

Press release: Major new research investment set to provide boost for UK's Creative Industries

Creative Industries Clusters in Bristol, Leeds, London, York, Cardiff, Belfast, Dundee and Edinburgh will bring together creative hubs with researchers and businesses to boost their world-leading status.

Aardman, Burberry, Sony and the British Fashion Company are some of the brands involved in the Programme

Developing the Clusters is a key deliverable in the Industrial Strategy's Creative Industries Sector Deal

Some of the UK's best performing and world-renowned creative businesses are to come together with researchers and organisations to explore new ways of enhancing their sectors. They aim to increase the use of digital technologies to improve audience experience in the screen and performance industries, and shorten production times in the design industry.

Led by the Arts and Humanities Research Council within UKRI, the £80 million programme comprises nine creative clusters across the UK and a new Policy and Evidence Centre, led by Nesta in partnership with 13 universities. The programme will bring together world-class research talent with companies and organisations, including household names such as Aardman, Burberry and Sony, in a first-of-its kind research and development investment.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

The creative industries are a fantastic British success story creating millions of jobs and business opportunities across the country. The sector currently contributes £92 billion a year to our economy and through our modern Industrial Strategy we are investing further to enable the sector to keep on growing and bringing the benefits to all corners of the United Kingdom.

This investment, through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund and industry, offers support to the UK's globally important creative industries, which are already worth over £92 billion to the UK economy and export an estimated £46 billion in goods and services each year. The aim is to create jobs and drive the creation of companies, products and experiences that can be marketed around the world.

Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright said:

Britain's creative industries are an economic and cultural powerhouse and the Creative Clusters will ensure they continue to

thrive in different regions across the country.

These partnerships between business, academia and industry will encourage the use of future technology to develop new products and experiences, and boost employment opportunities across the breadth of the UK.

Professor Andrew Thompson, Executive Chair of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, said:

Combining world-class arts and humanities researchers with our globally renowned creative industries will underpin growth in this vibrant and rapidly expanding sector within the UK economy.

These pioneering partnerships between industry and universities are providing a huge vote of confidence for a sector that is vital to the future prosperity of the UK.

A new Policy and Evidence Centre has also been established that will address gaps in the evidence base on the national economic strength of the UK's creative industries. Led by global innovation foundation Nesta, it will develop independent evidence that will inform decision-making across the creative industries and underpin future policy decisions.

Hasan Bakhshi, Director, Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, said:

The UK's creative industries have had a stellar growth performance in recent years, but to navigate the economic uncertainties ahead they will need rigorous evidence. This is where the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre will step in, producing research and formulating policies to support the sector's future growth.

Notes to Editors:

Each of the nine clusters emerged from an open, rigorous and peer-reviewed selection process that began a year ago. They bring together a range of educational and commercial partners to tackle unique R&D challenges identified by a specific area of industry.

The nine clusters are:

- Bristol and Bath Cluster (B+B)XR+D – Creating jobs, companies and products in the Bristol and Bath region's screen and performance industries by helping them adapt to emerging technologies. Led by: the University of the West of England with other institutions and commercial partners including Watershed, Aardman Animations,

Audible, the BBC, and the RSC.

- Clwstwr Creadigol – Transforming the screen and broadcast industries in the Cardiff region of South Wales by helping them innovate and compete. Led by: Cardiff University with other institutions and commercial partners including BBC Cymru, S4C, Boom Cymru, ITV Cymru Wales and Sony UK Technology Centre.
- InGAME – Delivering new products, start-ups and training opportunities in the video game sector, and intensifying growth, diversification and cultural engagement. Led by: Abertay University in Dundee with other institutions and commercial partners including DC Thomson and Co, Sony, deltaDNA, Scottish Enterprise, Microsoft, TIGA, Creative Scotland and Dundee City Council.
- Creative Informatics – Seeking to put businesses and creative entrepreneurs in the driving seat of data-driven innovation in Edinburgh’s lively design and advertising sector. Led by: University of Edinburgh with other institutions and commercial partners including Creative Edinburgh, Festivals Edinburgh, The List, the BBC, National Museums Scotland, The Fruitmarket Gallery and Royal Bank of Scotland.
- Future Fashion Factory – Transforming the fashion industry’s capacity for creative innovation and reducing lead times and waste by embracing digital technologies in the design process. Led by: University of Leeds with other institutions and commercial partners including the Royal College of Arts, Burberry, Wools of New Zealand, Wooltex UK and the British Fashion Council.
- StoryFutures – Driving innovation in creative, immersive storytelling; connecting businesses, creating jobs and developing next-generation talent as the sector seeks to harness data-driven personalisation, smart devices and AI to reach audiences in new and complex ways. Led by: Royal Holloway with other institutions and commercial partners including the BBC, HTC Vive, nDreams, Plexus, Punchdrunk, Sky UK, Pinewood Group, BFI, Endemol Shine, Heathrow Airport, and the National Film and Television School.
- The Business of Fashion, Textiles and Technology Collaborative R&D – Partnership Delivering sustainable growth for the business of fashion, textiles and technology through innovation and adaptation. Led by: University of the Arts London with other institutions and commercial partners including ASOS, Clarks, British Fashion Council, London Legacy Development Corporation, Centre for Fashion Enterprise and the V&A.

- Future Screens NI – Growing the creative industries in Northern Ireland, particularly the extant animation and games clusters, by developing new hardware and software solutions.
Led by: Ulster University with other institutions and commercial partners including: Northern Ireland Screen, the BBC, RTE, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Catalyst Inc., Causeway Enterprise Agency, Belfast City Council and Digital Catapult.
- Creative Media Labs – Establishing the screen industries of Yorkshire and the Humber as a centre of excellence in immersive and interactive storytelling.
Led by: University of York with other institutions and commercial partners including Screen Yorkshire, New Moon Studios, BT, Sony, BFI, Duck Soup, Warp Films, Game Republic and the BBC.

The Industrial Strategy sets out a long term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. It sets out how the UK Government is building a Britain fit for the future – how it will help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), which is part of UK Research and Innovation, funds world-class, independent researchers in a wide range of subjects: archaeology, area studies, the creative and performing arts, design, digital content, heritage, history, languages, philosophy and much more. This financial year we will spend approximately £98 million on research and postgraduate training in collaboration with a number of partners. The quality and range of research supported by this investment of public funds not only provides economic, social and cultural benefits to the UK, but contributes to the culture and welfare of societies around the globe.

[Press release: Review of government's bovine TB strategy published](#)

A [review of the government's 25 Year Bovine TB \(bTB\) Strategy](#), led by Sir Charles Godfray, has been published today (Tuesday 13 November).

The report, which was [commissioned by Environment Secretary Michael Gove in February](#), aims to inform future strategies around the government's goal of eradicating the disease by 2038.

The report is now with Ministers who will consider its recommendations before publishing a response, setting out the next steps for the bTB Strategy.

Farming Minister George Eustice said:

We welcome this review of the Government's 25-year Bovine TB strategy and I extend my thanks to Sir Charles Godfray and his team for their hard work in producing the report.

As a Government we are committed to eradicating bTB and have always been clear that there is no single measure for tackling it. That's why we have pursued a range of interventions, including cattle movement controls, vaccinations and controlled culling in certain areas.

Sir Charles' report is an important contribution that will inform next steps in the strategy to achieve officially TB free status for England by 2038.

Sir Charles Godfray, population biologist and Fellow of the Royal Society said:

The Review Panel are acutely aware of the burden this disease places on the welfare and well-being of farmers and their families, and the distress many people feel about badger culling.

There are no easy answers to reducing disease levels and what is required is new drive and a concerted and concentrated effort by all sectors involved.

The findings from the report include:

- industry must take greater responsibility for on-farm controls, biosecurity and safe trading practices to stop the disease spreading
 - more can be done to help farmers make purchasing decisions reflecting the risks of cattle being infected
 - evidence shows that badgers do transmit bovine TB to cattle and contribute to the persistence of the disease
 - disease reduction would benefit from greater flexibility and agility in adapting bovine TB control measures as new research findings emerge
 - A new independent body on disease control would be helpful to take over disease control operations from APHA, Natural England and local authorities (this recommendation will be considered by the government in light of the wider Dame Glenys Stacey review into farm inspections).
-

Press release: UK fashion brands take action to tackle modern slavery

The announcement follows the latest meeting of the Modern Slavery Taskforce, created by Prime Minister Theresa May, which discussed how to better identify and tackle forced labour in business supply chains.

The UK's multi-billion fashion industry employs tens of thousands of people, which can make its companies vulnerable to unscrupulous providers and criminals who exploit workers for their labour.

The new agreement will commit its signatories, John Lewis, M&S, New Look, NEXT, River Island and Shop Direct, to work together with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), and others, to root out criminality and shine a light on hidden victims.

These efforts to uncover hidden slavery in businesses come as activity to respond to modern slavery offences has reached an all-time high, with police forces across the UK running more than 920 live investigations in September, involving over 2,000 victims.

The Prime Minister said:

Modern slavery is an abhorrent crime that denies its victims of liberty, and it is disturbing to think that some of the products we buy could have been produced by someone exploited into forced labour.

As global leaders in the fight against modern slavery, I am clear that this will not be tolerated in the UK – and our consumers won't stand for it either.

I welcome the action being taken by businesses which are leading the way in being open and transparent about the modern slavery risks they face, and have pledged to raise awareness to prevent slavery, protect vulnerable workers and help bring more criminals to justice.

But with Modern Slavery police operations at an all-time high, clearly there is more to do to stamp out this vile crime and prevent criminal groups from operating in the shadows of supply chains to exploit people for commercial gain.

Businesses with a turnover of more than £36 million are already legally required to publish annual transparency statements, known as a Modern Slavery Statements, setting out what they are doing to stop modern slavery and forced labour practices occurring in their business and supply chains.

Last month, to coincide with Anti-Slavery Day, the Home Office wrote directly to the Chief Executives of 17,000 businesses to remind them of their responsibilities, or face being publicly named.

Press release: UK fashion brands take action to tackle modern slavery

Major UK fashion retailers are joining forces with law enforcement bodies to help eradicate modern slavery from the textiles industry.

Press release: UK condemns illegitimate “elections” held in the Donbas, Ukraine

A Foreign & Commonwealth Office spokesperson said:

The UK condemns the so-called “elections” which Russian-backed separatists held in the Donbas, Ukraine on 11 November: they are illegitimate and in violation of the Minsk Agreements. They undermine efforts to achieve peace in the region, and they are illegal under Ukrainian law.

These so-called “elections” took place against the background of Russia’s continued violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia is providing arms to the separatists in the Donbas, with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reporting a flow of Russian military convoys crossing in and out of eastern Ukraine.

We call on Russia to fully implement its commitments under the Minsk Agreements, to stop providing financial and military support to the separatists, and to withdraw its armed forces and military equipment from Ukrainian territory.

We also strongly urge the Russian-backed separatists to stop obstructing OSCE monitors, and to grant safe and unhindered access so essential humanitarian assistance can be delivered to the 1.8 million people in need within non-government controlled areas.

The UK again reiterates our commitment to diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict in eastern Ukraine, so that legitimate and credible elections can be held in line with the Minsk Agreements and that this conflict be brought to an end.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

Media enquiries

For journalists

Email

newsdesk@fco.gov.uk

Newsdesk

020 7008 3100