

The Honorary Graduand: Melanie Jane Maria Rodrigues

Melanie Jane Maria Rodrigues is to be awarded the Honorary Doctor of Arts.

Mel is an award-winning business leader, tech entrepreneur and inclusion consultant, with 25 years' experience working in the screen & digital sectors.

Mel was appointed Chief Executive at Creative Access in July 2024. Her leadership of this social enterprise is focused on delivering career long support to creative professionals from under-represented and marginalised groups. This includes internships, mentoring, board trainees, career bursaries and inclusion training for employers, to support and progress talent in their organisations.

Previous to joining Creative Access, Mel enjoyed working in TV across a range of productions and leadership roles, including Creative Diversity Lead at Channel 4 and producer of the BBC Digital Cities initiative across the UK.

Mel is a passionate advocate for diversity and inclusion and believes that smart technology in particular - when designed with care - could be the key to creating more equitable and accessible opportunities. In 2019 she founded Bristol based start-up, Gritty Talent, to design technology to address the biggest inclusion challenges in TV and Film.

Mel is a proud adopted Bristolian, having first moved to the city in 1998 to study law at Bristol University. She hails originally from Redditch in the West Midlands. In her spare time, she's also the Vice Chair of Women in Film and TV, and has previously served as Creative Director of TEDxBristol, on the RTS West of England committee and advisor to the Bristol University law school alumni board, delivering creative career pathways via these voluntary organisations.