

The power of creativity

Recovery and Renewal

The background of the entire page is a vibrant yellow-orange gradient. In the lower half, there are large, flowing, abstract shapes in varying shades of yellow and orange, resembling stylized waves or organic forms, creating a sense of movement and renewal.

In recent years our creative industries have been one of the fastest growing parts of the UK economy, attracting significant inward investment and increasing jobs and exports.

Until recently the sector employed two million people - 75% of them working outside London - and made an annual contribution to our economy of more than £110 billion.

Then came the threat of Brexit with some immediate impacts such as skilled EU nationals leaving, UK cities barred from the European Capitals of Culture Programme, broadcasters leaving the UK and investment programmes being cut-back.

And then the Covid-19 pandemic hit. Thousands of creative industries workers found themselves excluded from

government support schemes, venues shut down, and – at the time of writing – there is still uncertainty about whether, how and how much of the government's rescue package for the performing arts will trickle down beyond the "crown jewels" to towns and communities.

The Creative Industries, and the arts and cultural programmes that underpin them, have been among the hardest hit. Yet in difficult times societies need a lift, something to reinvigorate and give comfort and hope.

Our creative community can rise to the challenge of recovery and renewal, and can play a leading role in leading the UK out of recessions, but only if they are given the tools to do the job and with a post Brexit UK/EU deal that meets their needs.

Despite the late, but welcome, short-term measures the Government has announced, much more is needed.

Without it our creative economy, which went into this crisis as a world leader, will emerge smaller, weaker and with lasting damage.

Liberal Democrats have already called for urgent recovery measures:

- Road maps for re-opening must be coupled with a clear timeline and help with insurance to protect against financial loss from any future lockdowns.

- Creative sector workers who have so far been excluded from government support schemes must now be included.

- Artists, writers, musicians and other creators must have a voice on government advisory bodies.

- The planned 2022 'Brexit Festival' should be scrapped with the earmarked money used now to help the existing festivals of Britain.

What follows is an agenda for immediate survival, recovery and renewal to tackle the twin-threats of COVID and the end of the Brexit transition period.



"I am glad to see the government finally putting money into saving the arts, but there is still a lot of work to do if the creative industries as a whole are to survive and thrive"

Daisy Cooper MP

Liberal Democrat DCMS Spokesperson.

Whole Sector

Immediate Recovery

While welcoming recent announcements by the Chancellor, more action is needed across the entire Creative Industry sector; from all levels of government, such as:

● **Including the “excluded”.** Freelancers account for 72% of the Creative Industries compared with 16% across the rest of the economy. Yet many freelancers, self-employed and other workers have been excluded from government support schemes with a disproportionate impact on the sector. This must be rectified without further delay.

● **Providing a one-off recovery grant to local authorities.** The LGA has said that councils still face a funding gap as a result of the COVID-19 crisis of around £7 billion. They should be provided with a one-off grant to protect and revitalise struggling community arts and cultural organisations, including festivals, libraries and arts centres. (see also 'Cultural Endowment Funds').

● **Opening a ‘pipeline furlough’ scheme** for those creatives, such as in production, who have worked throughout the lockdown but who will feel the impact of the lockdown further down the line.

● **Supporting regional creative industries** so that the money is spread across the regions and not concentrated in London.

● **Supporting and encouraging inclusivity and diversity** both in those who work in the creative industries and those who make up the audiences.

● **Retaining diverse workforces.** Section 159 of the 2010 Equality Act already empowers organisations to have due regard to protected characteristics during recruitment.

To retain diverse workforces this should be extended to apply to considerations of redundancy or retention.

● **Creating an ambitious strategy for the UK’s already world-leading disability arts sector,** with a specific focus on those who are clinically vulnerable and therefore at risk of becoming invisible in creative content in the medium and long-term.

● **Exploring the provision of unconditional Reset Grants** to help existing micro-businesses in the sector get going again and expand.

● **Giving creators a voice on government advisory committees.** We have a global reputation for developing world-class talent but their voices are sorely missing. Artists, writers, musicians and other creators must have seats at the highest levels of government discussion.

● **Developing contingency measures** so that targeted help can be given quickly if lockdowns (whether localised or countrywide) have to be re-imposed. (See also ‘underwriting affordable insurance policies’).

● **Supporting the creative industries to provide place-based recovery** so that they can provide training and vocational courses in areas of the country where there have been significant redundancies in other sectors.

Renewal

● Ensuring Cultural infrastructure projects form part of the Government’s Infrastructure Plan and local growth plans.

● Exploring Cultural Endowment Funds, backed by sustainable annual grants, for every major town and city to attract inward investment.

Venues, Companies and Media

Theatres, concert halls and museums all closed. In much of Europe high subsidy levels mean that this has been an interruption, not a disastrous blow.

For those in Britain, where ticket sales and sponsorship account for a much higher percentage of income, going dark for a long period will mean at best, the loss of key staff, at worst insolvency and permanent closure – wasting all the public infrastructure money and lottery funds that have made them important features of modern life. **So more help is needed, including:**

Recovery

- **Guaranteeing the payments** of essential administrative, technical and creative staff in national and regional arts institutions.
- **Extending furlough payments** until sufficient income can be generated again.
- **Providing a clear timeline with 'not before' dates** for reopening without social distancing as soon as it is safe to do so.
- **Supporting an industry-led campaign to restore trust and confidence in attending live performances.**
- **Underwriting affordable insurance policies** to protect against virus claims and cancellation losses not least in the event of new local or national lockdowns, following the model of the UK's re-insurance flood scheme.
- **Offering tax credits to UK advertisers** taking space on PSB TV channels, in cultural magazines and UK owned local newspapers.
- **Protecting the BBC** not least by government taking responsibility for funding

any over-75 licence fee concessions and create an independent body to set the licence fee without government interference.

- **Protecting public service broadcasters** with increased prominence on Electronic Programme Guides and fairer "must carry" deals with non-PSB broadcasters.
- **Changing the 'VAT-cut plan'.** Many venues will not re-open for some time. Some may not open at all during the six-month VAT cut period. So, in the case of such venues, there should be an extension.
- **Reallocating funds from the planned 2022 'Brexit Festival of Britain'** to support existing festivals throughout Britain. The government has pledged £120 million for a 'Festival of Great Britain and Northern Ireland' in 2022. But the UK already has a programme of festivals that service the whole of the UK, and which now need support if they are going to survive. Their survival and revival will be worth celebrating.

Renewal

- **More generous and sustainable funding mechanisms.** The Government, local government and the Arts Councils should work together to explore new, and more generous and sustainable, financial mechanisms for underwriting the long-term activity of venues, performing companies, local museums and galleries, and festivals.
- **Improved Diversity.** More needs to be done, not least by the sector itself, to ensure live events more accurately mirror and take account of the needs of the diversity of existing and potential audiences.

Education, Training and young professionals

High quality universal arts education is essential for our civilisation as much as for our creative industries and future audiences – and to ensure that our creative industries remain competitive worldwide.

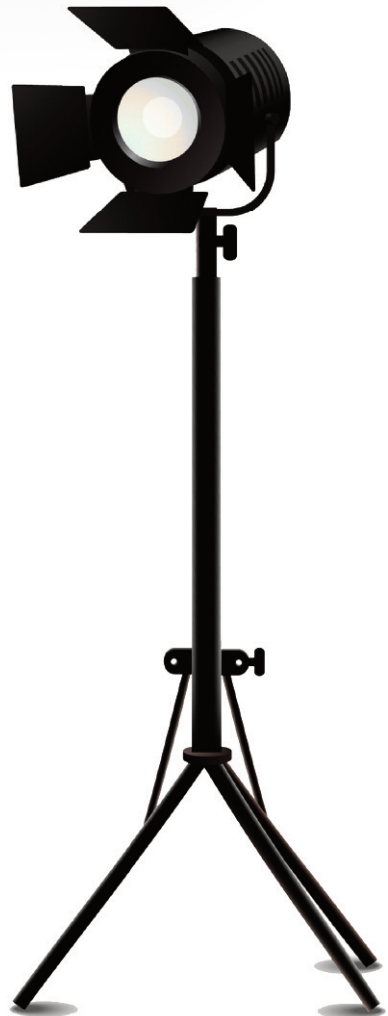
The failure of successive governments to acknowledge this is reflected in, for example, a school curriculum that downgrades arts and creative subjects and an apprenticeship scheme inappropriate to the needs of the Creative Industries. **Much needs to change, including:**

Recovery

- **Ensuring universities, conservatoires and colleges have the funds to maintain high levels of tuition** and can adapt to the loss of income from European and international students.
- **Addressing problems of student accommodation and the training environment for performing arts.**

Renewal

- **Ensuring the arts and culture form a key part of the school curriculum, which should be based on 'STEAM' not 'STEM'.**
- **Amending the current apprenticeship scheme** to more accurately reflect the needs of the Creative Industries with its eco-system of freelancers and small businesses often operating on short-term projects.
- **Reforming the apprenticeship levy** so the £55million of apprenticeship levy funds raised within the creative industries, but not spent on them, can be used to support the training of the creative industries' workforce.
- **Exploring the establishment of a UK/Europe Scholarship Fund** for UK post-graduate performing arts study at European Conservatoires, and similar for those studying here.



Brexit & Beyond

The recovery and renewal of our Creative Industries will depend on the above but also, in large measure, on the outcome of the Brexit trade negotiations, not least with the EU but also with other countries such as the United States.

The success of our Creative Industries and of our arts and cultural programmes has relied, in part, on our willingness to employ and provide a performance platform for people from different cultural and educational backgrounds not least from around Europe and from the knowledge and skills learned by our citizens working and performing in Europe.

Trade negotiations with the EU should seek, as far as possible, to preserve this and many of the other

benefits of close co-operation with the other EU countries.

At the same time, the UK should recognise the risks attached to rushing to conclude a UK-US trade deal, as its terms will likely set the parameters for all other UK trade deals that follow.

Currently, the UK enjoys gold standard intellectual property protection and EU data adequacy protections.

Brexit & Beyond

As the negotiations with the EU continue therefore, our negotiators should seek to:

- **Secure continued access to European partnership schemes** in the arts and audio-visual sector and devise new ways for UK professionals to network and collaborate.
- **Retain partner access to Creative Europe co-operation projects and to the Erasmus programmes.**
- **Continue engagement in Horizon 2020** (and successor programmes) to maintain funding and cross-border collaboration for crucial R&D within the Creative Industries.
- **Protect Intellectual Property Rights** by ensuring existing EU Directives remain incorporated in UK Copyright Law and that it keeps in step with best EU practice.
- **Ensure collection and mutual distribution societies continue to collect across Europe**, not just in the UK.
- **Update UK Design law** to fully reflect the EU's comprehensive protection of UK designers
- **Ensure Broadcasters have continuing access to European platforms.**
- **Guarantee mutual recognition of qualifications** to allow, for example, architects and IP advisers to continue to practice in the EU.
- **Maintain cross-border data sharing** to ensure the UK remains aligned under adequacy arrangements with EU data legislation.
- **Negotiate inclusion of UK Cultural goods and services within the EU's Cultural Exception rules and minimise barriers to trade.**
- **Create a reciprocal, multi-entry, EU-UK wide visa system (or similar)** to reduce red-tape and cost for performers and creators making short work visits in any of the 28 countries, with protection against double taxation or social security payments and, ideally, no customs carnets for instruments, stage sets, works of art or equipment.
- **Ensure cross-border participation in the development of on-line harms legislation**, which should include 'economic harm' and misinformation.

Conclusion

If these measures are taken and sufficient funds provided there is a chance that the revival of Britain's cultural sector can lead the rest of the economy as it has so often before.

In sustainable economic growth confidence is everything. This is the sector that can turn pessimism into optimism, stagnation into invention and immobility into speed.