

UPFRONT

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

Welcome To The Front Lounge Newsletter!

UPFRONT is a way for us to give you, our friends, supporters and funders, a more nuanced insight into the happenings of Front Lounge. It will feature stories that focus on the people who make Front Lounge what it is, alongside topical issues, and some of the things coming up in the future.



A Letter To My Younger Self by Amy Deans

Even on the darkest of days **the sun rises** and so will you. I know it doesn't always feel like that but I promise it's true. **I'm so sorry** for all the nights that you've spent on your knees, begging for God to help me please. **Love yourself** and the person you are; me and you, we've already come so far. We will get past this, we will make it through. Just don't be afraid to **try something new**. The pain we've felt it **doesn't seem fair**, but one day soon you'll realise that you no longer care. Our life will be filled with **love and light**. Never keep that image far from sight. **Believe in yourself** and all that you can do. Please try to see yourself from my **point of view**.

Looking Back: Two Amazing Films

On 3 – 5 July 2023 we gathered a group of teenagers at The Workshop in Hilltown, Dundee to take part in **iGNiTE**, the first such event since 2017. Led by Amy Deans, Britney Burnett and Leigh Addis with Grant Keelan of PPG Photography, the young people made **ZOMBID The Movie** - a zombie film! We intend to do many more iGNiTE events in 2024 so watch this space!



Adventures of the Little People is back! After 11 long years! 12 children worked with Ashley Dye and Grant Keelan to make **A Christmas Disaster**. This film premiered on 19 December 2023 at Coldsides Parish Church alongside the magic of Jamie the Jester, the music of Edenbank and Layla Brown, & mince pies! What a wonderful to end 2023!



Kindred Clothing Changes Lives

Kindred Clothing is a great introduction to the fashion industry. An SQA accredited course delivered by industry professionals, it teaches learners how to make garments from scratch. However it is so much More Than Just A Course...



“If it wasn’t for the people around me supporting me and pushing myself with things like Kindred Clothing, my job or even my kids giving me a reason to keep going, I wouldn’t like to think of where I would be today.” Courtney Keddie, winner of the Tailor Trade Award 2023



“It feels good to know that I can actually do something. In Maths or English I don’t know what I’m doing and whether I’ll ever need this, but I can do something with this. I’ve got a vision for the future now. I’d like to have my own clothing brand, and I have some ideas for it. I’ve got a lot more confidence than I had before.” Ellie Fraser, winner of The Courier Gold Star Award in 2023

Meet The People: Core Team

Front Lounge is made up of three workstreams of activity: **COMMUNITY**, in which the primary activities include engaging and supporting our target audiences; **EDUCATION**, which includes Kindred Clothing and the Fashion Production Award, a new qualification under development; and **WORK**, through which we plan to offer internships and paid work opportunities in the textile and fashion industries. Each Core Team member is responsible for specific projects from one of the three workstreams. Here we are in our own words answering how we first got into this work:



Amy Deans
Development Worker

“I first attended Bringing Up Baby after I had my first son in 2016. Despite my second child being born and successfully completing Kindred Clothing in 2020, my mental health was on a downward spiral. In March 2022 I was asked to work at Front Lounge for six months while I figured out my life. A few days in I decided Front Lounge is where I belong. I currently oversee iGNiTE, Adventures of the Little People & Let’s Create 23.”



Chika Inatimi
Project Leader

“I have always enjoyed working with people. Whilst I was studying my second degree, 1996 - 1997, I realised how much I enjoy working with young people and realised this is what I should do with my life. The charity was set up in 2001, and in 2004, I started working for Front Lounge full-time. I lead the core team and the effort to grow Kindred Clothing, become an SQA approved learning centre, and deliver international projects.”



Christie Wanless
Fashion Technologist

“Back in 2018 I helped deliver one of the first ever Kindred Clothing workshops with Isolated Heroes. Since then I’ve been involved in various fashion related projects with Front Lounge. Late 2023 I was asked to bring my skills to the core team. I am responsible for EVOLUTION, which involves working with designers to turn their scrap fabric into saleable products in a bid to reduce the negative impact of garment production.”



Changing Modus Operandi

“...If you want something you’ve never had before, it is likely you will have to do something you have never done before...”

This is a mantra we have uttered since our earliest days, as we implored our people to find their courage to do the things that possibly terrified them as they seek to be all they can be. Front Lounge finds itself in a similar place. We have spent many years running ‘cool projects’. However, if Front Lounge wants to see sustainable and transformational change in the lives of the target audiences we work with then we cannot continue to do things as we have done them in times past.

The big milestone for 2024 is to become a fashion focussed learning centre. Our goal is to deliver Kindred Clothing alongside a suite of courses that we hope will deepen the learning experience and strengthen learning outcomes. The introduction of the Fashion Production Award will provide a much needed progression route for advanced learners. It will deliver real skills, work opportunities and personal growth, whilst simultaneously tackling some of the very real barriers to progress that plague the organisation’s target audiences. We really believe in the power of Kindred Clothing to change lives.

This has not been arrived at lightly: this is a well considered and holistic solution. Turning to education as our springboard for social transformation builds sustainable infrastructure that will have direct economic and community impact that we hope will last long into the future.

And so we find our courage and embrace the unknown as we forge forwards and continue to do things we have never done before!



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