



CREATIVE EDUCATION MANIFESTO

ART IS...
ESSENTIAL

We set up the creative education coalition, a group of organisations from the higher education and creative sectors, because we are deeply concerned about the future of the creative talent pipeline, and the lack of engagement in developing creative skills in the school system.

Not only is creativity a core skill which all employers value, but there is growing evidence¹ that it contributes to the positive health and wellbeing of citizens. Creative skills are also vital to our economy. They service one of our most successful industries: the creative industry brings in £108 billion a year to the UK economy and employs over 2.4 million people. Culture and creative activities also play an instrumental role in levelling up² regions of this country.

So whilst Government is keen³ to drive growth, build talent and develop creative skills, its Cultural Education Plan will not include changes to school delivery or Progress 8. This is troubling. We have seen over the last 10 years a substantial reduction in the number of students accessing high-quality creative education in schools.

Our own sector data shows a dramatic decline⁴ in the number of GCSE and Level 3 qualifications in creative subjects, which is impacting on admissions to creative arts degrees. It shows a worrying trend that only those from privileged backgrounds are able to access creative arts education, whether through the curriculum or extra-curricular activities.

Our organisations believe that #ArtsEssential to everybody. Not just those who can afford it, have the social or cultural capital to engage with it, or want a specific career in the creative industries. We have therefore developed this manifesto which sets out 8 asks, 8 societal benefits and 8 economic benefits of investing in arts education in schools, colleges, and higher education.

The UK's creative ecosystem needs to be preserved, which means future-proofing the creative skills pipeline and ensuring that all students from all backgrounds have access to it.

THE ASKS



Equipping every child with a solid foundation of creative education skills

- According to the Durham Commission on Creativity and Education⁵, fostering creativity at a young age is instrumental in driving growth both in the creative industries and the wider economy. This will become more important as demand for creative skills across other sectors increases.

- Sadly, ‘...while the government has adopted a market orientation rationale in progressively reducing arts education in state sector, in the private education sector, the top schools have followed a contrary approach and increased the importance of arts education.’⁵ Yet this ‘market orientation rationale’ does not match the contribution that the creative industries make to the economy and job market:

With around 2.4 million filled posts, 7.1% of all UK jobs in 2022 were in Creative Industries. This is an increase from 7% in 2021 and 6.3% in 2019.⁶

Exports generated by creative industries’ services were worth £37.9 billion in 2019 - nearly 12% of total UK service exports.⁷



Driving the recruitment and training of specialist creative arts teachers

- There is not only a decline in the number of applicants for art and design specialist courses – who are most often novice teachers destined largely for secondary

schools - but there is also a retention issue. There is a significant rise in the number of vacancies caused by serving teachers leaving the profession, with two thirds of art and design teachers surveyed considering leaving.⁸



Putting the creativity back into creative arts/cultural arts education

- Students need access to specialist art and design teachers to ensure they achieve the best outcomes in their subjects.
- This requires support, funding and encouragement for schools to train subject-specific teachers, to ensure all children have access to a high-quality art and design education.⁹



A review of creative arts/cultural education assessment and qualifications to ensure valuable qualifications are protected in the long-term and creative arts skills are formally recognised and valued

- It is concerning that cultural education appears to be seen as of lesser importance to the curriculum, which feeds negative perceptions of careers in the creative industries. This then compounds issues like social mobility and skills shortages within the creative sector and the wider economy.¹⁰

- Qualifications like the English Baccalaureate, which is part of the basis for determining a school's progress 8 score and its place in performance tables, exclude all arts subjects. This incentivises schools to focus on 'core' subjects, and thereby de-value arts subjects altogether. Social discrepancies in later life are then exacerbated as independent schools are not bound by these performance tables and are therefore free to do what they decide is best for their pupils – again hindering social mobility in the creative sector.¹¹



A primary, secondary and tertiary education system that values STEM, the Arts and Humanities in equal measure and enables and embraces interdisciplinary study and research

- There is a decline in children studying design and technology which needs to be reversed.
- Students should be encouraged to learn a blend of creative and digital skills in an environment where arts subjects are valued on the same level as STEM.
- This requires a reversal of the rhetoric around 'low value' arts courses, which only impacts students' perception of careers within the creative sector.



Realising the value of sustaining a talent pipeline of creative arts/ cultural arts students into higher education and beyond, including a commitment to Lifelong Learning within and through creative education

- The value of the creative arts talent pipeline is huge:

Nearly three quarters (73%) of those employed in creative occupations are qualified to degree-level or above (44% of those working across all industries are as well-qualified).

In some parts of the creative sector productivity is 1.5 times the UK average, and creative roles are amongst the best-paid in the economy.¹²



Equality of access to a thriving creative arts/cultural ecosystem for every citizen across the country

- There is concerning evidence revealing low levels of social mobility and inclusivity within the cultural sector, which is exacerbating the national skills shortage within the creative industries.
- This can be attributed in part to the discrepancy between arts education within independent and state schools, and a general low opinion of careers within the creative arts.



Recognition of - and investment in - the power play of creative arts/creative skills to turbo boost entrepreneurship and commercialism across the UK

- Creative skills have enormous potential in growing UK entrepreneurship: PEC research into the multiplier effect of creative businesses over the last 20 years¹³ suggests that each creative job can generate 1.9 new jobs in local services.

HOW?

- Cross party-political collaboration and commitment to the importance of a long-term creative education plan for the UK
- Creation and protection of specialist creative arts/cultural pedagogy and teachers
- Protecting creative arts BTECs, recognising creative arts as a qualifying subject in the EBacc and the development of an exciting new qualification system recognising technical creative and craft skill accomplishment and ability
- Sustained investment into the UK's cultural infrastructure
- Protecting and supporting our world-leading and regionally significant specialist higher education institutions
- Commitment to Lifelong Learning within and through creative arts education

SOCIETAL BENEFITS



Happy, healthier people equipped with the tools for self-care and repair

- According to a DCMS policy paper¹⁴ published in June of this year (2023), participating in the creative industries can have a significant impact on wellbeing – not just for improved mental health, but for degenerative health issues like Parkinson's disease and dementia.
- The positive impact of the arts on health is strongest in tackling psychosis in young adults, postnatal depression, recovery from neurological damage and falls prevention in older people.¹⁵
- Engaging in creative activities can also underpin good mental health, and is increasingly used across our health-care system with social prescribing initiatives.
- This is supported by the fact that 93% of 16-18 year-olds studying creative subjects say that this impacts positively on their mental health and wellbeing.¹⁶
- There is a cumulative positive effect on the healthcare system as a result, with arts participation in England making estimated cost savings of £168.8 million for the NHS, due to reduction in GP visits.



Greater innovation, jobs and exports

- The creative industries are a huge asset to the job market, and in 2022, 7.1% of all UK jobs were in the creative industries.¹⁷ In 2019, exports generated by

creative industries' services were worth £37.9 billion, which is nearly 12% of total UK service exports.¹⁸

- Frontier Economics also reported this year, that '...firms with greater connections to the [creative industries] are more likely to produce product innovations.'¹⁹



Increased productivity and growth of the UK economy

- Top employers CBI and Pearson commented in 2016 that: '...businesses are clear that first and foremost they want to recruit young people with attitudes and attributes such as resilience, enthusiasm and creativity.'
- The creative industries delivered £115.9bn of Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2019, 5.9% of UK GVA. The GVA of creative industries has increased 5.6% between 2018 and 2019 and by 43.6% between 2010 and 2019 in real terms. Creative industries GVA has been growing faster than the UK economy since 2011 with large increases seen in 2015 and 2019.²⁰



Delivering social justice

- There is evidence to suggest that class inequalities currently exist in England's creative industries. Much of this originates in imbalances in students' access to arts and culture in their early years of education.²⁰
- Unlike the state system, the leading schools in the

English private system have witnessed a growth in the importance and value attached to arts and culture as part of preparing young people with the life skills necessary for participation in society's elite positions.²¹

- As the Durham Commission on Creativity stated in 2019: 'If creativity and creative thinking are necessary capacities for young people, then the Commission believes that their universal provision should be a matter of strategic concern and social justice.'²²



Providing social and cultural capital

- Just as participating in arts and culture from a young age provides young people with important life skills for their careers, it also aids in their social and cultural lives and how they express and define their individual and shared experiences: 'The sector has proved that it is an essential positive force for society, bringing joy, inspiration and opportunity to our lives. The creative industries form the national conversation through which we define our shared values.'²⁴



Delivering levelling up, high-street renewal and place repurpose

- Based on evidence from the Great Place Programme²⁵ – a scheme intended to ensure that local investment in arts and culture has the greatest impact on local ecologies – providing access to local culture has been proven to have huge positive social impacts.

- The programme saw improved outcomes around local pride, intergenerational relations, people's sense of belonging to an area – and an increased diversity in audiences engaging with their activities. There was particular success in engaging audiences from low-income areas, with a fifth of participants coming from the 10% most deprived areas, and audiences and Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse groups accounting for a fifth of all audiences in year 3.

- '48% of [arts and culture organisations] have been involved in or currently are still involved in local regeneration projects around their communities and 52% occupy previously unused or regenerated buildings.'²⁶



Creating safer streets and communities

- According to the DCMS Culture White Paper 2016: 'Culture can help to improve self-esteem, social skills and wellbeing: all of which help to reduce the risk of offending and re-offending and make our communities safer.'²⁷
- This is proven by the impact of the Arts Council Summer Arts Colleges that were established alongside the Youth Justice Board, which helped high-risk young people to reintegrate into education, training and employment. As a result, reoffending rates among young people were 54%, compared to the national re-offending rate of 72%.²⁸
- An Arts Alliance report has shown that the arts play an important role in keeping inmates from reoffending once released from the criminal justice system. Schemes for

prisoners show a fall in reoffending rates, from 57.5% to 25.9%, saving almost £150,000 for each offender that stopped committing crimes.²⁹



Protection of our world-leading creative arts / cultural economy

- The UK's arts and culture eco-system is world-leading. Thousands of people from all over the world flock as tourists, prospective students and artists to become part of it every year. It needs to be protected and future-proofed.
- From 2010 to 2019 the creative industries grew more than one and a half times faster than the wider economy, and in 2021 they generated £108 billion in economic value. In 2021, they employed 2.3 million people, a 49% increase since 2011.³⁰ They are one of the most lucrative industries in the UK.
- A DCMS Committee report from 2022 said: 'The skills shortage and low social mobility within arts and culture is being driven by two primary factors: poor working conditions, and a dearth of education and training opportunities.'³¹
- Without proper educational opportunities and access to the creative and cultural arts for students of all backgrounds, future generations will not be able to sustain our hugely valuable creative industries.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

1

Pride in place

- Polling by the Arts Council in 2021 found that 62% of adults agree that cultural experiences on the high street give them a sense of pride about their local area.³²
- Half of adults (50%) would like to see more cultural experiences on their high streets. This 50% rises to 54% among those aged 25 to 34 years of age and 57% among black Britons.



Community cohesion and integration

- Creating a feeling of community integration is just one of the important effects of nurturing and sustaining arts, media and culture in local villages, towns and cities.
- A DCMS policy paper³³ from this year found that the creative industries, particularly public services broadcasters, local TV, radio and press play an important role in strengthening community cohesion and wellbeing. They also enhance local democracy through provision of content that reflects diversity in the community.



Reduced burdens on the state esp. Health and Social Care, Police, Benefits

- As mentioned in the societal benefits section, participation in the creative arts has a positive effect on the UK's

healthcare system, making estimated cost savings of £168.8 million for the NHS in England, due to a reduction in GP visits.

- Additionally, a WHO 2019 report³⁴ found evidence for '...the potential value of the arts in contributing to core determinants of health; playing a critical role in health promotion; helping to prevent the onset of mental illness and age-related physical decline; supporting the treatment or management of mental illness, noncommunicable diseases and neurological disorders; and assisting in acute and end-of-life care.'



Creating new jobs, trade and exports, enabling discovery, delivering wealth

- The creative industries are responsible for creating a large proportion of the UK's jobs, a role that will continue to grow into the future.
- As mentioned in the societal benefits section, with around 2.4 million filled posts, 7.1% of all UK jobs in 2022 were in creative industries. This is an increase from 7% in 2021 and 6.3% in 2019.³⁵
- The creative industries are hugely valuable to both the national and international economy. They were worth more than £115bn to the UK economy before the pandemic and make up as many as one in eight businesses across the country.³⁶
- The creative industries support 'a further 1.4 million jobs across the supply chain, bringing the total number of jobs supported by the creative industries to 3.5 million.'³⁷

- A BPI report in 2020 found: ‘that 1 in every 10 songs (10.1%) streamed around the world is by a British artist. The UK’s share of global streaming is four times greater than its share of global GDP (2.2%), underlining the UK’s exceptional performance in music.’



Providing key skills for all industries to thrive (innovation, creativity, design, problem-solving, communication and collaboration)

- There are multiple reports, surveys and polls that suggest that creative skills, such as innovation, design, problem-solving, communication and collaboration are among the most desirable competencies sought after in an employee.
- Kingston University Future Skills 2022³⁸ survey of 2000 business leaders found 44% identified creativity as a valued skill for innovation (8th in the list of 10 Future Skills).
- Frontier Economics found that: ‘...firms with greater connections to the [creative industries] are more likely to produce product innovations.’⁴⁰



Improved educational outcomes overall and vast reduction in NEETs

- We have spoken in this manifesto about the ‘soft’ benefits to individuals that engagements with the creative arts can have, like engaging with their communities and finding belonging within social circles. But they are also

proven to improve educational outcomes too, particularly in early child development.

- A study led by UCL⁴¹ suggests that ‘There is very strong evidence that music can support speech and language in infants, while wider arts and reading can support the further development of language in children.’
- A DCMS Culture White Paper from 2016 also found that cultural participation can help deliver improved educational outcomes in children and young adults, including raised attainment and a greater likelihood of going on to further and higher education.⁴²



Rescue of the Covid generation

- The pandemic has raised awareness of the importance of culture, arts and creativity to individuals and communities throughout the UK.⁴³ It has also highlighted a serious issue with resourcing creative subjects in schools.
- The Art Now Inquiry⁴⁴ survey has shed light on the issue with resourcing in schools for art and design since the pandemic. 34.9% of teachers in the UK reported that resourcing was an issue, and 93.2% said there had been a decrease in resources. Teachers also reported having to pay for their own materials, and indicated that many children and young people have missed valuable opportunities to develop vital motor skills learnt through handling tools and materials during the pandemic.⁴⁵

- Investing in the development of creative skills through arts subjects in schools is vital to future generations, not just in the creative arts, but throughout the UK's industries.



Restoring our global creative power play

- The UK's creative industries are a huge global export, and thus contribute to our soft power and standing on the world stage.
- There is a risk, with repeated underinvestment, that we begin to fall behind our global competitors: 'In 2020 the UK's 5.3 per cent share of global creative services exports placed it in the top five biggest exporters – but only just ahead of Japan (4.4 per cent) and the Netherlands (4.3 per cent), and significantly behind Germany's 7 per cent share.'⁴⁶

- 1 Arts Council England, Creative Health and Wellbeing plan, July 2022
- 2 AHRC Creative Communities Deep Dive Report 2023
- 3 Creative Industries Sector Vision: A joint plan to drive growth, build talent and develop skills June 2023
- 4 Trends in creative arts qualifications September 2021
- 5 Durham Commission on Creativity and Education October 2019
- 6 DCMS Economic Estimates, updated April 2023
- 7 Department for International Trade, Sep 2021
- 8 Art Now: An Inquiry into the State of Art and Design teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage, Primary and Secondary Education 2023
- 9 Inquiry
- 10 Reimagining where we live: cultural place-making and the levelling up agenda
- 11 The Guardian editorial, Feb 2023
- 12 PEC, June 2022
- 13 PEC, July 2021
- 14 DCMS, June 2023
- 15 Changing Lives: The social impact of participation in culture and sport
- 16 Enhancing creative education, 2022
- 17 DCMS Economic Estimates, updated April 2023
- 18 Department for International Trade, Sep 2021
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- 20 DCMS Economic Estimates, updated April 2023
- 21 Heidi Ashton & David Ashton (2023) Creativity and the curriculum: educational apartheid in 21st Century England, a European outlier?, International Journal of Cultural Policy, 29:4, 484-499
- 22 Heidi Ashton & David Ashton (2023) Creativity and the curriculum: educational apartheid in 21st Century England, a European outlier?, International Journal of Cultural Policy, 29:4, 484-499
- 23 Durham Commission on Creativity, 2019
- 24 DCMS policy paper, June 2023
- 25 Great Place Programme Evaluation Report, April 2022
- 26 Centre for Economics and Business Research, 2020
- 27 DCMS Culture White Paper 2016
- 28 Changing Lives: The social impact of participation in culture and sport, DCMS Committee, 2019
- 29 Artlyst, 2011
- 30 DCMS, June 2023
- 31 DCMS committee 2022 Reimagining where we live: cultural placemaking and the levelling up agenda
- 32 Arts Council, A High Street Renaissance, 2021
- 33 DCMS policy paper, June 2023
- 34 World Health Organisation 2019 report
- 35 DCMS Economic Estimates, updated April 2023

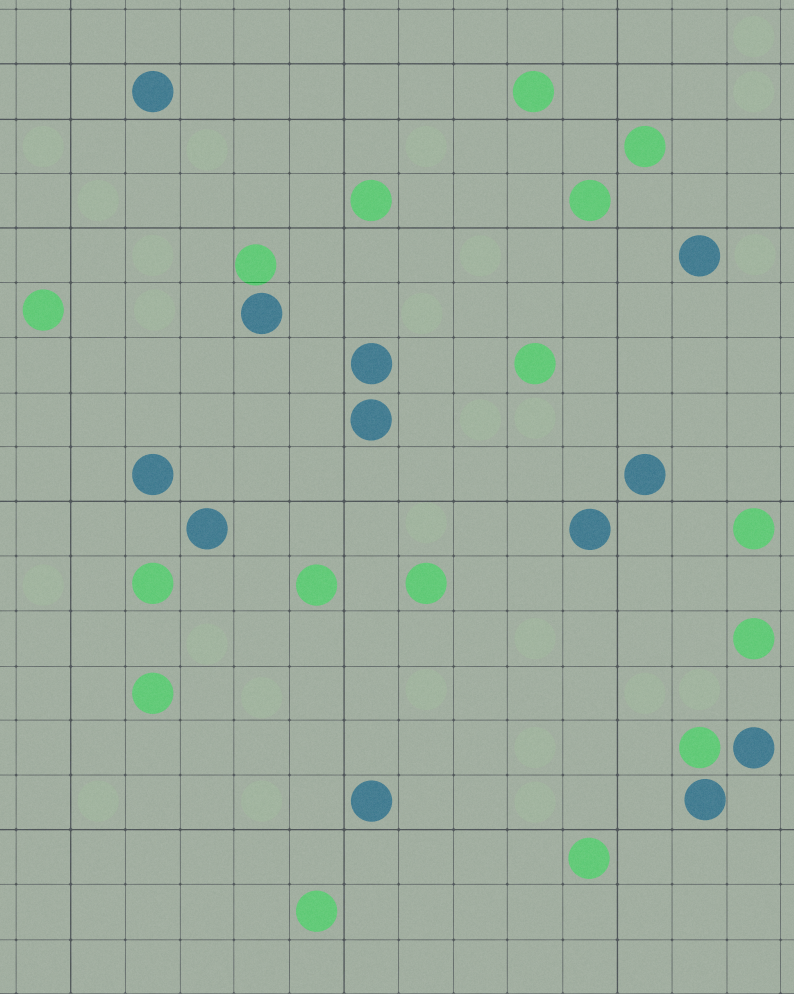
- 36 House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee, 2023
- 37 Creative UK
- 38 British Phonographic Industry, 2020
- 39 Kingston University Future Skills report 2022
- 40 Frontier Economics, June 2023
- 41 Evidence Summary for Policy The role of arts in improving health & wellbeing, UCL 2020
- 42 DCMS Culture White Paper 2016
- 43 Creative Recovery? The Role of Cultural Policy in Shaping Post-COVID Urban Futures
- 44 Art Now: An Inquiry into the State of Art and Design teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage, Primary and Secondary Education
- 45 Creative Recovery? The Role of Cultural Policy in Shaping Post-COVID Urban Futures. King's College London, 2023
- 46 At risk: our creative future – House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee 2022-23 session

THANK YOU

Thank you for reading. If you'd like to join the creative education coalition and pledge your support for protecting the creative skills pipeline – sign up via our QR code

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