



HERE'S TO THE JOY AND
DEFIANCE OF BEING YOUNG
IN THE UK

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OVERVIEW



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The 2026 BFI FAN UK-wide season – *Rip It Up* – explores and celebrates the changing face of youth rebellion, culture and expression – from joy to heartbreak - on screen in the UK.

Youth culture in the UK has a wide and varied history, from the defiant rebellion of Teddy Boys, mods and rockers and the many activist movements that have shaped our society to hedonistic self-expression in the music and fashion scenes and the emotional rollercoaster that simply is being a teenager – all of which have been portrayed on screen in a multitude of ways.

With The Southbank Centre marking the 75th anniversary of the Festival of Britain - a landmark moment of post-war cultural renewal - and the 50th anniversary of Punk being celebrated in 2026, BFI FAN members are invited to join in these UK wide celebrations and explore how youth scenes and counterculture have impacted and resonate to this day inspiring new generations and beyond.

Rip It Up has two core elements, both of which need to include big screen moments and offer audiences opportunities to reflect on the evolution of generational rebellion from the 1950s through to today here in the UK.

- *Activity involving young programmers/ creatives focussing on youth scenes and/or counterculture that they themselves are part of or can relate to with clear potential to engage their peers.*
- *Activity celebrating the transformative energy and evolution of youth culture over the past 75 years tapping into a selection of key titles with potential to engage a range of audiences across generations.*

This document is intended to share our vision and creative ideas for the season, helping to inspire you to bring *Rip It Up* to your screens and audiences whether you run pop up events, a festival or a cinema space.

If you are interested in taking part in this UK wide season, please also read the [Funding Guidelines](#) that sit alongside this brief.



Quadrophenia (UK, 1979) Image Courtesy of Park Circus/Universal.

MEETING THE CREATIVE BRIEF



MEETING THE CREATIVE BRIEF

By exploring the wide range of youth culture movements and teenage experiences from the 1950s to the present day, *Rip It Up* has the potential to resonate directly with younger generations through youth led and bespoke film curation that invites reflections on their own lived experiences, identities, and cultural interests within the UK.

At the same time, it offers intergenerational relevance, inviting everyone to reflect on their own youth and the UK's evolving social fabric from mod rebellion and rave culture to climate activism. Whilst the season is UK wide, we recognise that there needs to be space for bespoke approaches that reflect distinct regional and national identities and perspectives and explore how notions of youth rebellion map onto these.

Over the past 75 years, the narrative has shifted from one of class-conscious post-war subcultures to a more fluid, digitally connected, and globally aware contemporary expression, but that generational desire for change and belonging has endured; and youth rebellion continues to play an important regenerative role in society; perhaps more important than ever.

The programme promotes screen heritage by showcasing culturally significant British films and TV across decades as well as creating opportunities for collaboration with national and regional archive materials many of which are underseen or underappreciated.

It will actively support the BFI's Inclusion & Skills priority by encouraging youth led curation/editorial, incorporating discussions, short films by young filmmakers, and interactive workshops, empowering young voices and creative talent. If there is an appetite for this, screen materials such as music videos, personal archives, and online content could also form part of the activity providing rights have been cleared.

Innovative approaches to outreach and engagement — including social media activations and influencers, wraparound activity (such as zine making, crafting, music, fashion, spoken word, etc.), and local partnerships — will be key to Public Engagement goals, broadening access and making cinema feel relevant, social, and alive.

The activity supported as part of Rip It Up will need to embody the BFI's vision for a future where screen culture is inclusive, reflective of the UK's diversity, and accessible to all, and align closely with the [BFI's Screen Culture 2033 strategy](#).

PROGRAMMING IDEAS

Whether it's the rise of teenager in the 1950s or today's culture of online influencers and social media, there is a huge amount of generational sub-cultures for you to draw your programming inspirations from.

This can include a celebratory look back at your audience's youth or current youth scenes or activism both online and in the streets. Your programme should focus on and celebrate the UK movements that have either had a lasting impact on culture or are playing a big part in society today.

This can include, but not limited to:

- Stories of love, loss and friendship – everything aspect of being young and the emotional rollercoaster that is being a teenager
- Fashion, Design, Music and Icons – and the movements they've inspired from graffiti to skate culture and more
- Online sub-cultures and the impact they have – from finding your people to the dangers of social media
- Community and activism – From LGBTQIA+ rights to gang culture – exploring hope, belonging and identity in a time of globalisation and growing disillusionment

This in turn can play into themes of protest, rebellion and even nostalgia to help tailor your programming ideas.

KEY SEASON TITLES

To help inspire your programming, we've worked with distributors to source a menu of key titles responding to the season's core themes and available to book at reasonable rates.

Several menu titles are available in theatrical and non-theatrical format and some are available with access materials such as Audio Description and Descriptive Subtitling.).

COMING OF AGE

Growing up in Britain and telling your own unique story: from self-expression to teenage angst and the joy of finding your people!

KEY TITLES

- East Is East (1999)
- Bend It Like Beckham (2002)
- Rocks (2021)
- Ish (2026)

PRIDE, PREJUDICE AND PROTEST

Rage against the machine with stories of protest, fighting injustice and standing up for your rights.

KEY TITLES

- Quadrophenia (1979)
- Babylon (1980)
- This is England (2006)
- Pride (2014)

CLUBS, DRUGS, PUBS AND PARTIES

Raves, drugs and the hedonistic lifestyle of being young.

KEY TITLES

- Young Soul Rebels (1991)
- Trainspotting (1996) - Likely to be from Sept 2026 onwards
- Human Traffic (1999)

[For format & booking information, please refer to the Title Listing Document](#)



Bespoke & Cross FAN Programming

We also welcome more bespoke activity, particularly if those involve region/nation specific elements or young programmers.

We encourage these proposals to take one or more of [the menu title\(s\)](#) as a jumping off point but are open to other approaches particularly if those involve young programmers and creatives as part of the planning team.

You can request up to £15,000 (average awards likely to be circa £5,000 based on previous activity) to develop unique programming activity within the parameters defined in the Creative Brief.

Projects can include bespoke youth led elements as well as menu titles and stretch over the period of activity, so that you can incorporate key titles into your offer. For example, *Ish* and *Trainspotting* which are due to be released in late July and late August respectively.

This funding type will require more detailed information and is best suited to larger or more experienced FAN members who have a track record of reaching audiences with unique and bespoke programming and/or of running activity with young programmers and creatives.

Cross FAN activity is suited for FAN members with a proven track record of delivering more complex projects in multiple locations and/or those with experience of delivering activity with and for young people.

Please note that we won't be funding many cross FAN projects this year, so they will need to have a clear audience development and outreach plan as well as confirmation from five or more venues about their participation to be considered.



BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE

LIVING FOR KICKS

We also encourage you to tap into national and regional archive collections as well as other moving image collections such as BFI National Archive's Living For Kicks.

Step into the burgeoning British youth culture of the 1950s and 60s with excerpts of programmes from Associated-Rediffusion, one of the first independent television companies which started with ITV in 1955.

Acting as a counterpoint to the BBC, Associated-Rediffusion was shaking up the world of TV documentaries with interviews featuring teenage girls going crazy for their pop idols, and teddy boys who worry that they're being misunderstood.

While comments from parents and psychologists reveal adult anxieties around the newfound freedoms of young people, teenagers in Brighton are hanging out in coffee bars and in Liverpool they're dancing to the latest pop music.

BFI National Archive's Living For Kicks, a 65mins compilation (with option to screen individual excerpts)

For more information: please email Selma Kerlow: Selma.Kerlow@bfi.org.uk

For alternative archive materials, please ensure you have contacted the relevant collection before seeking support from us and consult resources such as [FAN's best practice guide for working with archive collections](#).

[See some suggestions in the second tab of the Title Listing Document.](#)

UK-WIDE PRESS & MARKETING CAMPAIGN

This FAN-wide season is an opportunity for audiences across the nations and regions to immerse themselves in a connected programme backed by a UK wide Press & Marketing campaign and central listings.

For exhibitors, season artwork and other marketing assets will be made available including:

- Social media graphics
- A season trailer
- Clips
- Promotional stills for key titles



POTENTIAL PARTNERS, INFLUENCERS AND WIDER CONTEXT

We're keen for this project to build on existing youth led film exhibition activity happening across the UK. We encourage organisations with a track record in this area to apply for bespoke activity and/or for FAN members to work in partnership with relevant youth organisations.

If you're a FAN organisation interested in working with young programmers, but are new to this area of work, BFI FAN Young Audience Champion Kirsten Geekie has also collated [recent news, research and resources](#) highlighting the growing interest in what Young Audiences might be looking for. Also check out the Other Resources section for more information.

You may well already have local guests/ influencers in mind for your activity but be sure to reach out to your local Film Hub for contacts that they might have worked with in the past and/or have relationships with. You can also contact BFI FAN's season producer Ti Singh ti.s@watershed.co.uk for additional suggestions.

[BFI Film Academy](#), which runs across the UK, also provides activity around 'skill development in specific areas of the industry, including screen heritage, exhibition, distribution'. Your plans for the season might for example involve BFI Film Academy alumni or align with the BFI Film Academy remit by providing behind-the-scenes insights from a costume designer.

As outlined in the Overview, Rip it Up is partially inspired by The Southbank Centre's 75th anniversary celebrations.

You might find some inspiration in the Southbank Centre's plans that'll kick off in May 2026 with an immersive production '[You Are Here](#)', exploring 75 years of UK youth culture, covering teddy boys, punk, northern soul, hip-hop, garage, and grime.



POTENTIAL PARTNERS, INFLUENCERS AND WIDER CONTEXT

Other UK wide activity happening as part of the project that might be relevant to the local activity you are planning includes:

- A mobile poetry library called. '[A Poet In Every Port](#)' visiting 10 UK coastal towns – it will be the largest contemporary poetry collection, to become more accessible.
 - Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum – North Uist
 - Dundee Book Festival – Dundee
 - The Old Electric – Blackpool
 - The Word – South Shields
 - Out There Arts – Great Yarmouth
 - METAL Southend and Estuary Festival – South Essex/North Kent
 - Acorn Theatre – Penzance
 - Super Culture – Weston-Super-Mare
 - Another Festival – Caernarfon
 - Aspects Festival - Bangor
- **Hometown Meltdown** music project to be taken nationally, supporting grassroots venues and emerging talent through partnership with Music Venues Trust involving [venues across the UK](#).
- The [Museum of Youth Culture](#) (set to open in Spring 2026) with a collection from 1920 - present day including archive films and photography touching on punk, raving and skating culture.
- 2026 is also the 50th anniversary of the birth of punk – specifically the anniversary of the Sex Pistols gig in Manchester. In June, The Pistols (without John Lydon) are doing [an anniversary show in Manchester](#) to commemorate it in the summer and an exhibition in London.



PROGRAMME ENHANCEMENT



East is East (UK, 1999). Image Courtesy of Park Circus/Film4.

PROGRAMME ENHANCEMENT

Audience development and wraparound activity should be an integral part of any proposal, making the collective big screen experience unique and memorable and/or offering routes into and a deeper engagement with this unique celebration of UK culture.

To help inspire you, here are some prompts and ideas for activity you could include in your programme but feel free to come up with other ideas:

- Short film programmes from young film-makers
- Rap battles / DJ / live music / spoken word nights
- Red Carpet experience
- Post-film discussions for audiences
- Food and drink offers
- Fancy dress competition
- Young Audience programmer input/ programme
- Craft workshops - zine making / badge making
- Tie-in with specific fandoms or social groups
- Online community meet-ups
- Social media activations/commissions (for example, a competition to name your season/design poster)
- Youth 'take-over' of venue

We hope you feel inspired to join us in 2026 for *Rip It Up* – a celebration of generational rebellion and expression on screen.

OTHER RESOURCES

BFI FAN'S YOUNG AUDIENCES INFORMATION PACK

This information pack aims to provide a basic understanding of who young audiences are and how to approach programming for them via links to organisations that run successful young audience film activity.

- Film Programming for Family & Children, 8+, 11+ and 16+
- Working with Schools
- Setting up Young Programming or Youth Advisory groups
- Safeguarding
- Licensing for non-cinema venues

[Read the guide](#)

BFI FAN'S GUIDE TO SAFEGUARDING FOR FILM EXHIBITORS

The BFI FAN Audience Network have created a guide to safeguarding for film exhibitors. This includes definitions, tips for working with both children and adults, how to create code of conduct policies and much more information on how to create a safer environment as a film exhibitor.

[Read the guide](#)

[Find out more information on BFI FAN's Guides and Resources page.](#)

For more information on how you can take part and what support is available, please refer to the [Funding Guidelines](#).