cognitive skills.
- Finally, graduates and experts indicate that there is very little opportunity of entering the job market if you do not have previous work experience or the relevant industry links.

### **3.5.4. EXISTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS**

- The South African film industry is largely comprised of small companies that are not always able to provide on-the-job training, mentorships or internships for learners seeking work placements.
- Employers generally seem willing to assist with skills development but will require some funding to make this work for them, e.g. for the interns to be paid so that the employers do not need to pay the interns themselves. (e.g. stipends to be able to afford transport to access shoots).



#### 4. NEED FOR SYSTEMIC RESPONSE

While the scope of this research limited the exploration of potential solutions to the state of skills in the film industry, it became obvious in conducting the research that the current issue will not be resolved through an intervention in one area. As will be seen in the modelling rationale there are a series of concerns within the film industry “pipeline” or value chain that need to be addressed holistically and systemically to ensure that the demand and supply of skills in the industry are balanced.

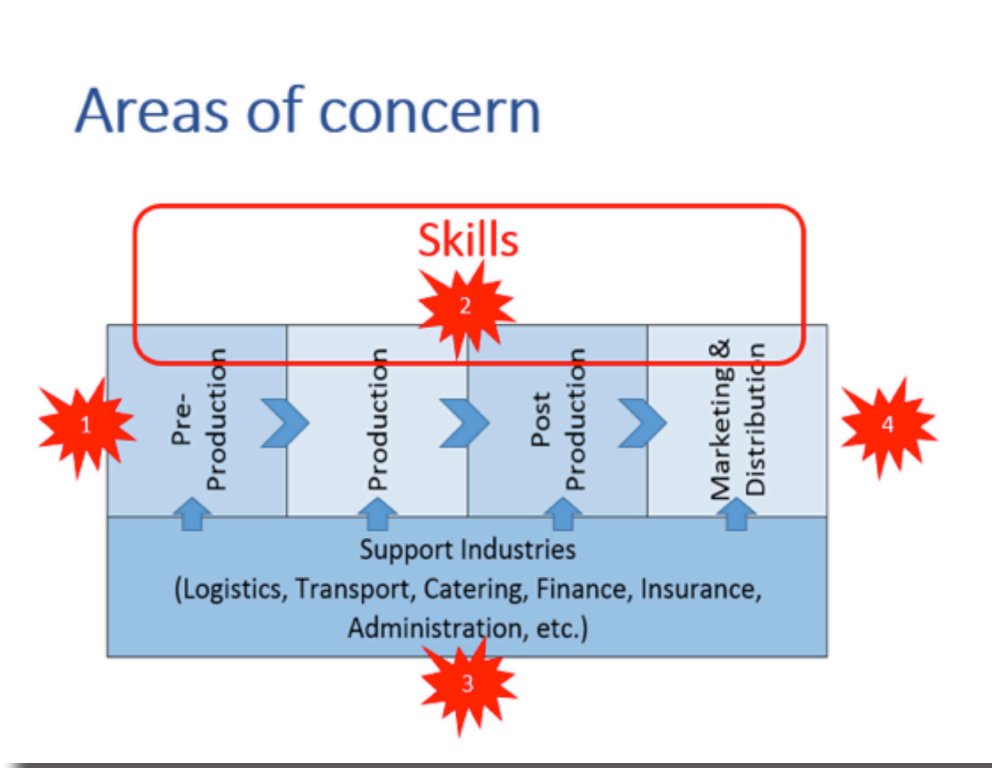
There are a number of systemic challenges that influence the skills in the film industry. These challenges are broader than those dealt with in this report but need to be considered. The research indicates that a co-ordinated response is needed to address the state of skills in the film industry. This co-ordinated response requires public and private sectors as well as training institutions to work together, each with different roles and responsibilities.

In the value chain of the film industry, five elements are identified. These are pre-production, production, post-production, marketing and distribution, and the support industries, such as technical skills (electrical, carpentry, plumbing), logistics, transport, catering, finance, insurance, administration.

Systemic challenges or areas of concern are documented below:

- Firstly, research indicates that students entering training institutions do not have a good, reality-based, understanding of the industry – particularly the long hours, hard work and how unglamorous the film industry is. Thus the first concern is with student recruitment.
- The second area of concern, and the focus of this report, is the skills-related issues, particularly that graduates are not work-ready when they leave their institutions and that personnel within the industry require upskilling.
- The third area of concern is that the links to non-core or support industries are not well established.
- The final area of concern is that there is insufficient market demand for industry products which directly impacts on growth and employment opportunities in the sector.

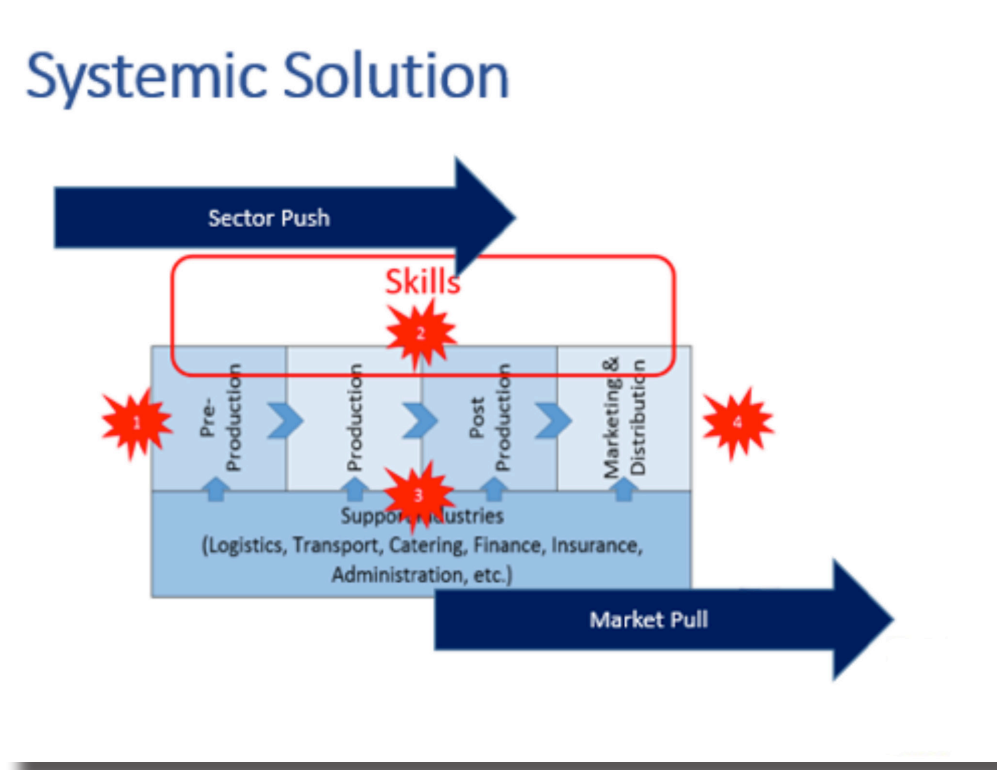
Figure 17: Areas of scarce skills along the value chain



Systemic solutions and interventions require both a sector push and a demand pull to change the state of skills in the film industry. Some solutions for these challenges could include:

- Interventions that could be considered at high schools are
  - Career guidance and Career Days, highlighting the full scope of careers within the film industry and supporting sectors
  - Workplace exposure for interested young people to understand the reality of the sector, as well as the long hours and hard work required in the film industry, i.e. it is not glamorous.
- Interventions to improve the capacity of training institutions
  - Technical support to institutions to make the curriculum more relevant to the South African industry
  - Infrastructural support for improving the equipment and technology for practical training
- Interventions to improve the relationships between institutions and private sector workplaces
  - Support to institutions in accessing opportunities for workplace exposure
- Interventions to improve the link with the support industries
  - Links with TVET Colleges which train artisan skills (carpentry, plumbing, electrical) as well as support industry skills (catering, clothing design, art)
- Interventions to improve demand for South African film industry products
  - This intervention requires a totally different strategy to the other areas of concern and needs engagement with various government departments and is likely to need extensive funding. (This would be considered a market or demand pull strategy.)

**Figure 18: A systemic solution requires both a sector push and a market pull**





An important point to note is that there are three “players” or central actors that are closely linked to the value chain: institutions, experts and employers. They are crucially important in the process of adding value to the learning process. The other players fulfil a vital function, but all of them are in a support role, such as the DAC, film commissions, industry bodies etc.

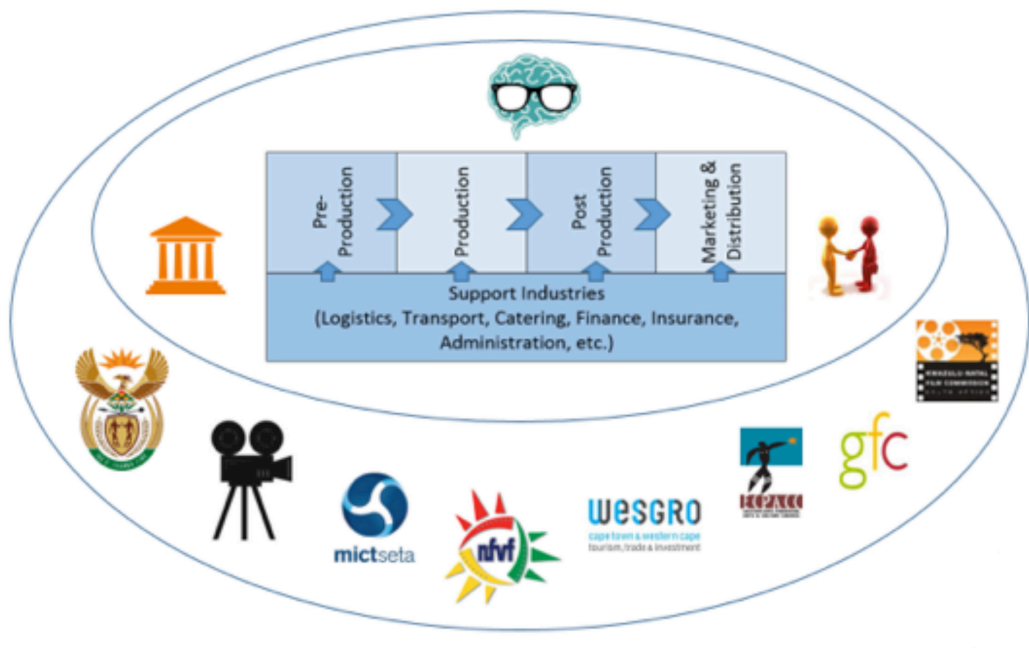
Skills development plan to address the gaps in the industry

This skills development plan has two main interventions to improve the skills within the South African film industry:

- The first is to ensure that graduates are workplace-ready when they enter into the workforce (upon graduation).
- The second is the upskilling of current personnel and freelancers within the film industry in order for them to be globally competitive.

**Figure 19: The film industry training environment**

## Systemic Solution: environment & players



### 4.1. ADDRESSING ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

#### 4.1.1. IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Although beyond the focus of this research, improving the recruitment process for school students who are considering a career in the film industry is recommended. To improve the recruitment process, it is important for school students to be made aware of the wide variety of possibilities for careers in this sector (including service and support industries to the sector). Examples of how to do this are by hosting a career day and talking to people who currently work in the industry. This will expose new entrants to the realities before they register as students. This is an additional opportunity to capture names on a central database for future use.

#### 4.1.2. ENGAGING WITH THE TECHNICAL SUPPORT SECTOR

While beyond the scope of this research, as part of the suggested systemic solution, the sector’s use of a wide variety of technical and professional support services, including finance, legal, insurance, lighting, sound, catering, design etc. should be explored. The sector should consider actively exposing learners or students who are currently studying in these fields to the industry. One suggested method is to work in collaboration with an institution which trains in a required field. For example, TVET colleges graduate students with electrical qualifications. The sector should actively engage with TVET colleges to recruit these students into the sector, either for WIL or after graduation.



### 4.1.3. CREATING DEMAND AND MARKET

While beyond the scope of this research, as part of the suggested systemic solution it is vital that the sector ensure that there is an adequate demand for the skills being developed in the training institutions. This can only be done through the stimulation of the market. Without adequate demand for product or for production within the local market, there will be a decline in demand for local skills. The result of this will be training institutions graduating students who have little or no opportunity of making use of their skills in a local market.

## 4.2. THE MODEL

This model was developed using reverse logic. Therefore, we established the goal of improving skills with a view to making the South African film industry globally competitive. Throughout the process of developing this model we asked how this goal could be accomplished. This model presents a picture of how the model will work, using an explicit statement of the activities that will bring about change and the results you should expect to achieve.

This model talks about a centralised database, however, it cannot be emphasised enough that ongoing communications and developing strong relationships between the administration of the database and the training institutions, between the administration of the database and the employers, and between the institutions and the employers are vital.

### 4.2.1. PURPOSE, OR MISSION

The primary and secondary research findings indicate that there is a scarcity of skills within the South African film industry and, in general, institutions which are training students to enter the industry are largely unresponsive to the needs of private employers. Graduates are thus not well prepared for the workforce. Consequently, employers are generally unwilling to employ graduates. Furthermore, the South African film industry is not keeping up with global trends, especially the digital trend. Finally, employees and freelancers who have been working in the industry for a number of years do not update their skills.

Thus, the overall purpose is to improve skills within the film industry in order for it to be globally competitive. The supporting goals are:

- Graduates should be workplace-ready when they enter into the workforce.
- The current employees and freelancers need to update their skills.

### 4.2.2. CONTEXT OR CONDITIONS

The film industry is generally fluid and flexible as most employees and businesses tend to work on a seasonal basis, rather than in a structured conventional manner. As noted in the research, a large number of employers do not have any full-time employees but rather employ freelancers when they are busy. The implication for the model is that all the interventions that are implemented need to take cognisance of the small workforce and need to be flexible and adaptive in terms of time and needs. Moreover, these businesses do not have the capacity to absorb large numbers of students, and we should be wary of training for unemployment. Solutions for experienced personnel are required to be flexible as they need to balance earning an income with any training initiatives.

## 4.3. WORK-READY GRADUATES

### 4.3.1. A WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING CONTINUUM (WIL)

Research has produced substantial evidence that there are considerable differences in the way learning occurs in actual real-world environments in contrast to how it occurs in training institution classrooms. Most importantly, there is evidence to demonstrate that real-world learning in the workplace has a positive impact on students' overall learning, and that motivation and engagement are also enhanced significantly. This positive outcome, however, does require considerable effort and resources. To ensure that graduates are workplace-ready when they enter into the film industry (upon graduation), we recommend developing a work-integrated-learning (WIL) programme for all students who are being trained at institutions.

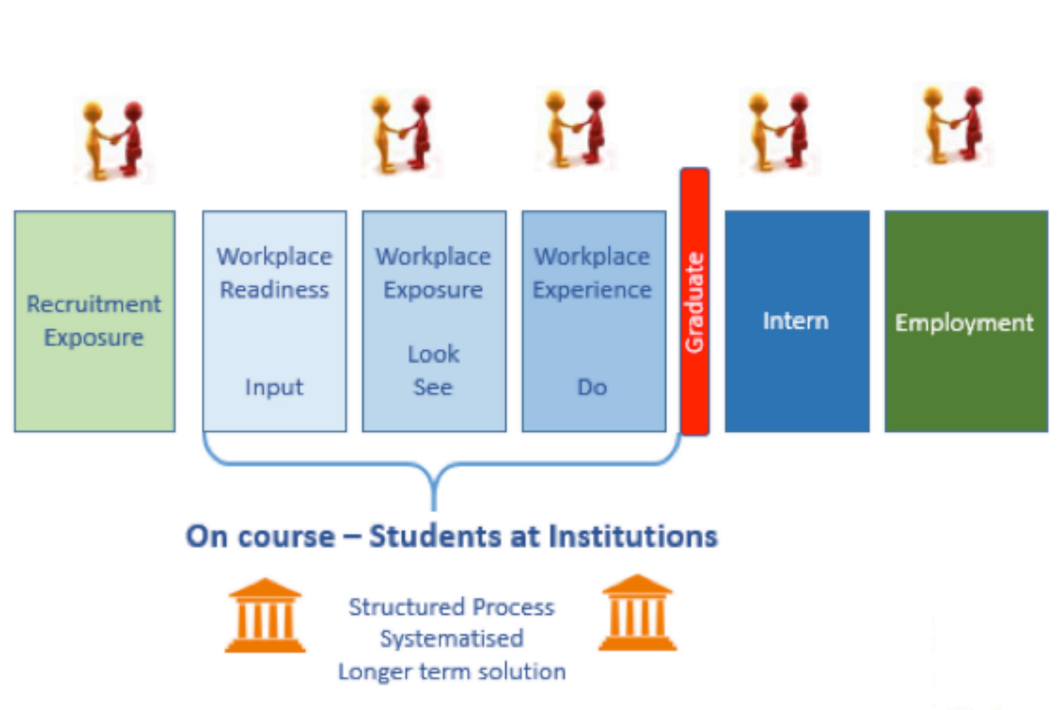
*Work-integrated-learning experiences provide a bridge for the student between the academic present and their professional future - an opportunity to apply and merge theoretical knowledge gained in academic studies to "real world" workplace practical experiences, and to prepare the student for a career by providing an opportunity to develop relevant professional skills. A three-way partnership between the student, the workplace organisation, and the university requires all parties in the relationship to assume definite responsibilities, perform specific functions, and achieve benefits as a result of the involvement.*

The Council for Higher Education notes that "WIL does not offer a 'quick fix' solution to national industry's lack of competitiveness; nor can it transform a 'low skills' society into a 'high skills' one overnight. WIL can, however, play a role with regard to the readiness of graduates to enter and contribute to South African society and the world of work."

Furthermore, insights into teaching pedagogy suggest that for learning to take place, students need to observe and reflect on experience, develop concepts to make sense of the experience and then to apply and test these concepts through new experiences. The OECD notes that the intention behind work-integrated learning is to produce graduates who are able to integrate, adapt and apply their knowledge across diverse global contexts (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 1996).

Therefore, WIL is not a once-off experience for students. Instead WIL is a continuum where students are given the opportunity to observe and reflect on experience; they are given opportunities to make sense of the experience and then to apply and test these concepts.

**Figure 20: Understanding the WIL continuum**



The elements of the WIL continuum are workplace readiness (also known as work-directed theoretical learning), workplace exposure and workplace experience:

1. Workplace readiness should include a course taught by the institutions to all first-year students in a structured, formal way. Many institutions cover this very briefly, but more attention is required. This course should cover non-cognitive aspects of being work-ready, i.e. personal development, teamwork, workplace ethics and behaviour, customer service, leadership and initiative, computing skills, communication and social skills, and problem-solving skills (Glass et al. 2002). Furthermore, institutions should host guest lecturers from the private sector – this allows for capacity building within the industry and networking opportunities for students.
2. Workplace exposure, most likely to take place during the students' second year, offers students the opportunity to be exposed to the reality of the film industry while they are supported by the training institutions. Exposure is for students only to observe, to look, rather than do any work, i.e. students go and look at a film production or a wardrobe casting. This can take place in workplaces anywhere in the value chain, and can be small or big workplaces. The purpose is for the student to see the reality of the non-cognitive behaviours which they learnt about in work readiness; the technical processes of the film sector; as well as the realities of a workplace and the unglamorous side to work. Our recommendation is approximately four days of workplace exposure during a year.
3. The final element of the WIL continuum is workplace experience or learning. Workplace experience is recommended during the students' second and third years. This would include a range or selection of workplaces (anywhere in

<sup>1</sup> For additional guidance and information on WIL in South Africa, consult the document developed for the Council on Higher Education: *Work-Integrated Learning: Good Practice Guide*.  
[http://www.chc.ac.za/sites/default/files/publications/Higher\\_Education\\_Monitor\\_12.pdf](http://www.chc.ac.za/sites/default/files/publications/Higher_Education_Monitor_12.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Please note that WIL is specifically designed for students who are currently being trained at institutions of higher education; "interns" refers to people who have already graduated and have qualifications.

the value chain, big or small); an agreed set of real-world tasks to be completed; the support of workplace mentors; recording the experience; opportunities for “debriefing” and reflecting on learning; etc. Workplace experience offers students the opportunity for hands-on experience and to do actual relevant tasks. Not only does it provide the student with a greater understanding of the industry, it offers them networking opportunities through exposure to employers and potential colleagues. It is recommended that students have approximately five to six days of workplace experience per year.

### 4.3.2. BUILDING THE MODEL

The stakeholders and interested parties that can play a role in the successful implementation of this model are:

**Table 5: Stakeholders for the successful implementation**

<b>National</b>	DHET, dti, DAC, SETAs, private sector employers, public sector employers, NFVF
<b>Provincial</b>	Provincial sector stakeholders (e.g. provincial film commissions, Wesgro, ECPACC, etc.), public and private training institutions, training providers 2
<b>Regional</b>	Local and district municipalities, smaller private sector employers, private sector training providers

### 4.3.3. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Putting in place a systemic process to enable significant numbers of students to enter workplaces will take proactive hands-on project management.

Before the WIL continuum is implemented institutions and employers will have to reach agreements (develop a relationship) and a full understanding of the process; the programmes will have to be designed and workplace mentors or learning guides within each workplace will require training. Students will require proper briefing and preparation, needing a full understanding of the process and it will have to be incorporated into the curriculum. One way of doing this is through a log book where the students can document their observations and experiences. Furthermore, it is recommended that students should be required to attend a number of cultural events and these should be included in their logbooks (theatre, art exhibitions, cinema, music concerts, fashion shows) during their training to expose them further to creative influences.

Due to the small size of employers and the fluid nature of the film industry, one way of offering students exposure and experience in the industry could be to place them at various businesses along the value chain of the industry. For example, a student training to be a camera man or director could be placed at an equipment hire business; or a student training to become a producer could be placed at an advertising agency. In this way students will gain a more holistic understanding of the film industry. The programme should actively encourage smaller employers to participate in the WIL process, even if they are only able to provide a few hours' worth of exposure, during their normal work day. Given the nature of the industry in South Africa, these few hours represent the reality of the sector, and reflect the reality of the workplace environment that the students will enter upon graduation.

The phased implementation of this model as discussed in the model implementation will need to be followed to implement the WIL continuum within training institutions, supported by private employers.

Factors for success include building relationships between employers and institutions, getting lecturers on board, and employing a project manager who is committed to achieving these goals and to engaging in programmes and partnerships that are mutually beneficial. Despite this current emphasis on work-integrated learning, in many instances there is no incentive for organisations to participate in the time- and resource-hungry practice of taking students under their wings and facilitating learning in real-world work contexts.

So why is participation in work-integrated learning programmes and partnerships so important? It is essential that the work-integrated learning process is designed, implemented and continuously managed to meet as many needs as possible of the three major stakeholders: the training institution, the student and the host workplace, including the workplace staff who act as learning guides for students.

We recognise the challenges faced by employers and institutions. Challenges for institutions include the adjustment of the curriculum - this is time-consuming; getting lecturers on-board and enthusiastic; creating sufficient opportunities for all students (location, resources, and capacity); and supporting students through the process which will have additional costs - time, transport, etc. Challenges for employers are their small staff complement; increased responsibilities;



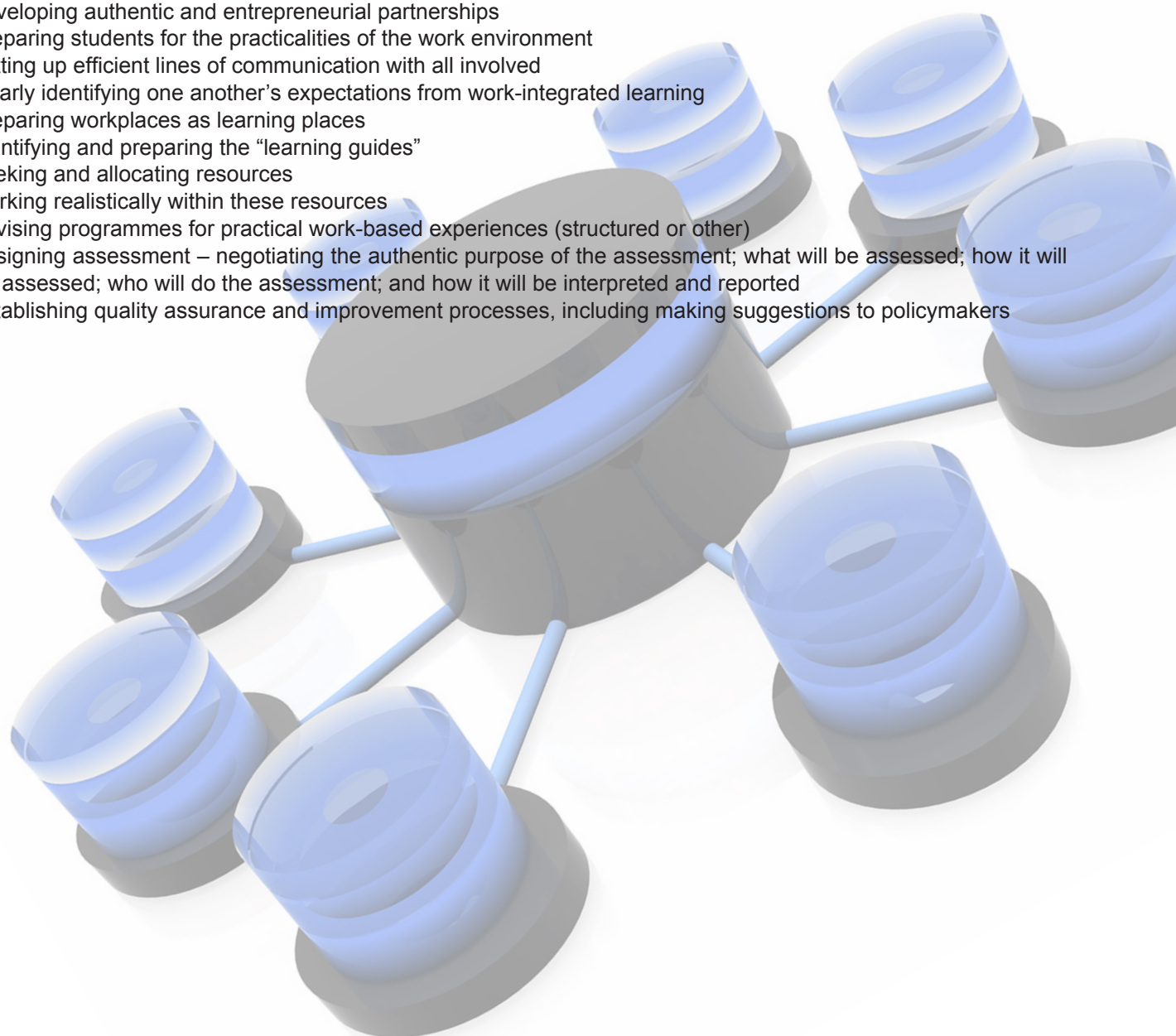
the need to assign co-ordinators or mentors to the programme; finding funding for stipend/living allowance support; ensuring that their existing staff are skilled technically and as mentors; and the process will have to be flexible. We argue that those participating in work-integrated learning programmes benefit from a four-way investment in their future:

- An investment in the organisation's sustainability due to recruitment of future employees with the knowledge, skills and attributes to ensure the organisation's ability to meet constantly changing demands
- An investment in the student's professional, personal and civic educational development, and future employment and civic participation
- An investment in sustainable training institution–organisation partnerships, and links with the institutions' local communities, and
- An investment in the future good of communities and society as a whole due to integration and sharing of theoretical, practical and life knowledge, and development of future generations of confident, competent, innovative, professional, civic-minded individuals equipped with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to lead in the face of ongoing change. This is the ideal outcome of work-integrated learning (Cooper, Orrell, & Bowden).

A central purpose of the assignment was the development of a model that would efficiently and effectively address the skills challenges in the South African film industry.

The management of work-integrated learning programmes is a critical and essential role. The development and management of workplace-learning programmes is complex. Programme co-ordinators and managers need to become expert at devising effective strategies for:

- developing authentic and entrepreneurial partnerships
- preparing students for the practicalities of the work environment
- setting up efficient lines of communication with all involved
- clearly identifying one another's expectations from work-integrated learning
- preparing workplaces as learning places
- identifying and preparing the "learning guides"
- seeking and allocating resources
- working realistically within these resources
- devising programmes for practical work-based experiences (structured or other)
- designing assessment – negotiating the authentic purpose of the assessment; what will be assessed; how it will be assessed; who will do the assessment; and how it will be interpreted and reported
- establishing quality assurance and improvement processes, including making suggestions to policymakers



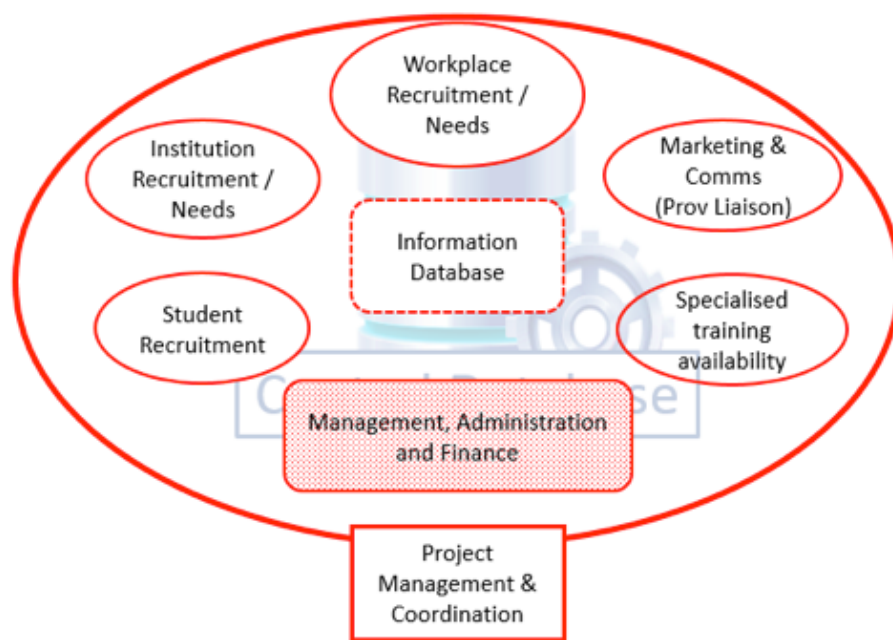


#### 4.3.4. COMPONENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE MODEL

We have simplified the model to these components:

- Student recruitment
- Institutional recruitment and needs identification
- Workplace recruitment and needs identification
- Marketing and communications (including provincial liaison)
- Facilitation of specialised training
- Information database
- Management, administration and finance
- Project management to ensure all these elements are implemented

Figure 21: Components of the model



#### 4.3.5. A CENTRALISED DATABASE

At the centre of this process is a database detailing opportunities within the industry and available students. It has already been established that there are students available to act as interns and that there are opportunities that exist within the industry for these students to fill in a temporary capacity. However, there is a mismatch between these two sets of information. The purpose of the database is to make this information more readily available to students, to employers and to training institutions.

It is important to understand that in the initial stages of this programme, this database might simply be a developed spreadsheet listing the variables. The strength of this intervention does not lie within the database but rather within the building of relationships which are then serviced by the information contained in the database. The key to the database is an ability to interpret the needs of the sector players accurately and match these with students' and institutional needs. This requires more than an electronic database; it requires an intimate understanding of the sector, good linkages with all stakeholders in the sector, and an ability to build and maintain effective relationships.

It is also important to understand and communicate the purpose of the model and its component parts to all groups of stakeholders.

- Students need to understand that this model provides an opportunity for them to gain workplace experience and exposure to the industry and to begin to actively network with industry players. The model may not provide job opportunities and students should not expect to be financially remunerated for their attendance at the workplace, unless there is a stipend agreement in place.
- Employers need to be aware that this model will not provide them with an inexpensive source of labour but rather will provide them with a limited risk opportunity to observe potential employees or sub-contractors in the workplace, and to begin to influence these individuals in their work ethic.



- Institutions need to be aware that the model does not replace classroom based learning, but provides a supplementary learning opportunity which needs to be “unpacked” within the training institution environment. Institutions also need to be aware of the need to provide some level of flexibility for students to be able to effectively participate in these learning opportunities.

We envisage that this database would be voluntary for employers and that registering on it would be a simple process. The advantage for employers who register on the database is that they get access to students and graduates as potential employees. It is recommended that the database be mandatory for registered students.

#### 4.3.6. FOUR MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

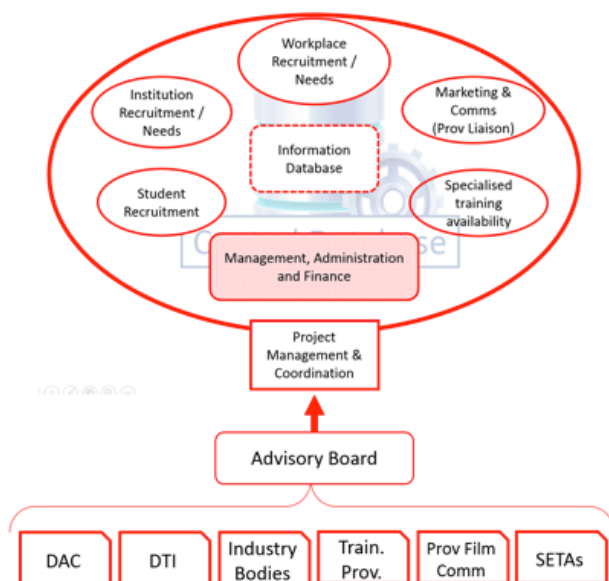
Taking the various factors and differentials uncovered during the research phase and recognising the strengths of the various role players in the environment, four ownership/management/co-ordination models were developed to determine which stakeholder would be the most appropriate to implement the skills development plan. Each model was interrogated for its strengths and weaknesses, and one model was recommended to the client.

Each of the four models together with the advantages and disadvantages of each is outlined below:

- The first option is for the project management and co-ordination to take place within the private sector which would be responsive to private sector needs. The concerns identified are the inability to raise sufficient start-up and sustainable funding. Furthermore, if it had been identified as a priority for the private sector, it is likely that they would already have implemented a similar project.
- The second option is for the project management and co-ordination to take place within training institutions. The concerns about this model is that institutions have neither the mandate nor the capacity to manage this programme – and to date have generally had very little interaction with the private sector, making it unlikely that they would be responsive to private sector needs.
- The third model is that a regulatory agency such as a SETA would take control of the project management and co-ordination. The concerns which we identified with regards to this option are that they do not have the funding, mandate, capacity and resources to carry this out. Of greater concern is that these regulatory bodies would over-regulate this initiative and the private sector would be unlikely to co-operate with this, especially as the film industry is naturally a fluid industry.
- The fourth option, which we believe is the most appropriate option, is for the NFVF to manage and co-ordinate this project. This is because the NFVF has the mandate and relationships with the private sector, institutions and other government bodies. The NFVF can establish an advisory board which will include the other stakeholders and which supports the work that the NFVF will be doing. The recommended members of the advisory board include representatives from DAC, the dti, industry bodies, training providers, provincial film commissions and the SETAs.

The support from the advisory board to the programme is envisioned largely as regulatory support as well as marketing and logistical support. As noted earlier and illustrated in the diagram below, the NFVF will take on the role of project management and co-ordination.

**Figure 22: Ownership/management model with advisory board**



#### 4.3.7. INPUT, RESOURCES OR INFRASTRUCTURE

Each of the stakeholders, the NFVF, institutions and employers, has roles and responsibilities in implementing the model. The input or resources required from each in order to make this successful include funding, general project management, space, time and individuals to assist learners. More specific input required from each stakeholder is tabled below. The largest constraints or barriers to the successful implementation of this model are long-term funding gaps and not recruiting a motivated individual with excellent people skills to manage this process.

**Table 6: Stakeholder roles and responsibilities for implementation**

Stakeholder	Roles
<b>NFVF</b>	Lead partner Project management (including funding sources) Develop instruments, tools, documents, guidelines Active and hands-on Liaison with strategic partners
<b>Institutions</b>	Make space and resources available (identify university staff member who will be the contact person) Brief and involve lecturers Brief and prepare students Place within planning framework Liaise with strategic partners Factors for success: relationships with employers, university relationship with employers
<b>Employers</b>	Actively participate in process Open up workplace Offer workplace placements for candidates Identify learning guides or mentors for students in the workplace Factors for success: relationships with employers, university relationship with employers, identify needs for upskilling existing staff



#### 4.4. ACTIVITIES OR INTERVENTIONS

We recommend that the model be implemented according to a phased approach which will allow for all stakeholders to be included and is responsive to private sector needs.

In each of the phases there are practicalities and specific activities that have been identified as well as a timeframe for how long these activities are likely to take.

- Phase one is largely a preparatory phase where relationships are initiated.
- Phase two is a Model Development phase (possibly to be implemented in Limpopo and Gauteng) where the model is implemented with a limited number of training institutions in each area, but with a number of employers.
- Phase three is the implementation of the model in a further two provinces and the official launch of the model.
- Phase four is an expansion of all activities so that they become systemically ingrained in all training institutions and employers.

Throughout the phases, a database of learners, graduates, employers and employees is developed and maintained in order for employers to access skilled graduates for employment and for institutions to liaise with employers for input such as lectures or curriculum development advice. In addition to the database, a strong element that runs throughout the phases is relationship building and developing partnerships to improve skills within the film industry, making South Africa globally competitive. It is estimated that from establishment in phase one through to the end of phase three, these activities will take approximately two-and-a-half years. Phase four is ongoing.

**Table 7: Phased approach activities and timeframes**

Practicalities	Activities
Phase One: Set up	6 - 8 months
NFVF Agency	Engagement with strategic stakeholders (campaign)
Location: Gauteng	Securing funding
NFVF Offices	Advisory board establishment
NFVF-appointed project manager	Advisory board liaison
	Liaison with institutions
	Liaison with provinces
	Liaison with large employers
	Preparation and training
	Marketing
	Pilot database development (outsourcing) and testing

Practicalities	Activities
Phase Two: Pilot/ testing/ modelling	6 - 8 months
NFVF Agency	Advisory board in place
Active, hands-on project manager	Province specific (GP or WC)
	Advisory board liaison
	Institutional registration on database
	Large employer registration on database
	Preparation and training
	Liaison and model development with smaller employers
	Development and initiation of a project - students from one institution placed in one workplace as a trial
	Testing, monitoring and reporting of implementation (best practice sharing to the sector)
	Development of database version two



Practicalities	Activities
Phase Three: Launch and implementation	12 months
NFVF Agency	Expansion to two other provinces
Active, hands-on project manager	Small and large employer registration on database
	Liaison and model development for specialised learning
	Liaison and model development for recruitment exposure
	Liaison and model development with extra-sector institutions
	Development of mechanisms for upskilling of existing staff
	Testing, monitoring and reporting of implementation
	Development of database (version 3)

Practicalities	Activities
Phase Four: Expansion (systemic process)	Ongoing
	National roll out
	Institutional registration on database
	Small and large employer registration on database
	Liaison and model development for specialised learning
	Liaison and model development for recruitment exposure
	Start of students taking responsibility for finding workplace exposure and experience
	Implementation of mechanisms for upskilling of existing staff
	Testing, monitoring and reporting of implementation
	Development of database as needed

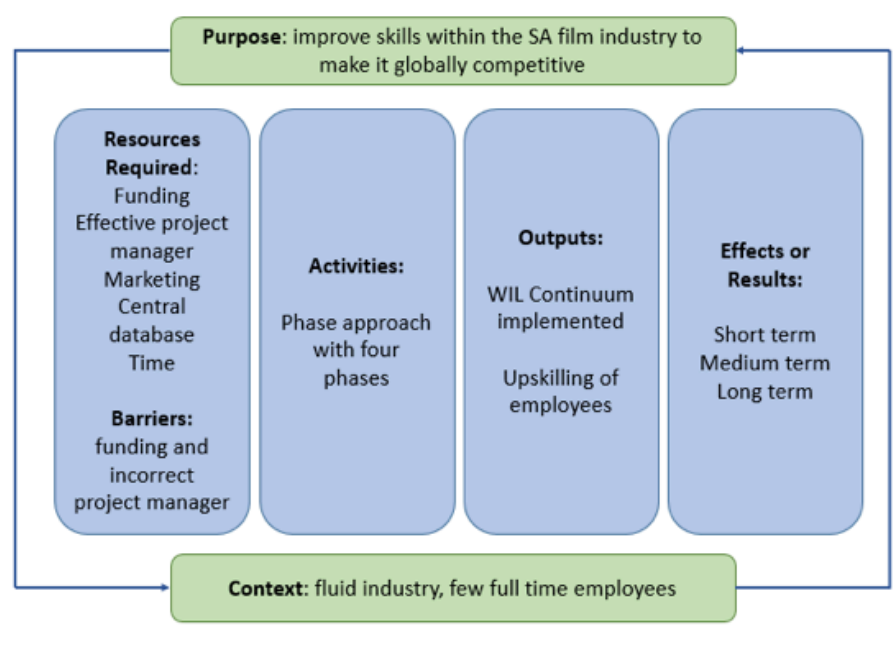
#### 4.5. EFFECTS, OR RESULTS, CONSEQUENCES, OUTCOMES, OR IMPACTS

The effects of implementing the WIL continuum and the upskilling for those currently working within the film industry are categorised in order of the short-; medium-; and long-term effects.

- Short-term or immediate effects include having stakeholders on board who are excited and prepared; relationship building throughout the value chain; marketing; some training has been conducted for employers and institutions; and a pilot database is populated.
- Mid-term or intermediate effects are the systemic buy-in and implementation of getting students into the workplace to gain experience before they graduate. The systemic uptake means that institutions start being responsive to industry needs; employers are open to taking students into the workplace and proactive about informing institutions when they will have opportunities for students to observe or participate; and workplace students are a resource for the short-term and the long-term as a better quality freelance or permanent workforce emerges. At the NFVF level: procedures and processes, and tools or instruments are in place to manage the process and to ensure it is self-sustaining. Students have workplace exposure and experience for sufficient amounts of time so that when they start working after graduation, they have realistic expectations and are more useful to the workplaces.
- Longer-term or ultimate effects of this programme is that students are workplace-ready upon graduation and the skills of current employees are up-to-date with technological changes, resulting in a globally competitive film industry that is able to employ a larger number of people



Figure 23: Implementation plan



#### 4.6. UPSKILLING OF CURRENT PERSONNEL AND FREELANCERS

Changing patterns of technology have altered the demand for particular occupations and skills, and require that employees' skill and knowledge level be developed continuously. Currently there is no method or process within the South African industry which skilled South African workers can access to improve their skills or to move within the sector from one area to another. This intra-sector migration tends to be done informally through personal exposure, learning and networking. The result is a range of competencies amongst skilled, experienced workers in the sector.

The NFVF does provide a limited number of bursaries to study at overseas institutions only for post graduate programmes that are not offered locally. These are awarded to deserving, experienced personnel who meet the qualifying criteria. Learning in an overseas environment, however, is expensive and, as a result, bursaries are limited in number and amount is capped to ensure .

It is suggested that, in the later stages, the proposed skills development model incorporate a process focussing on upskilling experienced, seasoned sector workers. It is suggested further that those experienced workers who have participated in the skills development model programme, as facilitators, as mentors, as employer hosts, etc. are identified as preferred beneficiaries over those who have not actively participated.

It is envisaged that individuals would identify opportunities to improve their own skills and communicate this with the skills development model. When there are a number of individuals interested in improving their skills set, the Foundation would facilitate the local hosting of a training event. It is suggested that this training event be run in co-operation with local training institutions. This event might be facilitated by staff at a local training institution or led by an international expert in the field. Local training institutions should be encouraged to make use of the needs identified by the experienced workers and to develop training courses that will suit these needs, taking the specific requirements of the experienced workers into consideration such as flexible working times and flexibility in meeting course requirements due to work commitments.

Local institutions might also consider developing areas of specialisation specifically to address emerging areas in the industry.

It is further suggested that relationships between the stakeholders in the industry, especially experienced workers, are reinforced by

- using experienced industry people as guest lecturers in institutions
- asking medium and large employers to identify experienced industry people who might be formally identified as WIL mentors



## 5. CONCLUSION

Through the primary and secondary research, and verified through the reiterative workshops, the research has identified four areas of concern.

- Firstly, research indicates that students entering training institutions do not have a good understanding of the industry – particularly the long hours, hard work and how unglamorous the film industry is. Thus the first concern is with student recruitment.
- The second area of concern, and the focus of this report, is the skills-related issues, particularly that graduates are not work-ready when they leave their institutions and that personnel within the industry require upskilling.
- The third area of concern is that the links to non-core or support industries are not well established.
- The final area of concern is that there is insufficient demand of industry products. This directly impacts on growth and employment opportunities in the sector.

Consequently, the two major interventions recommended to improve the skills within the South African film industry are ensuring that graduates are workplace-ready when they enter the workforce and the need to upskill personnel and freelancers within the film industry in order for them to be competitive globally.

An additional intervention is the development of a centralised database. An implementation model was developed which recommended a phased approach as well as identifying the various roles which stakeholders needed to play. Both the skills development plan and the implementation plan were presented to the NFVF and signed off by management. One of the greatest risk factors which the NFVF faces when implementing this model is insufficient communication and relationship building.

## 6. APPENDICES (ELECTRONIC VERSION ONLY)

Survey instruments

Literature review

Presentations

