



PRESS RELEASE – Tue 12 Feb 2019

Helen Boaden to Chair Audio Content Fund Panel

Helen Boaden has been announced as the Chair of the Funding Panel of the new Audio Content Fund, which is funded by a grant of up to £3m from the UK government.

Helen Boaden, who until 2017 was Director of BBC Radio, is joined on the Panel by John Myers, Mukti Jain Campion and Kate Cocker. The Panel will assess bids for funding, working closely with Managing Director Sam Bailey, who formally takes up his post at the beginning of April 2019.

Carlisle-born John Myers has a strong background in commercial radio, while Mukti Jain Campion is a highly-respected former independent producer. Kate Cocker is a multi-talented Manchester-based radio expert who currently works as a consultant. The Panel will be supported by a range of additional experts to be appointed, including Advisors for the Nations.

The Fund has also published official guidelines for those seeking to bid for funding. The guidelines add detail on timelines; how to meet the eight criteria set out by the Government; and more information on how to construct bids for UK indigenous languages and community radio. Independent production companies will need to formulate bids and obtain a guarantee of broadcast from an Ofcom-licensed radio station.

Helen Boaden said: “I’m delighted and honoured to have been asked to Chair the Funding Panel for the new Audio Content Fund. It’s an exciting new project with huge potential. I am looking forward to working with John, Mukti and Kate in assessing the various bids. Given the extraordinary interest in the Fund, I expect that we’ll have our work cut out for us over the coming months.”

Will Jackson, a Director of the Audio Content Fund, said: “We’re very pleased to be able to announce such a strong list of names for our Panel, who will bring to bear their extensive knowledge and experience from across the industry. The Fund has already created much excitement in the radio broadcast and independent production sectors, and we hope the guidance will answer many questions from those seeking to bid for funding.”

Siobhan Kenny, a Director of the Audio Content Fund, said: “Helen will be a wonderful Chair of the Funding Panel. We are fortunate to have secured her support and that of such a talented and experienced team. Their help and advice will be invaluable in establishing the Audio Content Fund as a source of funding for innovative new public service radio programming”.

Audio Content Fund Panel Members – brief biographies



Helen Boaden (Chair) Helen Boaden began in commercial radio in Middlesbrough and Leeds. After a spell at BBC Radio Leeds she worked on Radio 4 programmes in Manchester, presenting the regional edition of Woman's Hour and reporting for / editing File on 4, winning several journalism awards. After moving to London to run BBC Radio and Television Current Affairs, she became Controller of Radio 4, winning Sony Station of the Year twice and taking the station to then record audiences. From 2004 - 2013, she was Director of BBC News before becoming Director of BBC Radio. She left the BBC in 2017 and completed a Fellowship on journalism at the Shorenstein Center in Harvard. In 2018 Helen / Mediatique's report for RTE on the future of orchestral provision in Ireland. She is involved with numerous arts organisations including the Royal Academy of Arts.



Kate Cocker has a 20-year career in radio that spans many roles in the commercial and public service sectors. As The Presenter Coach, she coaches radio presenters across the country so that they shine, as well as working with business leaders so that they have impact with their clients and audiences. Kate has a huge passion for radio and presents her own daily podcast/flash briefing, Everyday Positivity.



Mukti Jain Campion founded the indie company Culture Wise, successfully producing documentaries and features for BBC Radio for over 20 years. She has been a particular champion for bringing original and diverse voices into the mainstream of British broadcasting and produced the seminal report Look Who's Talking.



John Myers is the former CEO of GMG Radio and Border Radio Holdings. He is a former award-winning producer and presenter, the creator of the Smooth, Real, Rock and Century Radio brands over a 35-year career and has also been a Government advisor. He is the author of four 'Myers reports' into radio including work for the BBC. John is also a past chair of the Radio Academy and the Sony Awards and was the founder of the 30 Under 30 list. He's currently on the Royal Television Society committee, a member of the Business Investment Group and owner of Myers Media.

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Notes:

1. The Audio Content Fund will be responsible for distributing funding to support original radio and audio production in the UK. It is a pilot scheme funded by a grant of up to £3m (including administration costs) from the UK Government. Funding will be used to produce distinctive, public service radio programming that is traditionally more difficult to support on a commercial basis (such as, but not exclusively, documentaries, comedy, drama, events). The fund will invite bids from audio production companies that are working in conjunction with Ofcom-licensed radio stations who have agreed to broadcast the output.
2. The Guidelines for Bidders can be found at: www.audiocontentfund.org.uk
3. Will Jackson is also Managing Director of AudioUK, the trade body for audio production companies in the UK. More at www.audiouk.org
4. Siobhan Kenny is also Chief Executive of Radiocentre, the industry body for commercial radio in the UK. More at www.radiocentre.org