

DCMS CREATIVE ECONOMY PROGRAMME

Minutes of Ministerial Steering Board, 2 June 2008

Attendees

Margaret Hodge
Delyth Morgan
Jon Zeff
Eleanor van Heyningen
Matthew Slotover
Andy Duncan
Feargal Sharkey
Chris Powell
Anthony Lilley
Juliet Williams
Tony Hall
Rachel Clark
John Sorrell

Apologies

Lord Puttnam
Shriti Vadera

Governance

- Ministerial Steering Board (MSB) to meet quarterly
- Draft Terms of Reference agreed with the caveat that they may adapt over time.
- Margaret Hodge (MH) asked members to write to if they think the board could be strengthened in any particular direction.

Commitments update – by theme

- MH asked members to bring to DCMS' attention any emerging projects that could be developed into "centres of excellence" (commitment 5).
- DCMS will seek further information about the creative industries that have benefited from Technology Strategy Board funding awards (commitment 8). Early indications are that, although the TSB has received a very high number of bids for grants from the Creative Industries (CIs) Research and Development Fund, the bids may not represent a true cross section of the CIs.
- MH reminded the Board that any assistance for business must be compatible with the Business Support Simplification Plan (BSSP).
- The board discussed the challenges of reconciling the rights of individual rights holders with the right of consumers to access content.
- DCMS/BERR Convergence Think-Tank will be addressing many IP issues.
- The Board noted that variations existed in the level and quality of support for CIs between different regions and local areas. One of the challenges for Government is to make this more consistent.
- The Board raised the issue of the lack of suitable venues for London festivals.

World Creative Business Conference

- Location of event is a key consideration – the Board recommended Government think carefully about the pros and cons of holding the event in London.
- It will take many years for the event to embed.
- It is also important that the first event is successful and has a very big impact so funds should be used appropriately – one shot to make it work. Others disagreed with this and recommended caution in the first year.
- Successful event needs – top people to act as a draw for others, imaginative (hot) themes, involvement of highest levels of Government.
- Google’s “Zeitgeist” and TED could serve as good examples, although the group was split between following their examples faithfully or picking and choosing the best/most appropriate bits.
- The Board felt the event could be used to apply creative minds to global social/economic/ecological issues.
- Must be clear about the “business reason” for people to attend.
- If this event is successful it could be the catalyst to generate interest and spur on progress in the other commitments.
- Other ideas included – limiting speeches to 6 mins, putting the event on-line and developing a prototype editorial approach.

Apprenticeships

- RDAs are starting to engage schools about the bridge between schools, higher education and joining the workforce in the creative industries.
- The Board mentioned that some CIs would prefer “graduate apprenticeships”. MH explained that, although the CIs are a graduate-rich sector, apprenticeships are not directed at graduates and this is not a solution the Government has in mind.
- Small businesses struggle with the red-tape concerning apprentices. Others may employ people in apprentice roles but don’t call or treat them as apprentices.
- Some businesses don’t see the benefit for them in taking on apprentices.
- The word “apprentice” may be causing difficulties as it is generally associated with manufacturing rather than creative industries.
- Take up of apprenticeships may benefit from the establishment of scheme managers to reduce the administrative burden on the people providing the work. Possibly in a similar way to the Channel 4 trainee schemes. Also a possibility of apprentices getting experience of more than one sector.
- MH pointed out that the new national strategy for apprenticeships published by DIUS in February offered help in many of these areas.

AOB

- The Board raised the issue of ensuring Arts Schools are adequately equipped to optimise their contribution to the cultural and creative sector.