

Annual Report

Year in Review: 2025

2025 Headlines

Some big takeaways from this year

- Delivery in 8 locations (new for 2025 - Liverpool, Sheffield, Stockport & Bolton)
- 3 new Academy courses launched
 - Including commercially sold courses (WiPro, DXC x Manchester United Foundation, The King's Trust, Fujitsu & Parkdean)
- Brand new podcast page launched
 - Including podcasts created for Audible & JD Sports
- A **record** 322 Academy participants on courses/projects across the UK
- Academy participant creating an award-winning radio show
- First year of new partnership with 'ERIC' app which promotes our courses to over 150,000 people across the UK looking to get into the media industry



Social Media

Our social channels reached fresh audiences this year



Total impressions: **802k (up 313%)**



Total impressions: **191k (up 99%)**



Total Impressions (first year): **4.6k**



Total incoming applicant leads: **2.1k (up 716%)**



The Stats

What have we achieved

Number of people successfully completing a course

322

% of participants who felt the course has helped them build more confidence

95%

% of participants who felt less isolated after taking a course

82%

% of participants who said that their mental health and overall well-being has improved

84%

% of participants who said that they made new friends during a course

93%

% of participants who said that they learnt new skills which they can take forward in their next steps

100%



The Stats

And the big one...

% of participants who would
recommend the Academy to friends and
family

100%

For the fourth year in a row!



Looking Ahead

What you can expect from 2026

- Fresh new courses aimed at advancing skills and boosting career prospects. Our Advanced Courses include:
 - **Advanced Podcasting** with Amazon Audible
 - **Advanced Social Media** (Photoshop)
 - **Advanced Audio & Video Editing** (Audition & Premiere Pro)
 - **Advanced Filming** (On Location)
 - **Advanced Broadcast Journalism**
- Introduction of **Broadcasting Support** training
- Introduction of 'Youth Music' project which sees us train participants in **DJ'ing** and **Music Production**
- New Participant and Volunteer Management system being implemented in which will allow a better recruitment journey, more in-depth reporting and applicant's profiles (**Academy Hub**)
- Larger freelancer team to help with the new courses



Testimonials

Previous funders & organisations

Tamsin

Organisation: Audible UK x Think Beyond Consulting

"Working with Gaydio on the 'Audible Lives' podcast project has been an absolute pleasure.

They are a knowledgeable, dedicated team who seamlessly adapted programming to the needs of the young people participating on the courses, creating confident storytellers.

Throughout the project, Gaydio achieved many of the outcomes we hoped to see (and more!), and we are excited to continue our partnership with them in 2026."



Testimonials

Previous funders & organisations

Cassandra

Organisation: The King's Trust
Funder & Partner

"Collaborating with Gaydio Academy was a genuinely **rewarding experience**. From the very beginning, their **professionalism** and depth of experience stood out.

Gaydio played a key role in bringing the **experience to life**. From my visits and observations, the atmosphere they created was both **fun and safe**, an environment where participants felt encouraged to grow, explore, and push past their comfort zones.

Despite the relaxed and engaging vibe, the participants took the programme seriously. Many shared that they could now **genuinely see themselves pursuing a career in radio**. They left with clarity on their next steps, crediting the programme for giving them the **confidence** and direction they needed.

Working with Lee and the Gaydio Academy team was an **absolute pleasure**. Their **commitment, energy, and professionalism** delivered a **unique and inspiring** insight into the world of radio. The **impact** on the young people was clear, not just in their skills, but in their **confidence, enthusiasm, and readiness for what comes next.**"



Testimonials

Previous funders & organisations

David

Organisation: DXC x Manchester United Foundation
Funder

"Gaydio delivered a **brilliant** two-day 'Radio and Podcasting' workshop to 15 students from across Greater Manchester. Students were invited from **Manchester United Foundation's** partner high schools in an event provided by their presenting partner DXC Technology.

The workshop was led by Lee, who was **incredibly engaging** and instantly put the group at **ease**, creating a space where everyone felt **safe to be their true, authentic selves**. Over the two days, students learned core broadcasting skills, explored storytelling techniques, and developed their **confidence** behind the mic. The workshop concluded with the students recording a **powerful** 10-minute podcast focused on diversity and inclusion in sport.

It was **fantastic** to witness their passion and **self-assurance grow**, resulting in thoughtful, **confident** discussions on such a relevant and important topic."

[Click here for video example of course](#)



Testimonials

Participant

Course: Intro to Radio & Podcasting

"Joining the Gaydio Academy was a **transformative experience**. From the moment I stepped into the studio, I felt **welcomed and inspired**. The course content was comprehensive, covering everything from the fundamentals of radio broadcasting to techniques in digital audio production.

The courses were incredibly well-structured, and the resources provided were **invaluable**. But what truly made the Gaydio Academy stand out was the exceptional quality of the tutors. Lee Barnes, in particular, is an absolute gem. His passion for radio is **infectious**, and his wealth of knowledge is simply **astounding**. He has a way of explaining complex concepts in a clear and engaging manner, and his approachable nature made me feel comfortable asking questions and seeking guidance. Lee's dedication to helping each student succeed is truly remarkable.

The Gaydio Academy isn't just a course; **it's a community**. I left feeling **empowered, confident, and ready to pursue my dreams in radio**. I wholeheartedly recommend this course to anyone passionate about broadcasting, especially if you're looking for an inclusive and supportive learning environment. **Thank you**, Gaydio Academy, and especially thank you, Lee, for making this journey **unforgettable!**"



Don't just take our word for it

Hear what some of our participants said...

"Gaydio and this course have been such an important part of my life, and I'll never forget the impact you've had!"

"Thank you so much to you and everyone at Gaydio. The course and the level of support and care you have for each participant genuinely blew me away. I have thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it and am feeling very excited about life again."

"Without the confidence you gave me, I would not be where I am today. The fact that I even have a long-term future goal now, is something I owe to Gaydio."

"I was completely lost and unsure of what I was doing or where I was going. You helped me see my future and gave me the confidence to believe in myself. That's something I never thought I'd have."

"I would absolutely recommend the Academy. It gives great insights into the radio industry, as well as the work LGBTQ+ media professionals have been doing for years to establish the station, which was amazing to learn about."

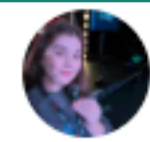
"Thank you for believing in me when I didn't believe in myself. You showed me what was possible, and I genuinely credit you with helping me turn my life around."

"The tutor was enthusiastic, inclusive of the entire group and very focused on building confidence. Genuinely excellent, really enjoyed myself!"

"I hope you realise it, but the support and encouragement you gave me during the programme changed my life in ways I'm only just beginning to fully appreciate."

DON'T JUST TAKE THEIR WORD FOR IT...

We're also LinkedIn famous...



Alice Smith • 1st

Production Coordinator Apprentice at BBC Audio North
1yr • 📢

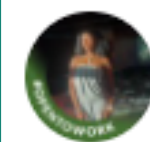
Last week I had the pleasure of becoming a part of the [Gaydio](#) Academy, through completing their 'Work Club' course 2023! 📢 📢 📢

The experience helped me remember just how much I love being in a studio, producing and presenting radio and audio content. The 'Work Club' has taught me so much about the professional radio industry, including the responsibilities of all typical roles needed to operate a studio, the commercial and marketing side of a station, and the logistics behind playlisting and scheduling.

I loved being able to get behind a mic again, as the Academy gave us the ability to try our hand at presenting a link, a self-written news story and hosting a podcast. Off air, I was able to construct social media content in keeping with the brand, and structure my own hourly show.

I would like to say thank you again to [Lee Barnes](#) for being such an incredible mentor this past week, I think we all really appreciate your enthusiasm and professional feedback.

Thank you again to the [Gaydio](#) Academy for putting on this course, I hope to continue supporting them as a station, but also for all the work they facilitate for the LGBTQ+ community.



Sasha Wiltshire • 1st

Journalist | Presenter | Content Creator | Bauer Mentee 2025 | John ...
3mo • 📢

So thankful for the opportunity to take the [Gaydio](#) Academy Intro into Radio and Podcasting course!

These past three days have been amazing all thanks to [Lee Barnes](#). I got to learn more about radio presenting, the other jobs in radio and how to start up a podcast. I can't wait to apply these new skills in the future.



Posy Wilson • 1st

Spanish and Portuguese student at UOM
1w • 📢

This week I had the pleasure of completing the "Intro to radio & podcasting" course with [Gaydio](#).

It was a thrilling week, in which I learned so much about the different roles in the radio industry and got a hands-on experience in the studio.

In the studio, I presented my first link, recorded a news broadcast and collaborated with my colleagues to host an original podcast. Meanwhile, outside of the studio I learned about crucial roles such as marketing, commercial and sound & imaging.

Thank you to [Lee Barnes](#) for being such a fun and helpful mentor and thank you to [Gaydio](#) for everything you do for the LGBTQ+ community 🏳️🌈.

I plan on taking the advanced courses in the new year so I am excited to see where that leads!



Rachel McHugh • 2nd

Freelance Presenter & Video Producer 📢 French & Spani...
1w • 📢

+ Follow

Last month I had the chance to take part in a week of radio and podcast training with [Gaydio](#), and it was a great experience.

Huge thank you to [Lee Barnes](#) for running the course with such dedication and energy. I gained plenty of practical and industry insights and got to connect with a really lovely group of people.

If you're in the audio space and get the chance to work with Gaydio, I'd definitely recommend it 📢



Eduardo Benfatti • 1st

Videographer, Editor & AI Video Specialist | Helping Businesses and ...
3mo • 📢

I really enjoyed my "Intro to Radio and Podcasting" course from [Gaydio](#), presented by the amazing [Lee Barnes](#) !
Thank you so much!



Adam Rohan • 1st

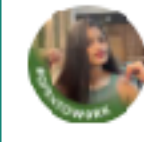
Video Production | Digital Marketing Content Creator | Prese...
2d • 📢

Last week I completed my Intro to Radio & Podcast Training at [Gaydio](#) as part of their Academy training!

Thank you to [Lee Barnes](#) for leading the course and teaching me the ins and outs of radio.

I now have a better understanding of the industry, the do's and don'ts, and how to approach presenting with confidence and authenticity. I am excited to keep developing my voice and get more involved with radio and podcasting projects.

Big thanks again to the team at Gaydio Academy for an inspiring week!



Jigeesha Gupta • 1st

Filmmaker | Writer
1yr • Edited • 📢

📢 Exciting News! 📢

I am thrilled to share that a few weeks ago I completed a dynamic "Intro to radio and podcasting" course hosted by the incredible team of Gaydio and Prince's Trust! This experience has been nothing short of transformative, providing me with valuable insights and hands-on skills in the world of broadcasting.

A huge thank you to [Gaydio](#), [The King's Trust](#), [Lee Barnes](#) and [Wipro](#) for this amazing opportunity and to the incredible team who shared their expertise. I am looking forward to applying what I've learned and exploring new horizons in radio and podcasting.

Stay tuned for some exciting projects coming soon!



Chris Demetriou • 1st

Audio & Sound Design | Radio • TV • Film • Podcasts • Branded C...
6d • Edited • 📢

Just come down from cloud 9 after the most incredible 8 days with [Gaydio](#) Academy in partnership with the [Workers Educational Association](#).

I honestly can't put into words how life-changing it was (clearly I can, read below 🤔🤔🤔).

Highlights:

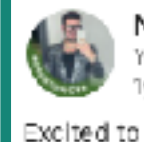
- [Lee Barnes](#) sharing 17 years of radio experience on and off the mic—funny, engaging, and so passionate about helping the next generation into radio/mid a.
- [Emma Goswell](#), radio royalty, inspiring us with her journey and the magic of "Theatre of the Mind."
- [Liselle Sheard](#), brilliant with careers, CVs, and guidance for media and allied industries.
- [Ian Wallace](#), station boss, whose insights—and very lovely dogs—made the office feel so welcoming and relaxed.

In 8 days, I got hands-on experience in:

- ✓ Recording links and the news
- ✓ Creating an artist drop and an ad for a fictional airline brand
- ✓ Planning, recording, editing, mixing, and mastering our podcast* (OUT SOON!)
- ✓ Designing audio branding: jingle + sweepers

No surprise I'm hooked on imaging, spot production, script writing, and end-to-end technical delivery.

The people. The place. Totally inspired. ✨



Nathan Hawkes • 1st

Youth Worker at The Proud Trust
1yr • 📢

Excited to share my experience attending the Gaydio Academy, where I've had the opportunity to dive into the world of radio and gain hands-on experience in all aspects of the industry!

From content creation to production, I've learned so much about what it takes to succeed in radio. This experience has been incredibly valuable, not just for me, but also for the young adults I work with as they prepare to enter the working world.

The skills and insights I've gained will be instrumental in guiding and inspiring them as they explore careers in media and beyond. I'm so grateful to [Gaydio](#) and [Lee Barnes](#) for this fantastic opportunity.

Our funders

We couldn't have done all of this without our amazing funders, Thank you!



FIND OUT MORE

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