

Creative Industries - Free Trade Agreements

Enhancing the economic, social and cultural strength of the UK



The creative industries are growing at more than twice the rate of the UK economy, generating over £100bn per annum in GVA - greater than the automotive, life sciences, aerospace and oil and gas industries combined. They employ over 2 million people, with jobs in the sector growing at three times the UK average, and produce more than £30bn in service exports (10% of the UK total) and more than £15bn in goods. This value is generated from a diverse range of industries - from architecture and advertising through to video games and film - and from businesses large and small, including a significant entrepreneurial freelance community. 95% of creative businesses employ four people or fewer, and over a third of the sector's workforce are self-employed.

These are the industries of tomorrow: resilient to automation, at the forefront of innovation, and with the ability to tackle major global challenges such as sustainability and climate change. The UK's future trade agreements present us with an opportunity to maintain this momentum and unlock further success - success that has so far been made possible through, the ability to move people and goods easily, strong Intellectual Property regimes and copyright protection, regulatory alignment, and the ability to drive inward investment. Underpinning this has been our strong relationship with the EU - our largest trading partner. This recipe for success is outlined below:

Movement - Enable the temporary mobility of people and goods alongside frictionless trade

As a primarily services and content driven sector, the ability to easily move people, the equipment and materials they travel with, and goods is vital. Many creative organisations operate on a project-by-project basis, relying on specialist temporary workers and top performers for their work to succeed. Manufacturers, such as those in the publishing and fashion industries, are dependent on their supply-chain to bring their creative content to the public. To ensure this success is not undermined, UK government must negotiate a touring visa with the EU to enable creators and performers to temporarily travel and take their equipment with them tax-free. Trade barriers for goods, in terms of both taxes and regulatory checks, must also be minimised.

Intellectual Property - Ensure a robust and properly enforced IP regime accessible to all

Intellectual Property is the lifeblood of the creative industries. EU-wide reciprocal IP protections and international treaties have enabled creatives to feel confident in trading across the EU in the knowledge that they will be able to enforce their trademarks, design rights and copyright. Any dilution of our 'gold standard' UK IP protections when negotiating FTAs, or the creation of an inaccessible system for protection and enforcement through excessive fees or bureaucracy, would threaten the ability of UK creatives to trade freely and weaken their motivations to continue to produce the original content on which the UK's economic and soft power is built.

Regulatory Alignment - Maintain and enhance access to international markets

Lack of recognition by the UK and EU of each other's regulations across data, qualifications and audiovisual rules will restrict both access to creative content and the sector's ability to collaborate in producing the best. Reaching European consumers means ensuring UK audiovisual content is classed as 'European work' to meet member state quotas, and sharing data across borders, which requires maintaining GDPR-adequate laws for the EU to allow unrestricted data flows. Producing work that creates enthusiasm among consumers also requires recruiting those

with unique skills and vision; without mutual recognition of people's qualifications, accessing this talent would not be possible.

Leaving the EU gives the potential to expand into new markets and build our thriving international creative community through greater cooperation and mutual recognition. However, agreements with other countries cannot replace the EU as our largest trading partner and we must ensure we align on the rules that have underpinned the sector's success.

Investment - Keep the UK innovative, competitive and collaborative

Free-trade agreements present an opportunity for the UK to maintain and expand its position as an attractive destination for inward investment. The extension of tax reliefs for creative enterprises alongside a supportive landscape of public and private investment can attract creative businesses and start-ups to the UK and encourage existing businesses to experiment more. Support for risk-taking results in innovative new products and services and enhanced expertise. Greater UK investment in R&D for the creative industries will ensure the sector remains a global leader for content innovation, in the face of international competition.

The UK must negotiate continued access to EU funding schemes such as Creative Europe (which enables 40% of sales of UK independent films in Europe) to ensure that UK creative content has the widest possible market, and ensure the UK Shared Prosperity Fund maximises the possibility for continued and inclusive growth across the whole of the country.

Download our [Creative Industries Manifesto](#) for our broader recommendations for UK policy.

The **Creative Industries Federation** is the independent body which represents, champions and supports the prosperity of the UK's creative industries. Through our unique network of member organisations, our influential policy and advocacy work and our UK-wide events programme we bring together the many sectors that comprise our world-leading creative industries. Through the combined expertise of our members we ensure that our sector is at the heart of political, economic and social decision-making.

In September 2019 the Creative Industries Federation and Creative England announced their intention to formally unite, recognising that they will be able to make a greater difference together than would be possible alone. The Federation's history of bringing together UK-wide networks and championing the sector will combine with Creative England's significant experience uncovering, investing and growing creative businesses outside of London.

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