



The HETV Job-share Bible

A 'How To' Guide to using job-sharing as a tool for retaining experienced and diverse crew

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Executive Summary

The early 2020s has been a time of huge economic turbulence for everyone. In TV and film, the Covid-19 lockdown crippled production; the post-lockdown boom brought an over-expansion of the sector; then the strikes and slowdown of 2023 resulted in many production workers finding themselves out of work.

ScreenSkills has reacted to this unstable time by developing training that could cushion workers, who are already operating within the insecure vagaries of the freelance market, against these waves of uncertainty. In understanding the value of job-sharing as a tool for retaining experienced and diverse crew through workplace instability, drought and boom times, the HETV Skills Fund turned to Share My Telly Job. They enlisted us to recruit, pair, train and coach job-sharers working in all behind-camera roles in HETV. The fund then provided up to £10,000 per job-share contract for a weekly handover period, for 40 job-share HETV placements.

From 2022 and continuing into 2024, job-sharing placements have proven that throughout this exceptional time, job-sharing retains and sustains crew. The lesson

from this is clear: that job-sharing is a practice that must be embedded more widely so it can continue to keep people in work.

In addition to this, experienced, talented, brilliant crew already working in HETV want to job-share for any number of reasons; they are parents, carers, they are managing their own physical or mental health, they are working on their own creative projects, they are completing training to become better at their jobs, they are increasing their contacts, they are building in balance, they are retaining their careers. The reasons are myriad.

Job-sharing does require adjustment of practice away from the standard long hours, all or nothing working practice. These adjustments can be treated with suspicion because their implementation invariably involves diversion from the norm, and making TV and film is hard enough. However, job-sharing is by its very nature, flexible! Given each production is already its own unique ecology that requires bespoke changes and adaptation, introducing job-sharing is not as hard as it might first seem. Productions have to be flexible; job-sharing is simply another aspect of this flexibility.

This Bible is a 'how to' guide to job-sharing that uses the ScreenSkills HETV Job-Sharing Programme as a case study. It will show you the ways in which job-sharing can be built into all HETV teams and the roles at which it is already a proven success. It will demonstrate the multiple ways in which job-sharing can respond to the specificities of roles and the quirks of different productions. It will show you some of the many pairs who have successfully worked on shows across the UK and who continue to do so.

We'd like to thank the HETV Skills Fund and ScreenSkills for the support they continue to give to job-sharing, as well as to Dr Tiffany Bale, who did the lion's share of the research for and writing of this document.

We hope you find it useful and we look forward to working with you soon.

Michelle Reynolds and Dr Rowan Aust

ReelTime Media (continuing the work of Share My Telly Job)

Introduction

The HETV *Job-Share Bible* is a blueprint for job-sharing in High-end Television (HETV). The information presented here comes from the experiences of job-sharers on the ScreenSkills HETV Job-Share Programme 2023 supported by the High-end TV Skills Fund with contributions from UK high-end TV productions. These experiences are contextualised here by Share My Telly Job's near decade long experience of facilitating job-sharing. This bible provides **real-world examples** of how job-sharing can work in practice and is a step-by-step manual for crews and production companies on job-sharing.

The issues faced by the film and television industries in the UK have been pinpointed: a lack of diversity, a culture of long hours, crew burnout, a talent drain, and skills shortages resulting in people stepping-up too early.¹ Job-sharing is a **practical tool** that production companies can use to **retain and support** much needed talent.²

Share My Telly Job (SMTJ) was launched in 2015 in response to the untenable **long hours culture** and a **loss of talent** in television work. For its duration, SMTJ worked to educate, advocate and promote job-sharing in order to make film and television work accessible to as many people as possible.³ In 2023, SMTJ worked in partnership with ScreenSkills to run the HETV Job-Share Programme, which placed job-share pairs on UK HETV productions and covered the cost of an in-person handover day.

There is limited research on how job-sharing can work in off-camera roles in HETV. In response to this lack and alongside running the Job-Share Programme, SMTJ gathered data as the programme has progressed. This document is the result of a year-long research project where we interviewed Programme participants, whether HETV job-sharers, associated production companies, or industry experts.⁴ We have distilled the research here, in order to provide a go-to document for job-sharing in HETV that shares our insights along with the experiences of both the job-sharers and production companies involved in the programme.

¹ BFI (2022); Creative Diversity Network (2023); Swords et al. (2022); Wilkes et al. (2020)

² The Creative Majority report into measures that work to support, encourage and improve diversity, equity and inclusion (EDI) in the creative sector noted how flexible working is a key tool to improving workforce EDI, and recommends that job-sharing should be offered as default for all positions. See Wreyford et al. (2021, p.117).

³ SMTJ closed in 2023 – its new iteration is ReelTime Media, run by Michelle Reynolds and Dr Rowan Aust (reeltime.co.uk).

⁴ Participants of the research were selected based on their expertise and to reflect experiences from as many areas of production as possible.

Collaboration is a fundamental part of working in film and television - likewise, job-sharing is a practice in collaborative communication. In many cases, off-camera roles require a high degree of communication, and job-sharing is simply an extension of these skills. Whilst no two productions and no two job-shares are the same, there are **basic principles** that should be followed throughout. With this document we aim to demonstrate how job-sharing can be integrated into HETV as a standard offer for all crew members.

We have split this document into three sections, **(1) Guidance for job-sharers, (2) Information for production companies and (3) Case studies and industry interviews.**

ScreenSkills HETV Job-Share Programme in partnership with Share My Telly Job (SMTJ)

In partnership with SMTJ, ScreenSkills created a first of its kind job-sharing programme for all off-camera roles in HETV. This programme was supported by the High-end TV Skills Fund with contributions from UK high-end TV productions.

The job-share pairs and their production companies were given **practical training** on how to job-share, as well as **bespoke coaching** and **ongoing support** throughout the production.

*“Enabling people to job-share is keeping that really **valuable experience and talent** in the industry and not losing them - it's just a waste otherwise, isn't it? Having two people to problem solve, and two people to create together is incredibly beneficial in such a creative and quick moving profession.”*

Michelle Reynolds, Job-Share Programme Lead - SMTJ

The programme was aimed at professionals working or returning to work in HETV who would benefit from a job-sharing opportunity. The job-sharers in the programme came from all departments behind the camera, from Focus Pullers to Editors to Art Directors. Most pairs split the week with one partner working Monday to Wednesday, and the other working Wednesday to Friday, with Wednesday serving as the handover day.

*“There needs to be **flexibility** provided by the industry, and I think providing a programme such as this is really unique and fantastic, because it not only says you ought to be providing job-shares, it gives them the **tools** through the brilliant skills and expertise of Share My Telly Job.”*

Kaye Elliott, Director of High-end TV – ScreenSkills

*“If you don’t support change at the top, it’s unlikely they’ll be able to make it work on the ground. It’s important for the production company to be **supportive** of the idea so it gives the chance for people working on the production to **think, ‘what if?’** or ‘let’s look at it in a different way’, and that’s really crucial I think.”*

Magali Gibert, Director of Production, London – SISTER

*“As an industry it is so important that we not only **retain exceptional creative talent** as their lives evolve; and also ensure there are **realistic ways** of combining work with demands individuals have elsewhere in their lives.”*

Cameron Roach, Executive Producer – Rope Ladder Fiction

Job-sharing explained

Job-sharing involves sharing one job between two people. There are multiple ways to job-share depending on your personal requirements and the demands of your role. Below are the most common options for sharing your working hours:

1. **Split week:** One person works Monday to Wednesday, and the other Wednesday to Friday. In this type of share, Wednesday becomes the handover day where both partners are working.
2. **Split day:** One person works the morning, and the other works the afternoon with 30 minutes to an hour for handover in the middle of the day.
3. **Weekly:** Sharers alternate weeks and handover on a Friday.
4. **By filming block:** Dependent on the production and length of block, the blocks are divided up between the job-sharers. Both sharers would be present together for catch-up days mid-block, and then have a handover

day(s) at the end of the block. The job-sharer not working would stay abreast of the production via a shared email, and relevant WhatsApp groups.

5. **By expertise:** A role can be split dependent on each person's skillset, where tasks are divided based on each sharers' expertise.
6. **By location:** Dependent on role and production, job-sharers would not necessarily need a in-person handover, but would keep shared documents and both be present at recces.

Regardless of how the hours are shared, every pair needs handover time to communicate what has happened when the other job-sharer was not in work. The handover time is used to tackle pressing tasks together and plan for the weeks ahead. **Job-sharing is inherently flexible** and can be **adapted** for different roles and levels of seniority (see page ? for detailed case studies).

The three most important parts of job-sharing in HETV are:

- A strong professional relationship between the job-share pair.
- Time to handover information.
- A supportive Head of Department (HoD).

Who is job-sharing for?

Job-sharing is for everyone. There are myriad reasons to want to job-share: a more sustainable work-life balance, caring responsibilities, a health condition or simple preference. You must be able to afford a part-time salary.

Throughout the *Job-Share Programme* we have had job-share pairs in nearly every department. The following roles have been job-shared:

- Production Buyer
- Production Designer
- Standby Art Director
- Set Decorator
- Costume Supervisor
- Crowd Costume Supervisor
- Make-Up Artist
- Editor
- First Assistant Editor
- Post-Production Supervisor

- 1st Assistant Camera
- Focus Puller
- 2nd Assistant Director
- 2nd Crowd Assistant Director
- Production Assistant
- Set Production Assistant

We have yet to come across a role that cannot be shared between the right pair and with the right support in place.⁵

Why job-share?

Job-sharing has numerous benefits for both crews and production companies.

Below are the 6 main reasons to job-share.

1. Job-sharers are **less likely to burn out** and leave a production as they are working fewer hours.
2. The **quality of work** on a production is improved by having crew members who are not tired.
3. Job-sharers form a **multi-skilled unit** and plug each other's skills gaps.
4. Job-sharers offer the production the **experience** and **creativity** of two people instead of one.
5. The industry can **retain** highly skilled workers who would otherwise be lost to the industry.
6. Job-sharing is a practical tool production companies can use to build a **diverse** workforce.

How to set up a job-share: diagram of best practice

Below are two charts on how to set up a job-share. One is for potential job-sharers, and the other is for a production company facilitating a job-share on a production.

We recommend that both parties read both charts to understand the process.⁶

⁵ The 2023 cohort of job-sharers were predominantly from mid-level roles. We hope to gather more information from senior and entry-level roles as job-sharing becomes more widespread in HETV.

⁶ The information provided here is a 'best-practice' scenario. These flow-charts are written on the understanding that every production is its own ecology and in-practice implementation can vary.

For potential job-sharers

1. Partner 1 and Partner 2 would like to job-share. They may have worked together on a previous job and feel they would suit working as a job-share pair.
2. The pair have a sit-down conversation about how they want to share the role, and how they will communicate and give feedback to one another. The pair decide on practical points such as how they will split bank holidays, box rental/equipment hire and cover sick leave.
3. The pair apply for the role on Production Z, and present themselves as a strong, multi-skilled unit. They are hired.
4. The pair bring a detailed plan of how they intend to share the role to the HoD and Production Co-ordinator.
5. The pair can access a job-share convenor from SMTJ to consult about practicalities of contracts or any points of confusion.
6. The pair set up a shared email, and a shared Google Doc for handover notes. They ensure that they both join all relevant WhatsApp groups in the department.

For production companies

1. Production Z would like to facilitate a job-share on their production. Production Z consults its HoDs, and asks them to consider which roles would be best suited to job-sharing. HoDs are given this document.
2. Production Z informs its HoDs to state when advertising their roles, and during interviews with potential crew, that they are open to facilitating a job-share, and to ask all potential candidates if they would be interested in sharing the role.
3. The job-share pair are hired and Production Z can access funding from the High-end TV Skills Fund to cover the cost of the pair's handover day.
4. The Production Co-ordinator consults with the job-share pair and the HoD on how the role will be shared.
5. The Production Co-ordinator consults this document for guidance on job-sharers' contracts. The Production Co-ordinator can also access a job-share convenor from SMTJ to consult about practicalities of contracts or any points of confusion.
6. The job-sharers are provided adequate time to Prep. HoDs are informed that meetings concerning both job-sharers should be scheduled to take place on their

handover day.

7. The job-share pair use some of their handover days during Prep to establish their presence with the rest of the team.

The pair explain to those with whom they work directly about how their job-share is going to work, and who to contact when.

8. Every few weeks the job-share pair have a check-in chat between themselves, and with their HoD to review how the job-share is going.

7. The job-share pair function like any other member of the crew.

Any issues that arise as a direct result of the job-share are dealt with in an open and constructive conversation between the pair, the HoD and the production company.

Guidance for potential job-sharers

How to find a job-share partner

During the Job-Share Programme, job-sharers found their job-share partner through a variety of methods. Some had worked together previously, some were paired by a HoD, and some found their partner at an SMTJ event.

SMTJ ran a series of networking 'speed-dating' events to pair people by role, region and experience. They also hosted regular training sessions on what to look for in a compatible job-share partner. While having a range of experience on different productions, and having **complementary skillsets** is a must, SMTJ emphasise that job-shares work best if the pair have the same level of experience. A mentoring type relationship where one person is the 'lead' sharer can lead to an unequal partnership and a lack of trust within the team.

As job-sharing becomes normalised we hope to see the creation of **job-sharing networks** that allow job-sharers to work with more than one partner, allowing them to have better availability and also to mould their offering for a role depending on the skillsets required.

This section provides guidance on what to do once you have found your job-share partner. Before you begin working as a job-share, there are two factors to cover: 1. the **practicalities** (Your job-share plan), and 2. the **relationship** between you both (Building your job-share relationship).

Your job-share plan

Before you begin applying for roles, you should have a sit-down conversation about the practicalities of your job-share. In that conversation you should cover the following points:

1. How do you want to split the role (e.g. by week, split days, or by block)?
2. Make sure you have both agreed on the same day rate.
3. How and when will you handover information?
4. What software will you use to communicate?
5. Set up your shared email address.
6. If one partner is consistently working Mondays, how will you (not) split bank holiday pay?
7. How flexible will you be to cover each other's sick days or planned holidays?
8. How will box rental/equipment costs be covered for days where you are both working?⁷
9. Discuss how you will build and maintain your professional relationship.

How to secure your job-share role

- Do your research and speak to your previous supervisors about what their worries might be about job-sharing your role, and then **work out solutions** to those.
- **Research** which companies, productions and HoDs have previously been open to people working flexibly and actively strive for greater inclusion in their workforce.
- As a job-share pair, you will have an increased number of contacts between you. Use this to your advantage and sell yourselves as a pair to **people who already know you**.
- Until you are established as a trusted and excellent job-share pair, apply for jobs on productions where at least one of you has worked for that supervisor / HoD before or a similar type of production.
- Format your CVs in the same way so it is easy for an employer **to scan and compare the two**.

⁷ The ScreenSkills funding did not cover the cost of two box rentals on the handover days. Most pairs split the box rental fee for the handover day.

- Send both CVs with one cover letter outlining why you have paired up and how your skill-sets and experience **complement** each other.

Building the job-sharing relationship

After ironing out the practicalities of job-sharing, you should consider how you will build and maintain **your professional relationship**. Below are three keys to a successful job-sharing relationship.⁸

Building deep trust with your job-share partner

- Discuss your **boundaries and commitments**; be open in saying, ‘I can’t do xyz because of childcare or other responsibilities.’ You should both know each other’s boundaries and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the team.
- Think about how you are going to deliver and receive **feedback** to each other; are you going to have a ‘check-in’ chat every two weeks to discuss how things are going?
- Do you have any **skills gaps or concerns** that the other partner should know about?

Presenting yourselves as one unit

- You are two people doing **one** job, and your relationship with one another should be seamless.
- In television we are trained to be competitive, but in a job-share **you cannot compete** - you are one unit and it is important to back each other up.
- You are bringing **complimentary skillsets** to the job and this is an asset, so have confidence in that – differences are not a drawback they are a benefit!

Being transparent with the rest of the department

- **Share expectations** with everyone in your team on how you intend to share the job. Other crew members will have assumptions about job-sharing; tell everybody how you are splitting the job and how you will be communicating with the rest of the team.

⁸ Hannah Corneck, an Executive Coach for film and television workers, ran Powerhouse Partnership sessions to educate job-sharers about how to effectively job-share. These are some of Hannah’s key tips for job-share pairs to consider when building a strong professional relationship.

- When others in the department have given your job-share partner some information there may be instances of people in your team saying, ‘I can’t remember if I told you about xyz or your job-share partner’. As long as **everything is communicated** between the two of you, this will not become a significant issue.

Software Sharing Tips

Job-sharing requires excellent communication. We recommend that job-sharers create a **shared email** and utilise the **software packages** listed below to communicate to their partner everything that has happened on their days off. Here are our top three recommendations:

1. **Shared Google Docs:** Each partner updates the shared document from the top, creating a colour coding system for when a note has been read, actioned or completed.
2. **OneDrive:** Create a shared OneDrive where the department can access ‘live’ documents and PowerPoints, so that everyone on the whole team can stay up to date.
3. **WhatsApp** chats and voice notes: Record voice notes on WhatsApp as and when needed during the day. Voice notes are particularly useful at the end of the day to ‘upload’ everything that has happened. Department WhatsApp chats are also extremely important to stay updated on group discussions that take place when one partner is not working.⁹

Information for production companies

Job-sharing as a practical tool

Long hours culture has a direct negative impact on crew, including burn out, declining mental health, and the industry talent drain.¹⁰ As a result, productions are often unable to find enough skilled crew members and have to adapt, whether through doubling-up roles or crew stepping-up too early.¹¹

Job-sharing is a tool that productions can use to resolve the issue of **attracting and retaining skilled crew**. A job-share offers a production the skills, experience, and

⁹ Department specific software was used in the Programme: *Yamdu.com* for Production roles and *SyncOnSet* for those sharing in Costume roles.

¹⁰ Film & TV Charity (2022)

¹¹ ScreenSkills (2023)

creativity of two people instead of one. As a partnership the job-share pair are bringing different strengths to the production, and they often plug each other's skills gaps to form **one multi-skilled unit**.

Common fears about job-sharing

The *Job-Share Programme* recognised that some production companies may feel that there remains a **level of risk** involved in facilitating a job-share. Below is a table of the most common fears held by production companies, and our responses based on the experiences of those who took part in the *Job Share Programme*.

Common fear	SMTJ's response
There may be extra costs to the production.	The ScreenSkills HETV Job-Share Programme provided funding to each production to cover the cost of one extra day-rate on the job-sharers' handover day. The handover day provides the job-share pair with dedicated time to communicate, whilst not costing the production any extra.
Information may get lost between job-sharers or time wasted having to relay information twice.	Information being lost or repeated did not happen when the job-share pair logged changes and had time to communicate effectively between themselves.
Some productions are so changeable that it would be impractical for scheduling.	Changeable schedules were not a significant issue for the job-share pairs. As freelancers normally do, they adapted their schedules around the production schedule (See page ?).
Some actors require a level of continuity from the crew members whom they work with closely (e.g. Hair and Make-Up Artists)	Crew members who worked closely with actors found that when they explained their job-share to actors, the majority were on-board and supportive (See page ?).
Some roles require continuity due to their level of seniority and/or the need for a singular creative vision.	We have examples of senior members of crew in creative positions successfully job sharing (See page ?). As job-sharing becomes more widespread in HETV we

	hope to gather more case studies of job-sharing working in senior, creative roles.
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Perceived risks can be alleviated when a job-share is managed well, for example when job-sharers are provided with adequate handover time.

Job-sharing is fundamentally a practice that requires adaptation on behalf of crews **and** production companies. The success of a job-share is highly dependent on production companies and crew working together to **anticipate teething problems** and put in place measures to resolve them. In our experience of helping to facilitate job-shares, we have found that most issues with the job-share itself are surmountable by clear communication and effective organisation.

Job-sharing offers the industry the opportunity to pioneer new working practices, to seek solutions and take a **managed risk that has substantial benefits** in terms of diverse skills retention through the wellbeing of their freelancers.

Job-sharing contracts

Dependent on the role, each job-share pair will have slightly different contracts, but there are common principles to follow. Below are points to include in job-share contracts:¹²

The job-share contract should ensure:

- Both job-sharers should be on the **same rate**.
- Information relating to the specific job-sharing arrangements that have been agreed, i.e. how the pair will share the role / what **days** they will work.
- How the pair will be splitting **box rental / equipment hire**.
- **Bank holiday arrangements:** If one partner will always be working Mondays, then the other partner will not benefit from these days off. The pair need to decide how they will share bank holiday benefits.
- **Sick day arrangements:** The pair should decide whether one partner will be contracted to cover the other's sick days, or whether they would be expected to provide sufficient cover within their allocated working hours.

¹² The job-share pairs should discuss between themselves how they wish to cover sick days, share bank holidays and split box rental and bring solutions to the production company.

- It must be clearly defined what will happen in the event of **one partner leaving** (either resigning or moving elsewhere in the department). This needs to be clear at point of contract so that expectations are managed. A reasonable procedure would involve offering the remaining job-share partner the role on a full-time basis, or the chance to find an alternative job-share partner (a timescale should be set for this). If this is not possible, the right to terminate employment in this eventuality should be made clear in the contract.¹³
- The individual's own contractual arrangements must be clarified, including any flexibility required, hours of work, holiday arrangements and so on.

Key Insights

For crews

- The success of a job-share is reliant on **other members** of the production remaining supportive.
- **Software** tools such as Google drive/Docs, OneDrive, WhatsApp, Zoom, Yamdu, SyncOnSet are key to good communication between the pair and the department. It is good practice to take the time in Prep to set up these systems and make sure the rest of the department understand how to use them.

For HoDs with a job-share in their department

- The **attitude of the HoD** plays a significant role in the success of the job-share. It is important they are on-board with the job-share and involved in conversations from the beginning.
- HoDs giving **regular and constructive feedback** helps in creating a successful job-share.
- Team meetings and recces concerning the role of the job-sharers should be **scheduled to take place on the handover day**, so that both partners can be present.
- Both job-sharers should be **co-present during Prep** for some days (perhaps making use of their allocated number of handover days) to establish their

¹³ As long as both parties have behaved reasonably, followed a fair procedure, acted in accordance with the contractual arrangements and have both done what they can to keep the remaining job-share partner in employment, termination is an acceptable last resort.

pairing with the rest of the team, and so that they are both consulted when initial decisions are being made.

For production companies

- The production company should support the HoDs; the HoD should not feel that they are taking a **professional risk** in hiring a job-share pair.
- It is very difficult for a job-share pair to enter a production without at least one half of the job-share already being known to someone else on the production. This issue is alleviated when job-sharing is a **basic offer** from all production companies.
- Job-sharing means that there are two people doing **one** role. There have been cases of production companies treating job-share pairs as two separate workers filling two roles on different days. This is not the purpose of job-sharing.
- There is still hesitancy from production companies about the applicability of job-sharing to **all roles**. As more information on job-sharing in HETV becomes available, we will continue to evidence how job-sharing can work across all roles.
- The provision of funding to cover the in-person handover day **incentivises** job-sharing and mitigates the perceived risk. We recommend that ScreenSkills continues to fund the handover day (See page ? for all Recommendations)

For everyone

- There is a need for **cultural change** across the industry. Job-sharing does not mean that crew members are any less committed or less able to do their job. As an industry we need to normalise people having multiple facets to their lives and that many want to achieve some level of work-life balance.
- There remains the **misplaced perception** that job-sharing is only for those with children. Job-sharing is for everyone who wants a more sustainable work-life balance and can afford to take home a part-time salary.

Job-share pairs in focus: Case studies

Throughout the *HETV Job-Share Programme* a variety of job-sharing arrangements were custom-fitted to each pair, their role, and level of seniority. The aim of this

section is to provide real-world examples of how job-sharing can work in different roles. The idea is to offer depth over breadth, illustrating the practicalities that job-share pairs faced in sharing their roles.

Tony & Emily – 2nd ADs



Production: *Protection* (2024), All3Media, ITV

Sharing breakdown: Split week with Wednesday alternating handover day

When the Line Producer on *Protection* could not find an experienced enough 2nd, she offered the role as a job-share to Tony and Emily.

Key Insights

- The pair started by only prepping the days they work, but details were missed if things changed last minute. Instead, they switched to both casting an eye over each other's work.
- A shared Google Doc was key to staying on top of tasks and writing in any changes or new pieces of information.
- Importance of a strong Production Manager and Line Producer who championed the job-share.

Why did job-sharing appeal to you both?

Emily: I had worked away for nine months prior to this job offer, and working away again was not something I wanted to commit to. [Job-sharing] for me personally

gives me the freedom to have a life outside of work and have a better quality of life, as I'm not exhausted from travelling on top of the hours worked.

Tony: My wife had our second child in March, so when I declined *Protection* for 2nding, I passed them on to Emily, and then Emily said she couldn't do it either. And we were both looking for something more part time so when that [job-sharing] became an option it was too good to turn down.

How did you split the role of 2nd AD?

Tony: We always work our set days, and mine are always Thursday, Friday and Emily's are always Monday, Tuesday, and then we alternate the Wednesday. I would recommend to anyone else doing this to use the handover day to get on top of everything. Because there'll be days where there are new scripts out and you've not worked for three days, and you just feel so behind and you probably will spend half a day just catching up on everything.

When we first started we always just prepped the days that we work. So when I worked on a Thursday, Friday, I was prepping the next Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. However, things just kept getting missed because things were changing and we weren't looking as in depth on the days we weren't working.

So now we both keep up to date with what happens on our days off - we are a second pair of eyes over each day - which is great actually because if you miss anything as a 2nd usually you're the only one doing it, so there's someone double checking your work.

What software do you use to handover?

Tony: The main thing I find useful is our 'At a Glance' - it's basically a calendar which we've created with everything that's going on in each day, and when someone gives us some information we add it to the 'At a Glance'. So when you come in, you just sit down and look at what's on there. And because we're speaking to each other throughout the week on WhatsApp, it's all the things we have been telling each other that are going on.

Emily: Along with WhatsApp, through a list of points of what has happened, or a voice note or a phone call. It varies - if Tony's finishing at 11pm and I've got to be in

the next day for 9am, he obviously wouldn't phone me, but he would make himself available the next morning when I started, just in case I needed to pick anything up.

What have been the main challenges of the job-share?

Tony: When we tried just prepping the days we worked, in the second or third week we had a second unit day when stunts were going on, and I came to realise: oh, this just doesn't work. Nothing fell apart, but it was a few things that we had to arrange last minute and I was like, 'God, I should have been over that.'

Emily: There'll always be that one thing that you've forgotten to pass over, I would say even more so as a 2nd because quite a lot of conversations happen face to face. Nothing that's impacted the show - fingers crossed.

How did the rest of the AD team adapt to having a job-share?

Emily: Our Base Runner is amazing - she has totally just adapted. She knows that Tony likes it this way, and I like to do it that way, and it was definitely learning two different styles. But in terms of the team? On the floor - I don't think it makes much of an impact on them. Our 1st ADs have been just nothing but supportive - they all understand the amount of hours we do - they've just adapted. It's not felt that challenging for the team.

Tony: I feel like the people that probably feel it more are the people who you speak to on a daily basis, like the Director and Unit Managers, and the Production Team. The 2nd probably spends more time organising things with them - that's the time I think where you could probably lose faith in the job-share if you weren't organised.

The production team, especially the Line Producer and the Production Manager, never have a bad thing to say about it. It helps that we've got a really strong Production Manager and Line Producer who are really championing the job-share, and they're very good at passing on information if there's anything that they think you've missed.

What do you think the main benefits to the production have been?

Emily: The reason why our Line Producer suggested it in the first place was that she preferred to have two experienced 2nds rather than an inexperienced one, because she was struggling to find somebody. Retaining people when we would have both

said, 'no' to this job and in fact, both of us were even better. And it's two people who are much better rested, and you've got two pairs of eyes on things.

Top tips for future 2nd AD job-sharers?

Emily: Communicate and communicate early and be a team. One of the things that we did right was that we told all the cast within our first communication with them that this was a job-share, this was how we were doing it and we would both be available, but these were our working days. We set boundaries [and expectations]. We've also both tried to be really positive about the experience, highlighting the fact that we want to make this work, so we will do what we need to make it work.

Tony: And people shouldn't be afraid of it - it has been a very easy transition. Maybe that's because I'm experienced and I know how the job works, but it hasn't been lots of pulling our hair out, I feel like in the first few weeks we figured it out, got into a rhythm and it's been fine - 2nds shouldn't feel like it's difficult or a burden, it has happened so easily and people should embrace it.

Katy & Tina - Production Designers



Production: *Waterloo Road*, (2023), Rope Ladder Fiction, BBC ONE

Sharing breakdown: Split week with Wednesday handover

Katy and Tina shared the role of Production Designer on *Waterloo Road* series 12 and 13. They have since been asked back to share the role again on series 14.

Key Insights

- Work was completed more quickly using two creative brains instead one. The pair felt their designs were better and fuller.
- It took time for the Art Department team to get used to working with a job-share pair but once settled, the team adapted well.
- The Art Director, who was working full-time, provided a level of continuity between the pair.

Why did job-sharing appeal to you both?

Katy: There is no rule book for working in TV and bringing up children - I've taken steps down, sideways and leaned heavily on my husband to do the lion's share of childcare responsibilities for long periods of time. I've taken large gaps between jobs and turned down every job away from home. This year will be the first school summer holidays I will be able to spend two days a week with my family. This has all been possible because of this job-share.

Tina: Aspiring to be a production designer had been my everything. Twenty years of dedication wasn't something I wanted to ever give up, but that moment of starting a family I knew the mammoth task ahead was to find a balance within my professional career and motherhood. No easy task!

What did a Wednesday handover look like for you both?

Katy: Busy - lots of communication.

Tina: On Tuesday through the day I'd pop together an email of everything that happened on Monday and Tuesday. It would have things that were coming up for Wednesday and the rest of the week.

Katy: I was prepared for what I was walking into on a Wednesday, rather than if I got in before Tina or someone caught me in a corridor before we'd done a handover, I knew what was going on.

Tina: We'd phone each other when leaving on a Tuesday evening, 15-30 minutes of driving and chatting about everything that we could think of that was going on.

Katy: In terms of what we were doing on Wednesday, we tried to schedule meetings with directors, page turns with directors, or recces, or meetings with producers, catch-ups with the team to go over budgets - all the big stuff.

How was it putting two creative brains together and sharing a design role?

Tina: We bounced off each other and brought different options and influences to the designs. We had two inputs so it made the design more full because we're both different people and bring different things to the design. So actually, that was one of the plus-sides that I didn't foresee as the design became more rounded.

I think Katy came up with the term: 'we see the gaps and we fill them'. So, if for example on Katy's days, she put together a PowerPoint or a plan, and the plan, the configuration, and the flattage has been Ok'd – then good, I don't question it. Let's go to the next layer of what we do - the colouring, the textures, the fabrication.

Katy: So you push the process on so it doesn't stagnate. Actually it gets done quite quickly because you're going, 'right, what's next?' So the production company got more design time - we got more done together.

What software for communication did you use?

Katy: We're on OneDrive - it's a live thing, we can just delete things, move things around, or if something's decided, it all goes in there, and that really helps the rest of the team as well. We just had to keep on top of it because things change so quickly that you just have to make sure the information is correct for the rest of the team.

How did the rest of the Art Department adapt to working with a job-sharing pair?

Katy: I think it takes a bit of getting used to; it was hard for the team starting out because it was new for everyone - we'd never done one before and they'd never worked with a job-share.

I think we lean more on our Art Director, because our Art Director is here constantly five days a week so having that good relationship with that role was key for it working.

Tina: Yeah, and [the OneDrive] really works - really helped the team. So they would refer to that, and if they were a little bit unsure, they would just ask whoever was in that day. They learnt that confidence to ask whoever was in on that day.

Were there any issues or challenges that arose?

Tina: Trying to manage and make sure that we don't have other departmental egos trying to overstep the situation. But it got nipped in the bud early doors and it wasn't a big thing. I think it's a trust, and people understanding how we work as a team, and to know that no matter if they come to me, it's a joint answer. If they go to Katy - it's a joint answer.

If for one moment, Katy or I think that something doesn't work or that isn't right, or something's ringing a bell, we'll snowball it with, 'we'll get back to you.' And then get that moment where we can talk together.

Katy: We'd get on the phone, and ask, 'Did you say that was agreed? Because so-and-so is saying that.' And then, 'no, I didn't.' OK, right. Let's put a stop to that.

What were the main benefits to the production having a job-share pair?

Katy: Two peoples' heads working on problems.

Tina: Nobody burns out. So there's always a fresh set of eyes. On a long running show your HoD by a Thursday, Friday will be tired. You know they're not superhuman.

Katy: And we cover each other's sick days or school strikes or hospital appointments because there's two of us, we have got a bit of flexibility.

Top tips for future Production Designer job-sharers

Tina: Just always work as a team to come up with answers fast. You want to make you're time efficient, you don't want to take it home with you.

Katy: And you can turn off from it, and that has been the nicest thing about it. We are able to turn off from this rather than it being in our heads the whole time.

Tina: Yeah, come Wednesday evening when I leave, I completely let go. Thursday, Friday I do not think about *Waterloo Road*, and I know that I've got that trust – I can do that.

Raphi & Siôn – 1st Assistant Editors - Beaumont



Production: *Beaumont*, 2024, Minim UK Ltd, Disney+

Sharing breakdown: Split week with a Wednesday handover, sometimes a Wednesday 1/2 day each

Raphi and Siôn's Editor had been an earlier participant in the *Job-share Programme* and suggested job-sharing to them. They took up the opportunity and have shared their experience below.

Key Insights

- The importance of their Editor championing the job-share to make it happen.
- The importance of both keeping up to speed with both episodes and monitoring any changes that happen whilst they are not working.
- Raphi and Siôn could better help cover for the Editor when she was unavailable for a week than a single First Assistant.

What made job-sharing appeal to you both?

Raphi: It appealed to me because it gives that work-life balance. I've got a young family – job-sharing means that the whole week isn't completely dominated by work.

Siôn: Working part-time helps because I need to spend time on another project, and I've also got a family to look after.

How did you split the role of First Assistant Editor, and how does your handover work?

Raphi: Wednesday handover. A full day if we need to or sometimes a half day on a Wednesday, which is great having that flexibility to catch up on anything that's happened.

We have a video call with our Editor, and we go over anything that's happened or is coming up. It's quite a good way to be 'face-to-face' online even though all three of us are pretty much remotely working.

We make sure we're both equally familiar with both episodes – so on a Monday morning I might watch what's happened on the Friday to catch up with where the episode is, if there have been big changes, or catch up on the other episodes that are before our block, to make sure that we're up to speed.

Siôn: Our exposure to both episodes has been enough that we're both just as familiar with the episodes as each other. And it's not like we're lost if we're given a task coming in on a Wednesday – I already know what shape everything is in because we're in touch over emails. You're only out of the picture for two days.

Raphi: Yeah, exactly and also WhatsApp, is a really good tool for us to, even though it does mean that you are slightly glued to your messages.

What software do you use to handover?

Raphi: We have a shared email address so we can both keep an eye on what's coming in and out, and we can flag anything that's coming up.

We also have a shared WhatsApp thread and I can see what Siôn and the Editor have been doing, so that's a good way of keeping across things.

Raphi: I think it has all been fairly organic, and knowing that we can, if we absolutely need to, just drop each other a message and say, 'Sorry, but can I just ask?'

Have there been any challenges that have arisen?

Siôn: Nothing I can think of as a direct result of doing a job-share. There has obviously been complicated stuff to deal with, especially in the first few weeks because our Editor was unavailable. So Raphi and I had to split the workload and

cover the Editor's absence. But, if anything, if it was just one assistant, it would have been even more complicated, so we were able to absorb that more effectively.

What do you think the main benefits to the production have been?

Raphi: Two people with eyes on it, and it's been great because we've both been able to do more than just assisting, it's been about helping out with the edit in quite a big way. We've all been helping make the episodes be as good as possible because we've all had a little input into it, which is really collaborative.

Is there anything you'd like to add?

Siôn: I mean it's quite a liberating thing working half the week – there's a lot to be said for not being so involved with something five days a week and burning yourself out by the weekend, and then having to do all again on Monday.

Raphi: I come back recharged on Monday and it's definitely something I would try and do again. The only thing that you're up against is that you're earning a part-time wage, but then everything kind of balances out with childcare.

Nuno and Harriet – Production Assistants



Production: *Lost Boys and Fairies*, (2024), Duck Soup Films, BBC channel?

Sharing breakdown: Four days a week each, dependent on needs of the production and the pair

Nuno and Harriet were the programme's first entry-level job-share pair. They were paired by the production to suit each other's working needs. Nuno had had a career in another industry and was looking to step into Production work whilst managing his

other commitments, and Harriet was a new entrant who had no prior production experience. Their job-share evolved to become more of a job-split, where Nuno and Harriet were essentially two runners working on different days. Their job-share was dissimilar to others in the programme, but it illustrates how job-sharing has always been a part of production work, as sharing Production Assistant duties is already an established practice.

Their case study offers valuable insight into how simply offering a reduced number of days meant that work became accessible to those who previously could not commit to working full-time. Below Harriet and Nuno share their experience of job-sharing.

Key Insights

- Job-sharing worked as a tool the production could use to make the hours sustainable for a new entrant who had a career elsewhere, but had valuable skills to offer the production.
- There was not always the need for a specific handover day because tasks were set daily.
- The Production Co-ordinator was key in setting tasks for Nuno and Harriet and providing the 'bridge' between them.
- As this was an entry level share, the pair were more reliant on a senior member of the crew.

Why did job-sharing appeal to you?

Nuno: For me it was to enable me to balance my other commitments, which included co-parenting. I work as a freelancer as well, so I had another role that I was committed to - so it was just to balance and enable me to do that.

How did you split the role?

Nuno: It varied on the needs of the production, so the production would come to us and tell us how many days we would be needed for that week, and then we were able to, between ourselves, discuss or agree on which day would be our days off.

It wasn't your typical handover because we worked four days a week, and it would be just one day off for us. We would always be in the know because of the nature of us working four days, and because everything was very well organised by the

Production Team. The Production Coordinator provided that bridge in a way, because our tasks were pretty much decided by her.

Harriet: From the beginning of the job-share scheme we developed a professional relationship which made handing over the rushes each week a smooth process, we both had different responsibilities but the ones we shared had good handovers on the days we were together.

How did the rest of the department adapt to having a job-share?

Nuno: I think they welcomed it. It went very smoothly because it wasn't a big production. There was plenty of communication with all the departments and colleagues in the production as well. We created a couple of WhatsApp groups so we could track everything and we would know what was happening.

I think that the key thing was the communication, we were very clear and there was plenty of information, so I never went into work not knowing what was happening.

Harriet: My PM [Production Manager] explained that sometimes working on HETV can be overwhelming and a job-share can be a gentle introduction rather than throwing someone in at the deep end.

Were there any issues or challenges that arose in terms of sharing the job?

Nuno: No, anything that needed to be to be addressed would be solved almost immediately, and because it was such a good environment to work in, there were no issues.

Harriet: It was nice having that day or two off to complete my personal admin. However on some days it felt like I had a day's work to catch up with on my return to work, during the shoot I found myself answering emails or doing small tasks from home so I didn't get behind on my work.

Top tips for future Runners sharing the job?

Nuno: I think being organised is key. The number one, would be communication - making sure everybody is clear at every single interaction. I think it was key to have someone within the production, in our case, with the Production Coordinator, providing that bridge between us.

We asked Shelley Rees, the Production Manager on *Lost Boys and Fairies*, about her experience of having a job-share pair on the production:

Shelley: Both colleagues had different but very strong skills and we were able to use their strengths daily on what has been a very busy production. During the production we were able to facilitate Nuno and Harriet observing and helping other departments which enhanced their skills and understanding of what the other departments do. Alternating the collection of the rushes worked well and helped with the work-life balance of both Nuno and Harriet. We had an arrangement that whoever collected the rushes started later the following day and I always asked both which days they preferred to work the following week depending on their personal circumstances.

A job-share placement is a fantastic way for people to maintain a work-life balance. Communication is key to its success; I feel that it worked well on this production and both Nuno and Harriet were valued members of the production team who always worked hard. Sometimes working on HETV can be overwhelming and a job-share scheme can be a gentle introduction rather than throwing someone in at the deep end. It enables the person to find a healthy balance and I would imagine it can help someone determined if a career in HETV suits them. I wholeheartedly support the

Abi & Miranda - Crowd Costume Supervisors



Production: *The Outlaws* (2024), Big Talk Productions & Four Eyes Entertainment, BBC

Sharing breakdown: Split week with Wednesday handover

Abi and Miranda shared the Crowd Costume Supervisor role on Series 3 of *The Outlaws*. They had worked together briefly in the past, but when they both went for the same job and were offered to share it, they were keen to try this new way of working.

Key Insights

- Keeping the costume truck organised made handing over easier.
- The Costume Supervisor took on some of the Crowd Costume Supervisor's team management tasks, such as assigning start times to the trainees.
- 'On-the-go' forms of communication such as sending a voice note or a quick WhatsApp message were key so that each person could log and send information before it was forgotten.

Why did job-sharing appeal to you both?

Abi: We are both mums and have been working in the costume industry a long time, but finding it increasingly difficult to juggle the demands in a quite high pressure, long hour job which you have to make a lot of personal sacrifices for. I feel like there's lots of jobs I can't really take on because my family life would suffer too much.

Miranda: I never thought I could do this role locally and I previously didn't go for any of those positions, as I just couldn't do full-time. I think in that respect [job-sharing has meant that] we could fit in other commitments around it, and still be seen by our kids some mornings, evenings, and afternoons after school.

What did a handover day look like for you both?

Miranda: Tuesday night I text Abi and make a few notes on our shared notes so that we're clear on what we're going to start on the next day's priorities, and then we'll meet and talk about it on a Wednesday morning.

Abi: Wednesdays also really depend on the schedule. For example, when we had a massive crowd day and we were both in with a huge crowd of over 100 SAs, there was just no time for us to crossover to have a catch up.

Miranda: We just chatted in the car!

Abi: If it was a day where we didn't have SAs [Supporting Artists] in we could sit down and go through all our notes from the fittings and what needs to be bought still.

Another thing that was really important was keeping the truck really organised, labelling everything really clearly, and having rails and dividers. If Miranda was leaving and I was coming in, I could then see clearly because I'd be in there at 6am the next morning not having met those SAs, and not having dressed them because Miranda's done it, but then I could see clearly on the rail who needed what.

How did the rest of the department adapt to working with a job-sharing pair?

Miranda: It was really supported and held together by our supervisor, who overall was assigning start times to the trainees, the standbys and us. Then the designer would be there to establish characters and do fittings as and when was required.

What software for communication did you use?

Miranda: The voice notes and the shared collaborative notes on the iPhone definitely work just to keep track of things that you might not have time to find a piece of paper and write it down, or email it - those on-the-go kind of updates.

Also having a Crowd WhatsApp group and a separate Costume Department group so we could just spam the WhatsApp Crowd group with all of the shots of that day annotated with character names and scene numbers and then it would all get uploaded to Scene Match.

Abi: We had a shared email so we were both checking the shared emails. Then on a Friday before leaving, I would just do a voice note before I forgot it all and update the list because I knew the minute I walked in my front door I was going to have kids throwing themselves at me, and I was like just going to forget.

Were there any issues or challenges that arose?

Abi: I feel like overall it was really successful. There were definitely moments where somebody would have a conversation with one of us and then we didn't pass that on, or we'd forget. It's hard to write every single thing down, remembering everything throughout the day because you're talking a 12-hour working day. So I would say that was a challenge, but it didn't cause any major problems.

What were the main benefits to the production?

Miranda: I think they got value for money. We were multi-role-ing and job-sharing, so they got two Crowd Supervisors, two Assistant Designers, and we were doing alterations as well.

Abi: Between us, we've got a lot of skills, and they didn't have to employ as many dailies because on a Wednesday we were both in could manage crowds together.

Miranda: We had two vehicles on one day a week. So we were doing a lots of moving stock around which you would have had to have an extra gangman.

Top tips for future Crowd Costume Supervisor job-sharers?

Abi: Work with someone that you really like and that you have some stuff in common with, because that really helps the personal relationship.

Miranda: I think when pitching for rates it was really important to stand firm on your deal and make sure that all of your expenses were going to be covered. Make sure you're not going to be out of pocket on box rental and car allowance, and all of the things that you end up using that deteriorate over the course of the job.

Abi: Be confident in the fact that the job-share is a really good thing and modelling that to the rest of the department. Be positive and upbeat because you get the time off as well, you get a bit of a break and you're not as broken by it all. You can come in and be more positive instead of absolutely rinsed.

Industry interviews

Michelle Reynolds, Job-share Programme Lead – SMTJ



Michelle joined Share My Telly Job following a 17-year career as a Producer and Director in Factual and Entertainment Television in the UK and the US. Having run the successful pilot of the *HETV Craft & Tech Job-Share Programme* for ScreenSkills in 2021-22, Michelle has been the project lead running the 2023 ScreenSkills *HETV Job-Share Programme* for all offscreen roles in HETV.

What has been your highlight from running the programme?

The highlight is when you hear back from the pairs about how it's made a difference. Just last week one of the pairs tagged me on Instagram in a picture of her kid's 4th birthday and she was able to be there because of the *Job-Share Programme*, and it says underneath, 'job-sharing is life changing.'

When a pair of Designers said that they were making their best work that they'd ever made as a job-share pair because they were able to challenge each other and bring

their different experiences, putting something together that was greater than anything they could have done by themselves.

What is the value of job-sharing, particularly to HETV?

There's all sorts of challenges around HETV. The big problem is that you have these incredibly experienced people who are 15-20 years into their career, and the industry is losing them because they can't do those long hours. The great benefit is retaining all that experience.

There were also the unexpected benefits that came through - the things that seemed like they could be disastrous, but actually showed the strength of the job-share. In a Costume job-share, one half of the pair injured her back and she couldn't do her job. Obviously if it was just one person that's a bloody disaster, but because it was a job-share pair, the other person just went full-time till the end of the run. In this case, job-sharing was an insurance.

What have been the biggest hurdles that the job-sharing pairs have faced?

I think culturally, in some departments there have been hurdles. There were worries about the optics of job-sharing. So: are people going to think that I'm less committed to my job, that I'm not able to do my job, that I'm not strong enough and good enough to do my job? They were worried about the perception of a job-share.

We're all control freaks in this industry - the fear that comes from relinquishing control and sharing the role, and taking a perceived risk can be a barrier. So even though nearly every single Production Manager has said - even if it's just flippantly - 'Oh God, I could do with job-sharing,' – for them it felt like a step too far. The perceived risks and perceived weaknesses are big barriers.

But when it comes to real obstacles, (not just perceived ones), I think problems have come from a mismatch in the job-share partners - for example, when somebody was maybe not as committed to the job-share as the other person. Other obstacles can be within the project - when there was a lack of time for Prep, or when there were problems with the production itself and they were double banking and scripts were flying in too late. Any single person would have struggled in that environment, not just a job-share.

How important has the attitude of the production companies been?

It's massively important that it comes from the top down to the head of department, because if that HoD is not on board with it, then that's a problem. The production companies recognise that it's a good idea, they understand that the hours are long, and they see the positives for them as well as for the job-sharers, but sometimes there is a disconnect between those at the top and the HoDs doing the actual hiring.

What are your thoughts on the future of job-sharing programmes in HETV?

I think the success of this programme and the key to getting these placements has been a lot to do with the funding that's available.

In the future we could go down the route of unscripted and have flip-flopped job-shares when people take turns working the third day without an in-person handover. That would work in some roles definitely, but in roles where there's decision-making seniority, it's really key that the in-person handover day is there.

I hope that the strength of the case studies coming out this programme show the production companies that it is worth investing in that handover day for the ability to retain excellent, experienced talent, that it is worth that extra day rate a week.

Kaye Elliott, Director of High-end TV - ScreenSkills



Kaye is responsible for setting the strategy for all of ScreenSkills' industry investments and skills support in HETV. She provides overall direction for how the High-end TV Skills Fund is used and is the main point of contact for the High-end TV Council, who have ultimate accountability for the fund.

Why did the High-end TV Skills Fund choose to commission the *Job-share Programme*?

The ability to support people returning to work, being able to continue with their career, or retain their role, was a really healthy way of making sure that we could keep talent, which is fundamentally the priority for the industry. We don't want to lose great people or be unable to support great people to return if there's a barrier in terms of them not being able to commit to a full-time role, so hence why the *Job-Share Programme* was created.

Where do you feel that job-sharing sits within the wider equality, diversity and inclusion measures on offer to productions?

There are a lot of things that industry can tap into, but also I think the industry is still on catch up in terms of being able to utilise tools such as job-sharing to put together a production crew comfortably. So I think it's a really healthy tool to have as part of the suite of offers, but it's not the only thing that industry have available to retain its workforce.

We also do a number of 'return to work' programmes to support individuals that may have been out of industry for a period of time due to other commitments, and we do 'transfer', so enabling people to move between different disciplines. We also do a lot of work around leadership skills and management.

I would say job-sharing is part of that suite of offers and is really, really important because I think the industry absolutely does need to recognise that not everybody wants to, or has the ability to work full time, 5-6 days a week. There needs to be flexibility provided by the industry, and I think providing a programme such as this is really unique and fantastic, because it not only says you ought to be providing job-shares, it gives them the tools through the brilliant skills and expertise that Share My Telly Job have, to be able to help them feel comfortable to do so, but also some funding to pay for a 6th handover day. So in my view, what's not to love? It's quite hard to turn that down, although I do appreciate that for productions and crews that work at a very fast pace and are used to having people there all the time, it is a change in terms of having that flexibility and understanding how you can support individuals in that basis.

Do you see the future of job-sharing as being rolled out on a larger scale?

I hope so. We've been doing it for a couple of years now with Share My Telly Job, I think hopefully the more success stories that come out of that, and the more

productions can see it is as another tool - the ability to have great talent working on their shows - the more there will be an appetite for it. I have to say still, and it's obviously exacerbated by things like the strikes that we've just been through, and also a downturn to some degree in some elements of the sector, that I think it has been harder to secure placements. It's not just on this programme - others too. So I think there is still a way to go to convince industry that this is a really beneficial tool for them and it's something that works. I think that's fundamentally the most important thing we need to be demonstrating that this works - in an ideal world this should be just part of a normal offer. You should be able to job-share and I think the more productions can see it working on lots of different types of roles, all the better as well.

Magali Gibert, Director of Production, London – SISTER



Magali Gibert is Director of Production for SISTER. SISTER have had five job-share pairs on their productions. We interviewed Magali about job-sharing and the perceived risks for production companies.

Why did SISTER choose to support job-sharing on their productions?

We think it is a good idea. It gets more people in the industry because it gives them the flexibility to look after children, or whatever else they need to do in their personal lives, and we need more rather than fewer talented people. If that means that we have to give other options to people, then that's what we should be doing.

Originally, I was really into the idea with the caveat that I was worried about the loss of information and its potential of slowing things down which could happen as a result for certain job-sharing roles. Everything about production 'has to be done yesterday', and you're always under time constraints. Most of the problems we have on productions stem from a breakdown in communication. So there was a potential risk there for productions that I wanted to cover. Michelle coming up with this kind of overlapping idea that could be funded by ScreenSkills was a very good one because if there were an extra cost and an extra risk, then it's not an incentive for production to take on job-shares. Any good idea works if it works for both sides, doesn't it?

Have there been any barriers to SISTER implementing job-sharing?

None that are obvious to me straight away. There have been certain moments where I wasn't sure, thinking: 'Ohh gosh, you know this production is going to be a lot of split days or night filming, so it's not going to be good for either of them. How are they going to manage this?' But usually, you can work it out. So no, I don't think so.

How important is the attitude of production companies generally to pushing toward new working practices?

If you don't support change at the top, it's unlikely they'll be able to make it work on the ground. It's important for the production company to be supportive of the idea so it gives the chance for people working on the production to think, 'what if?' or 'let's look at it in a different way', and that's really crucial I think."

Before you had job-sharing on your productions was job-sharing perceived as a risk?

As I said, there are certain roles where, even for me who is in favour of job-sharing, I still think, 'ooh hang on a minute, how is that going to work?' So yes, but again, it doesn't mean that it can't change. I'm thinking of Make-up, for example. Your schedule can change all the time, so how do you plan if that person is meant to look after one artist, how do you plan ahead? You can't pretend that production will not need a lot of flexibility. Suddenly the location falls through, so your schedule changes, or the weather is not on your side and you have to reschedule something, and we had planned to shoot from that time to that time, and suddenly it's completely different that day. How is it going to work for the person who was meant to work on that day?

Our industry from that point of view is not easy because it changes all the time, but that's also why everybody is so good at coming up with other ideas and other ways of dealing with things.

Cameron Roach, Executive Producer – Rope Ladder Fiction



Cameron is the Executive Producer at Rope Ladder Fiction. We spoke to Cameron about how Rope Ladder Fiction facilitated a job-share pair on *Waterloo Road*.

Why did you choose to have a job-share on one of your productions?

I think that we all recognise that we need to do better in terms of people's work-life balance, and we're really ambitious to have diverse teams across all our productions. One element of having a truly diverse team is having people that are able to continue their career while they have a young family in particular. When you've got exceptionally talented individuals and they want to balance their professional life with their home life, you don't want to be restrictive in the progression of their career, and so to build a dynamic diverse workforce for the long term, we really want to encourage that flexibility of working.

How important was the funding in your decision to have a job-share on one of your productions?

Funding was important because I think realistically to get job-shares to function at their best you want some sort of crossover between those individuals. I think it's insincere to say that you don't want any crossover within the week. Now, of course in

different roles in different areas that ability to crossover and exchange information and communication varies from role to role.

It's insincere to think that these things have no cost, but actually what you recognise is that cost has a net effect in terms of the health of the production and how the production functions as well. Also I think on a long-term production like ours, it adds a longevity to help people to work on the show, and we're really proud of the staff retention that we've got and the fact that people are choosing to work on our show over shorter jobs because they like the security and stability that we're able to offer.

Were there any challenges that arose from having a job-share?

I think the one challenge is probably organisational, but I think working across the production you need precise organisation anyway, so it might be that we have to think more carefully about when head of department meetings happen, or when certain meetings happen in Prep or in Post - but that's no more complex than other elements of production planning. There's a complexity to it, but I think once you're open to that as something that's key to the healthy functioning of a production, it's no more complex than any other pressure you might be considering as you go into a pre-production or production phase.

What would you have like to have known before you had a job-share on one of your productions?

I think exploring the different shapes of how that job-share might look for the individual roles and not making assumptions about it. Allowing us some time to predict what those might look like because it's so individual and for individual needs. It's ensuring that there's flexibility as you build what that job-share pattern of work will look like.

How important are the attitudes of production companies in championing new ways of working?

Absolutely vital - it's vital for the progression of our sector. I think that we're all now conscious that there have been unhealthy working patterns across our sector and actually, there's a number of inherited unhealthy ways of working and as we try and be more accessible and build a dynamic and diverse workforce for the future, job-

sharing is vital. As I say, I think it will energise programme-making and it will also bring forward different and varying ideas and teams into the programmes themselves.

SMTJ's recommendations

- Continued funding from the High-end TV Skills Fund to support the handover day for job-sharers.
- The presence of an on-call job-sharing convenor for both the job-sharers and production companies to contact for advice.
- The creation of job-sharing networks based around certain regions or roles. This could be a WhatsApp group that has semi-regular networking events based in their region.
- Production companies should create their own flexible working policy as part of their equality, diversity and inclusion remit.

Conclusion

This Bible has been written as a guide to job-sharing, which can be used to build the practice into scripted productions. Within it we have detailed multiple ways in which job-shares can be arranged, as well as detailing some of the issues that can arise from the attempts to job-share, if they are not adequately organised.

From the Programme, we learnt that the uptake in job-sharing from those in mid-level positions is likely required because of the 30s and 40s life and career stage. During these years, caring responsibilities can prohibit successful negotiation of the long-hours culture of TV and film. We have also gathered evidence to suggest that job-sharing is beneficial to new entrants, as it offers peer to peer support, the opportunity to keep a stable secondary source of income, and alleviate some of the 'feast or famine' nature of freelance work (exacerbated at early career stage). At HoD level, we found good evidence that collaborating on creative decisions led to better outcomes, helpfully contradicting the idea of the necessity of a 'singular vision'.

We saw great evidence that job-share employers are demonstrating their commitment to best practice. By facilitating a job-share they understand the benefits of engaging with two people rather than one, they understand the benefits of going beyond simply hiring people into learning about the people they are hiring.

Employers who run job-shares are invested holistically in its success through their investment in their teams. These employers understand that job-sharers will bring additional experience, ideas and capacity to see the project through.

Job-sharing, as we have shown, is not difficult. There are significant conceptual barriers to it, around the time required to organise and the worry that when shooting, one of the pair may not carry that “essential” information needed. This hypothetical fear is indicative of the insecurity of productions, not of the inadequacy of job-sharers.

Job-sharing is for everyone. Job-sharing makes work more accessible. Job-sharing prevents burn out, retains talent, increases the skills base and maintains diversity. If HETV is going to continue to build upon its success it needs to recruit, retain and progress the talented people working on its shows. The ScreenSkills HETV Job-sharing Programme has shown that job-sharing is a tool to protect the health and diversity of the HETV workforce - it is a method that can introduce security in uncertain times. It is a simple offering that makes an enormous difference to the productivity and happiness of the workforce.

Job-sharers are brilliant at their jobs. They succeed because they are consummate communicators, able to note and share and they are team players, invested in the work beyond their immediate involvement. They are ideal employees and they are changing, for the better, the way our TV and film is made.

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