THE IMPACT OF
CREATIVE EUROPE
IN THE UK

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A report by SQW
with the support of Creative Europe Desk UK
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A report by SQW with the support of and funded by Creative Europe Desk UK

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1. About this report

Creative Europe is the European Union’s programme to support the cultural, creative and audiovisual sectors. From 2014-2020, €1.46 billion was made available to support European projects with the potential to travel, reach new audiences and encourage skill sharing and development.

Launched in January 2014, Creative Europe brought together a Culture sub-programme, which provided funding for the cultural and creative sectors; a MEDIA sub-programme, which invested in film, television, new media and video games; and a Cross-Sector strand which explored the common ground between the two sectors. The programme has a network of 42 Creative Europe Desks (CEDs) in all participating countries.

Creative Europe Desk UK (CED UK) is a partnership between the British Council, British Film Institute, Arts Council England, Creative Scotland and Welsh Government. It is designated and supported by the UK Government Department for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport and the European Commission. It promotes awareness and understanding of Creative Europe and provides free advice and support for applicants based in the UK. Creative Europe Desk UK’s team of specialists is based across the UK (in London, Manchester, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast).

There have been several investigations and summaries of the impact of Creative Europe both across Europe and in the UK:

- In 2018, CED UK commissioned a piece of research exploring the Impact of Creative Europe in the UK
- In 2018, the European Commission published an mid-term evaluation of the Creative Europe programme
- Annual monitoring reports are published by the European Commission
- Creative Europe Desk UK maintains a comprehensive website with information about funded projects, monitoring reports and applicant information.

This report was commissioned to consider the evidence and strength of evidence base of the impact of Creative Europe in the UK from 2014 until 2019 and in particular its two sub-programmes MEDIA and Culture, according to the headings and sub-headings defined in the Evaluation Framework established in the previous impacts assessment in 2018.

It is based on: review of documents and data sources including those listed above; the findings of a survey undertaken for the project, co-designed with the steering group, and distributed and publicised by Creative Europe Desk UK; interviews with key stakeholders; interviews with survey respondents to provide further detail regarding specific issues arising from survey results; and a document review.

This is a summary of a technical report which includes more extensive elaboration of survey findings and case studies.
Creative Europe supports organisations throughout the UK

- MEDIA
- Culture
- Cross-Sector
2. Introduction

This is a summary of a report that presents evidence of the impact of Creative Europe from 2014 until 2019 and in particular its two sub-programmes MEDIA and Culture, in the UK.

The creative, cultural and audiovisual sectors in the UK benefit both directly and indirectly from Creative Europe. In addition to the non-repayable grants paid to companies and organisations, individuals based in the UK can benefit from training and access to market opportunities. The UK also benefits from involvement in projects led by partners in other countries and through distribution deals for UK products such as films or other content, fees, or commissions to artists.

Between 2014 and 2019 Creative Europe invested €203 million to support 609 projects involving UK beneficiaries. The UK beneficiaries within these projects are known to have received €68m directly. In addition, €32m was awarded to European distributors for the distribution of 196 UK films. This brings the total value of support to the UK’s creative, cultural and audiovisual sectors in this period to over €100m.

The value of the creative, cultural and audiovisual sectors

These sectors contribute to the UK’s economy and quality of life. DCMS data shows that in 2019 the number of jobs in the creative industries sector stood at just over 2.1 million. The number of jobs in the creative industries increased by 34.5% from 2011: more than three times the growth rate of employment in the UK overall (11.4%). In 2019, the cultural sector had 676,000 jobs. Since 2011, the number of jobs in the cultural sector has grown by 24.0%

The size of the creative and cultural sectors in the EU is estimated to be 4% of EU GDP. The creative and cultural sectors also make a substantial contribution to the UK economy measured in Gross Value Added (GVA). In 2018 (the most recent data available) the creative industries contributed £111.7 billion to the UK economy, an increase of 43.2% in real terms since 2010. Meanwhile the cultural sector contributed £32.3 billion in 2018, an increase of 21.9% in real terms. Exports in the two DCMS sectors; creative industries and cultural sectors in 2019 amounted to £20.1 billion and £17.4 billion respectively. Exports from these sub-sectors have been growing rapidly showing an increase of 50% from 2018 for the creative industries and 63% from 2018 for cultural. These sectors are well-connected, and also make positive contributions to other areas of the economy including commerce and education. Economically, they create value and support jobs.

But the creative and cultural sectors offer more than economic value. Thriving creative and artistic communities provide opportunities for experiences that enrich people’s lives by providing cultural experiences, entertainment, inspiration and opportunities to participate and to learn about ourselves and others. The sectors trigger a positive impact in other sectors of society, such as education, innovation or healthcare, and help to connect people across borders through powerful human stories and narratives. Alongside education they are the basis of the UK’s ‘soft power’, and help demonstrate the UK’s values of openness, inclusion, transparency and fairness.

These sectors do, however, face barriers in accessing and building on international networks, market and collaboration opportunities. They are characterised by a large number of micro or small businesses for whom the entry costs, skills barriers and network deficits can make international participation difficult or impossible. These barriers affect the different creative, cultural and audiovisual sectors in different ways and can result in missed opportunities to grow, to reach wider or different audiences, to secure financial reward, share cultural experience, or to improve organisational and business resilience.

The Creative Europe programme

Set up under a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council in December 2013, the programme’s two overarching general objectives are to:

- Safeguard and promote cultural and linguistic diversity and Europe’s cultural heritage
- Strengthen the competitiveness of the European cultural and creative sectors.

The programme has four specific objectives:

- Supporting the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally
- Promoting the transnational circulation and mobility of cultural and creative works and artists to reach new audiences
- Strengthening the financial capacity of cultural and creative SMEs and organisations
- Supporting transnational policy co-operation to foster policy development, innovation, creativity, audience development and new business models.

Its three sub-programmes are: (i) The MEDIA sub-programme supporting the audiovisual sector, (ii) the Culture sub-programme supporting the cultural, arts and heritage sectors and (iii) the Cross-Sector strand supporting the Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility, cross-sectoral activities, transnational co-operation, and the Creative Europe Desks. This report focuses on the Culture and MEDIA sub-programmes.

Across these two sub-programmes, Creative Europe funded an extensive variety of initiatives including long-term, large-scale European partnerships which include: professional development and training, development of digital skills and technologies, knowledge exchange and co-creation activities, production of creative and artistic works, distribution, showcasing and audience development.
Conceptualising impact and how to measure it

Six potential impact areas of Creative Europe in the UK were set out in a framework published in the 2018 report; The Impact of Creative Europe in the UK11 (Table 1).

Evidence to inform the updated assessment is derived from four sources:

- Context is provided by the European Commission’s monitoring and evaluation reports. An annual monitoring report provides an update on the implementation of the fund with examples of impactful funded activities. The European Commission12 has also undertaken a mid-term evaluative assessment of its processes and effects.

- Project-level information held by Creative Europe Desk UK, based on the European Commission’s beneficiary information. This is supplemented with insight and information about project development and delivery from the team’s communications and broader networking activities. Information on each Creative Europe project with UK involvement is available on the Creative Europe Desk website. This provided evidence presented in this report on the scale of engagement.

- Impact assessment comes from survey responses. A survey of beneficiaries of UK Creative Europe funded projects from 2014 to 2019 was undertaken during the summer of 2020. This was distributed to 229 potential respondents from the Culture sub-programme including artists who participated in the pilot mobility scheme i-Portunus and 453 potential respondents in the MEDIA sub-programme including those who were participants of MEDIA-funded training and markets. This achieved a response rate of 25% which is sufficient to provide a good indication of range and scale of impact. Responses were affected by timing as the survey was live when many people were on furlough due to COVID-1913.

- Interview evidence from stakeholders and survey respondents. 20 stakeholders were interviewed in the early stages of the process and in addition, the survey generated qualitative insights through inclusion of some open text questions with additional qualitative insights from subsequent emails or interviews with 17 respondents.

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13. The ‘Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey found 70% of employees in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sectors were furloughed during June 2020.
https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessservices/articles/comparisonoffurloughedjobdata/maytojuly2020
Table 1: Impact Evaluation Framework

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<th>Impact heading</th>
<th>Impact areas</th>
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<td>Networks, partnerships and internationalisation</td>
<td>• Involvement in international networks and partnerships which increase the influence of UK practitioners</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Increased understanding of professional practice and working context in other countries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• International mobility and exchange, and reaching international markets</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Raising the profile of UK’s cultural and creative industries and supporting cultural relations</td>
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<td>Creativity, innovation, research and development</td>
<td>• The creation of new content and IP along with the commissioning of new work and establishing new artistic collaborations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The development of new business models, experimentation and the piloting of new approaches</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Responding to change, including the digital shift, interdisciplinarity and cross-sectoral working</td>
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<td>• Knowledge exchange, research and evaluation within the sector along with culture’s contribution to research and development generally</td>
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<td>Financial and economic impact</td>
<td>• Increase in output</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Increase in the availability of permanent and temporary employment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Increased investment from a variety of sources</td>
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<td>Knowledge, skills and capacity within the workforce</td>
<td>• The development of cultural professionals’ knowledge, skills and networks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Improving the employability of professionals across the sector</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Stimulating capacity and professional know-how through co-production and collaboration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Strengthening organisational capacity, including cultural governance and leadership</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The development of technical infrastructure and administrative processes.</td>
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<td>Audience development (access to audiences and benefits for audiences) and cultural impact</td>
<td>• Expanding audiences for international work in the UK and for UK work abroad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Deepening audience engagement through educational and outreach initiatives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Improving the quality of cultural activities and outputs, and leading and influencing developments in practice. Learning from best practice elsewhere</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Showcasing of UK work along with increasing international visibility and promotion</td>
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<td>Social impact</td>
<td>• Creating professional opportunities and pathways for young people and people from under-represented or marginalised groups</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Connecting international artists and culture with local communities, and promoting understanding of other cultures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Supporting social integration and tackling inequality through cultural activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Stimulating the cultural and creative vibrancy of locales.</td>
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Creative Europe has provided opportunities to connect with creatives from across Europe and beyond, learn from each other, work on projects together and build lasting relationships. Participation enables exploration of these opportunities, creating new partnerships and networks, with funding to support festivals, conferences, events, awards and platform creation. The results include raising the domestic and international profile of these organisations, as well as opportunities, time and space to work on projects together. Enabling the mobility of artists and other cultural professionals then facilitates understanding through international exchanges. Involvement is valued and respected: half the survey respondents said the reputational benefit of involvement in Creative Europe had supported the development of other relationships.

Creative Europe has been important for the sector to develop international relationships across Europe. The UK has consistently been a sought-after partner in Creative Europe projects, for example:

- In the Culture sub-programme from 2014 to 2019, 146 UK partner organisations were involved in 175 Cooperation Projects, the Culture sub-programme’s largest strand. 56 of these were lead partners on the projects. In total, the UK partnered with 1,086 organisations in 37 countries through this strand. In addition, all 28 currently supported European Networks have at least one UK member and 10 out of 11 European Platforms have UK members and involvement.

- Involvement connects UK partners with many countries. Creative Europe projects with UK involvement across both sub-programmes included partners based in 37 countries across Europe and several countries beyond (including Morocco, Canada, and Thailand). The ‘big five’ (France, Italy, Germany and Spain with the UK) are key partners in many of these partnerships.

“ Our involvement in the programme meant we achieved ambitious and bespoke partnerships. These allowed us to meet the issues of the day, to work with international colleagues, to offer new opportunities for UK creatives to engage in international projects and so much more. Creative Europe involvement was so vital and so vibrant.”

Culture survey respondent
Creative Europe connects UK partners with many other international organisations. In total there have been 1,470 partnerships with partner organisations across Europe. However, the number of ‘formal’ partners probably under-represents the extent of new activity. Survey respondents were asked about the number of partners that were either co-beneficiaries, or non-co-beneficiaries. Results reported an average of 17 project partners per respondent in the Culture sub-programme and 9 per respondent in the MEDIA sub-programme.

Organisations with an appetite for working internationally have used Creative Europe to help them make or strengthen international connections. Survey respondents reported that the majority of partnerships or networks would not have happened without Creative Europe (55% for partners also in the UK, 92% in Europe and 48% in the rest of the world). Partnership development was not restricted to Creative Europe funded projects: 76% of respondents said that they had established new partnerships beyond those established specifically for a Creative Europe project that would not otherwise have happened.

The partnerships UK organisations formed as a result of their involvement in Creative Europe were not just with European partners. Around half of the survey respondents reported that they had worked with partners in the UK and the same proportion also said they had worked with partners beyond Europe.

Involvement in Creative Europe was a gateway to working globally. For some, it revealed possibilities that were hitherto just not part of their thinking. Asked whether Creative Europe had changed their appetite for working internationally, 60% of respondents reported an increased appetite for working in Europe and 73% for working in the rest of the world.

UK organisations work with:

- 1,086 Culture partners
- 37 Countries*

43% of cross-border Cooperation Projects have a UK partner

*37 of 40 other countries participating in Creative Europe

Note this counts the total number of international partnerships rather than unique organisations or unique partnerships. Some European-based organisations are involved in multiple partnerships with UK organisations, and in some instances there are partnerships between the same UK- and European-based organisations.
The first phase of the Keychange project was to create a network of women in the music business and support their careers through exposure to network events, showcases and a Creative Lab Capacity Building Programme. These were devised and run through six music festivals in Europe and an associate festival in Canada. A second project continued the talent development programme alongside an international campaign for gender equality in music, and the project continues to create new international opportunities for performance, creative collaboration and capacity building among European female musicians and industry professionals. It also brings together festivals from across the world to pledge towards programming more women. Keychange aims to promote the creative and economic contribution of female talent in Europe’s music industry through innovative, inclusive action.

Extensive engagement through the network for Phase 1 (2017-19) of Keychange, included multiple participants, partner and audience surveys, ongoing research and data analysis, and discussions with Partner Festivals and Pledge Signatory Partners. This shaped the Keychange Manifesto.

The organisers reported that the “greatest impact by far though is the proactive network we have built. We pick up so much from that network which will have a lasting impact… The societal impact of running a gender-equality focussed programme of this scale has been huge. We now have over 350 music organisations and companies signed up to our ‘Gender balanced by 2020’ pledge which has a massive societal impact and offers the platform and development opportunity to thousands of women in music around the world.”

The knock-on impact of influencing music industry, arts sector and European Cultural policy through our Keychange Manifesto is of course very positive too… The Keychange Pledge results in many bookings for women artists around world, many consultancy and freelance roles/opportunities being taken up by industry professionals who were on the programme, and in terms of wider impact many job opportunities being filled by women as a result of the gender equality pledge and our high profile campaign.”
Creative Europe co-finances a pan-European network of 2,761 screens in 1,134 cinemas. These cinemas can be found in 685 cities in 34 countries and provide audiences with opportunities to access a much wider range of film than commercial cinemas as 52% of screenings are of European films (compared with an average of 30% in commercial cinemas). Founded in 1992, the network is the single largest beneficiary of Creative Europe and receives €10 - 11 million a year. Cinemas must be based in countries participating in Creative Europe and films that can be supported must also be from these countries.

47 UK cinemas with 104 screens have been members of the Europa Cinemas network during the period of 2014 to 2019. They are spread across 33 towns and cities in the four nations. 70% of them are outside of London.

In addition to funding, the network provides space for learning and exchange, with audience development and innovation labs, conferences, prizes and exchange programmes all contributing to help cinema professionals improve their own skills and expertise and increase the competitiveness of their cinemas. James Calver (Independent Cinema Office) is quoted on the Europe Cinemas website about his recent exchange in BUDA Kunstencentrum in Kortrijk, Belgium:

“What I personally found so inspiring was the commitment organisation wide to cater for those in the community who wouldn’t normally have access to culture…It’s this inspiration which I am hoping to bring back to the ICO and the variety of independent venues and organisations in the UK that we encounter and work with on a regular basis; this idea that despite how it may appear, people are still willing to support those who are less fortunate, it just takes one determined organisation to act as the catalyst.”

From 2014 to 2019, 9% of all admissions and 16% of all European film admissions in Europa Cinemas network were for British films. There were more than 38.2 million admissions for British films in this period among the cinemas of the Europa Cinemas network – with 84% of those admissions reported outside the UK. UK films are often present in the top performing films in the network. 2019 saw The Favourite, Downton Abbey, Yesterday, Rocketman and Sorry We Missed You all make the top 10.
Impact on creativity, innovation, research and development

“Quite simply we would not have been able to develop and deliver two ground-breaking innovative projects that are still ongoing and sustainable. They are universally acclaimed, have broken boundaries in terms of cross sectoral work and we were able to develop them in this way because of Creative Europe”

Culture survey respondent

Creative Europe has enabled companies across the UK to take creative risks, experiment and innovate – 90% of respondents reported that they had innovated and experimented within their funded project. The diversity of activities funded through Creative Europe took many forms, from new ways of creating to novel ways of sharing skills and knowledge. Half the organisations had introduced new business models, including ways to better control rights and methods of remuneration.

Innovation and experimentation involve elements of both commercial and artistic risk. Creative Europe support increased the funding available to international projects. In the audiovisual sector for example this has enabled projects to resource the time and travel associated with preparation, development and piloting of new scripts or productions. The effect of this has been to enhance quality but also to absorb some of the associated financial risks. Allocation of secure funding meant that some companies were able to diversify income streams, step aside from dependency on usual financial backers with the creative restrictions these can entail, and help challenge preconceptions around audience demand. Half the respondents said they had been involved in cross-sector working, which can bring in new insights, skills and knowledge.

This support generates new commercial and artistic activity in both familiar and new territories. Respondents were asked whether they had worked in or delivered activities/products in new countries that they would attribute to Creative Europe. 76% of respondents had done so in European countries new to them, while 60% had done so outside Europe in the rest of the world. The quality of these products had been recognised by peers: 31% reported that they had received an award or equivalent recognition.
Digital innovation featured strongly in the aims of Creative Europe. Over half of companies surveyed (57%) said that their project included a digital offer or made innovative use of digital technologies, while 55% of respondents felt better equipped to use digital technologies as a result of their involvement with Creative Europe. Use of digital technologies lowers the barriers for the creative and cultural sectors to reach international audiences, whilst simultaneously removing accessibility barriers for audiences. Innovation with these technologies is vital to overcoming the challenges around rights, remuneration and piracy.

Sheffield Doc/Fest’s MeetMarket and Arts Talent Market (formerly billed the Alternate Realities Talent Market) have both received funding through MEDIA’s Access to Markets scheme. The Arts Talent Market exists to foster collaborations between artists, collectives, creatives and organisations focused on using digital technologies to experiment and play with non-fiction boundaries, as well as push storytelling in exciting new directions. Images by Sheffield Doc/Fest.
Crossing the Line was a collaboration project bringing together organisations that work with learning disabled artists from Sweden, France and the UK. The Bradford-based company Mind the Gap led the collaboration which involved three training residencies in each of the partner countries, ongoing partner meetings and the Crossing the Line Festival held in France in January 2017. The latter was attended by 1,448 people including 40 international participants from 11 countries.

An evaluation of the project showed how these organisations had learned about theatre production and audience engagement in each of the different countries, and how they had supported learning disabled artists in their partner countries. The festival attracted interest in future collaboration from other international partners. The artists themselves felt more confident and inspired to do more international work.

“It was great to see all three companies and get a real sense of each company’s established history, ambition, rigour and aesthetic. It was also valuable to see the aesthetic differences between the companies in such a (generally speaking) non-competitive, non-judgemental context”

Dave Calvert, University of Huddersfield, quoted in the evaluation report.
Launched in September 2017 with the goal of cultivating new interest in European cinema and making European films more accessible to wider audiences, this multi-faceted project encompasses a number of different activities, with the MEDIA funding supporting MUBI – a curated, online subscription video on demand (SVOD) platform – to experiment with innovative approaches in order to grow its business globally.

MUBI GO was launched in 2018 in the UK and was made available to MUBI users in India and Ireland in 2019. It offers MUBI subscribers a free weekly ticket to a film chosen by MUBI programmers in 155 partner cinemas. Winner of a Gamechanger award at the Screen Awards 2019 - a new category celebrating innovation in the audience experience – MUBI has led the way for closer collaboration between cinemas and VOD platforms. Since launching MUBI GO in the UK they have been able to reach a high percentage of young audiences (80% under 44, 55% under 34). Building on this success, preparations for expansion are currently underway in Germany and the US.

In 2018 MUBI announced a new initiative offering film students free access to their streaming service for the duration of their courses. Over 60,000 free subscriptions were made available to students in 180 films schools worldwide.

Support towards its marketing campaigns has helped the company to reach a new, more international audience and in July 2020 it increased its brand awareness with a campaign across selected territories in Brazil, Germany, India, Mexico, UK, US and Turkey. The campaign generated almost 30 million impressions and drove more than 15,000 new trial starts.

According to the 2019/20 Impact Assessment, the various MEDIA-funded activities “were directly responsible for over 121,151 new paid subscribers”, which is predicted will generate €6.5 million in incremental revenue. The total subscribers grew by 151% and the company has been able to reach a more global audience with their promotions and marketing, as well as better understanding of their reach and the engagement with their content.
Financial and economic impact

“Involvement in Creative Europe has delivered financial and economic benefits.

Between 2014 and 2019 Creative Europe has supported 609 projects involving UK beneficiaries. These received a total of €203 million from the programme, of which €68 million is known to have gone directly to 373 UK companies and organisations, ranging from small artistic production companies, universities and umbrella arts organisations to film and TV production and distribution companies. In the same period UK films benefited from a further €32 million (18% of the total awarded Europe-wide), received by 240 film distributors across Europe to distribute 196 UK films. This brings the total value of support to the UK’s creative, cultural and audiovisual sectors in this period to over €100 million.

This funding attracted match from a range of sources, most of which would not have been available without Creative Europe. In the cultural sector match funding is often contributed by Arts Councils and Local Authorities. MEDIA schemes had diverse sources of match including from public funders, distributors and co-producers. Most companies access finance from within the UK, with MEDIA companies more likely to draw finance from Europe (44% of companies) and from the rest of the world (25% of companies). These contributions demonstrate the local and regional value attributed to projects. Nearly half (47%) of all projects said they thought none of the match would have been brought forward were it not for Creative Europe.

Commercial effects have followed some of this investment. For example, through the MEDIA sub-programme, Creative Europe has supported 35% of the 456 UK films which had cinema admissions in Europe from 2014 to 2019. These MEDIA-supported films generated 80 million admissions. Assuming the average cinema ticket across Europe costs €7.19, the revenue generated by MEDIA-supported UK films totalled just over €575.2 million.

Revenue diversification was another benefit reported by participants. 46% of respondents said that they secured new revenue streams through their Creative Europe project, and that the benefits of this were sustained beyond the life of the project, and could be attributed to participation in Creative Europe.

Many of the companies involved reported that they had experienced positive financial impacts in the medium term. These financial effects related to them being more competitive in Europe (reported by 86%), achieving higher turnover (77%), being more profitable (63%) and being more financially resilient (76%) than would otherwise be the case.

Projects supported by Creative Europe have resulted in job creation. According to the 2018 Creative Europe Monitoring Report, from 2014 to 2016, Creative Europe channelled €544 million in funding to 2,580 entities in the cultural and creative sectors, and generated an estimated 3,000 jobs. Jobs created through Creative Europe in the UK cannot be reliably estimated from the survey evidence, however survey respondents (who represent 37% of core beneficiaries) reported a total of 2,590 permanent or temporary full or part time jobs as being attributable to Creative Europe.

The job-related effects of participation extend beyond the funding period. In total over three quarters (77%) of respondents reported that jobs had been created either during or following the project. They stated that 385 permanent (full and part-time) jobs were created during the lifetime of the project and that an additional 126 have been created since that were attributed to Creative Europe. The wide range of jobs created included artistic and creative roles as well as roles in management and administration, business and finance, and other specialisms including programming, other technical and education.

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Leverage in the MEDIA sub-programme

Creative Europe Desk UK calculated the total value of the direct support provided to projects between 2014 and 2019. Analysis revealed that MEDIA sub-programme beneficiaries in the UK were able to leverage match funding worth four times the amount of their Creative Europe grant. This amounted to over €157 million of funding in addition to the €37 million received as grants.

In addition, Creative Europe supports the release and distribution of UK films internationally. Outside of the UK, European distributors and sales agents invested over €107 million in the acquisition and release of UK films supported by the MEDIA sub-programme between 2014 and 2019, nearly 3.5 times larger than the grant total of €32 million. This supported two types of activity:

• €20.6 million worth of grants supported the release of UK films (i.e. print and advertising costs which go towards the marketing of the film’s cinema release), which leveraged match-funding of €54 million, more than twice the amount of the Creative Europe grant.

• €11.6 million worth of grants supported the acquisition of UK films (i.e. minimum guarantee costs which distributors pay to producers when they acquire the film as an advance of expected revenues) which leveraged match-funding worth €53 million – five times the amount of the Creative Europe grant.

Creative Europe generates additional funding for the UK
Fiction Factory is a Cardiff-based production company making high quality, original and popular drama. One of their drama series, Hinterland/Y Gwyll, received support for its third series from Creative Europe (after receiving support for the first series under the previous MEDIA Programme). This series was shot back to back in English and Welsh. Located in Aberystwyth, the production found local support during filming from the community and authorities. A partnership with the University allowed them to use buildings during vacation periods for filming that were otherwise empty and off-season production times meant that they provided a boost to the local economy. The production partner S4C commissioned a study of the economic impact of the production which reported a boost of over £1 million during one season’s filming to the Aberystwyth economy.

The production would not have been made were it not for two factors. The first was Scandi-noir; when Wallander and the Killing became popular hits and middle England and America were consuming subtitles it tipped the balance. The second was Creative Europe finance because even with a new market, the perceived risk by funding partners was too high to commit. “Creative Europe funding was the mechanism to get investment over the line because it was non-recoupable” Other investors (including S4C and the BBC) were willing to commit to production once this funding was in place.

This funding model has subsequently provided the template for other producers and other dramas produced in Wales in the Welsh language. Hinterland/Y Gwyll subsequently sold to more than 30 countries and is available on Netflix worldwide. The programmes were first broadcast on S4C with a bilingual version aired on BBC One Wales later.
Impact on knowledge, skills and capacity

“Our organisation, artists and creatives, and those of partner organisations would not have had this opportunity - to learn and create together, to form networks and to create and grow an international base - something that is very difficult to do for small organisations, but particularly lone and freelance artists and workers”

Culture survey respondent

Another motivation for organisations applying to Creative Europe opportunities is to improve the skills and knowledge of their staff and/or other individuals in the sector and indeed, the programme has developed skills and knowledge that are relevant to creativity, innovation, research and development. Survey respondents perceive a positive impact on knowledge and skills relating to their creativity (89%), research (77%), entrepreneurship (64%), utilising digital technology (63%) and specialist technical (62%).

For those surveyed, learning and skills exchange took place more commonly through informal learning opportunities than through formal training courses, although Creative Europe does fund formal training schemes, which are important mechanisms for professional development. Informal learning arises through chances to connect and interact with other trusted European counterparts, and exposure to international experiences and international expertise. The ability to draw upon international experience was important to 91% of respondents, with 86% of respondents saying Creative Europe had enabled them to access expertise, 85% that it had enabled them to facilitate the mobility and exchange of talent/professionals and 74% that it had enabled them to promote new or emerging talent.

As a result of enhanced skills and knowledge, Creative Europe-supported companies reported enhanced capacity to engage in international work and collaboration, and to set up and lead international partnerships. There are few alternative ways for companies to access these skills and knowledge. Most respondents (88%) said they would have been unable to access the skills and knowledge other than through Creative Europe.
Inside Pictures is a film business and leadership skills development programme for senior executives and producers from across the world and from across the film value chain, from sectors including finance, distribution, business and legal affairs, sales, acquisitions, marketing, PR and new media. Many are leaders or emerging leaders in their sector. The course is designed to enable these participants to lead and grow successful businesses by developing their 360-degree understanding of the global business of film, increasing their network of high level contacts and raising their industry profile.

During the seven years of the Creative Europe programme 142 professionals from 28 countries have been through the Inside Pictures programme, including many from outside of Europe. 37% of these came from the UK, including executives from leading British sales and distribution companies such as Altitude, Bankside, Curzon and HanWay well as producers from in demand UK production companies such as Archers’ Mark, Pulse Films, Synchronicity Film and Warp Films.

Simon Gillis (class of 2014) was one such executive recently promoted to COO of Film at See-Saw Films. The production outfit has offices in the UK, Australia and in the US. Simon will also serve as executive producer on See-Saw’s forthcoming feature film slate, including Francis Lee’s *Ammonite*. Simon joined See-Saw in 2016 as Head of Commercial Affairs, after previous business affairs roles at Universal Pictures, Disney and BBC Films. Quoted on the Inside Pictures website he credits the course with contributing to his professional development:

“Putting what I learnt to work, in the short term, contributed to my promotion at Universal Pictures and ultimately led to me being headhunted by See-Saw to spearhead the commercial strategy and business operations for their film division”.

Inside Pictures cohort 2019 with their graduation certificates, image by NFTS
Companies that participated in Creative Europe were motivated by taking their work to new and bigger audiences and indeed, two thirds of respondents said that their involvement in Creative Europe had enabled them to reach larger audiences internationally, while a slightly smaller proportion said it had enabled them to reach different audiences either internationally or in the UK.

Digital access was important as well as reaching audiences in physical settings, particularly in MEDIA supported projects. Again, total audience reach for Creative Europe is difficult to assess across their plethora of the types of supported projects and their distribution platforms. Among MEDIA survey respondents, audiences of 402 million were reported, and a further 5 million for Culture.

By working across the production cycle, Creative Europe enabled three quarters of the survey respondents to tailor their work for international audiences, with the same proportion saying they learned about new audiences as a result of participation.

A two-way flow of products and audiences was reported by three quarters of respondents, who stated that the Creative Europe project had made both UK content more accessible to European audiences, and European content more accessible to UK audiences. The survey was focused on UK beneficiaries, and UK audiences will also have benefited from European organisations bringing cultural activities and products to the UK.

For example, UK films supported by Creative Europe attracted an audience of 80 million across Europe. In the same period 2014 to 2018 over 120 European titles were released in the UK’s cinemas with Creative Europe support and these films attracted 2.5 million viewers in all nations of the UK.

Impact on audiences and cultural development

“The programmes have added significant value to our organisation by giving us the opportunity to create new access points for audiences to enjoy European films. In addition, we’ve developed exciting and lasting partnerships and relationships with film festivals, cinemas and like-minded organisations in the film and in parallel industries.”

MEDIA survey respondent
Case Study #7: Culture

Name of organisation: Walk the Plank
Name of project: School of Spectacle

Four host cities across Europe created public arts spectacles / parades as part of a ‘learning by doing’ training programme run by Salford-based Walk the Plank with partners in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Lithuania and Ireland. Five different training courses (schools), provided 131 places to creative practitioners from eight European countries delivering over 392 guided learning hours. Four cities hosted six public arts events attracting an audience of 59,400 people.

The aim was to bridge the gap between “community events” and “major events” by creating performance spectacles with the communities in host cities. The approach to training was learning through practice in an intense seven-day training culminating in performance. It involved a combination of seasoned creative practitioners to emerging talent, university educated to self-taught, with a diverse spread of ages from 21 to 57, male or female, but primarily female. Occupations ranged from street, circus and theatre professionals, to community artists, visual artists, designers, curators, makers, dancers, aerialists, administrators and community leaders.

The evaluation report said the cultural activity was especially valuable in its “capacity to bring people from different backgrounds together without emphasizing their social, ideological or other differences”… and that “it turned many watchers into doers”.

Baltijos Cirkas, Kaunas School of Spectacle. Photo by Darius Petrulis
Puppet making, Kaunas School of Spectacle. Photo by Darius Petrulis
Spellbound created by Walk the Plank seen here at Freedom Festival 2014. Photo by Steve Eggleton
Creative Europe recognises and values cultural and linguistic diversity, strengthens the European identity and sustains social cohesion. In this context, routes to positive social impact are very diverse and include bringing international perspectives to local community audiences, supporting social integration through co-creativity and stimulating creativity through cultural connection.

Consequently, social impacts were built into project design. For many participating organisations, promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion was integral to their organisational policies affecting their staff and also their work and engagement with audiences. Projects were selected for their promotion of European values, and ability to connect international content and culture with local communities. The survey found that almost two thirds of survey respondents’ projects included a focus on young people (63%), with a third focussing on women (34%).

Stakeholders reported that the UK’s values with respect to marginalised communities, celebration of diversity and positive approach to inclusion were demonstrated through its creative and artistic products and that this meant other countries were positively disposed towards working with UK partners.

Some projects were designed to promote behaviour change and policy development with a targeted agenda. For example, Keychange developed its campaigning and advocacy work through the creation of its ‘Manifesto’. Julie’s Bicycle led a cooperation project designed to link environmental campaigning and behaviour change with cultural policy platforms. According to the 2019 Monitoring Report, 10.5% of the Creative Europe budget has been granted to projects which were climate-related.

Many of the projects were based in locations across the country and brought opportunity to areas where connecting with international partners or working in international markets might otherwise have proved difficult or impossible. This has created new opportunities for people to engage creatively. The map on page 5 shows this distribution and it should also be noted that the distribution over time has moved away from London (70% of funding was allocated to organisations outside of the capital in 2020, following from 62% in 2019).

"Creative Europe support and networks has made us able to move from an “import and export” approach to European work. Without Creative Europe we would have toured work that we admired from Europe in the UK and promoted work from the UK to European festivals and venues, but we would not have been able to collaborate across borders on sharing ideas and challenges, developing artists, developing the art form, upskilling, making work, developing audiences, etc.”

Culture survey respondent
Case Study #7: Culture

Name of organisation: Julie’s Bicycle
Name of project: Creative Climate Leadership

Creative Climate Leadership (CCL) was a cooperation project geared towards building an EU-wide community of organisations and individual artists committed to climate action. The goal was to build capacity within the creative community, create links with cultural policy platforms, scale up leadership and create ripple effects across the public domain.

With seven partners from Slovenia, Belgium, France, Germany, Montenegro and Serbia, the project ran two residential training courses to train 28 artists and creative professionals from 15 different countries to create an alumni network. Some participants were supported financially if this was a barrier to their participation. A condition of participation was that each trainee was expected to run a dissemination event to share their learning with other creative professionals and/or audiences in their local area. Since 2017 these dissemination events have engaged more than 3,000 creative professionals in 18 countries. In addition, each participant created a green policy and action or business plan for their organisation or arts practice, and subsequently the majority were reported to be changing the way they work to respond to the climate and ecological emergency.

“I have been taught resilience and optimism through the knowledge and understanding that there are others working towards the same goal. Sometimes I feel lonely and isolated when working on issues to do with environmental activism and climate justice - but this frustration is dissipated by having a network of other Creative Climate Leaders around me. I am empowered and mobilized to do more, and to strive for more.”

Dan de la Motte Harrison, quoted in the evaluation report.
Reinforcing the evidence base

Creative Europe has supported the creative, cultural and audiovisual sectors in a range of different ways to overcome barriers to international engagement and to support particularly small and medium sized enterprises across the four nations. Capturing the extent of that activity and its longer term artistic and commercial effects is challenging at both micro level and at programme level.

The evidence base could be made stronger through three changes. First, the extensive monitoring and reporting associated with European funding held with the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency in Brussels could be shared with the national Desks. This would give them helpful information about progress and outputs achieved without adding any additional burden to projects. Second a requirement to undertake third-party evaluation of the impacts of funding would help reinforce the evidence base. Thirdly, an annual survey of beneficiaries both during and after their engagement would track progress and capture the immediate and longer-term effects.
3. Summary

“We’ll miss what these partnerships afforded us: support to realise ambitious, value-driven projects, shared expertise, opportunities for artists and cultural workers, financing for daring work and for international travel. Creative Europe had an enormously positive impact on [our organisation]. Without this opportunity for funding, growth, networking and exchange, our ability to commission and present international artists has become much more difficult, as has how we promote internationalism to audiences.”

Culture survey respondent

The evidence reviewed in this report shows that Creative Europe has been an established source of valued support across the creative, cultural and audiovisual sectors. The effects of the financial contribution made to projects and organisations through Creative Europe has been significant. It has had the direct effect of supporting jobs, increasing turnover and improving financial sustainability amongst its beneficiaries. The financial support has had a number of other effects, notably by reducing the element of financial risk it has enabled collaborative, creative projects to progress, supported new talent and reached new markets in ways that would not otherwise have been possible.

Whilst financial support has been vital, the programme operates in a deliberately collaborative, strategic, and accessible way to build skills and confidence amongst the sectors. It has done this by bringing people from across different countries and specialisms together, building sustained networks and partnerships, fostering new technical skills and innovation and enhancing knowledge and understanding of new audiences and international markets.

Final reflections

The impact survey was undertaken at a time when the creative, cultural and audiovisual sectors were reflecting on the implications of the withdrawal from the European Union and the UK Government decision to withdraw from Creative Europe. When beneficiaries were asked what they would miss about Creative Europe, they articulated the uniqueness of the contribution, to them, their organisation and their sector. Many said they would miss the funding, but more specifically the ability to connect with international policy agendas that they believed in, to learn new skills and to see young people benefit from their involvement. Members of the creative and cultural sectors will also miss the opportunity to collaborate, to feel part of an international community and to access the wide range of benefits that come from feeling connected.
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