

New Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre co-hosts announced

Embargoed: 10am UK time, Thursday 9 March 2023

Newcastle University and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) have been announced as new hosts of the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (Creative PEC).

The Creative PEC is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to provide independent research and policy recommendations for the UK's creative industries.

This comes as AHRC confirms £11 million in funding to allow the Creative PEC to continue its work for a further five years.

Minister of State at the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology, George Freeman, said:

“Our dynamic creative industries are a national treasure, attracting major investment and creating exciting new technologies, companies & careers in creative clusters all round the UK.

“This additional funding for the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre will help allow yet more brilliant British creative industry talent from Tyneside to Tenby, and Belfast to Bathgate, to flourish for years to come.”

Arts and Humanities Research Council Executive Chair Professor Christopher Smith said:

“Through its role as a centre of excellence for research and evidence PEC is a critical resource for the UK's world-leading creative industries.

“The wide range of research and policy expertise provided by Newcastle University and the RSA means they are ideally suited to being the new PEC hosts.

“We very much look forward to the exciting next stage of the PEC's development and to reinforcing its important role in the sector.”

Following an application process in which nine bids were considered, Newcastle University and the RSA were selected for their expertise, inspiring vision and ‘twin hub’ structure - with a Northern Hub in Newcastle and a Southern Hub in London - which will bring huge benefits to the whole of the UK's creative sector.

Since 2018 Nesta has hosted the Creative PEC, and it will continue to do so until the end of May. They are wholeheartedly supporting the Creative PEC team to make a seamless transition to Newcastle University and the RSA.

Informing policy

The creative industries are a UK success story, growing at double the rate of the overall UK economy between 2011 and 2019, with 400,000 additional jobs created since 2015.

To make good, impactful policy decisions on how to support the creative industries and ensure the UK remains a world leader, we need robust evidence and independent advice. The Creative PEC is at the heart of these debates providing an impartial, reliable and challenging voice.

Creative PEC Director Hasan Bakhshi MBE said:

“Over the past five years, the Creative PEC has helped bring about a step change in the quantity and quality of evidence available to inform policies for the creative industries. As well as publishing new research, we have embedded our researchers in the design, planning and implementation cycles of policies. In our next phase of work, our ambition is to work with our colleagues at Newcastle University and the RSA to undertake this “embedded knowledge exchange” activity in both our Northern and Southern Hubs.”

The Creative PEC has provided evidence to inform policy on subjects as varied as R&D funding, creative skills education in schools and universities, the role the creative sector can play in tackling the climate emergency and how the creative industries can help narrow regional economic disparities.

Since its inception in 2018 Creative PEC has published a new independent research paper at a rate of one every month providing the data and evidence needed to support the creative sector.

The future

The next phase of the PEC will build on its previous successes, growing the evidence base by:

- addressing industry and government identified priorities
- advancing research into the longer-term challenges and opportunities facing the sector

It will do this by:

- producing its own new research
- acting as a platform for policy-relevant research produced by others
- engaging policymakers through embedding researchers in policymakers’ planning and design cycles

Newcastle University Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Nigel Harkness said:

“As one of the consortium members for the first phase of the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, we are delighted to be the host university for this vital second phase of the PEC’s work. We look forward to working closely with our partner organisations and the RSA to realise the significant benefits in the new dual-hub structure which connects London and the North East. The PEC will also draw on and enhance Newcastle University’s significant place-based policy expertise, developing partnerships with our Insights North East and Creative FUSE teams from its base in our Business School to inform policy for the creative industries over the next five years and beyond.”

Andy Haldane, Chief Executive of the RSA, said:

“We are delighted to be co-hosting the Creative PEC at this hugely important time for the sector and the economy. By combining the very best analysis and research, with the RSA’s on-the-ground programme of work, we believe we can realise the enormous potential of the

creative industries to grow jobs and skills, income and exports, health and happiness, in communities right across the UK. The UK needs a creativity revolution and the PEC can be its centrepiece.”

In recognition of the growing availability of data in key areas of policy, over the next five years Creative PEC will introduce set piece UK-wide 'State of the Nation' reporting in each of four high-level priority thematic areas led by the four organisations that will make up the research consortium:

1. R&D, Innovation and Clusters (Sussex University)
2. Creative Education, Skills, Talent (Work Advance)
3. Internationalisation (Newcastle University)
4. The Arts, Cultural & Heritage sectors (University of Sheffield)

In addition to this activity, Creative PEC will convene a new multi-disciplinary network of researchers working on topics that are relevant for policies to support the creative industries. As well as sharing knowledge and insight, the research network will be commissioned throughout the lifetime of the award to undertake timely research to address industry and policymaker needs.

Newcastle University Professor of Macroeconomics Giorgio Fazio who will be the Research Director of the Creative PEC following its move said:

“Research in the next phase of the Creative PEC will be powered by a new Research Unit hosted at Newcastle University, a consortium delivering regular State of the Nation reports incorporating both key trends commentary and “deep dives” into emerging topics, and a large and diverse network of PEC Research Fellows. Our goal is to become the national and international reference point for research on policy for the Creative Industries.”

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Notes to editors

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About the Arts and Humanities Research Council

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), part of UK Research and Innovation, funds internationally outstanding independent researchers across the whole range of the arts and humanities: history, archaeology, digital content, philosophy, languages and literature, design, heritage, area studies, the creative and performing arts, and much more. The quality and range of research supported by AHRC works for the good of UK society and culture and contributes both to UK economic success and to the culture and welfare of societies across the globe.

About the Creative PEC

The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (Creative PEC) works to support the growth of the UK's Creative Industries through the production of independent and authoritative evidence and policy advice. Led by Nesta and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of the UK Government's Industrial Strategy, the Centre comprises of a consortium of universities and one joint enterprise from across the UK (Birmingham; Cardiff; Edinburgh; Glasgow; LSE; Manchester; Newcastle; Sussex; Ulster and Work Advance). The Creative PEC works with a diverse range of



industry partners including Creative UK. To find out more, visit www.pec.ac.uk and @CreativePEC

About Newcastle University

Newcastle University, UK, is a thriving international community of more than 28,000 students from over 130 countries worldwide. As a member of the Russell Group of research-intensive universities in the UK, Newcastle has a world-class reputation for research excellence in the fields of medicine, science and engineering, social sciences and the humanities. Its academics are sharply focused on responding to the major challenges facing society today. Research and teaching are world-leading in areas as diverse as health, culture, technology and the environment. Newcastle is committed to providing students with excellent, research-led teaching delivered by dedicated and passionate teachers. Newcastle University is ranked 122nd in the QS World Ranking 2023 and joint 139th in the Times Higher Education World University Ranking 2022. Newcastle University is ranked first in the UK and eighth in the world for sustainable development in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2022.

About Royal Society of Arts (RSA)

We are the RSA. The royal society for arts, manufactures and commerce. Where world-leading ideas are turned into world-changing actions. We're committed to a world that is resilient, rebalanced and regenerative, where everyone can fulfil their potential. The RSA has been at the forefront of significant social impact for over 260 years. Our proven change process, rigorous research, innovate ideas platforms and unique global network of changemakers, work collectively to enable people, places and the planet to flourish. We invite you to be part of this change. Join our community. Together, we'll unite people and ideas in collective action to create opportunities to regenerate our world.