

# Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee inquiry into film and major TV production in Wales

## Supplementary briefing for evidence session, 11 July 2018

### Creative Wales

The Creative Industries has been the fastest-growing part of the UK economy for nearly a decade. The sector doesn't just create jobs and wealth; it contributes to a strong national brand and promotes Wales in the world. Creativity – say in the form of TV, music, the visual arts and digital platforms where we share interact, work and play – can also promote a more inclusive society.

Many creative roles are among the least likely to be lost to automation in the future; creative people and their businesses are often the exploiters - not the victims - of new technologies.

Since 2011, Welsh Government has focused support in areas where it was considered we would have the best economic impact, namely high end television drama and digital projects. This was the right decision at the time, with Wales now being a real competitor in these areas which has led to a significant increase in the amount of money these businesses spend in Wales on the Welsh supply chain, and in the wider Welsh economy.

Therefore recent industry growth has changed the landscape considerably and in 2018 the Creative Industries sector in Wales is at a vital tipping point where opportunities are converging and we believe that with the right support over the coming years, growth and success could be significant. This is why we are committed to reshaping and re-launching our support for the creative sector as a discrete function called Creative Wales. We recognise the need for a more rounded approach and the requirement for bespoke support to aid business growth in the sector. Government needs to respond more flexibly to businesses that move and change quickly. Creative Wales will be our vehicle for doing this, offering a streamlined, dynamic and innovative service to this sector.

Creative Wales aims to deliver:

- Strategy aligned with Government priorities
- An online 'one stop shop' for sector support, networking, resourcing and opportunities
- A strong and recognisable brand, using digital platforms to harness business and network opportunities in Wales, the UK and across the globe
- Better access to, and exploitation of, markets for the creative industries at home and abroad as well as selling Wales to Inward Investors
- A Welsh skills base able to take on the creative challenges of the future, no matter what your background
- Improved interaction with other areas of the public sector to achieve effective industry support.
- Improved business productivity and growth rates
- Higher rates of intellectual property retention and exploitation.

Creative Wales will provide bespoke support for indigenous SMEs, productions and freelancers as well as supply chain companies. It will also provide funding through the £15M Media Investment Budget and bespoke access to our new Economic Futures Fund.

To achieve these aims, Creative Wales will broaden our current activities, prioritising those that will best maintain and accelerate sector growth, namely:

- Nurturing talent pathways & industry led skills support
- Supply chain development;
- Improving networks and access to specialist industry advice
- Effective exploitation of social media and digital platforms for improved service provision
- Access to funding tailored to the sector's needs

In taking this collaborative, integrated approach, Creative Wales will expand the range of outputs and outcomes to include some broader and/or softer measurements, such as raising skills levels, strengthening the supply chain and improved retention of intellectual property.

Cross cutting themes will also be part of the organisation's underpinning ethos, with Creative Wales able to deliver outcomes to support the equality and tackling poverty agendas, delivering a more diverse pool of decision-makers in public life and public appointments and helping people to take up job opportunities and earn an income.

Although Creative Wales will operate within government, it will be structured for delivery in a way not dissimilar to an arm's length body; that will be to have a Board with an external Chair recruited through the Public Appointments process, as will be the case for any external members of the Board. Operations will be led by a Chief Executive or equivalent role.

The Board would provide strategic oversight to the management team, reviewing the annual business plan and progress, and receiving financial and other updates.

To ensure there is no break in industry advice when the Creative Industries Sector Panel's term ends in September, the process to recruit a Chair and Board through a public appointments process will be starting shortly.