

Falmouth University x John Schofield Trust partnership

April 2025 update



The John Schofield Trust (JST) is an established charity for journalists across the UK and Ireland. We help early career and student journalists regardless of their background through mentorship, networking and upskilling.

Executive summary

- JST piloted the journalism student mentoring scheme with Falmouth University in 2024, welcoming five students from journalism-related courses into our cohort of 'Fellows' (mentees) and pairing them individually with a senior journalist from their area of interest.
- We had mixed success with the Falmouth cohort, with many students not responding to our regular check-ins with them or participating in our evaluation process. However, there were some stand-out examples of how the programme positively impacted the students who took part.
- Many changes will need to be made in 2025 to ensure both Falmouth faculty and JST are across the experience of the individual students, and making changes to their mentoring (or mentor) should problems arise.

What our offer is to Falmouth students

- Each student was matched on the basis of what they told us in their applications e.g. one student who was interested in film-making and videography was paired with an established videographer at the BBC.
- Each student is offered 12 months of mentoring, with one meeting every 4-6 weeks. These meetings can be in person, virtually or a mix throughout the year. Should the student want to see their mentor in person, the John Schofield Trust would cover travel expenses and accommodation (if needed).
- The aim of the mentoring is to build the confidence of the student to take the next steps in their career, offer them direct insight from a working journalist, and widen their network of working journalists.
- All students and mentors are briefed separately by the John Schofield Trust on the goals of the programme and mentoring best practice.
- We host a 'masterclass' each month, covering different topics to expose all of the students to different areas of journalism and give them inspiration and insight from professionals. In 2024 topics included:
 - how to be a sports journalist
 - conducting great interviews
 - in conversation with Gary Younge (Guardian columnist)
 - managing your mental health as a journalist
 - career agony aunts
 - in a year of elections – political reporting
 - global reporting
 - in conversation with Matt Brindley (Managing Editor, ITV News)

- a session for journalists for whom English is a second language including public speaking tips
- how to find and tell great local stories
- a day of masterclasses at the BBC in London (all expenses covered)
- In return we ask that mentees keep in touch with us, let us know if there are issues, and proactively engage in the mentoring.

2024 MENTEES & MENTORS

Student	Chosen mentor	Why they were matched	Engagement/ feedback notes
James Bessant Davies	Hywel Griffith	Hywel is Wales Correspondent, BBC News. James wanted someone based in Wales, and with a wide experience of all sorts of journalism.	 James said: "In January 2024, I applied to the John Schofield Trust mentorship scheme as a 21-year-old photojournalist from mid-Wales. I hoped to be paired with a journalist with experience working as a foreign correspondent and was connected with Hywel Griffith, BBC Wales Correspondent. I speak with Hywel on a regular basis, visiting him at BBC Cymru Wales. I look forward to these meetings where we discuss everything from life at the BBC to his experience as a foreign correspondent, Welsh nationalism, personal life, and the weather. These conversations always give me a boost, and I leave feeling motivated—not just from the many cups of coffee that we share. Hywel guided me through the final stages of my course at Falmouth and helped me with future career choices. He introduced me to people and the architecture of the new BBC Wales building in Cardiff. As well as fellow/mentor connections, the John Schofield trust offers networking events and regular talks with prominent industry professionals, both online and in-person. I am hugely grateful to the trust for the work that they do and recommend that anyone who wants a career in journalism should apply!"
Jennifer Wearn	Emma Sanders	Jennifer expressed that she was interested in exploring womens sports reporting so we matched her with Emma Sanders, one of the BBC's best sports journalists.	No feedback forthcoming when prompted, no responses to Whatsapp messages asking for update
Naomi Smith	Hugh McIntyre	Hugh is a music journalist with Forbes and Metro weekly, Naomi had expressed she was interested in writing about culture and music.	No feedback forthcoming from Naomi despite numerous attempts to chase (she even in the midst of my emails applied for a part time job we were advertising!).
Chaya Nathan	Josh Lustig	Josh is Deputy Editor Photography for the Financial Times Weekend Magazine	Chaya told ius: "It's been really nice I met Josh in person shortly after we were matched and have had several meetings

			online since our last one was only a couple of weeks ago and he has been amazing!”
Charles Deane	James Fair		Charles was engaged in the mentoring though didn't send us the feedback we'd requested. He had multiple meetings with her mentor James (including one in-person in November for which we covered his travel and accommodation costs), however he flagged to me that he wasn't getting a response from James in December towards the end of the mentoring – I offered to set him up for a few coffees with different journalists to make up for it but Charles did not send me the follow up email with details of who he wanted to meet like I had requested.

2025 MENTEES & MENTORS

Student	Chosen mentor	Why they were matched
Poppy-Rose Scarborough	Ada Enechi	Ada writes about food and culture for Buzzfeed (and is now head of content), was former Channel 4 and was named Forbes Under 30. Poppy had directly requested Ada as a mentor.
Emma Vowles	Mentor preference has changed recently so we are confirming a new choice now	
Danielle Hutchinson	Ros Atkins	Ros is from the same area that Danielle is from, and is very experienced in analysis and storytelling, two areas Danielle has expressed she's keen in.
Luke Williams	Micah Crook	Micah was Falmouth alumni and has set up his own photo agency covering sporting events and campaigns, aligning with Luke's preferences for a future career.
Ugne Kamienaitė	Kate Holt	Kate is an experienced photojournalist who has worked across the world and for the BBC. Ugne requested a woman as a mentor and Kate was her top choice after further conversation.

Learnings and recommendations from pilot year

1. Faculty and JST staff to meet regularly (especially at the beginning of the programme) to ensure each pairing is meeting and to assist where communication has fallen off.
2. JST to regularly check in with both mentor and mentees, to flag to Falmouth colleague when there isn't a response.
3. Briefing/training enhanced to include more on expectation of the mentee to be proactive, and what to do if your mentor is disengaged (DONE).
4. Student participants encouraged to be more proactive and attend every masterclass – a register can be kept if helpful.
5. Evaluation element is mandatory for all students to participate in, alternative emails and phone numbers sought if no answers to primary contact points.