

# Dr Rob Watson

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## Outlook

I am an advocate for improved access to creative civic media that is community-focussed, and which promotes diversity, inclusion and social value. I am an experienced media and education professional with a background in academic management. I have twenty-five years' experience working with young adults in Higher Education, and in community media engagement projects. I am skilled at organisation management and financial planning, ensuring that community and voluntary organisations and projects make efficient and prudent use of re-

sources. I am a successful fundraiser who understands how collaborative partnerships succeed. I enjoy working with young people, as I am an advocate of learning for innovation, exploring new engagement practices, developing new production techniques and promoting collaborative working methods.

## Leadership Skills

As a director of the Community Media Association up to May 2019, my role was outward facing. I fostered and established regular dialogue between members, service users, partners, stakeholders, funders, regulators and government bodies. This included meeting regularly with BBC, Ofcom, DCMS, Internews, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Carnegie UK, in order to secure funding and partnership projects.

As the Chair of Governors at Sherard School in Melton Mowbray, I was responsible for the overall financial strategy of the school, ensuring it was efficiently managed to meet children's and parents' expectations. My role was to steward budgets that enabled the leadership team and staff to meet the needs of pupils, while working within the policy and resource framework of Leicestershire County Council and Ofsted.

As the Station Director of DemonFM up to 2012 I established the station as a full-time community broadcaster, and secured funding that enabled broadcast operations. As the Ofcom licence-holder I was responsible for the station's legal compliance, while also being the lead contact for volunteer engagement and safeguarding.

As a Programme Leader at Leicester Media School I managed, mentored and appraised staff, in addition to guiding students through a positive learning experience. I championed the development and validation of new courses, ensuring that the quality and status of the learning met with DMU and HE thresholds.

As a school governor, practicing teacher and researcher, I have broad experience ensuring that safeguarding practices are up to date and fully implemented, and that any risks or harms which might occur are mitigated, properly reported and sensitively managed. As a module tutor at De Montfort University I project managed many hundreds of student projects and research students, guiding them to meet deadlines and manage their resources effectively. My PhD demonstrates that I can independently devise, manage and evaluate a long-term project based on little prior foregrounding information, while taking it to successful completion.

## Professional Experience

### **DIRECTOR | DECENTERED MEDIA | AUGUST 2018 - PRESENT**

- Offering independent consultancy, research and training services for social and community development projects using independent media and communication practices.
- Clients include Examtrak, Internews, Soundart Radio, International Network for Criminal Justice, Medina Publishing, A Germ's Journey, University of Bath.

### **OVERSIGHT GROUP MEMBER | ARTWORKS ALLIANCE | OCTOBER 2021 – PRESENT**

- Development support for participatory arts organisations.

- Business development planning and organisation management.
- Communication and advocacy with public, government and activist organisations.

#### **DIRECTOR | COMMUNITY MEDIA ASSOCIATION | JULY 2014 – JUNE 2019**

- Development advocate with responsibility for research capability and social impact evaluation.
- Business development planning and organisation management.
- Communication and advocacy with public, government and activist organisations.

#### **PRINCIPLE LECTURER | LEICESTER MEDIA SCHOOL, DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY | SEPT 1997 – SEPT 2018**

- Researcher and development advocate for community media practices and ethos.
- Taught programme and learning content development for media technology, social media and community media, validating learning programmes and recruiting students.
- Teaching and learning support for undergraduate and postgraduate students.
- Managing, mentoring and appraising staff.

#### **CHAIR OF GOVERNORS | SHERARD PRIMARY SCHOOL, MELTON MOWBRAY | SEPT 2008 – JULY 2012**

- Good governance representative for children, parents and professional staff.
- Strategic advisor to Head Teacher and leadership team.
- Advocate for school with partners, local authorities and Ofsted.

#### **STATION DIRECTOR | DEMONFM, LEICESTER | SEPTEMBER 2008 – SEPTEMBER 2012**

- Ofcom Broadcast Licence holder and principal advocate of service development.
- Principle advocate for resource and partnerships developer.
- Principle volunteer and training coordinator.

#### **DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY | MAIN TEACHING AREAS**

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| • Radio Production, Social Media Production, Community Media     | 1998 - 2018 |
| • Programme Leader, BSc Radio Production & Technology            | 2005 - 2012 |
| • Programme Leader, BSc Media Technology, De Montfort University | 2000 - 2005 |

#### **PROFESSIONAL AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY**

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|--|----------------|
| • Advisor – Documentary Media Centre                                       | 2013 - Present |
| • Advisor – International Criminal Justice Network, De Montfort University | 2020 - Present |
| • External Examiner – BA Radio Production, University of Bedfordshire      | 2017 - Present |
| • Social Media Tutor – Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok                | 2019           |
| • ArtWorks Alliance – Communications Group Advisor                         | 2018 - Present |
| • Academic Evaluator – Soundart Radio, University of Bath                  | 2018 - Present |

### **Qualifications**

PhD, De Montfort University - Community Media.

MA, De Montfort University - Media Studies.

BA (Hons), De Montfort University - Media Studies.

### **Media, Advocacy and Evaluation Work**

I continue to work with independent community media organisations in Leicester, developing funding bids and helping to identify inclusive social value objectives and (SROI) indicators. I am skilled in presenting complex issues to diverse audiences of stakeholders, service users and partners. I am able to advocate and promote strategic policy objectives with partner organisations, such as charities, professional media organisations, regulatory and governmental organisations. My experience producing radio and audio programming, producing podcasts, blogging, developing social media platforms, giving lectures and public presentations, means that I am an effective communicator. In MBTI metrics I am INFJ, relating to the *pathfinder* who is people and values focussed, meaning I am comfortable with organisation leadership that fosters the capability of individuals. I create and share blogs, audio and photography content from my websites and forum. I host a regular community media professional issues-based discussion podcast at <https://decentered.co.uk>, and I am developing a music and discussion podcast at <https://robwatsonmedia.net>.

## Research Experience

- In 2019 I was the principal investigator on Internews Europe's report about the sustainability of community media in the UK, in addition to giving papers at academic conferences relating to community media, digital inclusion and media literacies.
- My PhD examined participative development in community media, and was based on a qualitative methodology using techniques drawn from symbolic interactionism, pragmatism and ethnography.