

## Breaking Into Documentaries

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International investigative documentaries are proliferating - as the number of platforms and outlets grows and access to the technology needed to make them becomes more widespread. It's frankly as good a time as there's ever been to try to break into documentary film-making - particularly investigative films.

As a commissioner of a range of strands, one-off docs and doc series, who used to make films himself - the key thing for those looking to break into film-making would be :-

1. Identify not just a subject but what access will help you tell the story . What is unique about what you can bring to the idea? Can you focus on an interview that no-one has got before or access to filming part of the story that's not been seen before? It's the best way of short-cutting your lack of experience.
2. Be single-minded and flexible in being prepared to film or research your story. It is an immersive business so be willing to do what it takes to immerse yourself in it.
3. Do you have a specific skill or knowledge base ( a language, perspective or insight) that means you can offer something no-one else can? Is there a skill you could bring to, for example, working undercover on an investigative film? Do you have a personal story that's relevant to the issue?
4. Ensure that you are as marketable as across a range of skills - shooting, editing - . Shoot producer/directors are now the norm for longer-term docs which are harder to finance. The more skills you can bring to a project , the more independence you can enjoy on it and the more financially sustainable it is over a longer period.
5. Take guidance and be happy to collaborate