

**Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship, Goldsmiths,
University of London—written evidence (CRF0016)**

**House of Lords Communications and Digital Select Committee
inquiry “A creative future”**

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The following submission represents the collated views of academic experts from the Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship (ICCE) at Goldsmiths, University of London. Due to the Institute’s specialisation in creative and cultural policy and financial models and management in the Creative Economy, colleagues at ICCE are well placed to respond to this inquiry to provide insight into future challenges and opportunities for the UK Creative Industries.

Executive summary

1. Digitalisation has led to shifts in audiences’ role from consumers of content to co-producers and has changed the way visitors interact with exhibitions. This necessitates that audience participation is incorporated into business models.
2. The use of data analytics for content production holds a large potential for disruption within the filmmaking industry. In order to capitalise on this, differences in access to data and technology between smaller and larger scale companies should be addressed.
3. Government and local authorities should focus on improving communication with creative workers and supporting creative businesses in accessing training and funding.
4. Government strategy should address precarious working conditions in the music industry, as well as the creative industries generally, taking into account the detrimental effects that financial insecurity has on the mental health of creative workers, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Question 1: Which areas of the creative industries face the greatest potential for disruption and change in the next 5–10 years, and what impact could this have?

a) What changes are expected in the way creative/cultural content is produced; the way audiences are engaged (for example through digital or immersive experiences); and the way business models operate?

5. The continuous emergence of new digital platforms that allow the audience to create content has shifted the role of audiences from consumers to co-producers. This has prompted audiences to seek a dialogue with cultural organisations, as equals, creating the opportunity for new forms of art and content to emerge, and for new perspectives to be exposed. However, in order to ensure the produced content is representative of a broad range of views and social groups, creative organisations should make a conscious effort to work with diverse stakeholders.¹

6. Digital platforms have also changed the way visitors in galleries and museums interact with exhibitions, with increasing demand for workshops and exhibitions that create opportunities for visitor engagement, from taking photos and live streaming to allowing visitors to shape the content through the use of digital filters or editing platforms. This has led to the emergence of new business models in the museums and galleries sector, which give the audience an extent of decision-making power, from being able to suggest exhibition topics (low-level participation) to having a say on how cultural organisations' budgets are spent (complete sharing of decision making). This shift in dynamics could create opportunities for museums and galleries to foster a sense of community and develop mutually beneficial relationships with their audiences. One challenge that such interactive business models present, however, is the "chaotic" form of storytelling, where the narrative of the artist or original content creator gets mixed with that of the audience.²

7. The creative industries provide an important platform for critical literacy around data and data ethics. As data becomes increasingly influential in how society functions, supporting a creative, independent, and non-commercial space for digital literacy skills development is becoming increasingly prescient.³

8. Within the film industry, a more widespread use of analytics in content production holds great opportunities. This potential for disruption is a result of a number of factors, including the advances in digital technologies, the increasing availability of highly personalised data, intensified competition from user generated content and original content produced by Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD) platforms (i.e. Netflix, Amazon Prime Video), as well as the versatile applicability of data analytic techniques. Analysing large amounts of consumer data could provide insights into what kinds of movies and scripts are likely to be well-received by audiences and guide casting and budgeting decisions.

¹ <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351030861>

² <https://museumsetc.com/products/museum-participation?variant=11494572677>

³ <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003038184>

9. However, despite the potential offered by advanced data analytics, audience data is not always readily accessible to producers, which blocks the broader adoption of the technology across the film industry. In addition, methodologies developed by academics are primarily leveraged by major studios, which raises the issue of equitable access to analytic techniques. This disparity in access to data, skills and resources limits the capacity for innovation, efficiency and generating value within the filmmaking industry, and more broadly within the Creative Industries.⁴

Recommendation: R&D policies should focus not only on strategies for content production, but also on researching effective business models within the Creative Industries.

Recommendation: Facilitate a shift in current practices across the Creative Industries to encourage sharing of data, technology and equipment and incentivise collaboration between larger scale and smaller companies.

Question 3: What actions are needed from the Government and local authorities to ensure there is an appropriate talent pipeline equipped with these skills?

a) How can this be sufficiently flexible to take account of the pace of change in the sector?

10. A recent report on the Lewisham Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ) found a need for local and national government initiatives to improve their communication with creative workers, and to facilitate communication amongst all stakeholders, in order to support their access to training and funding. Growth in creative enterprises can be hindered by a lack of understanding of business and legal skills, as well as a lack of understanding of bureaucracy and public policy. This creates a barrier to accessing finance and progressing projects. Local authorities could reflect on how they might better support creative businesses in terms of skills, training, and facilitating knowledge exchange among local businesses, and better communicate the existing methods of support to ensure that workers feel able to take advantage of the help on offer. Local authorities seeking to support creative enterprises could also consider how cultural organisations could partner with educational institutions to offer networking opportunities, whether this is through guest talks, offering work opportunities/experience, holding networking events which students are invited to, and/or mentorship.⁵

11. Systemic inequalities between class, gender and race continue to hinder access to essential aspects of creative career development. These specific concerns should be taken into consideration alongside initiatives to improve the communication between local/national government and creative businesses.

⁴ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10824-019-09372-1>

⁵ <https://www.gold.ac.uk/news/cez-report-2022/>

Question 6: How effective are the Government’s existing strategies at supporting the creative industries to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead?

12. Research has shown that the precarious working conditions in the music industry can have detrimental effects on musicians’ mental health and wellbeing.^{6 7} Financial insecurity and career uncertainty for musicians, performers and other creative workers were further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns, with many workers in the creative industries reporting not meeting the eligibility criteria for government support.⁸

13. Ways of addressing these issues could involve reconsideration of the relationship between self-employment and benefits entitlement, providing subsidies to return to the pre-austerity levels, launching initiatives to encourage audiences to return to theatres and other venues, and making funding more accessible to independent workers.

14. Providing pastoral care, including the establishing of a dedicated counselling service for creative workers has also been brought up as part of the solution. Music Minds Matters, a 24-hour helpline run by Help Musicians UK was established in 2017 (in direct response to earlier research by colleagues cited herein), and future policy responses could consider the expansion of similar services, as well as critical evaluations vis-à-vis efficacy and user experience.^{9 10}

Question 7: What lessons can the UK’s creative industries learn from other countries, and other sectors?

15. International collaboration is key to developing new business models and mechanism of support for art and artists. The Museum + AI Network which was funded by the AHRC is a transatlantic network designed to create an ethically robust framework for the development of AI applications in museums. The Network was founded by Goldsmiths, in partnership with The National Gallery, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and The American Museum of Natural History. Through public events, and research meetings senior museum professionals and members of the public collaboratively developed new ways of applying AI technologies. The tool developed by the network was published in English in 2020, with Spanish and German editions published in 2022, and this collaborative model of developing emerging practice in response to AI in the creative industries through international partnership has been used as an exemplar of best practice by the AHRC.^{11 12}

⁶ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09548963.2022.2058354>

⁷ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/03057356221096506>

⁸ <https://link.springer.com/book/9783031095313>

⁹ <https://doi.org/10.16997/book43>

¹⁰ <https://sites.gold.ac.uk/iccecommunication/2022/05/27/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-performing-arts-lessons-and-challenges-for-cultural-policy-and-freelance-workers/>

¹¹ <https://themuseumsai.network/toolkit/>

¹² <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/how-we-are-doing/research-outcomes-and-impact/ahrc/museums-artificial-intelligence-network/>

16. In the area of data analytics, China's practices of cross-ownership among financiers, producers, ticketing apps and internet platforms have successfully enabled marketing efficiencies and higher-level strategic decision-making.¹³

17. Addressing precarious work conditions in the creative industries can learn from the example of the French unionised benefit scheme IDS, which aims to promote French culture and to protect cultural workers, including musicians and others working in the music industry. While the specificity of this scheme means it cannot serve as a replicable model for the UK, it is a good example of an approach towards articulating the real cost and value of a domestic cultural industry. The IDS scheme is one of the clearest examples of a public policy initiative that acknowledges both that music making is valuable and that musicians need time to produce creative work.¹⁴ Indeed, we have seen recent attempts at addressing this via the introduction of Basic Income for the Arts (BIA) scheme launched in Ireland, the results of which should be carefully evaluated at the conclusion of the pilot.

18. Kenya's HEVA fund – a creative industries investment loan and grant body – also demonstrates an innovative approach by funding a market/creative hub rather than individual enterprises and looking to ensure growth across all members of the hub.¹⁵

19. Cultural organisations can provide physical space to support the development of the creative industries. Internationally, a number of museums have pioneered in house co-working spaces as a means to support the creativity that their museums collect and curate. In the UK we have begun to see co-working spaces embedded in a range of arts organisations such as Battersea Arts Centre and Stanley Arts. Such spaces provide an incubator for the creative industries, but also provide a valuable revenue stream for these arts organisations.¹⁶

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¹³ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10824-019-09372-1>

¹⁴ <https://doi.org/10.16997/book43>

¹⁵ <https://www.hevafund.com/>

¹⁶ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1111/muse.12193>