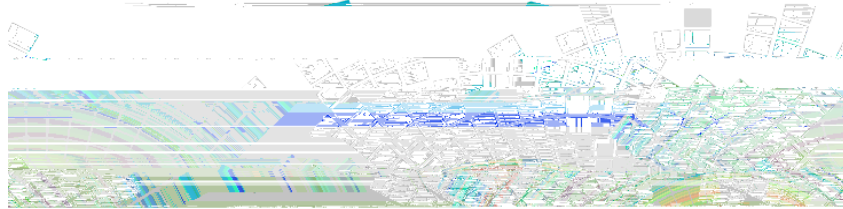




# Commissioning Brief



## 44' AFTERNOON DRAMA

Commissioning Brief N o. 47019

Round 7, 2025/26

# CONTENTS

SECTION A: RADIO 4 .....	3
SECTION B: EDITORIAL OPPORTUNITY .....	4
SECTION C: COMMISSIONING TIMETABLE .....	7
SECTION D: COMMISSIONING PROCESS.....	8



## SECTION A: RADIO 4

**Mohit Bakaya**

**Controller, BBC Radio 4 & Radio 4 Extra**

**Commissioning Director, BBC Speech**

Drama is an important genre for Radio 4. There is drama on Radio 4 every afternoon of the week, and we know that our listeners love the huge range of styles, treatments and stories, from the Sunday Drama to Limelight, The Archers to the Afternoon Drama.

We live in interesting times. Political, social and cultural upheaval, combined with disinformation, polarisation and fragmentation, mean Radio 4 has an incredibly important role to play in helping the audience navigate the world around them. Our mission is to introduce listeners to ideas, perspectives and experiences that might not be easily available to them, but also, occasionally, help them get away from it all!

This means that drama is more vital than ever for our audience. While it can provide much needed relief, it can also be a brilliant and surprising way to engage listeners on difficult or complex subjects, and simultaneously inform, educate and entertain them.

All of this needs to come wrapped up in world class storytelling, with world class performers, actors and contributors. If the Reithian mission for Radio 4 is reassuringly constant, the manner in which we capture people's imaginations and draw them into our world should be constantly evolving.

Always remember, in everything we do, we have a responsibility to reflect the whole of the UK and the rich, varied and changing lives of the people living here. We must be a broad church, giving voice to experiences, viewpoints and perspectives that come from all corners of the country. Please look to represent all points of the social, political and geographic compass, even those views which might not necessarily chime with your own.

We want the best possible dramas for our audience - existing and potential - and we hope this brief forms part of a framework for a genuinely creative and respectful collaboration between the commissioning team and the production community.

Radio 4 is the biggest speech station in the world. We commission nearly 8,000 new programmes and podcasts every year, chosen from the thousands of offers submitted to our commissioners. This is alongside having editorial oversight of all the regular news sequences, programmes and strands that sit in the schedule and on BBC Sounds.

None of us know what will come next in this turbulent world. Only one thing is certain: brilliant, original ideas with great talent, clever treatment and real ambition will always be devoured by our audience. Please bring your very best our way.

Thank you.



## SECTION B: EDITORIAL OPPORTUNITY

Commissioning Brief ID / Title: 47019 / 44 ' Afternoon Drama

Commissioning owner	Alison Hindell Commissioning Editor, Drama & Fiction
Commissioning contact	Sharon Terry
Commissioning Brief title	44' Afternoon Drama
	Radio 4 & BBC Sounds
Guide gross price	£21K 21



We are pleased to offer this slot for open competition for the first time in some years and look forward to reading your ideas. Please read this brief carefully as it contains some helpful information.

## WHAT DO WE WANT?

The 44' Afternoon Drama features a few series/serials and the rest are single plays. Stories here are mainly contemporary and we are looking for as wide a range of theme, subject, setting and style as imaginative producers and writers can provide. Here are some points to consider:

- Serendipity is the pleasure of this slot for listeners, there should be something here for everyone.
- We are looking for new, original writing and not for adaptations from other sources.
- Ambitious, grand scale ideas and perfect miniatures are both welcome.
- Tone is very important: we want both light and shade and although we have a limited appetite for plays solely about grief, tragedy or illness, dramas that offer redemption and hope despite hardship will be part of the mix

b.5 (s)-7.-5a( t)(3(64 y. 8 ( )t)-57.8o(y)-.8 s)-7.4 ( (m)2 -85



•









Further information about how we define whether a programme falls within these criteria can be found here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/radio/diversity-inclusion/> . To avoid your company having to complete the Diverse Company Leadership dropdown each time you



The following must be entered for each full proposal:

**Title** If your idea is commissioned don't change this title without flagging to the commissioner first. Please use Title Case. It is fine to use w/t for working titles.

**Commissioning Brief number** 47019

**Delivery Date** For full offers we need a earliest possible delivery date; linked to anniversary/event where relevant. This information is important and will be used when scheduling a commissioned programme.

**Price per episode** If you leave this blank, it will default to guide price. Please enter your forecast price if you expect it to be under or over the guide price.





## **Rights**

Radio 4 requires an appropriate set of rights dependent on the type of programme. This will vary only in exceptional circumstances. The guide price is based on buying the standard set of rights for that programme. If fewer rights are bought, the price may be reduced. Radio 4 will welcome proposals with co -production funding.

## **Schedule and delivery dates**

We are unlikely to issue precise transmission dates for programmes not pegged to a particular



We are interested in working with companies that share our Diversity & Inclusion values. BBC Radio has committed itself to spending £12m in the three years from FY21/22 on newly competed commissions that support at least two of the three priorities set out below. This is in addition to the many proposals that we will commission which meet only one of these priorities, as well as those that meet none of the three.

Please tell us whether, and how, your proposal and/or your company and/or (if yet known) the production team meet any of these three diversity priorities:

- i. diverse stories and portrayals, covering the nine protected characteristics plus social mobility;
- ii. diverse production leadership - where 'diverse' includes ethnicity, socio-economic background and disability;
- iii. diverse company leadership - where 'diverse' includes ethnicity, socio-economic background and disability.

The full definitions supporting each priority can be found [here](#) and some FAQs [here](#). For clarity, proposals will not be accepted or declined simply because they do or do not meet these diversity criteria. What you write in relation to them will be considered alongside all the other factors we evaluate when awarding commissions. Proposals that don't meet the diversity criteria may still be commissioned on the strength of meeting the other assessment criteria in this brief.

Our D&I commitments will help create an inclusive culture for all, increasing gender, ethnicity, socio-economic and disability diversity, and helping to deliver on the BBC's new 50:20:12 diversity targets for gender, ethnicity and disability representation.

## Sustainability

The BBC is committed to informing and inspiring listeners about how they, as individuals, can take steps towards more sustainable living. Your proposal should consider how the editorial and production methods contribute towards the BBC's Net Zero strategy – you can read about this [here](#).

Where appropriate, sustainability themes should be woven into the editorial – either implicitly or explicitly. - Unsustainable portrayals should be avoided in favour of showing more sustainable practices, e.g. if the narrative allows maybe a character takes a train journey instead of a flight, or presenters use re-usable cups instead of disposable ones. The BAFTA albert site contains inspiration across genres <https://wearealbert.org/planet-placement/>

Production methods should demonstrate good practice – minimising negative environmental impacts (e.g. from energy, waste, travel) and where possible making a

