



OPEN
LENS
MEDIA

2022 ANNUAL OUTCOMES REPORT

Developing Young People.
Creating Opportunities.
Opening The Lens On The Youth Perspective.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Hello and welcome to our 2022 Annual Report.

2022 was definitely a year of growth for us here at Open Lens Media. Not only in our capacity and capabilities, but also for each member of the team. With all the changes in recent years, much has changed within our service and the way in which we deliver. We've embraced online delivery, smaller group sizes and refined our offer. However, one thing that has remained consistent is our passion and drive to make an impact within the communities we serve and the lives of the people we support.



As a small organisation it is important that we remain fluid in our growth, whilst also not losing our core aims. I feel very proud to say that over 2022 we managed to achieve this and I am especially proud (as always) of our team for their unwavering commitment.

This year, we took a deep dive into some of the most challenging issues facing our young people, with a particularly strong focus on employability, criminal justice, identity, and social action. I'm pleased to say that we've covered some extensive ground here and opened the lens on some of the causes of these problems whilst developing projects that provide a solution to some of the issues that have arisen, which you'll read about in this report.

However, our work is not done and in 2023 we will be building on the progress we've made with a strong focus on influencing systemic changes and improving the quality of the opportunities our beneficiaries are able to access and receive. In practice this means:

- Expanding our Pathway employability programme and Pathway offer across Birmingham and the Black Country.
- Developing our relationships within the Media and Creative Sector to provide valuable training and career opportunities for our beneficiaries.
- Adding value to our educational offerings through accreditation and certification of our courses and programmes.
- Providing strategic direction to support local authorities and agencies in tackling social issues affecting young people from marginalised communities within the local communities we serve in Walsall and Birmingham.

There's a lot to dig into, so I do hope you take the time to read our report and learn more about the work we're doing. I also hope that as valuable members of our community you will continue to support us through your encouragement, partnership, network, custom, and donations in Developing Young People, Creating Opportunities and Opening the Lens on the Youth Perspective.

Thank you,
Daina Anderson Mpunzi
CEO & Business Director

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SNAPSHOT OF OUR YEAR

Key Stats

1200+

people we have worked with to date

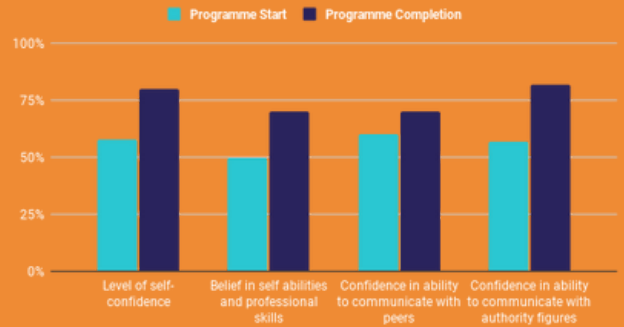
80+

participants upskilled in 2022



63% of ESF participants achieved hard outcomes (moving into further training, education, or employment)

Average Participant Development Progression in 2022



2022 has been a positive year for OLM in terms of programme delivery. We've completed various projects that have been delivered across Birmingham and the Black Country area, working with a range of community partners and contractors that have enabled us to deliver our programmes to some amazing young people.

Project Overview

Sandwell BCI Contract – 4 young people

Walsall BCI Contract – 3 young people

SHAPE Project – 13 young people

LCCTV – 2 young people

Youth Justice Project – 3 young people

Sandwell College Project – 15 young people

ESF Pathway Project – 11 people

Lighthouse Half-Term Workshop – 30 young people approx

2022

WHO WE ARE

Open Lens Media is a Training, Development, and Engagement organisation providing employment services, educational courses, school holiday programmes, community engagement services, and training and consultancy to young people and youth focused agencies/authorities working with those stemming from disenfranchised, underrepresented, and under-served backgrounds.



We use Media Production, Communication, and Digital Skills activities to improve soft skills, educational attainment, and support creative expression by embedding hidden learning methods into our technical and practical sessions. We also deliver engagement services that provide social research into complex issues faced by marginalised communities and encourage social action.

Working closely with children, young people, and young adults between the ages of 11-15, 16-24, and 25-35, we deliver programmes that support them in successfully transitioning into further education, employment, training, or developing their entrepreneurial talents.

We operate within a vast network of local authorities, educational establishments, and youth and community organisations across the West Midlands, providing opportunities to young people across the region.

Our range of programmes in Film, Radio, Podcasting, TV, and Video Production teach transferable skills by embedding hidden learning methods into our technical and practical sessions. As a result, graduates learn skills in:

Teamwork Critical Thinking & Decision Making
Presentation Skills Organisation Skills
Problem-Solving Leadership
Time Management Creative Writing

Our Mission

Our mission is to create and provide innovative and interactive learning tools, within safe and fun environments that engage young people and encourage them to develop their personal, professional, entrepreneurial, and academic skills.

Our Aim

We aim to ensure that young people stemming from underreached backgrounds have equal access to opportunities that propel them into further education, employment, or training; helping them to secure a brighter future.

Our Values

Safety

Ensuring every person we work with feels safe and supported.

Social Impact

Adding value to communities through impactful work and measurable change.

Cultural Engagement

Understanding the importance of cultural differences and community intersectionality.

Respect

Respecting the diverse viewpoints, backgrounds, and cultures of individuals in contributing to what we do.

People

Continually nurturing a better organisational culture, employee satisfaction, motivation, and engagement.

A MESSAGE FROM THE TEAM

Chloe – Project & Engagement Coordinator

2022 has been an exciting year at Open Lens Media. We've delivered a range of projects and programmes throughout the year that have helped many young people achieve their goals and develop their skills. We also expanded our services to offer employability support to our participants via our Pathway Programmes helping them to step closer and achieve their career goals. It's been incredible to connect with organisations and services over the past year who support the work we do, and I look forward to continuing working with them on future projects in supporting our young people.



Personally, it's been a great year for my professional development; working with such a supportive and talented team, I've had the opportunity of taking on a leading role on various tasks and projects which have been a joy to oversee.

Overall, it's been a pleasure to be a part of all the work we have achieved this year and I look forward to seeing what Open Lens Media will achieve in 2023!

Taran – Lead Facilitator

Whilst working at Open Lens Media this year I have continued to develop a range of skills and knowledge working in a diverse team environment. In my role as Lead Facilitator, it has been a privilege to deliver our programmes to young people from various backgrounds and abilities. Some highlights from the past 12 months include delivering anti-bullying training sessions before directing and editing two short films in collaboration with Sandwell Council's Shape Forum. During the summer period I helped to deliver a bespoke programme for a group of young boys from black and mixed heritage backgrounds who had been involved with the criminal justice system. This was an eye opening experience and broadened my perspective on working with young people from a range of backgrounds and circumstances.

Looking ahead to 2023 I am excited to continue working towards establishing the Pledge 10 initiative and realise this as a source of opportunity and development for the young people that we work with.



Joshua – Facilitation & Production Assistant

I have been working at Open Lens Media for almost two years now. In my time with Open Lens Media, I have achieved more than I could have ever imagined. I have been challenged, trained and supported both personally and professionally by each member of the team.

We are all working towards the same goal as well as to our personal goals. We want to help young people achieve. We want to enable and assist them through the use of media to express themselves and develop the valued skills that they have.

Over the past year, I have worked closely with some great organisations on behalf of OLM. For example, we have worked with Shape at Sandwell Council, Sandwell College and Gazebo Theatre to create a series of Anti-Bullying films. We have also worked with the Walsall Youth Justice System in which we worked with a group of young people to develop their skills and create a documentary based on some of the challenges they face within the youth system. Around the same time, I was encouraged towards a great opportunity of working on the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games as part of the Sunset + Vine host broadcast team in which I received extensive training in preparation, an opportunity which I was introduced to by OLM.

With Open Lens I have the ability to do a bit of everything in terms of media; social action, corporate, creative, facilitation, it's always something different.



T'naya – Facilitator

Working with Open Lens Media has been great. Since starting I've had plenty of opportunity to lead and assist in facilitating programmes.

Over the summer we spent some time with the Youth Justice, focusing on a few young boys in particular. Through this programme we were able to identify and begin to tackle a variety of issues that the young boys had or were facing. This also helped to point out trends and similarities that could then be used to help the Youth Justice reach these young boys and others in similar situations better. Personally, I feel like this was a great way to start breaking down the current barriers and help our youth succeed.



Rima Ismail - Digital Content Creator & Marketer

2022 has been a year full of new experiences and exciting achievements for myself and reaching one whole year working at OLM in November.

This year, I had the opportunity to expand my work into facilitating sessions about social media and content creation. This meant I had written several session guides, planned activities, and led facilitation of these to a number of young people at The Lighthouse Young People's Centre. I have also taken on a line manager role for the two Lighthouse Lens Reporters, working with the participants from the start of the LCCTV Project until the end of their month month internships, which was a completely new experience for me and was a good way for me to branch out in my role. It has been very enjoyable to continue creating and uploading content across all of our social media channels on various platforms, alongside writing and mailing out our monthly e-newsletter, Inside The Lens, and editing and updating OLM's website.



As always, it has been a pleasure to work alongside the talented, supportive, and encouraging OLM team whilst working in a fun environment and carrying out meaningful work every day.

"Special thanks to Rima for all of her time and dedication into helping us when we needed it and always having time to hear our thoughts, also a really big thanks to Open Lens Media in allowing us to experience this project." - *Brianna, 16*

"The staff have been amazing and kind throughout, especially Chloe, Josh, and all the others on the team. They've just been amazing at helping us along the way." - *Josh, 16*

"Thank you for your knowledge and your time" - *Bethany, 20*

"The facilitators are really good... you never feel like you're lost or out of your depth because everything is explained simply... I'd like to say thank you to Open Lens for giving me this opportunity and thanks to the facilitator for helping me through this process." - *Chris, 22*

PROGRAMME BREAKDOWN



Black Country Impact

Aim of Project:

In 2022, Open Lens Media worked under both Walsall and Sandwell Council to deliver programmes under the Black Country Impact Scheme. Under this contract, we have been working with young people who are looking to get into further education, employment, or training to develop their soft and employability skills. We have been using media as an engagement tool for creative expression that allows participants to identify and overcome their barriers to progression.

Delivery and Outcome

At the point of writing this report, we have been delivering our “Using Media to Develop Personal Skills” programme to several young people who have all achieved various outcomes. Many of our participants on this programme reported an increase in both technical skills and soft skills including self-esteem and confidence.

Note: We're extremely pleased to announce that in 2022 we were recommissioned by Walsall Council to be a skills provider until the scheme closure in 2023.



Testimonials

Here is what a few participants had to say about their time on the programme:

“I did learn a lot and gained a lot from the group; I enjoyed using the camera and learning camera angles, different shot takes and audio was most valuable.” *Mo, 20*

“I didn't have any expectations going into this course but I enjoyed learning all the different angles and editing” *Natasha, 29*

“I gained some interesting skills from this course. I felt the most valuable things that I learned were the different camera skills, shot frames and terminologies because they are what would help me in my foreseen future and are what I am passionate about.” *Bethany, 20*

SHAPE Anti-Bullying Programme

Aim of Project

The Shape Forum provides the opportunity for young people to meet other young people aged 11-23 across the Sandwell Borough, regionally and nationally, organise SHAPE Events and act as a consultation group for Sandwell Council services and partner agencies. Open Lens Media was approached by the Forum in 2021 to help shape their project on Anti-Bullying. The Forum wanted a training resource created by young people that would help to inform local Anti-Bullying policy and training.



Delivery and Outcome

We delivered our Media Production programme to teach the young people essential camera skills that would help them to create the training videos. Across seven sessions, the participants were taught skills in camera operation, audio production, script writing, storytelling, creative development, etc. all leading up to them developing their final narrative for their films which would be used as part of Sandwell Council’s Anti-Bullying Roadshow. The six training videos were produced in collaboration with Sandwell College and Gazebo Theatre. These videos were received positively in the training, and we also received positive feedback from the participants in the Forum who enjoyed their training.

Testimonials

“This programme actually exceeded my expectations – I learned quite a lot.” *Muneerah, 18*

“I expected a lot less and found it really engaging, I’ve developed camera knowledge and practical skills.” *Josh, 16*



LCCTV Project & Lighthouse Lens Reporters

Aim of Project

The LCCTV Project ran at The Lighthouse Young People’s Centre, Birmingham between April and August 2022. This project aimed to teach young people the skills needed to become content creators for various social media platforms.

Delivery and Outcome

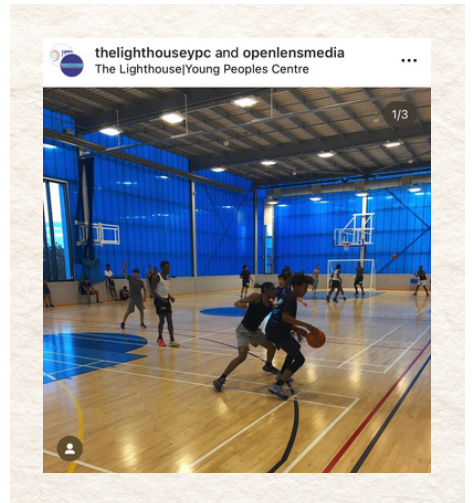
This was a new project put together using a combination of existing sessions such as Video Editing and Presentation Skills, and some completely new sessions such as Introduction to Social Media and Content Development. Participants were coached through sessions and were taught the basics of content creation, social media marketing and digital skills.

At the end of the 12 sessions, participants were invited to be interviewed to be hired as Lighthouse Lens Reporters by Open Lens Media for a three-month paid internship to create Instagram content for The Lighthouse using the skills they had learnt during the LCCTV Project. This gave them the opportunity to develop interview skills and practice the skills in a mock interview scenario.

Two of the participants on the LCCTV Project were successful in securing an intern placement and gained invaluable work experience at The Lighthouse.

Case Study

Participant A is a 16-year-old female in the last year of Secondary School. She began LCCTV project with minimal media knowledge and only a basic user understanding of social media. Throughout LCCTV, the Participant learnt many new technical skills and handled equipment she had never used before. During the project, Participant A noted that she would like to work on her communication skills and be more professional when sending emails. After being hired as a Lighthouse Lens Reporter, the Participant had to send and reply to emails promptly with content, and to send information regarding her working hours; the Participant was able to work on her professionalism and confidently sent emails to OLM staff and to the Lighthouse staff in a professional manner.



ESF Pathway Programme



Aim of Project

The aim of the Pathway Employability Project was to deliver tailored 1-2-1 employability support in a creative and interactive environment that utilises Media and Communication practices as engagement tools for delivery. The project was developed in March 2022 and launched officially in May 2022 through the successful bidding of the ESF Community Grants fund.

The purpose of the project was focused on improving the employability skills of learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds that were unemployed or economically inactive; providing a development bridge to those furthest away from the employment market or to those who were in need of focused employment support into their chosen field. The aim of these activities was to ensure participants could then successfully access and sustain future employment, education, or training.

The programme aimed to support them in achieving this by:

- 1) Improving their digital, IT, presentational, and written skills through coaching development support.
- 2) Improving their social and communication skills using media production. Breaking down their barriers to progression through creative expression.

Delivery and Outcome

Overall, the Pathway Programme was very beneficial for our participants who all made significant progress towards their personal goals and employment journeys. All of the participants on the programme engaged positively in their sessions to develop both technical and personal skills including Communication Skills, Presentation Skills, Teamwork, Camera Skills, Editing Skills, Podcasting, and Research Skills. Participants also reported that the programme helped them to develop employability skills including interview skills, time management, self-promotion, motivation, productivity, and self-management.

7 out of the 11 participants that we engaged in the programme achieved hard outcomes including employment and training opportunities, with the remaining participants making positive steps towards their personal goals. This achievement was reflective of the intended outcome number that was submitted in the application. Our evaluations show that 100% of the participants would agree or strongly agree that the programme has helped them to develop their soft skills including confidence and improved self-esteem. These progressions will help the participants to increase their chances of sustaining employment in the future.

Sandwell College

Aim of Project

In September and October of 2022, our CEO was invited as a Guest Lecturer by Sandwell College to teach Film and Media. The aim was to support the students in developing their Film and Media knowledge, in particular teaching them techniques in Filmmaking and Producing that they would then use towards their final end of year project.



Delivery and Outcome

Daina spent a term working with 1st and 2nd year students to teach them Filmmaking and Directing techniques. Lessons including skills in Researching, Directing, Scriptwriting, Producing, and Editing and Daina coached the students in coming up with topical subjects. As a result, the students produced a series of Documentaries and short films.

Students reported an increase in confidence in their ability to create and also stated how much they enjoyed the informal teaching style that allowed them to be as creative as possible.



“Working with the students at Sandwell College was a breath of fresh air. They were a joy to support and reminded me just how much talented young people we have in the West Midlands. I’m pretty sure I’ve worked with some budding filmmakers and I honestly look forward to seeing their names pop up on my TV or cinema screen in the future.” *Daina Anderson Mpunzi – CEO*

Youth Justice Disproportionality Project

Since 2019, Open Lens Media has been working with the Walsall Youth Justice Service (WYJS) to provide opportunities for disengaged or at-risk young people within the Youth Justice System within the Walsall borough. Our engagement over the years proved successful from projects to internal team training and as such we were asked by WYJS to develop a pilot programme to support them in tackling the issue of Disproportionality within the Youth Justice System in Walsall.

The HM Inspectorate of Probation 2021 Thematic Report highlights the experiences of Black and Mixed Heritage boys within and known to the Youth Offending Service across a number of UK regions.¹ Whilst the report highlighted there is a severe issue of over-representation of Black and Mixed Heritage boys within the system, it also identified that there was a lack of serviced commissions specifically for Black and Mixed Heritage boys. Good quality services were the 'exception and not the rule' and were not always known to staff teams, so were not routinely used.

Aim

WYJS approached Open Lens Media to develop a full serviced project that provided dedicated and tailored support to Black and Mixed Heritage boys within the WYJS. As a result, we developed a bespoke three-tiered programme that incorporated:

- Internal team training in diversity, bias, and cultural identity.
- Dedicated personal and professional development support for young boys to support them in re-engaging in education, employment, or training through our Pathway Programme.
- Production of a Documentary film with heads of service in early years, police, children's services, and Youth Justice to investigate what changes are being made to reduce the issues of over-representation.

¹ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. (October 2021). The experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system.



Delivery

This was a bespoke professional and personal development programme that used media production techniques as an engagement tool to allow the boys to express themselves and explore their aspirations. The media sessions were delivered alongside our Pathway Programme to fit the needs of a small group of boys from Black or Mixed Heritage backgrounds who had been involved with WYJS.

Starting with multiple empowerment sessions, the programme covered aspects of prejudice and cultural identity before including our traditional media sessions as well. By the end of this programme, the group had been given the opportunity to become familiar with various recording equipment and created a podcast to voice some of their experiences. The group also contributed towards the overall Youth Justice Service documentary that we are making in collaboration with the Service to explore the issue of disproportionality within Walsall's Youth Justice System.



Case Study

Participant A is a 15 year old male who has shown a lot of development throughout the time spent on the Youth Justice Disproportionality project and has continued to engage with our 1-2-1 sessions as a form of personal progression support. At the start of the programme, similar to many of the other participants, Participant A did not engage much or want to become involved within the sessions. However, once covering various themes around identity and breaking stereotypes in Ricky Otto's empowerment sessions he showed more interest and began to contribute as part of the group. Since this point, Participant A's confidence levels increased as he has spoke on issues important to him through podcasting and developed presentation skills. Participant A already showed good communication skills with his peers but was able to expand this and speak more openly with 'authority figures' and facilitators within the session environment. Participant A has continued this good progress during 1-2-1 sessions and maintained good attendance as he works towards his goal of securing a football scholarship upon completing his studies.



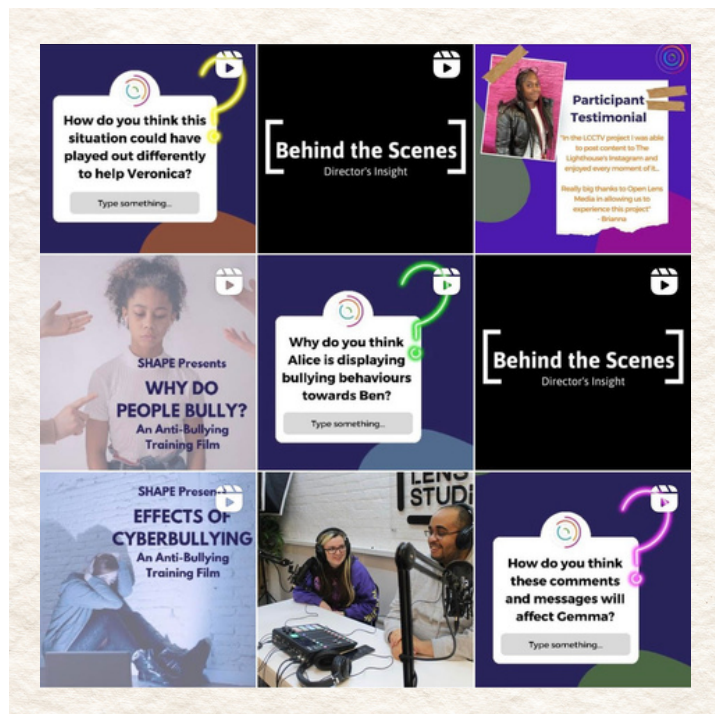
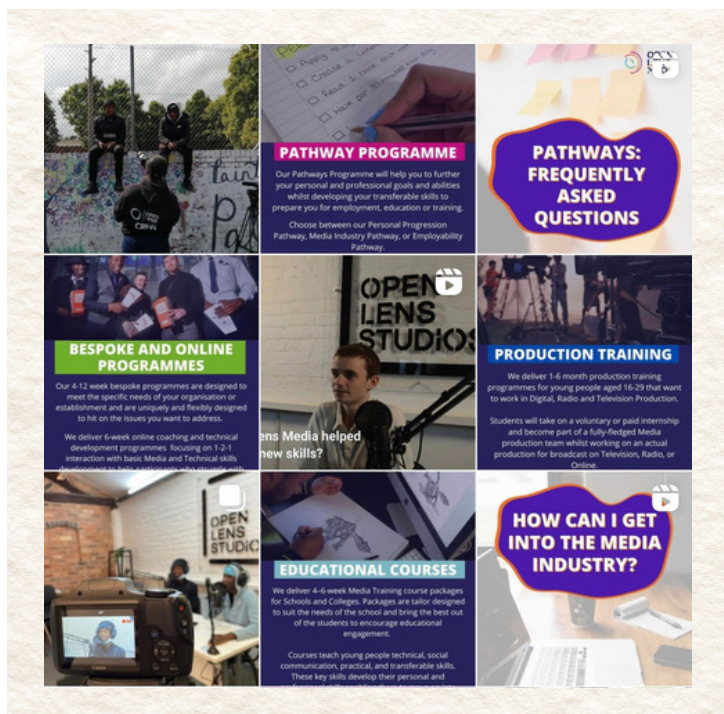
PARTNERS & FUNDERS

The Pandemic caused a seismic shift in the way we as an organisation operate and deliver our programmes and services. Almost years on since restrictions eased and we can honestly say we're still seeing the impact of Covid on the lives of our beneficiaries and students. Therefore, it's more important than ever that we are positioned to support and deliver impactful programmes and projects that add value to our beneficiaries lives and make a difference.

On behalf of the Open Lens Media Team and the Board of Directors, I want to say a heartfelt thank you to our Partners and Funders that have worked with us over the past 12 months and supported to work we're doing. We're extremely grateful and look forward to a continuous and growing relationship with you all going forward - Daina Anderson Mpunzi.

A YEAR ON SOCIAL MEDIA

This year, Open Lens Media has been consistently growing our audience on Instagram and focusing our efforts on taking the audience alongside us during events and our everyday office life working with our participants. Instagram has also been a key platform this year for us to exhibit our consequential Anti-Bullying films that we were commissioned to produce for Sandwell Council with The SHAPE Forum. Collaboration posts have also been advantageous this year to present joint projects with our Community Partners, such as with The Lighthouse Young People’s Centre and with The SHAPE Forum, and to deepen our partnerships. 2022 has also been the year that we expanded our social media range on to LinkedIn and Twitter to be able to interact with our Partners on a closer level, and posting regularly for our audiences not on other social media platforms.



Looking forward into 2023, we are determined to continue expanding our social media reach into new audiences whilst still providing the high quality, fun content that our long-time followers have come to know us for. We also are keen to stay in conversation with our audience to keep all of our new social media content relevant, valuable, and fresh for all those people following us across various platforms.



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MEET OUR DIRECTORS

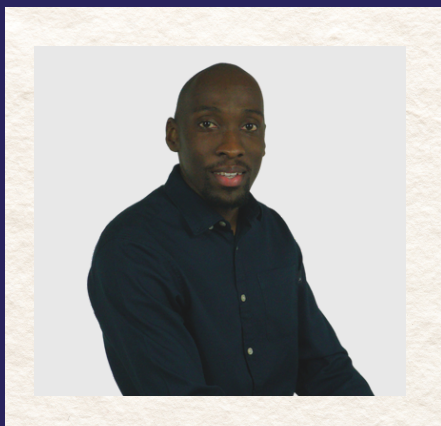
Julette - Education & Curriculum Director

My name is Julette Bell and I have held the position of Education and Curriculum Director for Open Lens Media for nearly 4 years. My background has been in education and teaching for the past twenty years. With this knowledge and experience, I am able to advise, support and ensure that our educational packages and practices are tailored accurately, are relevant and appealing to stakeholders.



As a director we are required to attend regular board meetings where we are kept abreast of our successes and projected areas for development, offering advice on strategic direction.

It has been a pleasure to witness, first-hand, the impact OLM has had on young people - empowering young people and expanding life chances - in the community. It has also been a privilege to support Open Lens Media's vision, watching as the business grows from strength to strength. I am excited for the future of OLM and to see where OLM will go next.



Joshua – Pastoral & Youth Services Director

I'm Josh Berry and I have been the Pastoral & Youth Services Director for Open Lens Media since 2018. I've thoroughly enjoyed the experience of working with Daina and the Directors over the last four years and seeing how far the organisation has come.

There have been challenges along the way, but with perseverance we have achieved many milestones over that time, some of which you have seen in our recent newsletters.

A bit about myself, I have been working with Children and Young people for the last 13 years and am currently the Head of Year 10 at a school in Birmingham. I have gained a wealth of knowledge and experience which I now contribute via my role in Open Lens. I deliver staff Safeguarding and GDPR training, contribute to policies, and share ideas in our regular board meetings.

I consider it a privilege to be a part of OLM and I look forward to seeing the plans we have in store coming to fruition.

Watch this space!

Jacqueline – Autism & Special Education Needs Director



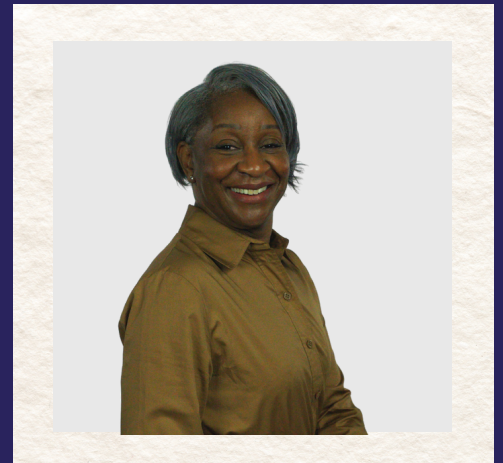
My name is Jacqueline Anderson, and I am the Autism and Special Education Needs Director for OLM. I happily agreed to the position as I could see the great potential of OLM's media projects and how they could be adapted to become inclusive for children and young people with additional needs.

My background is in autism and specialist education, and I am a campaigner for inclusion. I work closely with OLM, delivering autism and SEN training to staff and I have previously delivered the coaching and wellbeing element of the courses to participants. I am proud to work with an organisation that is striving to include all the young people in the community.

Valerie – Finance Director

My name is Valerie Spence, and I am the Finance Director for Open Lens Media. I have recently joined the OLM team and I am looking forward to working alongside and supporting you all.

I have 35 years background in finance as a Business Finance Manager with a proven track record of delivering innovative programmes, managing budgets, and leading teams to sustained success. I look forward to working with the OLM team and the young people who are referred to OLM programmes.



Stuart - Youth and Community Engagement Director



My name is Stuart Bates and I am the Youth and Community Engagement Director for Open Lens Media. A position I can say I have proudly held for nearly four years.

Throughout this period, I have been a trusted advisor to Daina and the team in helping Open Lens Media to achieve its strategic aims, reviewing outcomes, developing staff and volunteers. I have represented Open Lens Media to stakeholders, and acted as an ambassador for the organisation in supporting and improving the lives of young people through the use of media.

My background is in Youth, Community and Sport and I am passionate about ensuring young people from all walks of life have access to equal opportunities. That is why this is a position I don't take for granted and I am very much looking forward to continuing to play my part in supporting Open Lens Media to impact more young people across the region.

HOPES & AIMS FOR 2023



Our hope for 2023 is that we are able to increase our Social Impact and provide long lasting value to the lives of our beneficiaries. We plan to make this possible through expanding our services, building stronger relationships with partners, and listening even more to the voices of our young people.

Over the next three years our strategic aim for our impact and outcomes are:

- To reduce the high levels of long-term youth unemployment experienced by disenfranchised communities.
- To improve access to employment in the creative sector and meaningful opportunities for young people from underrepresented backgrounds.
- To improve systemic operations within local governing procedures in youth justice and policing.
- To improve educational attainment for young people stemming from socially deprived communities.

Pledge 10

In 2023 we will be launching our Pledge 10 initiative, which is our 12 month annual commitment to building relationships with new partners and working together with 10 local creative companies to provide opportunities for our participants. We're looking for organisations that can offer different experiences to our participants across the creative sectors ranging from arts and performance to graphic design and gaming.

Our desire is to build long lasting partnerships that extend beyond placements, effectively creating long term commitment to upskilling our young people.

CONCLUSION

Overall, 2022 was a great year for Open Lens Media. We've worked with some incredible partners and young people, developed our services and contributed to some positive community projects. We continue to navigate through uncertain economic times and understand the challenges that this brings to local business and the community. It is our hope that we will continue helping people achieve their goals through these challenging times and we look forward to seeing what 2023 brings.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report.

Open Lens Media CIC.



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2023 HOPES

