

# ITV Academy marks first anniversary, names new ITV Original Voices writers and trainee of ITV Sports' inaugural Roger Pearce Traineeship

Published Tue 20 Feb 2024



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After a record number of more than five hundred submissions, ITV Academy today reveals the four emerging writers from underrepresented backgrounds who have been selected to work on Britain's biggest soap operas as part of ITV's Original Voices initiative. The name of the ITV Sports' inaugural traineeship has also been announced.

Riz Moritz and Stephen Collins are set to join the team behind Britain's most-watched soap *Coronation Street*.



Riz Moritz



Stephen Collins

Meanwhile, Oneikeh Campbell and Yassmin Abdel Magied will work alongside ITV's talented scriptwriters on one of the nation's most-loved soaps, *Emmerdale*.



Yassmin Abdel-Magied



Oneikeh Campbell

For the first time, ITV's renowned 'Original Voices' writing initiative will run simultaneously in both Continuing Dramas, offering emerging writers from underrepresented backgrounds a 12-week paid-placement in the Script and Story department.

In addition Lanna Cowles has been announced as the ITV Sport Roger Pearce technical trainee assistant, following last year's launch of a new traineeship in memory of the late ITV Sport Technical Director, Roger Pearce by The Academy and ITV Sport, in partnership with Creative Access, Lanna will join ITV Sport's multi-skilled technical team for 12 months, learning new skills with training from ITV Sport's technical facilities providers.



Lanna Cowles

Since launching, The ITV Academy has created 72 new roles and opportunities through initiatives such as the ITV News and Continuing Drama traineeships, launched ITV's first-ever Production Finance Traineeship and partnered with Stormzy's MerkyFC and Adidas to offer roles to black talent in football production.

The Academy has engaged with schools and colleges, reaching 700 students through projects such as ScreenSkills' nationwide Discover Creative Careers Week and YouFestival in Liverpool. ITV Academy and SignPost Productions' Making Creativity Works programme trained 23 individuals from the Deaf, Disabled, and Neurodivergent communities, with 18 securing employment.

**Sonny Hanley, ITV Academy Director, said:** “What a fantastic way to cement the ITV Academy's inaugural year with these announcements. The Academy was created to open doors into the industry and support those already within it and these initiatives are part of a whole range of what we do and will continue to do, working with our partners.”

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