



**inclusive growth
network**

Hosted by CPP



Culture and creative industries: A catalyst for inclusive growth



January 2024





About the Inclusive Growth Network (IGN)

The IGN is a network of 14 local and combined authorities across the UK who are pioneering new approaches to delivering inclusive growth in their communities. We are hosted by the Centre for Progressive Policy (CPP), funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and supported by our partners Metro Dynamics and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA). We provide a three pillar offer to support our members to deliver inclusive growth through bespoke delivery support, peer-to-peer learning, and research and guidance. Our ambition is to create momentum for inclusive growth as the leading economic model locally, nationally and internationally.

The members of the network are London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Belfast City Council, Bristol City Council, Cardiff Council, Glasgow City Council, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Leeds City Council, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, North Ayrshire Council, North of Tyne Combined Authority, Plymouth City Council, South Yorkshire Combined Authority, West Midlands Combined Authority and West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Acknowledgements

This report was written by Danielle Jackson (Senior Network Lead, IGN). The research and interviews were led by Andrew Kelly (Creative Programmer, Bristol Ideas and visiting professor, University of the West of England), with further research and analysis provided by Francesca Cave (Programme Coordinator, IGN), Ross Mudie (Research Analyst, CPP) and Sian Norris (journalist and commentator). Report design and illustration by Emily Buchanan.

We would like to thank everyone who has offered their time and expertise by participating in interviews. A full list of interviewees is included in the Annex.

Finally, many thanks to Annabel Smith (Head of Place and Practice, CPP) and Alex Gardiner (Director, Metro Dynamics) for providing feedback on the report.



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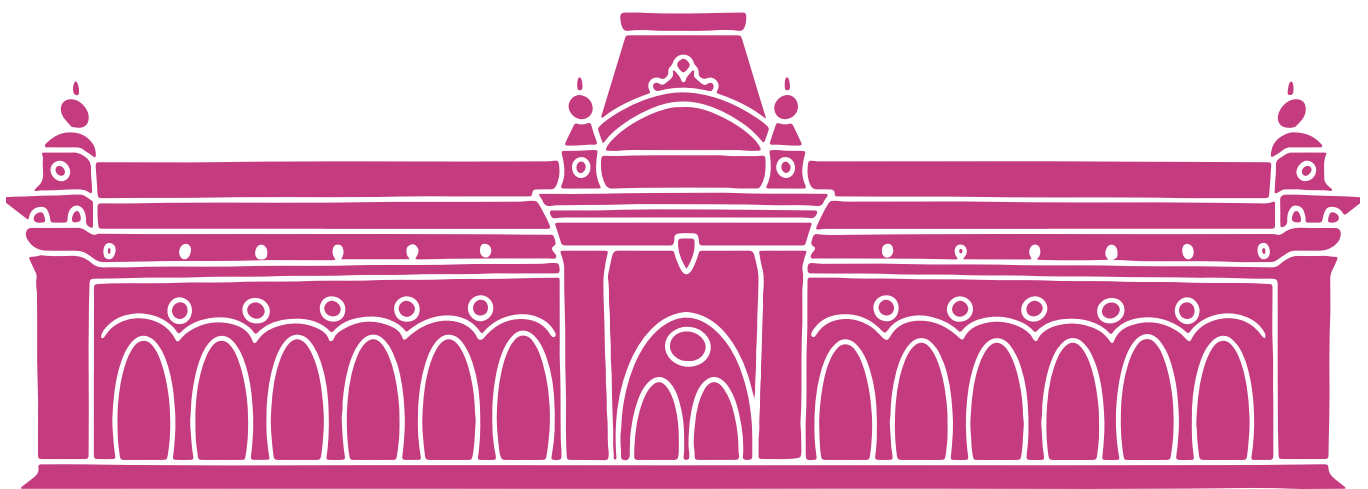


Executive summary

The future success and prosperity of the UK depends on a new type of growth. One that looks beyond gross domestic product (GDP) and gross value added (GVA) to support a thriving economy that everyone can contribute to and benefit from. We call this inclusive growth. This means addressing regional inequality and nurturing the drivers of good health, education and skills, alongside growing high-productivity sectors, attracting inward investment, and supporting resilient supply chains. These priorities are not ‘nice to haves’, but central to delivering the inclusive growth that will counter economic stagnation and improve prosperity.

Culture and creative industries have much to add to this agenda. Their role in unlocking inclusive growth across the UK should not be overlooked. The economic heft of these sectors is clear, contributing £160bn to the UK economy with 3.2 million jobs, and making the UK the fifth largest global exporter of cultural services. Beyond its status as a key growth sector, culture is an important source of soft power and convenorship, bolstering the UK’s reputation as a cultural powerhouse and making this a central feature of its brand on the world stage.

While many of our most internationally recognised cultural institutions are in the UK’s capital and other major cities, the social and economic impact of culture everywhere – from the Piece Hall in Halifax to the Birmingham Royal Ballet to Burnley Football Club – cannot be underestimated. With the right support, this creates an opportunity to nurture and grow cultural clusters across the country, building on local assets to develop strong local economies, address regional inequality and connect local people to high-quality, fulfilling job opportunities.



Leeds City Museum

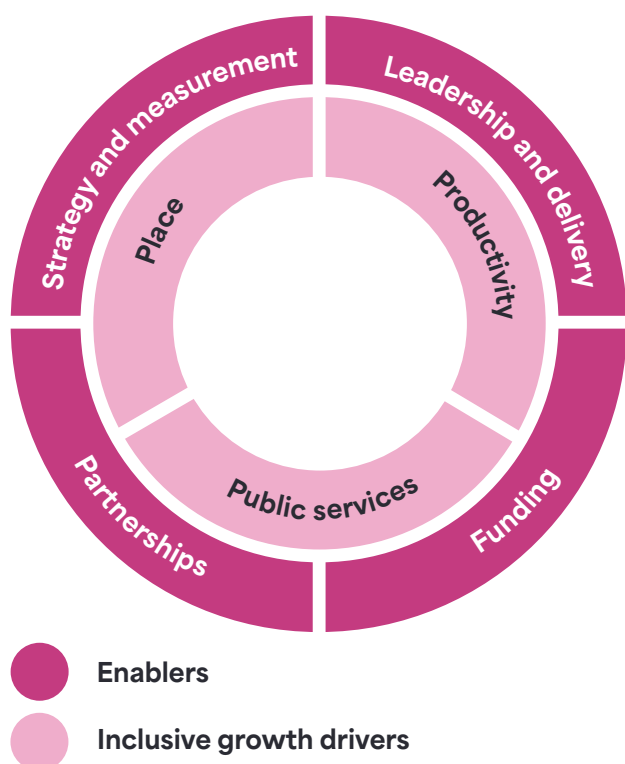
Culture has a societal role beyond its economic contribution. It shapes and defines us as individuals and communities. It builds social capital, strengthens community resilience and nurtures pride in place. It is a crucial part of a proactive, preventative approach to health and wellbeing, enabling people to meaningfully contribute to their communities and local economies. This is a key driver of the economic dynamism of places – creating areas in which people want to live, work and play. Its role has been recognised in the 2030 mission set by the government’s Levelling Up White Paper around ‘pride in place’, which highlights the importance of engagement in local culture and community.¹

Despite this, culture has historically been overlooked as an economic asset for the UK, not least because it can be difficult to measure and quantify its value. 2024 brings a general election and several mayoral elections, with devolution firmly at the forefront of the national policy agenda. **Now is a key moment to look seriously at the role culture and creative industries can play in delivering inclusive growth across the UK.**

A new framework for culture and inclusive growth

The Inclusive Growth Network (IGN) has produced this report to make the case for culture and creative industries as a catalyst for inclusive growth – economic growth that as many people and places can contribute to and benefit from as possible. It has been informed by in-depth interviews with senior IGN officers and national experts, as well as a review of the literature and analysis of the cultural and creative sector.

The report explores what local and combined authorities can do with the levers available to them, shares learnings from the experience of places across the UK, and sets out what national government and arm’s-length bodies can do to enable places to go further and faster in harnessing culture as a key asset for a fairer type of growth. Examples and case studies of IGN member activity are included throughout, recognising the role that the IGN plays in sharing good practice and connecting members so that we can collectively build on this work to create system change.



Our Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework sets out how culture and creative industries can catalyse inclusive growth through three intersecting drivers:

- 1. Place** - embedding inclusive growth in the design, development, and use of places and spaces, doing *with* rather than *to* communities.
- 2. Productivity** - reducing inequalities between and within places through robust industrial strategy, business investment and skills development.
- 3. Public services** - a prevention-led approach to public services whereby culture supports community resilience, education, and health and wellbeing.

Across these drivers, IGN members are taking different approaches that are tailored to their distinctive local context, inclusive growth challenges and opportunities. There is a wealth of good practice to draw on. In West Yorkshire, the Mayor's Screen Diversity Programme is enabling a wider range of young people to pursue a successful career in the film and TV industry without needing to leave the region. LEEDS 2023 Year of Culture has enabled grassroots cultural activity across all council wards, linked with events in the city centre's major cultural organisations. The North of Tyne Combined Authority has established Culture and Creative Zones, local place-based approaches to supporting the cultural and creative sector.

To maximise the opportunity for inclusive growth and make positive change happen, local and combined authorities need to have the right enablers - these are the approaches, mechanisms and tools that will allow them to unlock real progress:

- 1. Strategy and measurement** - aligning the vision and priorities of inclusive growth and cultural strategy, and developing mechanisms to demonstrate impact and change.
- 2. Leadership and delivery** - establishing the strategic and operational frameworks to deliver inclusive growth through culture and creative industries.
- 3. Partnerships** - drawing on the expertise and experience of partners across the public, private, voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) and education sectors to embed inclusive growth at the heart of cultural activity.
- 4. Funding** - working proactively to leverage funding and inward investment to progress inclusive growth and other strategic objectives, centralising culture as a key asset.

There is good practice across the IGN, including the delivery of devolved cultural powers and functions. The integration of culture and inclusive growth teams within local and combined authorities is breaking down siloed ways of working. Teams are using their convening role to foster cross-sector partnerships and leverage funding opportunities to achieve shared objectives.

What next?

Despite vastly decreased financial capacity over the past decade, local government continues to play a crucial role as a convenor, enabler, and champion of culture and creative industries, identifying and maximising opportunities to catalyse inclusive growth. Places can go further to unlock the transformative potential of culture with greater devolution of powers, functions and funding. But there are steps that places can take now. This report draws on the experience of IGN members to set out some of the ways that culture and creative industries can be put at the heart of inclusive growth policy and practice.



1 | Introduction



Chapter summary

This report, developed for and with members of the IGN, aims to support local and combined authorities to leverage culture and creative industries as a catalyst for delivering inclusive growth. It seeks to improve alignment between cultural and economic policymaking and practice by identifying how opportunities can be harnessed and maximised.

Why now?

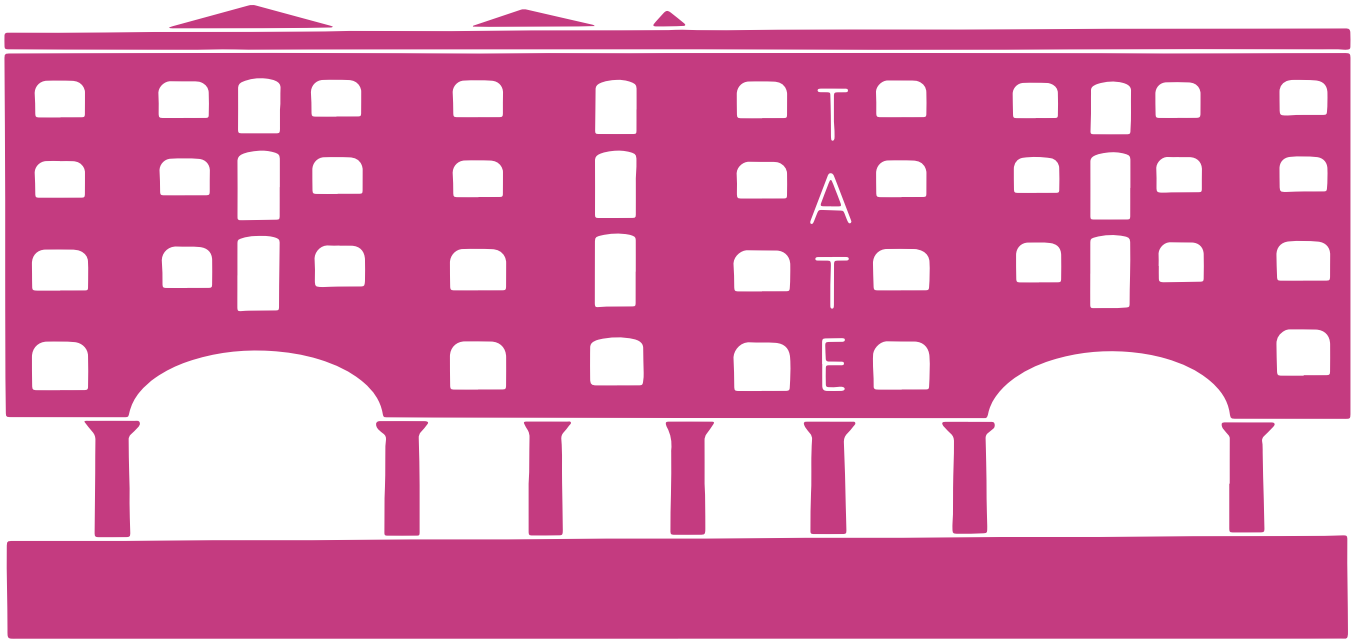
Economic and cultural development have largely sat separately from one another in strategic and operational terms. There is an opportunity to better interconnect them to foster inclusive growth. With general and mayoral/local elections in the pipeline and devolution at the forefront of the national policy agenda, now represents a vital moment to explore three key questions:

1. What can local and combined authorities do with the levers they already have at their disposal?
2. What lessons can be learned from examples of the experiences of members across the IGN?
3. How can national government and arm's-length bodies enable places to drive this agenda further, and which levers need to be strengthened and how?

Our approach

Developing this report has involved a combination of desk-based research and stakeholder interviews. A full list of interviewees is included in the Annex.





Tate Liverpool

Definitions used

Culture and inclusive growth are both highly contested terms with varied meanings which are applied in different contexts. Many local and combined authorities have their own definitions of inclusive growth, which respond to the nature of inclusive growth challenges and inequalities in their place. As a sector, creative industries can be defined in different ways. We set out here what we mean by these terms for the purpose of this report, drawing on the literature and insights from interviews with key IGN stakeholders.

Culture underpins individual identities, communities and places. Cultural planners define culture widely – from what Raymond Williams famously described as ‘ordinary culture’² to large-scale, flagship institutions and activities. Culture is the pub we visit; the football team we support; the opera, paintings, theatre, dance, architecture, books, television and films we enjoy; the poetry we read or hear; the music we sing. It can be high culture and popular culture. It may be publicly funded, commercial, or made at home. Culture embraces human creativity and community activity, the stories people share, their habits and history, urban myths, and how people perceive their place.

Creative industries are ‘those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property’.³ This includes a wide range of sub-sectors, including advertising and marketing, architecture, crafts, design, film and TV, IT and software, publishing, museums and galleries, and music, performing and visual arts.

Inclusive growth offers a more purposeful approach to growth creation, recognising that the traditional ‘grow now, redistribute later’ model of economic growth does not work.⁴ It is measured not only by how fast or aggressive it is, but by how and where it is created and shared. It fosters a thriving economy that everyone can contribute to and benefit from by tackling inequalities and considering the social and environmental outcomes it achieves for people and places. Another term for this is ‘fair growth’.

About this report

The first two chapters of this report set the scene and make the case for why culture and creative industries are a catalyst for inclusive growth. **Chapter 2** gives an overview of the cultural and creative sectors, including strengths, opportunities and challenges. **Chapter 3** provides a qualitative assessment of the perception of culture and its impact in place.

Chapter 4 sets out a new Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework. This includes three drivers through which culture and creative industries can catalyse inclusive growth and four enablers to make this happen.

In **Chapter 5**, we unpack the three inclusive growth drivers of the Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework. For each driver, we give an overview of the inclusive growth opportunity and five practical ways to catalyse inclusive growth. The chapter ends with five ways that places can leverage large-scale events and projects to deliver inclusive growth. Case studies of good practice from IGN member places are included throughout.

Chapter 6 describes how the four enablers in the Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework help local and combined authorities to make positive change happen. This chapter includes a set of principles for places to take forward.

The report finishes with a set of recommendations for national government and arm's-length bodies in **Chapter 7**.



2 | Where are we now?

Chapter summary

Culture and creative industries contribute £160bn to the UK economy, with a growing number of clusters outside of London, creating skills and job opportunities. This chapter makes the case for why culture and creative industries matter by giving an overview of the sector in the UK. It then sets out three big opportunities, based on the evidence: addressing regional inequalities, nurturing talent and building strong communities. These opportunities have been used to inform the structure and contents of the Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework (see Chapter 4).

The state of the sector

The UK has a long-standing legacy and reputation as a cultural powerhouse.



£160BN
GVA



3.2M
jobs



£50,118
per
worker



345,175
businesses

Creative industries have been identified as one of the UK's key growth sectors by the Chancellor,⁵ and together with culture more broadly, they make a significant contribution to the UK economy. Culture and creative industries are worth approximately 7% of the UK's GVA, at around £160bn.⁶

There are 3.2 million jobs in culture and creative industries, with growth of 13.5% since 2019, compared with 0.9% growth across the whole UK economy.⁷ Between 2019 and 2022, the GVA contribution of creative industries alone grew by 12% in real terms, relative to 2% across the UK economy as a whole.⁸ The cultural sector grew at 5% over the same period. Given that the sector was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns and capacity in many venues is still below pre-pandemic levels, this builds a picture of a highly resilient sector, with potential to grow further.

Creative businesses tend to engage in innovation at a higher rate than other types of businesses.⁹ However, productivity is slightly below the UK average at £50,118 per worker, compared with £58,327 across the economy as a whole.¹⁰ This suggests that there is potential to boost productivity across the sector, for instance through improvements in skills levels, uptake of technology and greater innovation.

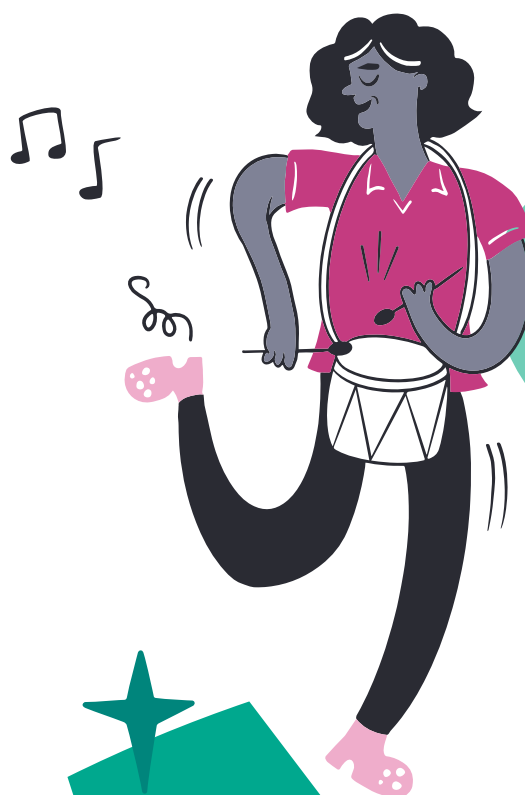
The UK's cultural and creative credentials are an important part of the country's soft power and international reputation. They make the UK an attractive destination for visitors, businesses and investors, and projecting the UK as a source of creativity and ideas has positive spillover effects to other industries, supporting growth and exports.¹¹ In 2020, the UK exported £8.9bn in creative goods (2.9% of total exports) and £41.4bn in creative services (14.2% of the total).¹² In the same year, the UK was the fifth largest exporter of creative services globally.¹³

Addressing regional inequalities

The right investment can support growth in employment, productivity, and innovation in creative clusters across the UK.

Cultural and creative industries are highly concentrated geographically, with London and the South East home to 54% of employment, 62% of businesses and 74% of economic output in 2019.¹⁴ But there are growing strengths in other parts of the UK, including many IGN member places. This includes ‘creative capitals’ in large cities like Manchester, Leeds and Glasgow, characterised by large and medium-sized businesses and a higher share of high-growth firms than other areas.¹⁵ ‘Creative challengers’ in other cities, including Birmingham, Bristol, Newcastle, Sheffield and Cardiff, have recently developed specialisms and have diverse ecosystems with some high-growth firms. ‘Incipient clusters’, such as Liverpool, are at an earlier stage in their development with higher levels of business and employment churn. Demonstrating the geographic versatility of the creative industries, ‘micro clusters’ of 50+ creative businesses in close proximity are also forming across every corner of the UK, from the Shetland Islands to the Isle of Wight.¹⁶

In the wider context of public disinvestment over the last decade,¹⁷ the government has recognised the potential for growth in culture and creative industries across the UK by investing £120m through the Arts and Humanities Research Council into the Creative Industries Clusters Programme.¹⁸ There are nine spatial clusters across the UK, including Bristol and Bath Creative R&D, Clwstwr in Cardiff, Future Fashion Factory in Leeds, and XR Stories in Yorkshire and Humber. Some clusters are focused on a specific sub-sector, for instance Clwstwr on screen industries, whilst others have a broader sector wide remit, such as Bristol and Bath Creative R&D.



Nurturing talent

Skills and jobs pathways into creative careers can help the sector meet its potential and diversify the workforce.

Creative industries have a highly skilled workforce – 73% are qualified to degree level or above and 83% are in professional or managerial roles, compared with the UK average of 44% and 46%, respectively.¹⁹ But the growth and success of the sector is at risk from skills shortages. In a pre-Brexit survey, 42% of employers in creative industries had jobs affected by skills issues, finding either that they could not recruit staff with the right skills or that they had employees doing jobs without the right skills.²⁰ Given the reliance on hiring non-UK workers, pre-existing shortages have been exacerbated by Brexit.²¹

An opportunity to address this could come from a more inclusive sector which draws from a more diverse talent pool. Careers in the creative industries are becoming less accessible. The proportion of creative workers from working-class backgrounds has fallen over time, while that of those from higher professional backgrounds has increased.²² People from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities are under-represented in the workforce.²³

Together, these challenges of skills shortages and lack of diversity present an opportunity to create a pipeline of local talent. But this will require new approaches to hiring and work practices, diversifying pathways into work and supporting people to stay and progress. The government's prioritisation of Skills Bootcamps for creative industries is a positive recent step in this regard, creating a local lever to address shortages in the sector.

Building strong communities

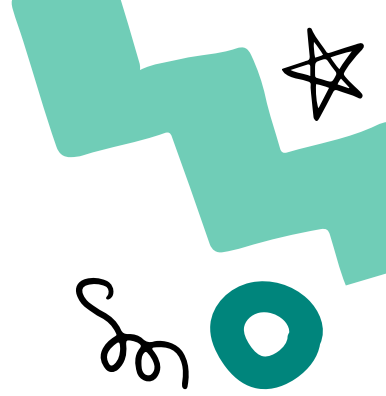
Culture can bring people together and build bridges between communities, supporting wellbeing and pride in place.

Engagement in arts and culture is a driver of social and economic impact, building social capital, supporting engaged citizens, and improving social inclusion, resilience, health and wellbeing.²⁴ However, there are spatial and socioeconomic inequalities in cultural participation. For instance, there is a below-average rate of engagement with the arts in Greater Manchester and South Yorkshire.²⁵ Engagement is lower in areas with higher levels of deprivation, and professionals have higher rates of participation compared with people who have never worked or who are long-term unemployed.²⁶ Poor transport connectivity can also act as a barrier to people participating in culture and accessing job opportunities.

In recognition of low levels of funding and engagement, Arts Council England has prioritised 54 places across England for 2021-24, including IGN member places, such as Barking and Dagenham; Rochdale and Wigan (Greater Manchester); Barnsley and Rotherham (South Yorkshire); Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton (West Midlands); and Kirklees (West Yorkshire).²⁷ However, the high-profile recent closure of Oldham Coliseum and the existential threat facing many cultural institutions across the UK highlights the continued risks to venues that remain reliant on public funding.



3 | Culture and IGN members



Chapter summary

Places across the UK are taking different approaches to nurturing culture and creative industries and maximising their potential to catalyse inclusive growth. This chapter provides a qualitative assessment of how culture is perceived and its impact on place, based on insights from the stakeholder interviews. It maps examples of innovative projects and programmes aiming to deliver inclusive growth across the IGN membership. These insights and lessons learned have been factored into the Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework (see Chapter 4).

What we heard in the interviews

We carried out 33 interviews with senior officers from IGN member placesⁱ and key national experts, exploring the role of culture and creative industries, the opportunities for catalysing inclusive growth, and the mechanisms for making this happen.

There are three main insights from the stakeholder interviews:

1. Culture has a key role in the UK's economic and social fabric.

Greater devolution and investment have the potential to unlock the economic and social benefits of culture and creative industries. As the previous chapter showed, these are high-value and growing economic sectors. The economic potential of culture and creative industries is recognised across the IGN membership, with many places actively supporting the sector to ensure that related skills, employment, business and innovation opportunities have wide-reaching benefits.

Interviewees referred to the social role of culture in shaping community identities and resilience, building social capital and pride in place. These benefits are hard to measure but are perceived to have a transformative impact on wellbeing. Many interviewees linked these social benefits to regeneration, placemaking, and the development and curation of spaces. Interviewees also reflected on the importance of creative skills in the labour market, advocating for a focus on science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics (STEAM), not solely on STEM (i.e. minus the arts).

ⁱ The members of the network are London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Belfast City Council, Bristol City Council, Cardiff Council, Glasgow City Council, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Leeds City Council, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, North Ayrshire Council, North of Tyne Combined Authority, Plymouth City Council, South Yorkshire Combined Authority, West Midlands Combined Authority and West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

‘The role of culture is around inclusion, engagement and that connection to people within their communities. It has a placemaking focus, helping to create vibrant spaces for people to use and access. Belfast is also home to a growing digital sector with film, TV and creative technologies which can offer opportunities for all.’

Councillor Christina Black, Chair of Belfast City Council’s Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

2. Investment in culture can benefit people and places.

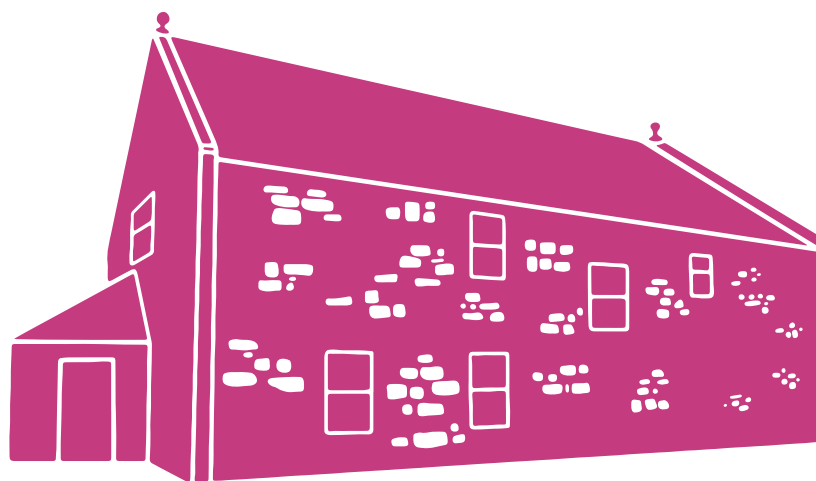
Inclusive growth addresses both social/demographic and place-based inequalities. Officers across the IGN are applying this approach to designing and delivering cultural programmes and interventions. They are thinking about where cultural activity, organisations and enterprises are located, investing across their area and in communities rather than solely in the city centre. This is accompanied by a sense of realism about what can be done with limited public funding.

Across the IGN, local and combined authorities are recognising their role in increasing equality, diversity and inclusion in a sector characterised by historic underrepresentation by supporting a wider range of people to access opportunities and progress. Many also raised the democratisation of access to cultural and creative experiences, especially when thinking about high-profile events and large-scale regeneration and development.

‘I think there’s something else as well about cultural power in terms of its ability to tell stories, to set narratives. And those narratives can be inclusive of people within a place or people who would otherwise be excluded from economic opportunity which can build social capital and enable people to see a future for themselves within a growing economy.’

Paul Bristow, Director of Policy Partnerships, Arts Council England





North Ayrshire Heritage Centre

3. Culture takes place at a range of scales.

In all the interviews, stakeholders spoke about the scale of cultural and creative activity. At one end of the spectrum, this means large-scale events, large cultural organisations and flagship projects, such as new developments or cultural institutions moving to the area (e.g. Channel 4 opening a national headquarters in Leeds and two creative hubs in Bristol and Glasgow). At the other end, it refers to local, grassroots, bottom-up, community-based activity.

Interviewees emphasised that these approaches are not mutually exclusive. They are complementary, and both have the potential to deliver inclusive growth benefits. Many places are looking at how they can join up large-scale events with local, community activity and (in the case of major one-off events) local legacy and impact in the long term.

‘We have asked the question “How are we supporting our creative sector?” We have led a review of our grants programme, looking at and interrogating how best we can fund or provide grants to enable and support culture and creativity right across the city, from those independent individual artists on the outskirts of Leeds to the city centre major cultural organisations.’

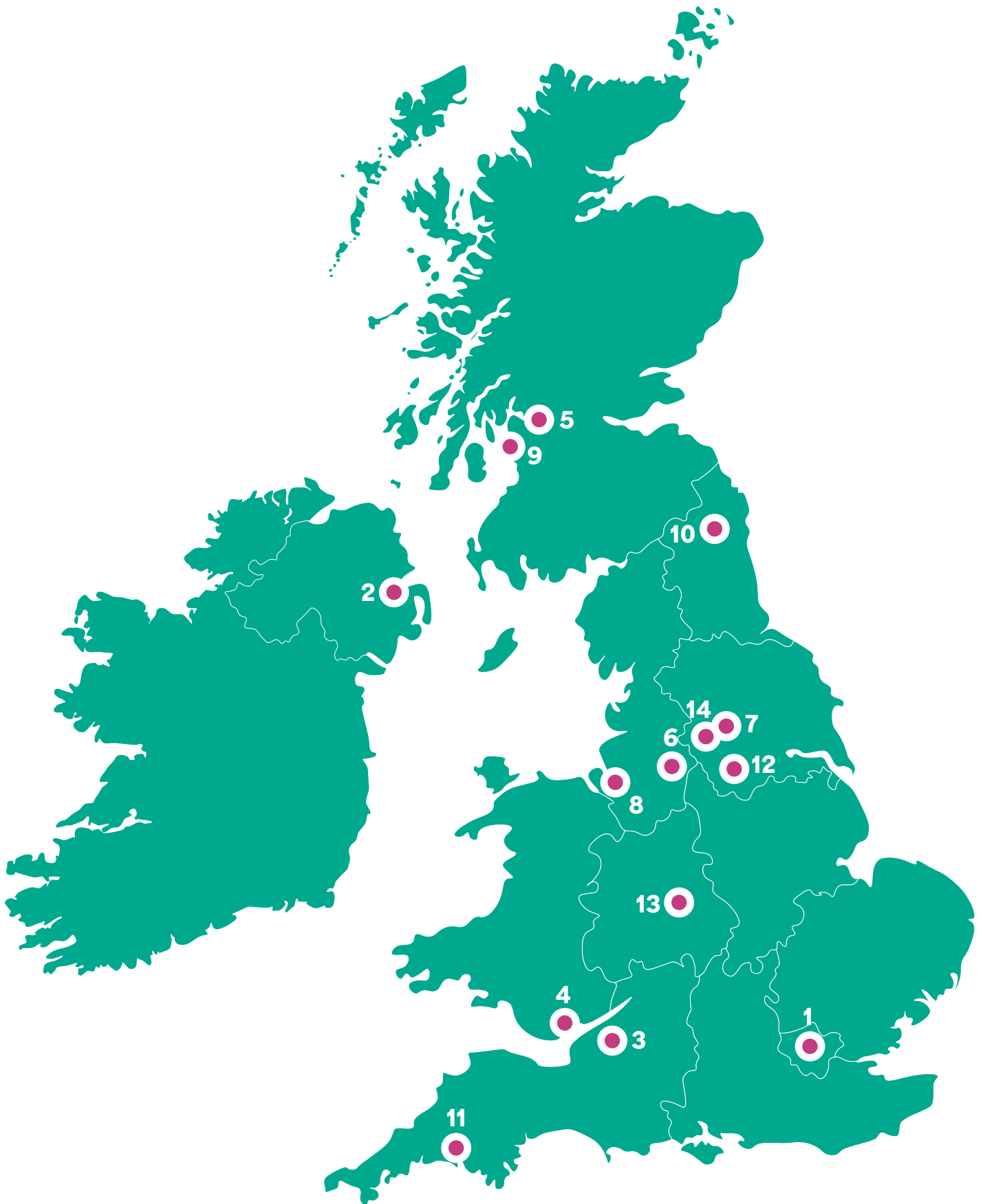
Pam Johnson, Head of Culture Programmes, Leeds City Council

Activity across the IGN

IGN member places are leading a range of activity to catalyse inclusive growth through culture and creative industries. The map and list on the following pages show some examples of the innovative projects and programmes taking place across the network.

What is striking is the range of activity underway across the country, from new capital projects to business networks and skills programmes. These range from large-scale developments, including Aviva Studios in Manchester and Cardiff Indoor Arena, to major festivals and events, such as LEEDS 2023 Year of Culture and Eurovision 2023. Community-based programmes include Creative Communities Glasgow. There are regeneration-focused projects, including Nudge Community Builders in Plymouth and North of Tyne’s Cultural and Creative Zones. Some programmes are focused on one sector, such as Music Matters, while others are about the broader cultural and creative industries, such as in South Yorkshire.

Examples of projects and programmes



1. Barking and Dagenham

Eastbrook film studios: London's largest film and TV production centre

Wholesale market relocation: community-led Good Food Partnership and Action Plan

2. Belfast

Music Matters: building a thriving and sustainable music sector

2 Royal Avenue: a community and cultural hub that provides free creative space

3. Bristol

Bristol Ideas: has led major citywide culture projects over three decades

Culture Investment Programme 2023-27: making arts and culture accessible for all

4. Cardiff

Atlantic Wharf Arena: embedding inclusive growth in a new music development

Creative Cardiff: a network encouraging cross-sector collaboration

5. Glasgow

Creative Communities Glasgow: empowering communities to develop cultural activities

Glasgow International: supporting locally based artists and organisations

6. Greater Manchester

Aviva Studios: a new £186m international arts venue in Manchester

Greater Manchester Music Commission: promoting music in the region

7. Leeds

The Creative Catalyst: accelerator and export programme

LEEDS 2023 Year of Culture: supporting creative and cultural events across the city

8. Liverpool City Region

Eurovision 2023: inclusive growth at the heart of design, delivery and monitoring

One Percent for Culture: supporting cultural activities through 1% of devolution funding

9. North Ayrshire

Ayrshire Visual Artist and Craft Makers Award Scheme: small grants to support artists

Islands Recovery and Renewal: strategic support for arts, culture and language

10. North of Tyne

Culture and Creative Zones: investing in the development and growth of the sector

North East Screen Industries Partnership: developing the region's TV and screen industry

11. Plymouth

Nudge Community Builders: reviving vacant spaces for sustainable long-term use

Plymouth Cultural Investment Fund: seed-funding cultural initiatives

12. South Yorkshire

Children's Capital of Culture 2025: celebrating young people and their creativity

Cultural and Creative Industries Network: connecting creative practitioners

13. West Midlands

£70m Commonwealth Games legacy fund: supporting cultural and creative projects

The People's Orchestra: generating job opportunities in the music industry

14. West Yorkshire

The Mayor's Screen Diversity Programme: supporting young people into film and TV

'You Can Make It Here' support package: helping people into the creative industries

Case study: LEEDS 2023 Year of Culture

West Yorkshire is highlighting the collective cultural offer of the region through Year of Culture events in each borough. This began in 2023 with LEEDS 2023 and Music in Kirklees, followed by Wakefield's Our Year and CultureDale in 2024, and finishing with UK City of Culture in Bradford in 2025. LEEDS 2023 has put inclusive growth at the heart of its mission, maximising the benefits of the event by:

- ▶ Enabling local communities to celebrate what culture means through curating and delivering their own events
- ▶ Equipping residents with the skills to access new opportunities
- ▶ Delivering an impactful programme, building on the strong partnerships and senior endorsement established through a previous European Capital of Culture bid

Empowering hyper-local culture

LEEDS 2023, an independent not-for-profit Year of Culture, is focused on 'Letting Culture Loose'. They are supporting creative and cultural events in every council ward across the city, ensuring that every community can take part in making culture meaningful to them.

This hyper-local, grassroots-led approach has empowered people to define what culture means to them, resulting in events which reflect the city's diversity and gives voice to often marginalised communities. It takes culture from big-ticket events in the city centre and places it in people's neighbourhoods, whether it is a community sports event, a Bollywood dance performance, or a celebration of Yorkshire traditions.



Held annually on the last Monday in August, the Leeds West Indian Carnival is one of the biggest cultural events of the year © Tim Dennell / CC BY-NC 2.0



© Tim Dennell / CC BY-NC 2.0



Delivering long-term benefits through skills development

Through community roadshows, LEEDS 2023 engaged directly with residents about showcasing their neighbourhood and the wider city. This listening and learning exercise led to the recruitment of 33 Neighbourhood Hosts – one representative for each of the 33 wards in Leeds with the responsibility to work with their local community and create a local event as part of LEEDS 2023’s My Leeds Summer programme.

Every host was offered paid training in event organisation, from health and safety, to liaising with the Council on road closures, and promoting activities. By developing social capital and upskilling residents, the long-term aim is for this to unlock opportunities to organise events and support local culture in the future, either on a voluntary basis or through paid work.

‘It’s a legacy for the city that there are people who have participated in this training and understand how to put on events, long after LEEDS 2023 finishes. These are people who will stay in the city and hopefully continue that work on the ground.’

Abigail Scott Paul, Director of External Relations and Strategic Partnerships,
LEEDS 2023

LEEDS 2023 events in local neighbourhoods have built capacity in the community, equipping residents with new skills to design and deliver events, with the potential for benefits beyond the end of 2023. This will lead to new opportunities for people, supporting inclusive economic growth and prosperity.

4 | A new framework for culture and inclusive growth



Chapter summary

We have developed a new framework to maximise the opportunities for inclusive growth presented by culture and creative industries. This is based on the Centre for Progressive Policy's (CPP's) three drivers of inclusive growth and is informed by findings from the evidence, insights from the stakeholder interviews and the repository of inclusive growth good practice cultivated through work with IGN member places. This chapter describes the components of the Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework:

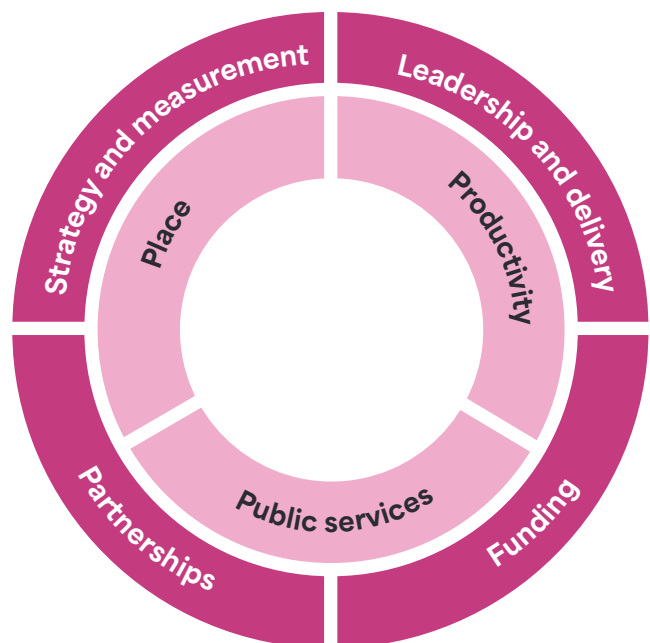
- ▶ **Drivers of inclusive growth** – place, productivity and public services
- ▶ **Enablers** – strategy and measurement, leadership and delivery, partnerships, and funding

Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework

The diagram below illustrates our Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework, which is made up of three inclusive growth drivers and four enablers.

Inclusive growth drivers

CPP has defined three drivers of inclusive growth.²⁸ Within each driver, local and combined authorities have a range of levers that can be used to catalyse inclusive growth through culture and creative industries. The lessons learned from the experience of IGN members have been used to inform the framing of the drivers and the five ways to catalyse inclusive growth.



Enablers



Inclusive growth drivers

- 1. Place** - embedding inclusive growth in the design, development, and use of places and spaces, doing *with* rather than *to* communities.
- 2. Productivity** - reducing inequalities between and within places through robust industrial strategy, business investment and skills development.
- 3. Public services** - a prevention-led approach to public services whereby culture supports community resilience, education, and health and wellbeing.

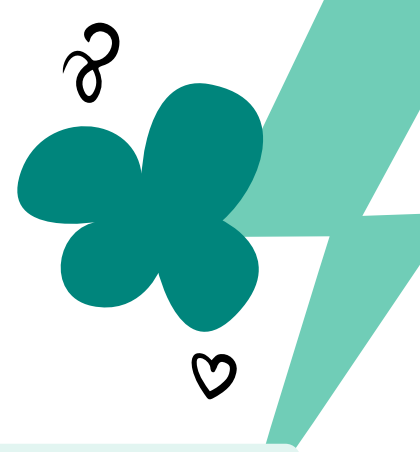
Enablers

The four enablers refer to approaches, mechanisms and tools that places need in order to create the conditions for culture and creative industries to act as a catalyst for inclusive growth. These enablers were identified and defined through the stakeholder interviews and experience of IGN members.

- 1. Strategy and measurement** - aligning the vision and priorities of inclusive growth and cultural strategy, and developing mechanisms to demonstrate impact and change.
- 2. Leadership and delivery** - establishing the strategic and operational frameworks to deliver inclusive growth through culture and creative industries.
- 3. Partnerships** - drawing on the expertise and experience of partners across the public, private, VCSE and education sectors to embed inclusive growth at the heart of cultural activity.
- 4. Funding** - working proactively to leverage funding and inward investment to progress inclusive growth and other strategic objectives, centralising culture as a key asset.



5 | Catalysing inclusive growth



Chapter summary

The Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework includes three drivers for catalysing inclusive growth through culture and creative industries: place, productivity and public services. This chapter unpacks each of these to set out the opportunity and five ways to catalyse inclusive growth. At the end of the chapter, we set out five ways to leverage the inclusive growth benefits of high-profile events, flagship projects and large institutions.

Place

Culture is often at the heart of place identity and developing a strong narrative. These narratives are vital in underpinning inward investment and talent attraction strategies, generating investment and bolstering local economies, including through promotion of the visitor economy.

‘How do you create a place where people want to live and where they want to set up a business and where they want to invest? Culture is always a key part of that.’

John Wrathmell, Director of Strategy, Research and Economy, Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Over the last few decades, culture has been central to place regeneration. Culture creates social infrastructure - ‘third’ spaces between work and home where people can convene and collaborate. New cultural and creative enterprises also have a key role in high street renewal and regeneration. As the purpose of town centres is changing, culture is reshaping high streets and the public realm, for instance through how spaces are used. This is exemplified by CS Lewis Square in Belfast and Plymouth High Street Heritage Action Zone. But without concerted efforts, cultural led regeneration and new developments can lead to displacement of people through gentrification and rising house prices.

The role of culture in regeneration can be at any scale, whether a flagship project such as the North of Tyne Combined Authority’s three emerging Culture and Creative Zones, responding to local challenges and opportunities through a place-based approach, or a smaller community-based project. There are also opportunities to involve artists and creatives in developments, linking them to wider place narratives and encouraging learning and debate. The involvement of Bristol’s City Poets in the Temple Quarter regeneration project is an example of this.



SEC Armadillo, Glasgow

Five ways to catalyse inclusive growth

- 1.** Connect entrepreneurs and cultural organisations to vacant space for pop-ups and events through a ‘meanwhile use’ programme and for longer-term use.
- 2.** Implement place-based zones, supporting the cultural and creative ecosystem and responding to place specific opportunities and challenges.
- 3.** Ensure that both existing infrastructure and new developments support the wider cultural ecosystem, with physical space reserved for local communities.
- 4.** Recognise the value of culture and heritage in local identity and storytelling, supporting pride in place and external place promotion.
- 5.** Apply co-design principles to the development and delivery of cultural spaces, events and programmes, with local residents and businesses at the heart of decision-making.



Case study: Belfast Stories

Belfast Stories is a flagship project of the £850m Belfast Region City Deal that will see a 5,000 square metre site transformed into a state-of-the-art, interactive and immersive visitor experience that will celebrate the stories of Belfast. It will catalyse inclusive growth by:

- ▶ Designing vibrant social spaces for visitors and local people to enjoy
- ▶ Putting people at the heart of the design through inclusive engagement, co-design and ongoing collaboration
- ▶ Connecting communities and building civic pride

A transformative opportunity

The new destination, due to open in 2029, is located on a key city centre site located on the edge of the city's Cathedral Quarter and adjacent to the new Ulster University Campus. Belfast Stories will transform a much-loved heritage building on the site and regenerate the area. Visitors to Belfast Stories will be encouraged to explore the city as the stories will continue to be told in the neighbourhoods. Belfast Stories aims to encourage more people to visit and spend more time in the city and region.

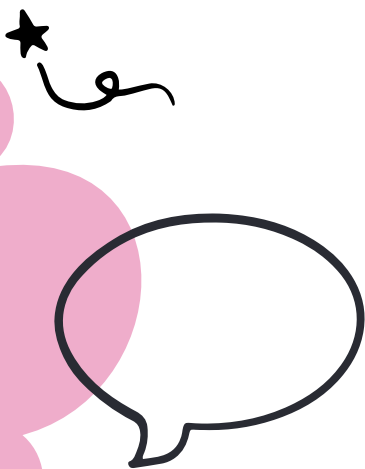
As a major new development, Belfast Stories aims to deliver social value by ensuring the purchase of goods, services and developmental works makes a positive difference to the people and communities of Belfast. Belfast Stories will also support opportunities for skills development and new jobs, and will actively target priority groups ensuring they are able to benefit from the investment. A Belfast Stories Inclusive Growth group was established early in the project to ensure that the breadth of opportunities during pre-construction and construction and post opening are both considered and maximised.

Skills audits are being progressed to identify the various skills opportunities in construction, tourism and hospitality, and creative and digital technologies. Collaboration with the local universities, further education colleges and the voluntary and community sector will help to identify and promote learning and skills opportunities for local people.

Connecting communities

Belfast Stories will reflect the unique spirit of Belfast through the telling of stories using a variety of media and a mix of immersive experiences, enabling international and local visitors to connect with Belfast and one another.

The Council will embark on an unparalleled programme of story collection using agreed principles to gather old and new stories told from multiple perspectives, by the people who call Belfast home. A key priority is to ensure that everyone who wants to can tell their story. These stories will be shared and celebrated through exhibition and screen-based galleries, with input from local creatives to bring the stories to life. The experience will be supported by animated public indoor and outdoor spaces and award-winning local food and drink.



Development through inclusive engagement

Belfast Stories is committed to engaging with stakeholders and in 2022 held a 14-week public consultation to raise awareness in communities about what the project is and find out how they would like to be involved. Working with the design teams, the project will agree an ongoing engagement plan, establish agreed inclusive design principles for the project, and identify opportunities for co-design and user input. This will ensure more impactful investment and the development of a high-quality accessible place.

An Equity Steering Group was established in 2022 to ensure the voices of people and communities that are often excluded from decision-making processes are heard. The group includes people from different faith, political and cultural backgrounds, people from ethnic minorities and the LGBTQIA+ community, neurodiverse people, disabled people, older and younger people, and carers and people with dependants. Its purpose is to ensure that everyone has the same opportunity to take part in Belfast Stories, from helping to make the design of the building and its experiences more accessible, to identifying 'missing voices' and co-producing engagement opportunities.

Belfast Stories contributes to placemaking by growing the local economy and enabling a renewed, vibrant city centre where people want to live, work, visit and invest. By amplifying local voices and strengthening connections, it stands as a transformative development that can drive inclusive growth across the lifecycle of the investment for the benefit of local people.



Belfast Stories will open on the site where North Street and Royal Avenue meet, including the former Bank of Ireland building above © William Murphy / CC BY-NC 2.0

Productivity

In 2022, culture and creative industries contributed £160bn in economic value and employed 3.2 million people in the UK but had below-average productivity.²⁹ Many cultural and creative businesses are small – 65% have between two and five employees³⁰ and 29% of the creative workforce are freelance, compared with 15% across the rest of the economy.³¹ The sector also has a wider economic role: for every £1 of salary paid in the arts and culture industry, an additional £2.01 is generated in the wider economy through indirect and induced multiplier effects.³²

Addressing sector skills, diversity challenges and labour shortages has the potential to enhance productivity and regional prosperity, with businesses able to access a wider array of talent and ideas. Notably, the promotion of opportunities linked to Eurovision through job fairs was successful in Liverpool, and West Yorkshire Combined Authority has established a targeted initiative through the Mayor’s Screen Diversity Programme.

‘We have something called the Mayor’s Screen Diversity Programme with Screen Yorkshire. It has very ambitious targets in terms of participation by women, ethnic minorities, and disabled people, and it surpasses those, it does really well. The reason is that it’s not just a “nice to have”, but because that is the whole *raison d’être* of that programme. There’s definitely a place for those schemes that look at where the under-representation is and target that specifically.’

Jim Hinks, Head of Culture, Heritage and Sport Policy, West Yorkshire Combined Authority

The government’s prioritisation of creative industries for Skills Bootcamps is a mechanism to bring people into the industry and is already being utilised by West Yorkshire Combined Authority and North of Tyne Combined Authority. Involvement in culture can also help individuals to develop the skills and ability to think creatively, opening up new opportunities.

There are opportunities to deliver inclusive growth by nurturing the cultural and creative ecosystem and creative entrepreneurialism through business and enterprise support, tailored to the sector requirements. Programmes should be accessible to a range of beneficiaries, such as freelancers, small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and organisations with alternative business models,ⁱⁱ and could be targeted to certain cohorts and localities. In West Yorkshire, the £1.7m ‘You Can Make It Here’ programme aims to attract more creative businesses through mentoring and upskilling support.

ii Including social enterprises, community interest companies, B Corporations and employee ownership.





The Piece Hall, Halifax

Five ways to catalyse inclusive growth

- 1.** Accelerate use of Skills Bootcamps and Adult Education Budget, integrating equality, diversity and inclusion considerations.
- 2.** Raise awareness of and aspiration towards opportunities for work, diversify skills pathways into cultural and creative roles by mapping entry routes, and showcase at schools and colleges from primary school upwards.
- 3.** Connect creative businesses to other sectors, generating new opportunities for productive growth.
- 4.** Encourage start-ups and growth through support and financing, including for freelancers, micro-businesses and organisations with alternative models.
- 5.** Work with cultural and creative organisations to encourage sign-up to good employment charters, and to build careers and work experience to showcase job opportunities.

Case study: New Writing North

New Writing North, set up in 1996, was the UK's first writing development agency, paving the way for similar regional projects to follow. The agency has catalysed inclusive growth in the region by:

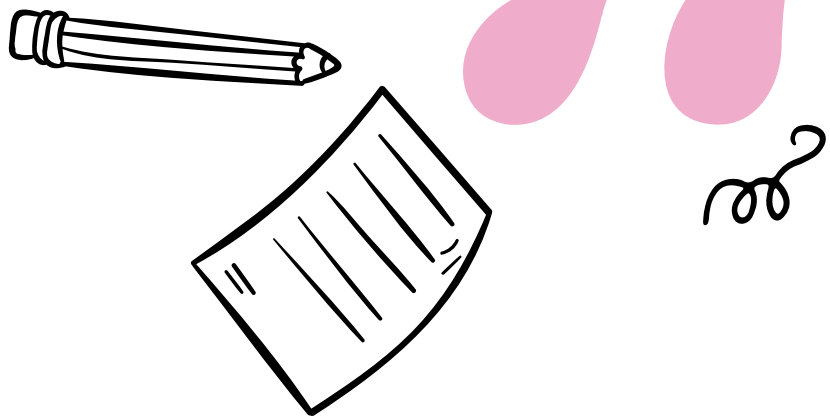
- ▶ Dismantling barriers to a career in the arts and cultural industries
- ▶ Addressing literacy and promoting cultural engagement in areas of disadvantage
- ▶ Growing the North's reputation as a cultural powerhouse

Developing local talent

New Writing North is dedicated to identifying emerging and talented writers, particularly those from under-represented backgrounds, who may lack cultural capital and publishing connections. Through national initiatives such as [A Writing Chance](#) and their flagship talent development programme the [Northern Writers Awards](#), the agency provides writers with the necessary resources to achieve their creative goals, whether that is publication in poetry, fiction or non-fiction; routes into TV, film, or audio production; journalism, or writing for theatre or digital. Grants, mentoring and development programmes provide emerging writers with the time, space and support to develop their writing voice and dedicate themselves to their projects.



© Priscilla Du Preez / Unsplash



Roadshows, led by established talent, promote writing across forms, provide industry insight, and identify writers in northern towns and neighbourhoods. These events, offered at low or no cost, aim to encourage creative writing, demystify the publishing industry and attract new talent to be nurtured by the agency. The agency has a sustainable model whereby writers supported through the programme go on to support and mentor the new generation of emerging writers.

Growing literary engagement and ambition

New Writing North runs deep and ongoing development work in places of socioeconomic disadvantage in the North East. It has year-round ongoing relationships with key schools, community spaces and voluntary organisations to co-create cultural activity with local communities.

New Writing North has also built relationships with a network of local libraries and smaller cultural organisations across the North, again prioritising socioeconomically disadvantaged communities. Local writers are invited into community spaces to introduce their work and facilitate conversations, thereby identifying emerging writers and fostering a new generation of literature lovers. The agency also runs the Durham Book Festival and produces the Gordon Burn Prize for books which challenge expectations and amplify voices from under-represented backgrounds that are often missing in mainstream literature.

New Writing North is expanding its impact by establishing a writing centre in Newcastle to put literature at the heart of the North's cultural offer. This is part of a wider movement of publishers moving staff out of London to the North East and other regions. The centre will host events, facilitate networking, attract industry partners, support young people's creativity and incubate new cultural businesses. It will become home to the recently launched Publishing MA course which Northumbria University runs in partnership with the publisher Hachette and New Writing North, a key development in the training of the emerging publishing workforce. By staying in the area, graduates will help to grow the cultural economy by contributing to and helping to develop the publishing scene across the North.

New Writing North's pioneering mission has successfully put the North on the map as a regional centre for writing and literacy. Recognising that talent is spread equally but opportunity is not, the agency is at the forefront of efforts to level up access to the cultural and creative sector.

Public services

By supporting health, wellbeing and education, strong and effective public services enable more people to participate in the economy, improving productivity and helping to spread the benefits of growth more fairly between people and places. Public services are more fragile now than in 2010 following consistent disinvestment,³³ with increasing demand and low morale leading to a crisis in staffing.³⁴ In this context, investment in culture should form part of a proactive and preventative approach, reducing demand on the public sector by supporting healthier, more resilient and cohesive communities.

Culture benefits communities in a myriad of ways, contributing to sense of place, belonging and inclusion, health and wellbeing, civic responsibility, confidence, leadership, and participation. It provides social infrastructure and physical spaces – places to meet to promote understanding, navigate differences, and overcome loneliness and isolation.

‘For North of Tyne, culture is definitely about community and social capital, that idea both of bringing people together around things they’ve got in common, to celebrate that, but also that bridging social capital of offering an insight into other people’s worlds, creating the places and spaces where people can come together and build that trust.’

Robin Fry, Inclusive Economy Advisor, North of Tyne Combined Authority

Member places across the IGN are taking different approaches to supporting cultural activity at the community level, with a strong emphasis on bolstering activity beyond major urban centres. LEEDS 2023 Year of Culture supports grassroots activity across all wards, alongside working with some of the biggest cultural organisations in the city. The North of Tyne Combined Authority has taken a localist approach, investing in local festivals and artists and in community partnerships. Similarly, Greater Manchester Combined Authority has invested in a Town of Culture programme. Belfast is linking communities to a flagship project through Belfast Stories, which has a focus on community involvement and co-design.

Five ways to catalyse inclusive growth

- 1.** Encourage cultural activity across a diverse range of localities and communities, with a focus on supporting grassroots organisations.
- 2.** Strengthen community development through capacity-building and educational programmes.
- 3.** Use employment charters as a lever to encourage cultural organisations and employers to support community-based activity.
- 4.** Embed cultural participation into wider health and public service strategies and programmes as part of a prevention-first approach.
- 5.** Adopt social prescribing approaches to connect people to cultural and creative opportunities in their local community.



Case study: Knowle West Media Centre

For over 30 years, Knowle West Media Centre has delivered cultural programmes in an area of South Bristol, helping to reverse entrenched social disadvantage. It has catalysed inclusive growth in the community by:

- ▶ Supporting local people to engage in cultural projects
- ▶ Helping local talent to learn new skills and develop their career ambitions
- ▶ Capturing the benefits of greater cultural capital locally



‘Our mission is to use arts, tech and care to make thriving communities. We are working with multiple stakeholders, bringing different kinds of expertise into the room, while focusing our work on citizens, and the challenges and ideas that come from the community itself.’

Dr Carolyn Hassan, Founder and CEO, Knowle West Media Centre

Making culture accessible

Knowle West has traditionally struggled with social deprivation, low educational attainment and marginalisation. The Media Centre seeks to reverse these trends by creating an inclusive space that makes culture accessible to everyone within the community.

The centre adopts a broad view of culture, reflecting the lived experiences of local residents. It integrates arts, humanities, STEM and technology to form a unique Knowle West media offer that reflects and embodies the voices, perspectives and challenges emerging from, and experienced within, the neighbourhood.

In its commitment to making positive changes, the centre offers local artists residencies to develop their artistic practice, and organises retreats to help emerging talent learn new skills and hone their craft.

Investing in the skills, confidence and agency of local people

A clear example of the centre’s commitment to inclusive growth is its investment in providing opportunities to explore creative technology, including filmmaking and media production. The creative and film industries have often excluded those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who cannot afford to do unpaid internships and work experience. By bringing filmmaking skills and technology to the Knowle West community, the centre trains and upskills a new generation of filmmakers, enabling them to tell their own stories.

The centre also cultivates broader social and employability skills in young people. This includes building confidence, learning about social action and understanding project funding. These softer skills support young people to secure employment or establish their own creative initiatives, expanding networks and contributing to local economic growth.

Building lasting value

Knowle West Media Centre focuses on creating value that ‘sticks’ to the community. It is about building social and cultural capital that remains anchored in the community, ensuring that those in the next generation have access to cultural opportunities, recognise the value of their stories and ideas, and aspire to careers in creative technology and the arts.

Knowle West Media Centre is a beacon of inclusive growth, actively shaping a community through culture and creativity that is not only accessible but also a source of lasting value.



Leveraging large-scale events and projects to catalyse inclusive growth

A criticism of event attraction can be the large amounts of time and money spent on bid writing and event delivery. However, we have heard examples of where this has worked well, notably at the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest in Liverpool. High-profile events (e.g. City of Culture), flagship projects (e.g. Belfast Stories) and major institutions (e.g. Channel 4's national headquarters in Leeds) present opportunities to grow local economies.

An inclusive growth approach can be embedded from the outset throughout the design and delivery of the project. This involves thinking about who and where benefits from projects and programmes, and proactively removing barriers for marginalised groups.

Here are five areas to make a difference:

- 1. Skills and employment pathways** - connecting local residents to high-quality jobs in culture and creative industries, supporting greater inclusion and diversity.
- 2. Community development** - establishing community and educational development programmes, encouraging local, place-based activity, and adopting inclusive engagement and co-design approaches.
- 3. Enterprise** - supporting the wider cultural ecosystem, for instance through provision of space, advice, and creation of start-up and accelerator programmes. This can be targeted at certain cohorts and localities.
- 4. Procurement** - developing strong and resilient local supply chains that provide good employment.
- 5. Physical space** - providing space for local community, culture and arts groups, and ensuring that new developments become local assets, prioritising accessibility and inclusion.



Case study: Eurovision 2023

In 2023, Liverpool hosted the Eurovision Song Contest on behalf of Ukraine, the winner of the 2022 competition. Liverpool made Eurovision its own, building on its thriving cultural sector, extensive experience of hosting major events since European Capital of Culture in 2008 and consistent investment in culture by the City Council. Liverpool put inclusive growth at the core of Eurovision 2023. The city capitalised on the opportunity presented by the event by:

- ▶ Leveraging a strong history of investment in cultural capital and infrastructure
- ▶ Adopting a collaborative multi-agency approach to deliver an inclusive event
- ▶ Looking beyond economic impact to proactively generate health and wellbeing benefits

Funding creative activity

Investment in activities around the main event played an important role in maximising the cultural value of Eurovision.

‘We offered an opportunity for people to put forward proposals saying how they would celebrate Eurovision. This way, we funded different creative activity. It did not come from us. It came from our community and the community saying “this is what I want to do”.’

Claire McColgan CBE, Director of Culture, Liverpool City Council

The Eurovision Village had capacity for 10,000 people and was free to the public, offering food and drink, information, cultural insights, and innovation. Events featured an educational programme for children to learn more about Ukraine and why Liverpool was hosting, and an outreach initiative to engage diverse and marginalised communities and the city’s Ukrainian community.



The Liverpool Arena during the Eurovision Song Contest 2023 © Michael Doherty / CC BY-SA 4.0



Engaging a wide audience

Recognising the economic and confidence barriers to participating in the main event, EuroStreet extended the reach of Eurovision into smaller community spaces. This approach enabled often overlooked communities to engage in other activities.

In addition, EuroLearn provided information and resources for schools and other educational settings to engage in Eurovision-themed events. Incorporating creative writing, storytelling and reading, the resource pack focused on the themes of belonging, welcome, home, hope, loneliness, wellbeing and celebration.

Success beyond economic impact

Evaluation was built into event delivery from inception, involving a multi-agency steering group with representatives from academic partners, the BBC, the Department for Culture Media and Sport, and British Council.

'We made sure we embedded monitoring and evaluation right from the start. This enabled us to measure and capture the amazing inclusive growth impact of Eurovision through a combination of compelling statistics and captivating stories, and allowed us to show the true value of Eurovision.'

Professor Matthew Ashton, Director of Public Health, Liverpool City Council

Eurovision 2023 brought £54.8m net additional spending to Liverpool City Region.³⁵ But the success of the event was defined by more than its economic impact and included cultural relationships, health and wellbeing. The broader impact of Eurovision included 2 million people reached through education and community programmes, and around 93% of participants feeling a sense of belonging during the event.

These findings clearly demonstrate how cultural events can bring more than financial benefits to a region and showcase Liverpool's success in fostering a sense of inclusion, wellbeing and belonging across a diverse city community.

6 | Making positive change happen



Chapter summary

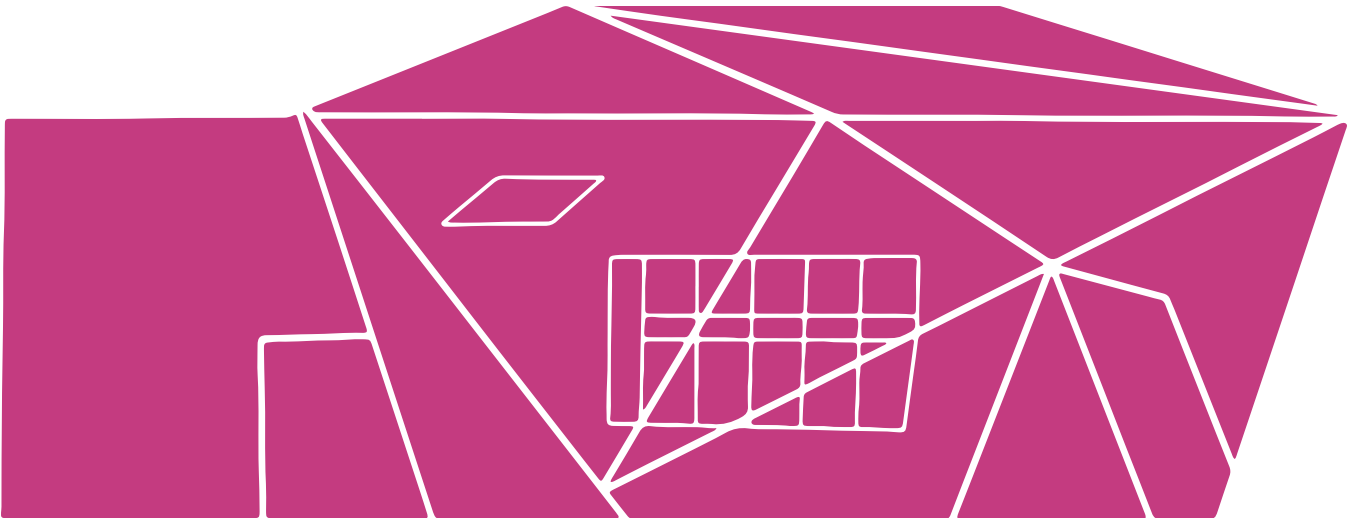
The Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework identifies four enablers that places need in order to deliver inclusive growth through culture and creative industries: strategy and measurement, leadership and delivery, partnerships, and funding. This chapter unpacks each of these in more detail. It then sets out some overarching principles for places to take forward to create the conditions to convene, enable and champion culture as a catalyst for inclusive growth.

Strategy and measurement

A cultural strategy can help a place to pursue a clear sense of self and its civic identity, in turn playing a key role in harnessing inward investment and business dynamism. Culture should also be embedded in all local and combined authority strategies and policies, including inclusive growth strategies. This will lead to cross-departmental working to identify opportunities for culture to support the delivery of inclusive growth. Culture is a golden thread running through the Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy, for example.

Further devolution presents an opportunity for culture, and with it the potential to embed inclusive growth principles. In earlier devolution deals, there was relatively little devolution of powers or funding linked to culture, but this has started to shift in recent years. In 2020, West Yorkshire's Devolution Deal included a policy heading for Culture, Heritage and Digital, with commitments including British Library North and a local cultural framework.³⁶ In 2023, culture and tourism was a key policy heading in both the Greater Manchester and West Midlands Trailblazer Devolution Deals,³⁷ as well as the four devolution deals announced in the Autumn Statement 2023 (Hull and East Yorkshire, Greater Lincolnshire, Cornwall, and Lancashire).³⁸





Aviva Studios, Manchester

Culture has the power to transform, delivering inclusive growth and positively benefiting health, town centre vitality, visitor numbers, and social and human capital. But it is challenging to capture the quantitative impact and value, beyond basics such as attendance, feedback and participation.

In recent years, some attempts have been made to address this. Liverpool City Council commissioned five in-depth independent evaluations to measure the impact of hosting Eurovision 2023, a first for any host city.³⁹ The report on economic impact looks at both the immediate and the short-term (one year on) legacy. There are several organisations and initiatives seeking to quantify the impact of culture, including the Onward UK Social Fabric Index, the Centre for Cultural Value based at the University of Leeds, and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport culture and heritage capital framework. It is important that the approach to measurement is broad and responsive to local context.

‘Policymakers often say culture is not a “one size fits all” model, and then they try to develop a “one size fits all” matrix for analysing its value. Actually what we need is an evaluation framework that is flexible enough to accommodate the different “values” generated by culture - social, economic and political - as well as the different needs and contexts of combined authorities and local authorities and the devolved nations too.’

Professor Katy Shaw, Director of Cultural Partnerships, Northumbria University

Qualitative methodologies are needed to collect case studies and compelling stories of how interventions and programmes can have a transformative impact on people’s lived experience. Sharing good practice and learning is important for building capacity and momentum, as is sponsorship from senior leaders and figureheads.

Leadership and delivery

Local government can create the conditions for culture to thrive, supporting capacity within the sector and providing opportunities to collectively realise potential benefits, including prioritising local inclusive growth. Cultural planners, who are found in local government, arts and cultural organisations, universities, and community groups, have a strong enabling and brokering role. Described as ‘boundary spanners’ by Professor Jane Robinson (Pro-Vice Chancellor of Engagement and Place, Newcastle University), they have strong networking, partnership and negotiating skills, can navigate complexity, and understand different policy areas, such as planning, transport and skills. They need to have the language and relational skills to communicate across different areas and an openness to help deliver against other strategic priorities through arts and culture, for instance health and wellbeing. This adaptability and openness brings significant opportunities to support the delivery of inclusive growth through collaboration.

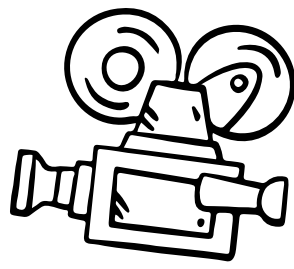
‘My first question is “What are you doing?” It’s never, “Let’s talk about arts and culture.” And then [my second question is] “How can arts and culture help deliver on your priorities?” We know it can. So it is about openness to seeing those connections and joining them up. It’s bringing it all together which is really exciting when it happens.’

Sarah James, Creative and Cultural Programme Lead, West of England Combined Authority

To maximise the potential for culture and creative industries to catalyse inclusive growth, it is essential that there are strong links between culture and inclusive growth at both the strategic and operational levels, and that this is integrated throughout the organisation. This is also vital in validating the work of cultural planners, providing institutional legitimacy for the role of culture in driving wider organisational priorities. In the same way that there are different models for cultural delivery, from council-owned companies to internal departments, there are different ways of approaching strategic and operational integration. It may be through membership of inclusive growth and other relevant boards, links between cultural directors and senior officers, or integration of teams and departments.

There are undoubtedly challenges to achieving this. Culture tends to have modest resources and can sometimes be a smaller voice when working within and with other departments. There can also be challenges around institutional memory, particularly when activity is driven by one person. This underpins the importance of having a clear integrated strategy with a collectively owned, shared vision and set of priorities, delivered in partnership.





Partnerships

Local government alone cannot create the conditions for culture and creative industries to thrive. Deep partnership working is essential to deliver inclusive growth and increase the resilience of the cultural sector, particularly in the context of reduced funding and capacity challenges across both cultural organisations and local government.

‘Our whole cultural strategy is based on collaboration and partnerships; working with the cultural sector and utilising their networks and their reach. We facilitate and enable artists and arts and cultural organisations to be more intertwined with other departments and sectors.’

Christine Osborne, Partnership Officer, Belfast City Council

This requires working in cross-sector partnerships, with cultural and non-cultural organisations as well as different communities. The Memorandum of Understanding between the BBC and North East Screen Industry Partnership, which represents all North East local authorities, will see £25m invested across 12 local authority areas.⁴⁰ There are opportunities to leverage funding from the private sector to support the delivery of inclusive growth outcomes through cultural development.

Universities play diverse roles in catalysing inclusive growth through culture, by supporting the sector, creating demand for the local leisure and cultural offer, supplying a talent pipeline, managing their own cultural assets, working with other cultural organisations, widening participation, and their civic role as an anchor institution. There are examples of successful collaborations with universities across the network, including LEEDS 2023 Year of Culture with the University of Leeds. It is important to have dedicated senior staff who work on partnerships and engagement: Newcastle University, Northumbria University and University of the West of England are good examples.

Funding

A constrained funding landscape is a well-documented challenge to delivering cultural programmes and enabling them to catalyse inclusive growth. Austerity has reduced cultural funding in councils, the largest public funders of culture, as well as devolved governments and the Arts Council across the four nations. Beyond a statutory requirement for libraries, public cultural spending is discretionary and insecure, leaving it to compete with rising statutory demand on council budgets from children's and adult social care.⁴¹

There is significant impetus for a shift away from competitive bidding between places and funding of discrete, short-term projects towards longer-term placemaking and locality-based models. Some places are exploring innovative approaches to generating revenue, such as through hotel, bedroom or tourist taxes, although there is some resistance to this in places. Others are exploring alternative models for investment such as Crowdfund North of Tyne, which matches community fundraising with grants.

'What we're interested in and thinking about in the cultural sector in Plymouth is how do we have different conversations with funders to change the investment model, so that rather than funding projects, [they] fund placemaking, fund locality, fund for longer periods of time.'

Hannah Harris, Chief Executive Officer, Plymouth Culture

The collaborative working and integration of agendas between culture, inclusive growth and other policy areas can help to pool and leverage funding to deliver strategic priorities and improve outputs. Devolution presents an opportunity to make progress with culture and inclusive growth through flexibility, local decision-making and longer-term funding horizons to support strategic planning and delivery. With flexible combined authority investment funds centring on 30-year time horizons, many places now have the opportunity to map out a long-term investment trajectory based on an intentional vision for their places. The growing consensus around the devolution agenda means that this model is likely to be rolled out further and expanded across English regions. Within this context, investment in culture must be seen as vital social infrastructure, crucial to facilitating regional prosperity.

Making the case for investment in culture can be challenging because business case and HM Treasury Green Book requirements do not lend themselves to cultural activity. Closer collaboration and working between culture officers and teams responsible for assurance processes can help to communicate and capture the broader value and impact of culture.



Principles

The role of local and combined authorities is to act as a convenor, enabler and champion of culture and creative industries, identifying and maximising opportunities to catalyse inclusive growth. These principles should guide approaches and activity.



Embedded - the potential for culture and creative industries to catalyse inclusive growth is recognised in both culture and inclusive growth strategies



Inclusive - cultural representatives are present on inclusive growth or inclusive economy boards



Integrated - close working relationships are proactively established and strengthened between inclusive growth and culture teams



Collaborative - cross-sector partnership models steer culture and inclusive growth strategy and delivery



Strategic - culture, inclusive growth and other policy teams work together to best leverage funding to catalyse inclusive growth



Impactful - success is shared through compelling stories and examples to build momentum

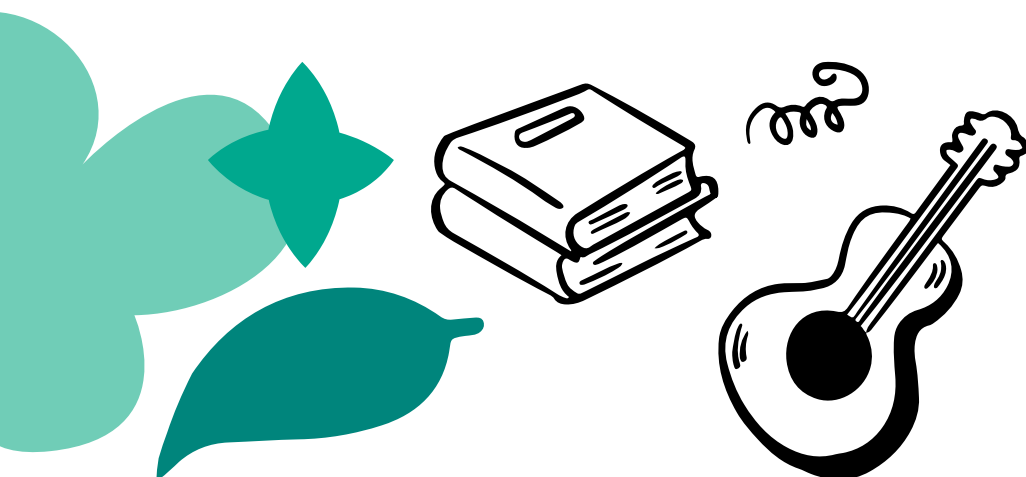
7 | Recommendations

Chapter summary

Local and combined authorities have an instrumental role in catalysing inclusive growth by nurturing the cultural and creative industries ecosystem. They could go further and faster with greater devolution of powers, functions and funding. This chapter sets out practical recommendations for national government and arm's-length bodies to enable local government to deliver inclusive growth in practice.

1. Prioritise culture and the creative industries in future Trailblazer Devolution Deals.
2. Decentralise the model of distributing funding from arm's-length bodies, including the Arts Council, devolving long-term place-based funding to combined authorities and upper-tier authorities.
3. Include cultural activity as a strand in future place-based funds.
4. Expand the Creative Industries Clusters Programme to support and grow cultural and creative ecosystems, particularly where these are nascent and emerging.
5. Fund a longitudinal study to measure the long-term inclusive growth impact of a major cultural development in the UK.

The Culture and Inclusive Growth Framework is intended to help places to catalyse inclusive growth through culture and creative industries, using the levers that local and combined authorities have at their disposal. Despite well documented challenges, culture has consistently shown its value and resilience as a key growth sector for the UK. We are optimistic that local and combined authorities are well placed to play a key role in harnessing it as an asset in promoting inclusive growth, as demonstrated by the breadth of good practice across IGN member places. These recommendations will further enable places to accelerate this agenda and put culture and creative industries at the heart of inclusive growth policy and practice.





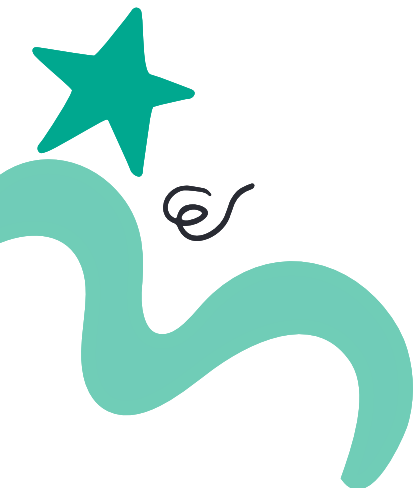
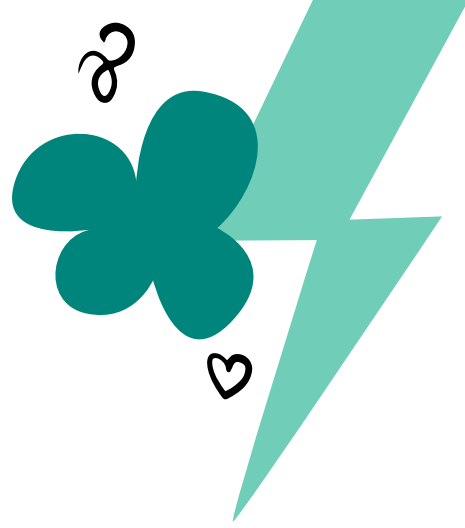
Annex: Interviewees

- ▶ Paul Bristow, Director of Policy Partnerships, Arts Council England
- ▶ Phil Gibby, Area Director for the South West, Arts Council England
- ▶ Lleucu Siencyn, Director of Arts Development, Arts Council of Wales
- ▶ Clare Hutchinson, Strategic Policy and Planning Officer, Belfast City Council
- ▶ Wendy Langham, Programme Director, Belfast Stories, Belfast City Council
- ▶ Chris McCreery, Culture Development Manager, Belfast City Council
- ▶ Christine Osborne, Partnership Officer, Belfast City Council
- ▶ Claire Patterson, Inclusive Growth Policy and Programme Manager, Belfast City Council
- ▶ Ruth Cayford, Head of Creative Industries and Culture Development, Cardiff Council
- ▶ Jonathan Day, Head of Economic Policy, Cardiff Council
- ▶ Sarah Christie, Programme Manager, Children's Capital of Culture
- ▶ John Wrathmell, Director of Strategy, Research and Economy, Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- ▶ Dr Carolyn Hassan, Founder and CEO, Knowle West Media Centre
- ▶ Fiona Bolam, Head of Economic Policy, Leeds City Council
- ▶ Pam Johnson, Head of Culture Programmes, Leeds City Council
- ▶ Abigail Scott Paul, Director of External Relations and Strategic Partnerships, LEEDS 2023
- ▶ Professor Matthew Ashton, Director of Public Health, Liverpool City Council
- ▶ Claire McColgan CBE, Director of Culture, Liverpool City Council
- ▶ Anna Disley, Executive Director (Programme and Impact), New Writing North
- ▶ Professor James Annesley, Associate Dean for Research and Innovation, Newcastle University
- ▶ Professor Jane Robinson, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Engagement and Place, Newcastle University
- ▶ Jamie Driscoll, Mayor, North of Tyne Combined Authority
- ▶ Robin Fry, Inclusive Economy Advisor, North of Tyne Combined Authority
- ▶ Professor Katy Shaw, Director of Cultural Partnerships, Northumbria University
- ▶ Hannah Sloggett, Co-Director, Nudge Community Builders
- ▶ Hannah Harris, Chief Executive Officer, Plymouth Culture
- ▶ Lindsey Hall, Chief Executive, Real Ideas
- ▶ Kate Brindley, Cultural Development Consultant, Sheffield City Council (Project Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority until August 2023)
- ▶ Laurie Heykoop, Senior Economic Policy Manager, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
- ▶ Salla Virman, Strategic Lead for Culture and Heritage, West Midlands Combined Authority
- ▶ Charlie Garnett, Senior Policy Manager, West of England Combined Authority
- ▶ Sarah James, Creative and Cultural Programme Lead, West of England Combined Authority
- ▶ Jim Hinks, Head of Culture, Heritage and Sport Policy, West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Endnotes

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