

MG ALBA Operational Plan 2018-19

The Gaelic Media Service in partnership with the BBC

As submitted to Ofcom. Approved by Board 22 February 2018

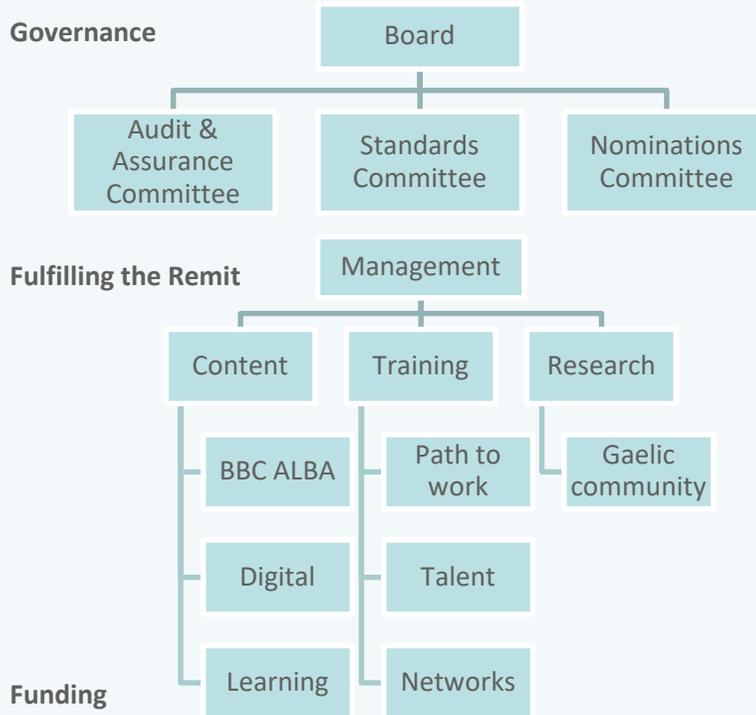


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MG ALBA

MG ALBA is the operating name for Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gaidhlig, the Gaelic Media Service, a body corporate established by the Broadcasting Act 1990 and subject to Ofcom governance oversight. Members of MG ALBA (max 12, currently 9) are appointed by Ofcom with the approval of Scottish Ministers.



The Scottish Government provides funding of £12.8m for 2018-19.

Statutory Remit – Section 183 Broadcasting Act 1990, inserted by section 208 Communications Act 2003

...to secure that a wide and diverse range of high quality programmes in Gaelic are broadcast or otherwise transmitted so as to be available to persons in Scotland [and to others]

In carrying out their functions, the Service may finance, or engage in, any of the following—

(a) the making of programmes in Gaelic...

(b) the provision of training for persons employed, or to be employed, in connection with the making of programmes in Gaelic ...

(c) research into the types of programmes in Gaelic that members of the Gaelic-speaking community would like...

BBC ALBA Collaboration Agreement – 27 July 2007

This Agreement provides for the establishment and funding of BBC ALBA (launched 19 September 2008).

Under the terms of the Agreement MG ALBA, MG ALBA provides content, development, training, research and other contributions and the BBC provides news, content, distribution, branding, on-air promotion and other contributions, sufficient to ensure a broadcast schedule with an average of 1.5 hours per day of new content, with the intention of increasing this to 3 hours per day “should sufficient funding be available to the parties”.

MG ALBA staff and infrastructure are engaged in commissioning, scheduling and presentation of the channel, junction production, trails and promotion, and digital publishing workflows for new and archive content for BBC playout.

Our Vision

Lèirsinn 2021 / Five-year Strategy 2016 to 2021

We seek to achieve the following outcomes:

1. That Gaelic users are informed, educated and entertained and have their lives enhanced through media in their own language.
2. The celebration and normalisation of Gaelic and Gaelic culture in mainstream Scottish society.
3. A better educated, more skilled and successful Gaelic media community.
4. A vibrant culture of Gaelic media innovation and creativity among young people.
5. Full economic potential and the realisation of better employment opportunities.
6. The celebration of Gaelic and Gaelic culture internationally.

Ar Luachan / Values

- ✦ 'S e ar luchd-amhairc ar spionnadh
Our audience is our inspiration
- ✦ Tha sinn daonnan a' sireadh sàr-mhathas nar n-obair
We strive always to achieve excellence in our work
- ✦ Tha sinn gar giùlain fhèin le ceartas, follaiseachd agus trèibhdhìreas
We treat everyone with fairness, openness & integrity
- ✦ Tha sinn a' toirt urram is taic do chàch a chèile
We respect and support one another
- ✦ Tha co-obrachadh agus com-pàirteachas aig cridhe ar n-obrach
Teamwork and partnership are at the heart of what we do
- ✦ Tha MG ALBA a' toirt prìomhachas don luchd-amhairc
MG ALBA puts the audience first

Challenges

Not enough new content due to insufficient funding and resources: standstill budgets at a time of inflationary pressure

Migration of linear PSB TV viewership to non-linear platforms

Increased competition for TV viewers (new channel in for Scotland)

Discoverability and promotion of our content in crowded linear and non-linear spaces

Increasing sector supply constraints and cost inflation as demand for content production increases in Scotland by an expected £50m

Keys to Success

Strategy of complementarity with new BBC Scotland channel

More creative and financial collaborations for content production

Long-term partnerships: producers, Screen Unit; agencies

Adequate commitments by BBC, in fulfilment of Para 40, BBC Framework Agreement ("the BBC must continue to provide a television service supporting MG ALBA's function.....")

Stable funding base for MG ALBA; right skills in-house

What will be happening in 2018-19? What are we changing?

CHANGES IN OUR ENVIRONMENT

A new BBC channel for Scotland

A new BBC channel for Scotland will offer 2.5 hours of new programmes per day at an average non-News cost of £40k per hour.

The channel will offer scope for collaboration and shared strategies. Early research shows that BBC ALBA viewers are the most favourably disposed to the new channel and may watch less of BBC ALBA. Risk planning will need to take account of this and appropriate risk mitigation strategies will be required.

Network production increase of £20m in Scotland

The new BBC Scotland channel is viewed by many producers as a window into more lucrative commissions for the channel in partnership with network (for example, first broadcast on BBC Scotland, second broadcast on BBC One or BBC Two).

Screen Unit operated by Creative Scotland - £10m

The new Screen Unit will offer production and content development funding to producers, strategic partnerships with content commissioners (including the BBC) and a significant boost into skills and talent strategies. MG ALBA will seek full alignment so as to maximise outcomes for the screen sector, including the Gaelic creative sector.

Centenary events WWI (Islay, Iolaire)

We will be present through content and in person at important events

Our responses

We will strengthen relationships across the BBC and the screen sector

We will build a strategy of complementarity with the new BBC Scotland, aimed at jointly building the combined audience and seeking to normalise Gaelic on the new channel

We will align strategically with Creative Scotland and other agencies

We will implement efficiencies in tandem with BBC Scotland in order to maximise our spend on content, trialling automated subtitle insertion at point of playout to deliver an on/off option on iPlayer and trialling more dynamic junction composition in line with BBC Scotland.

Changes we are making

Evolving our internal culture to be more adaptable and entrepreneurial

Better appreciation and reporting of the external value secured for our content (such as co-finance and “club” collaborations)

Communicating better

Increasing focus on outcomes

Developing leadership capability



Our Statutory Promises: Content, Training & Research in 2018-19

Content £10.987m (net)

MG ALBA will contribute the following content to BBC ALBA, plus 100 hours of junctions, including presentation. All live programmes will be delivered direct to BBC playout by the producer. All other funded content contributions will be delivered electronically by MG ALBA fully compliant with Digital Publishing Partnership (DPP) standards.

MG ALBA Illustrative TV Content Output by Genre for 2018-19

Genre	MG ALBA Hours		BBC Hours	
	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19
News	-	-	175	TBA
BBC other / Current Affairs	-	-	77	TBA
Children	55	59.0	-	-
Drama	2.5	2.5	-	-
Entertainment	22.0	26.5	-	-
Factual	112.0	83.5	-	-
Music & Arts	35.0	36.5	10	TBA
Sport	200.0	200.0	-	-
Comedy	0.5	2.0	-	-
Learning	-	-	-	-
Archive	6.0	6.0	-	-
Digital short-form	-	TBA	-	-
TOTAL	433.0	422.0	262	TBA

Training & Community Outreach £300k

FilmG is MG ALBA’s key vehicle for digital media participation and talent development. FilmG is project managed by Canan Ltd.

We will also focus on increasing the volume of user generated content, building on initiatives such as #VlogaMhòid.

We will work with partner bodies to support the development of skills and talent in the education sector and in our supply chain: this will include apprenticeships, student & graduate placements, creative development, writing, acting, craft skills and language skills. We will also seek to use Radio content as a vehicle for creative development.

We will continue to incentivise and facilitate the internationalisation of our Gaelic content, and to build future sector sustainability.

Research £95k

We will continue to outsource our research in order to preserve its independence. This research focuses on the weekly viewing habits of users of Gaelic and will be complemented from time to time by bespoke research on specific areas of interest.

The work will be re-tendered in time for the start of the financial year.

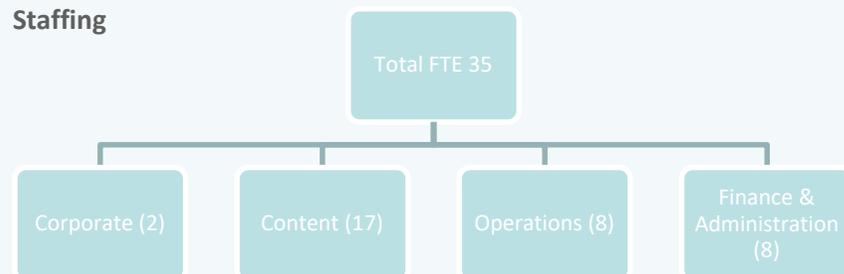
The BBC will continue to provide Scotland-wide audience data.



Resources for 2018-19

BUDGET	2017-18	2018-19
Content (direct spend)	£9,816,000	£9,817,000
LearnGaelic	£110,000	£110,000
Digital short-form	-	£50,000
Development	£45,000	£55,000
Internationalisation	£50,000	-
Programme Promotion	£45,000	£45,000
Studio running costs	£250,000	£250,000
Channel junctions & links (salaries)	£650,000	£660,000
Total Content	£10,966,000	£10,987,000
Research	£95,000	£95,000
Training	£276,000	-
Community	£15,000	-
Training & Community Outreach	-	£300,000
Stakeholder engagement	£60,000	-
Marketing & Strategic Development	£28,000	-
Communications & Sponsorships	-	£88,000
Capital expenditure	£120,000	£100,000
Channel operating costs	£20,000	£20,000
Administration	£310,000	£310,000
Staff & Board training	£30,000	£30,000
Salaries (non content)	£750,000	£740,000
Operating costs	£50,000	£50,000
Board costs	£80,000	£80,000
Total	£12,800,000	£12,800,000

Staffing



An increase of 2 FTE (Digital Media Producer and Ingest Tech) and pay scale increases in line with Scottish Government pay policy can be accommodated without an increase in net paybill, due to recoveries increasing from £100k to £175k. Further changes to staffing – subject to Ofcom consent – may be proposed as the year progresses.

Infrastructure

Creative Industries & Media Centre (CIMC) leased by MG ALBA from the Local Authority and subleased to BBC and other media enterprises.

Production facilities comprise 3 edit suites, 2 dubbing suites, 2 technical compliance suites and 2 contribution studios. Servers, IT, production equipment.

These facilities will be enhanced by previous year expenditure with a view to increasing local production, training and skills development in collaboration with local agencies and the local authority. [Redacted]

Key Targets and Metrics for 2018-19

Key Outputs

- 422 hours of funded content for BBC ALBA
- Including 4.5 hours of drama / comedy
- 100 hours of junctions for BBC ALBA
- 1,059 hours of new DPP compliant media assets for BBC ALBA payout
- 450 bespoke produced digital short form content for social media

Outcomes

- Increase in value of projects for BBC ALBA funded by BBC/Screen Unit through alignment and complementarity strategies
- Stabilisation of channel reach with core audience
- Maintenance of high audience satisfaction both core and national
- Maintenance of national reach at or above 10%
- Establishment of comedy format for core audience
- Increasing confidence of core audience in digital content realm
- Successful presence established on Instagram and YouTube
- Increasing volume and boldness of ugc

KPIs

BBC ALBA

- Weekly reach among users of Gaelic – 60% - 70%
- Weekly reach in Scotland - 10%
- iPlayer content views – 5m
- Audience appreciation in Scotland – 7.0
- Audience appreciation among users of Gaelic – 8.0
- Core audience agreement with strategy – average score 8.0

Digital & Social Media / FilmG

- Social media weekly reach of [TBA] and engagement of [TBA]
- Maintain participation level
- ugc 50 pieces

LearnGaelic

- Increase website traffic (pages viewed) by 25%

Economic

- Potential co-finance deal pipeline – 3rd party investment >£300k
- Value of pooling and club arrangements maintained

Training and Talent Development

- Training engagement [TBA]contacts / participants / reach

Awards

Top 10 Projects

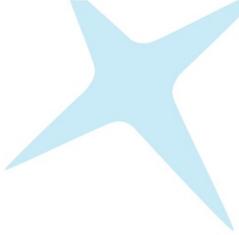
- Value of deal



Staff structure chart

Available separately





MG ALBA Activities 2018-19

The Gaelic Media Service in partnership with the BBC



HOW WE DO BUSINESS

Commissioning

The BBC ALBA Commissioning Code governs the commissioning of original programmes.

Some programming (principally children's and factual) are purchased and versioned into Gaelic. Re-versioning of established BBC ALBA pre-school and older children's animation together with new brands will remain, while developing new voice and writing talent. New programmes are also created by repackaging archive programming.

Multi-annual deals account for around 2/3rds of MG ALBA content contribution to BBC ALBA. 4-year contracts (3 years for sport) were awarded in 2017 following competitive process and current deals will be monitored for performance in 2018-19. A new or refreshed Music and Events multi-year package will be commissioned.

Competitively-tendered **commissioning rounds** and a small number of bespoke commissions (normally time-perishable or highly specific propositions) account for the remaining 1/3rd of MG ALBA's content. Commissioning rounds are held prior to the financial year, and – funding permitting – during the year, and also support international co-production and co-finance projects especially in the music and documentary genres.

In 2018, the BBC are expected to begin to deliver “up to 100 additional hours” of content to BBC ALBA. This has no financial or legal implication for MG ALBA, but will require time and staff resource.

Production Terms of Trade

MG ALBA acquires rights in commissioned programmes through a Programme Purchase Agreement.

100% funded programmes

One-off programmes and series commissioned through commissioning rounds and bespoke commissioning are subject to terms of trade agreed with PACT (note - MG ALBA is not formally obliged to agree terms): a 5-year primary period licence for UK broadcast and 30-day windows for online distribution, with the producer being able to exploit the titles in other jurisdictions and require a 2.5% fee for secondary period UK licences, subject to paying a small percentage of net profits to MG ALBA.

Generally MG ALBA acquires all rights in programmes commissioned under multi-annual deals, but carves out an option for the producer to exploit the assets in other jurisdictions for no cost and to retain all income up to £100k per asset in the first 12-month window.

Partially funded programmes

Generally MG ALBA and other broadcasters and funders will draw up bespoke terms based on the circumstances.

Procurement

A published Procurement Policy and Scheme of Tenders guides the purchase of all other goods and services.

CONTENT: BBC ALBA

Audiences

BBC ALBA seeks to serve:

- users of Gaelic, providing them with a credible, appropriate and relevant service; and
- wider audiences and communities of interest across Scotland and the UK providing them with content which offers alternative viewing and a point of access into Gaelic.

MG ALBA's commissioning, Digital Hub (including presentation) and scheduling teams are integral in the provision of the daily viewer offering of programmes. Commissioning editors also ensure that programmes comply with BBC Editorial Standards.

MG ALBA's editorial priority for BBC ALBA in 2018-19 is for bold and distinctive content, clearly differentiating BBC ALBA from other television channels not only by virtue of language but also by a different perspective rooted in Gaelic language and culture. The content will increasingly appeal to younger, Gaelic audiences through a significant increase in the volume of non-linear content.

Using CBBC and Cbeebies brand attributes, the children's' "block" will be transformed with 365 days of wrap-around live-action links and bespoke content for children age 3-6 from 5pm – 6pm and for children age 7-10 from 6pm – 7pm – from September 2018.

BBC ALBA will celebrate its 10th year of operation in September 2018 and intends to refresh the channel's branding.

Delivery Commitments

Commissioning, Digital Hub (including Presentation) and Scheduling teams deliver over 422 hours of programmes and 100 hours of interstitials or junctions (trails and continuity). In addition, the Digital Hub delivers short-form content for social media and BBC ALBA trails.

Business Affairs gives financial and contractual effect to commissioning decisions. The complexity of contracts is increasing in line with the number and deal size of UK and international co-finance and co-production projects. The BBC ALBA schedule is contains 74% repeats, leading some cost and a large amount of administrative effort to secure distribution rights, artist and archive clearances.

MG ALBA undertakes all DPP workflows for pre-recorded programmes supplied by the independent sector, as well as digitising, processing, packaging and verifying pre-July 2017 tape-based programming to comply with DPP File Delivery Standards. All content is delivered to the BBC ready for transmission.

New technologies and upgraded connectivity over IP circuits allow for full integration with technology partners at BBC Scotland for the delivery of prepared content in HD in less than real time.

A tape and digital library in Stornoway are complemented by our Gaelic screen archive, maintained by our partners, the National Library of Scotland to ensure a lasting legacy of Gaelic programmes.

CONTENT: Digital Participation and Learning

FilmG

FilmG creates over 70 new short films each year. All are available online. Each is a triumph in creative teamwork, free from the editorial and time constraints of the broadcast schedule (although some may be broadcast if appropriate), and many create a lasting legacy by chronicling events, telling stories or introducing personalities in touching and imaginative ways.

The Awards Ceremony creates strong inter-generational interaction centred on the content and the talent behind it. This is important for the linguistic community and is enhanced further by wide social media engagement, deepening the tie with the communities with which the project engages during the year.

User Generated Content in Gaelic

An active community of ugc creators is an indicator of a healthy media ecology, in which digital participation is the norm. This is an increasingly important source of creative ideas and talent.

Our objective in this arena is to increase the volume of Gaelic material being spontaneously produced by the Gaelic community. Our social media work will complement this activity, creating dialogues with our television audience round live events such as Belladrum, Na Trads and Ceilidh na Bliadhna Ùire as we actively seek to increase the profile of Gaelic on social media.

LearnGaelic

With partners, LearnGaelic and BBC ALBA will prioritise the development of a new multi-platform learning resource.

LearnGaelic will continue the transformation started in 2017-18, changing from a brand-based learning aggregator site to a resource that offers “learning journey” support and navigation by skill (reading, listening, writing, speech production and speech interaction) and by competence (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2).

The site structure will be fully in line with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages which has now been commonly adopted as the framework for Gaelic language learning.

LearnGaelic will continue to increase its UGC and social media interaction as it actively seeks to increase the number of learners and improve the quality of engagement with them. Data clearly indicates the stages at which learners are most likely to give up, and support effort will be targeted at those stages.

Learning through Radio content

We will continue to support the provision of audio-based learning, both for Radio nan Gàidheal and podcast, in line with the LearnGaelic strategy

CONTENT: Projects for development and/or delivery in 2018-19

In 2018-19 MG ALBA and the BBC will pursue project funding for a variety of projects, which are currently unfunded, including the following.

- 1. Learning.** BBC-led multi-platform learning initiative to create new digital, multi-media, learning output in a partnership which builds on LearnGaelic and is aimed at increasing the number of learners of Gaelic and the number of those who progress to proficiency in the language.
- 2. Dual language contemporary drama.** A Gaelic 'Hinterland' type of contemporary drama – demonstrating that Gaelic is a part of a multi-cultural, diverse modern Scotland
- 3. Live/as-live contemporary studio show,** post-watershed and aimed at a 25-34 audience, with elements for digital platforms. Talent-led, combining live music and celebrity elements, with an irreverent, bold perspective.
- 4. CBBC ALBA drama.** Live action for this critical age group to enable them to see themselves represented on screen.
- 5. Current Affairs.** More Eòrpa. Currently only c 8 hours of first run original CA per year.
- 6. Music.** BBC ALBA is the platform for Scotland's world-class trad music scene. We aim to develop music series that leverage the quality of all of Scotland's musicians in trad and classical, and trad and contemporary music collaborations, e.g. with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.
- 7. Natural history.** Culturally, Gaelic has always had a close affinity with the land and the sea. Its vocabulary is immensely rich in this area. We want to develop series which showcase Scotland's natural wonders, and examine the fragility of sustainability, using Gaelic to add a further, distinctive dimension.
- 8. Celtic Legends for children.** Marvel-type animation of Celtic legends for children.
- 9. Digital archive.** A single, partnership-delivered, Gaelic media content archive in digital form.
- 10. HD broadcast of BBC ALBA**
- 11. BBC ALBA Idents.** A refresh of 10-year old suite of channel idents

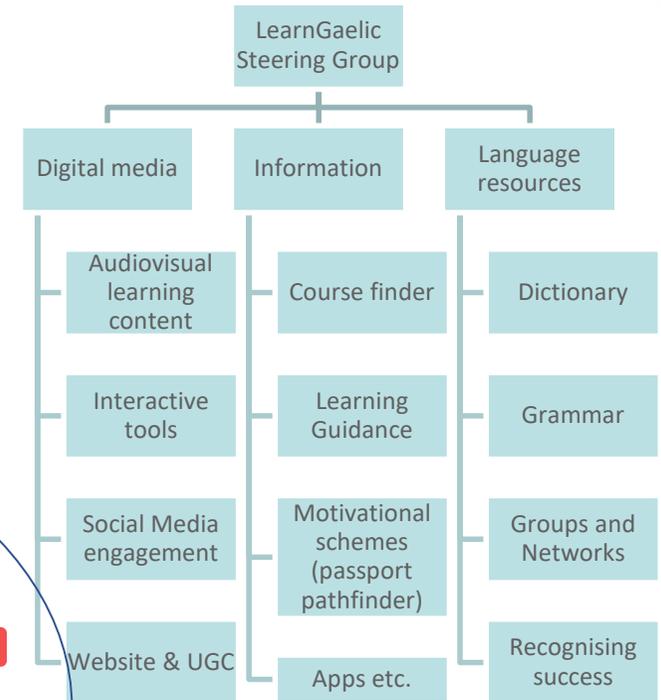
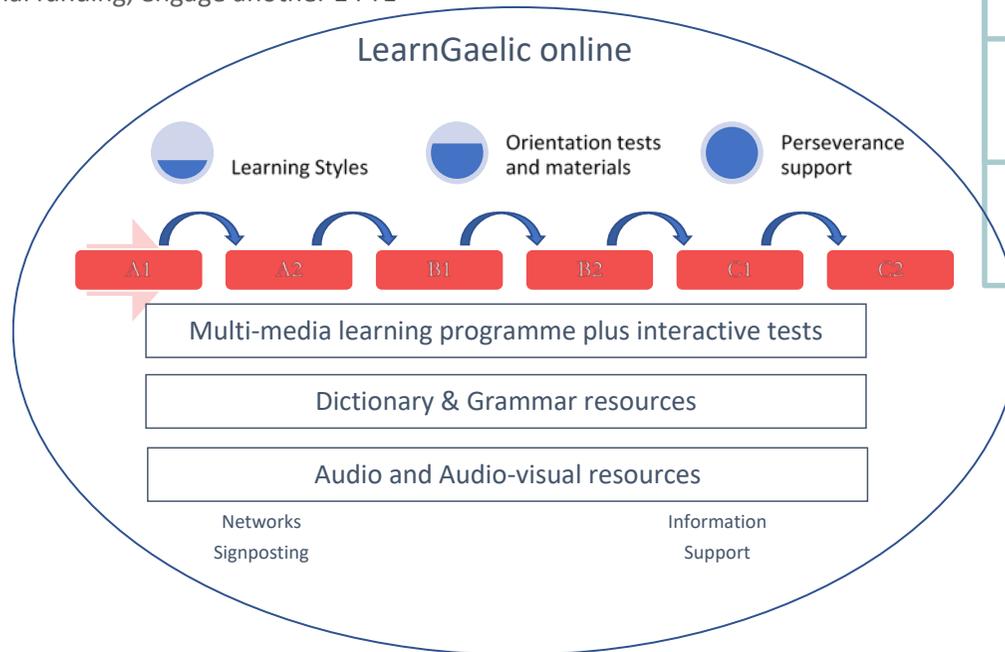
LEARNGAELIC

Approach

LearnGaelic, a partnership of Bòrd na Gàidhlig, MG ALBA, BBC, Bòrd na Ceiltis (Alba) and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, will:

- co-commission learning content with BBC ALBA and Radio nan Gàidheal, additionality from television and radio programmes
- offer an improved learning journey web experience for users based on the CEFR progression scales A1 to C2
- co-design, with learners, new tools and content
- improve the quality of information and support available to learners
- Subject to external funding, engage another 1 FTE

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) lies at the heart of LearnGaelic's approach to content and user navigation



Funding is provided by MG ALBA (from Scottish Government grant) and from Bòrd na Gàidhlig. The BBC and the academic institutions provide in-kind support, resource, expertise and guidance.

TRAINING & COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Strategic Approach

Approach

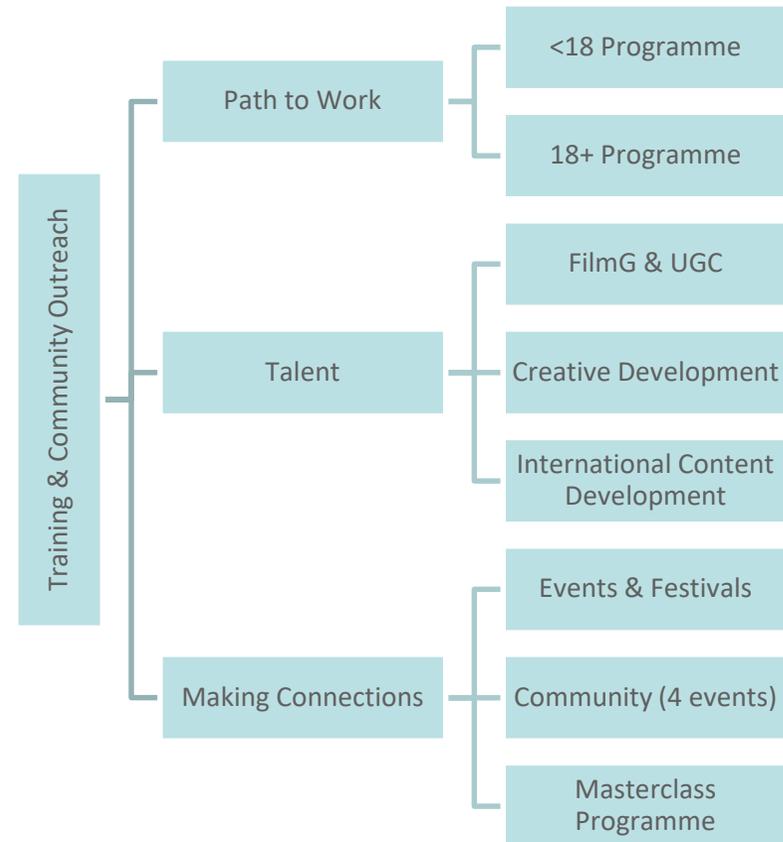
Engagement with current and potential creators of Gaelic media content is a fundamental part of MG ALBA's remit. It is more than "training": it is also inspiring, motivating, creating space for growth, building confidence, incentivising experimentation, facilitating the internationalisation of our content and supporting our creative community to enter an increasing number of collaborations, both creative and financial, domestic and international.

Partnership is key. Our partners include: schools, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, BBC Writersroom, Caledonian University MA in TV Fiction Writing, Young Films Foundation, Northern Ireland Screen, SDI, Creative Scotland, HIE, Skills Development Scotland, eSgoil, Local Authorities, the Celtic Media Festival and Canan Ltd, who deliver FilmG. In 2018-19 we will extend this to Glasgow School of Art's School of Simulation and Visualisation by providing a bursary to a student whose interest lies in developing interactive Gaelic learning tools.

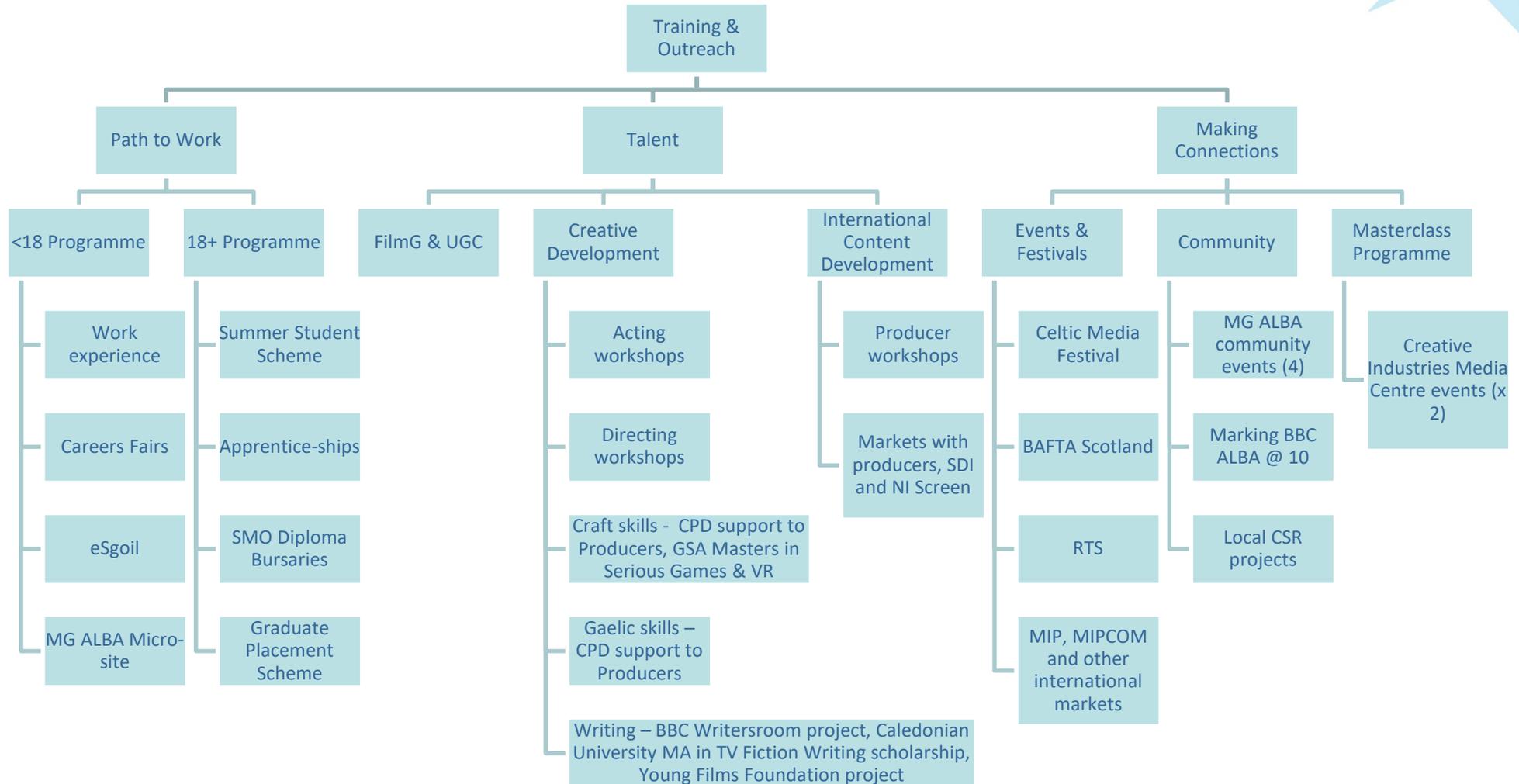
Path to Work, Talent and Making Connections are the three main strands of activity. Some are wholly funded by MG ALBA and others are partially funded.

FilmG represents the single biggest investment, building capability through teaching creative, craft and business aspects of video creation and distribution, providing exceptional value to the Curriculum for Excellence, communities, BBC ALBA and Radio nan Gàidheal.

A full list of our initiatives is appended.



TRAINING & COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Activities



OPERATIONS: Efficiency and enhancement in channel delivery

SUBTITLES

Streamlining the process – trial

All BBC ALBA pre-recorded programmes from 7pm to midnight offer on-screen English-language translation subtitles in order to make the content accessible to viewers who do not understand Gaelic. The subtitle files are created by the producer and, in the case of indie-produced MG ALBA-funded programmes, they are inserted by MG ALBA during digital publishing workflows. The programmes are then delivered to the BBC for transmission (TX).

The proposed trial presents the opportunity to streamline the current process by removing subtitle insertion from MG ALBA workflows in favour of automated insertion of subtitles by BBC Playout at time of TX. Subtitle format would change from PAC format to the EBU-TT-D format, causing a change to their visual representation on-screen, but the change in process would mean that the **subtitles could be turned off/on for iPlayer viewers**. [Note: this option could not be delivered alongside Gaelic hard-of-hearing subtitles were that required.]

The trial will offer the opportunity to measure process efficiencies and improved iPlayer functionality as against potential loss of some on-screen subtitle aesthetics.

JUNCTIONS / MEDIA PLANNING

Increasing responsiveness – trial

The MG ALBA team undertake Media Planning and the production of junctions for BBC ALBA. Trails are delivered by suppliers around 6 week in advance of TX, and the junctions are planned 2/3 week in advance of TX. The channel has in-vision continuity, the links for which are recorded in Stornoway and PQ. Once the junctions are planned the individual assets for each junction are merged into a single file for each junction. Junctions for each day are delivered to PQ for playout at least 10 days in advance of playout.

The trial will investigate (a) the shortening of media planning timelines, which could involve later delivery to playout and (b) composition of junctions by individual files rather than a single file. If trails and promos could be produced, compiled and delivered closer to TX, the presentation team could promote the channel more effectively.

The trial depends on BBC ALBA having dedicated playout resource capable of taking on the extra effort of granular junction planning (junctions composed close to time of TX and made up of individual files), which would enable BBC ALBA to operate like other BBC channels. This should enable more effective promotion and more topical messaging. It would also more closely align media planning timescales for BBC ALBA and the new channel, and so make cross-promotion easier

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES MEDIA CENTRE (CIMC)

Production and Training from CIMC

The Creative Industries & Media Centre (CIMC) in Stornoway offers scope for more production and more media training – whether to aspiring or current media professionals or to individuals and communities seeking to enhance their capabilities.

The CIMC benefits from proximity to broadcasting activity and to Gaelic speaker density.

Strategic response

An expected increase of some £50m pa in production activity in Scotland (BBC Scotland £20m, BBC Network £20m, Screen Unit £10m) is likely to lead to BBC ALBA's talent and skills pool benefitting from an increasing number of opportunities with other broadcasters. It is essential that BBC ALBA addresses this challenge proactively.

[Redacted]

Detailed Budgets for Reporting Purposes 2018-19

BUDGETS	2018-19
Children	£540,000
Entertainment	£751,000
Factual	£2,501,000
Music & Arts	£1,137,000
Sport	£2,490,000
Comedy	£360,000
Drama	£1,000,000
Co-pro / Time sensitive	£300,000
Short form	£50,000
Archive	£98,000
Repeats, Contingency, Rights	£650,000
Graphics, Idents, Rebrand	£100,000
Studio running costs	£250,000
Direct promotion	£45,000
Channel Links & Internal Productions	£660,000
LearnGaelic	£110,000
Radio	£40,000
Development	£55,000
Recoverable costs	(£150,000)
Total Content	£10,987,000

BUDGETS (cont)	2018-19
<i>Total Content b/f</i>	<i>10,987,000</i>
Training & Community Outreach	£300,000
Research	£95,000
Communications & Sponsorships	£88,000
Capital expenditure	£100,000
Channel operating costs	£20,000
Administration	£310,000
Staff & Board training	£30,000
Salaries (non content)	£740,000
Operating costs	£50,000
Board costs	£80,000
Total	£12,800,000