

CREATIVITY: POLICY AND FUNDING INITIATIVES IN ENGLAND 1998-2025

1998 Creative Industries Mapping Document (DCMS)

The concept of the 'creative industries' came into common parlance in 1998 when Chris Smith, as the new Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, commissioned the first mapping document of the sector. It included advertising, the art and antiques market, architecture, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio. Tourism, hospitality, museums and galleries, heritage and sport were recognised as close economic allies to the creative industries. The Creative Industries Mapping Document was revised over time, and in his foreword to the 2001 edition Smith wrote, "I want to see us putting creativity at the heart of education, encouraging our children to develop their innate talents ... I want all young people to have the opportunity to express and channel their creativity through a wide range of activities, including for some a career in the creative industries."

DCMS (1998). Creative Industries Mapping Documents:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creative-industries-mapping-documents-1998>

DCMS (2001). Creative Industries Mapping Documents: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creative-industries-mapping-documents-2001>

1998 NESTA established (DCMS)

The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (Nesta) was established by DCMS with a £250m endowment from the National Lottery and chaired by Lord Puttnam. Nesta was created to promote talent, creativity and innovation across science, technology and the arts. Three programmes provided project funding across learning, fellowships (awards to individuals) and product development. The learning programme was able to proactively seek out and solicit creative and cultural projects as well as respond to direct funding applications and enquiries. Nesta via its sponsoring body (DCMS) fed ideas into the development of Creative Partnerships (see section below) and the development of Artsmark. Nesta later transitioned in 2012 to become an independent charity focused on innovation for public benefit.

Nesta archive:

https://pec.ac.uk/creative_economy_res/nesta-creative-economy-archive/

1999 All our Futures report (DCMS and DfEE*)

The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education was first established in February 1998 by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, the Rt. Hon David Blunkett MP and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt. Hon Chris Smith MP. Chaired by Professor Ken Robinson it was tasked: 'To make recommendations to the Secretaries of State on the creative and cultural development of young people through formal and informal education: to take stock of current provision and to make proposals for principles, policies and practice'. The report was timed to coincide with the Government's planned review of the National Curriculum. The report emphasised that all children and young people could benefit from developing their creative abilities and this should be seen as a general function of education. It stated that creativity can be developed in all areas of the school curriculum, including the sciences as well as the expressive arts. Although the Government did not implement all of the report's recommendations with regard to the National

Curriculum in England, many elements were taken forward. For instance, the report led directly or indirectly to important initiatives such as Creative Partnerships and Artsmark.

* Department for Education and Employment (1995-2001)

All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education (1999) DCMS and DfE, London:
<https://sirkenrobinson.com/pdf/allourfutures.pdf>

2002 Creative Partnerships (Arts Council England)

In 2002, DCMS provided significant funding to ACE (starting at £30 million a year) to establish 16 Creative Partnerships – placed-based investment in arts provision for schools in areas chosen because of need. It became England's flagship creative learning programme. Typically Creative Partnerships Directors were able to invest in arts projects for groups of schools in an area over an extended period, and the role of freelance brokers, often called Creative Agents or Creative Friends, was developed, with the aim of helping to marry up the needs of schools and the value and language of the arts organisations' practice in school settings. The programme was passed from ACE to Creativity, Culture, Education in 2009, and closed in 2011.

Creative Partnerships evaluation in 2007:

<https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/national-evaluation-of-creative-partnerships-final-report/>

UKRI: A critical review of the Creative Partnerships archive: How was cultural value understood, researched and evidenced? University of Nottingham School of Education 2013/14:

[https://qtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=AH/L005379/1#:~:text=Creative%20Partnerships%20\(CP\)%20was%20the,over%201%20million%20young%20people.](https://qtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=AH/L005379/1#:~:text=Creative%20Partnerships%20(CP)%20was%20the,over%201%20million%20young%20people.)

2004 Qualifications and Curriculum Authority – 'Creativity: Find it, Promote it!'

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) sought to support and promote creativity in primary and secondary schools with online and printed resources and materials. QCA advocated for creativity in schools to enable pupils to discover and pursue their interests and talents and linked creativity to leading a richer life and to societal impact.

QCA. Creativity: Find it, Promote it!

<https://www.literacyshed.com/uploads/1/2/5/7/12572836/1847211003.pdf>

2008 Creativity, Culture and Education established

Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) is a UK-based charity which focuses on nurturing creative skills in young people. Following the withdrawal of government funding for Creative Partnerships (which it ran from 2009) and Find Your Talent (a pilot cultural offer for all children and young people) from September 2011 and May 2010 respectively, CCE has worked in more than 23 countries to support education systems to understand and apply creativity in learning. It went on to develop the Creative Partnerships programme in Wales where it had a big influence on the new Welsh Curriculum (2022): as well as including the Expressive Arts as an area of study, the Welsh Curriculum is committed to partnership working with Arts Council Wales to ensure close links with the cultural sector.

CCE. Lead Creative Schools: https://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/case_studies/lead-creative-schools-programme-wales-2/

Arts Council of Wales and Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE): https://arts.wales/sites/default/files/2018-12/Creative_Habits_of_the_Mind.pdf

2019 Durham Commission (Arts Council England and Durham University)

The Durham Commission on Creativity and Education was a joint research collaboration between Durham University and Arts Council England, convened to look at the role creativity and creative thinking should play in the education of young people. The Commission was chaired by Sir Nicholas Serota, Arts Council England Chair, and presented a vision for creative

education, allied with strong subject-based learning. It identified creativity as a critical element of any education system that seeks to future-proof prosperity and maximise opportunities for children and young people. The Commission stated that 'The evidence shows that teaching for creativity confers personal, economic and social advantage. As a matter of social justice and national interest it should be available to all young people, not only to those who can afford it.' The Commission considered creativity and creative thinking in relation to three themes that underpin an individual's life: identity and community, mobility, and wellbeing. The report set out 10 recommendations and concluded that the arts: 'have a distinct contribution to make towards nurturing creativity and the Commission had serious concerns about the decline in the provision and uptake of arts subjects in schools'. It also stated that the development of creativity in any subject requires deep subject knowledge and understanding as well as the development of skills that enable the application of this knowledge and understanding.

Durham Commission on Creativity & Education (2019).

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/durham-commission-creativity-and-education>

2020-2030 Arts Council England's Let's Create Strategy

This ten-year strategy aims to foster a nation in which creativity is valued and accessible to all. It envisions a future where everyone can participate in and benefit from high-quality cultural experiences. The strategy outlines three key outcomes and four investment principles to guide Arts Council England's work. The **three key outcomes** are:

- *Creative people*: everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life
- *Cultural communities*: villages, towns and cities can thrive through a collaborative approach to culture
- *A creative and cultural country*: England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international

To drive the strategy, the Arts Council is following **four investment principles** as they allocate funding:

- *Ambition and quality*: Cultural organisations are ambitious and committed to improving the quality of their work.
- *Inclusivity and relevance*: England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that we support.
- *Dynamism*: Cultural organisations can thrive and are better able to respond to the challenges of the next decade
- *Environmental responsibility*: Cultural organisations lead the way in their approach to the climate emergency

Arts Council England Let's Create strategy: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create>

2021 Arts Council England Creativity Collaboratives

The Creativity Collaboratives pilot (2021-2024) developed a national cohort of schools to test a range of innovative teaching practices to nurture creativity in pupils and embed teaching for creativity across the curriculum. The pilot phase was one of the key recommendations of the 2019 Durham Commission that found that teaching for creativity is not widespread and that there is a huge disparity between schools, often reflecting socioeconomic factors. £2.78m from the Arts Council and Freelands Foundation was allocated across eight lead schools in various regions, each linked to at least another eight schools in that region. The networks trialled varied methods of teaching that help children and young people to develop their creative capabilities and evaluate their effectiveness. The pilot ran until July 2024, testing out teaching approaches and curriculum development which could then be applied more widely throughout the education system. The network of collaboratives documented their findings which are on the Arts Council's Creativity Exchange website.

The Creativity Collaboratives Legacy Phase was launched in October 2024. Arts Council England has invested £1.5 million into a legacy phase for the programme across two additional academic years (from September 2024 – July 2026). The legacy phase is not an extension of the pilot, it is a new phase through which six Creativity Collaboratives are exploring Teaching for Creativity with a clear focus on:

- Building more robust evidence of the **impact on pupils**
- Sharpening the focus on **equity, diversity and inclusion**
- **Consolidating learning** to inform principles, models, and resources that could be applied more broadly by the education sector and other schools to support a sustainable approach to creative education.

Abigail D'Amore Associates is leading the evaluation of the legacy phase. Throughout the legacy phase the Creativity Collaboratives are continuing to share their knowledge through toolkits and resources, all of which are available via their individual pages. There has been no funding announcement beyond July 2026.

Pilots:

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/developing-creativity-and-culture/children-and-young-people/creativity-collaboratives>

Legacy phase:

<https://www.creativityexchange.org.uk/creativity-collaboratives>

Other links

CAPE UK (Creative Arts Partnerships in Education UK – a sister organisation to CAPE Chicago) was a national program that began in Leeds in 1997 to foster partnerships between schools and creative professionals. CAPE UK focused on creating collaborative projects in schools and became a Bridge organisation (IVE) in 2012. The specific national programme no longer exists under that name but has informed various initiatives, including the cultural engagement strategy of the [University of Leeds](https://www.weareive.org/history).

A brief history of creativity in English schools (ACE | Creativity Exchange)

<https://www.creativityexchange.org.uk/ideas-hub/a-brief-history-of-creativity-in-english-schools>

PISA 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment. Creative Thinking assessment. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

<https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/creative-thinking/pisa-2022-creative-thinking.html>

Governments opt out of international creativity tests (28 November 2019). Arts Professional.

<https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/governments-opt-out-international-creativity-tests>

Harvard Project Zero Creative Classroom Project 1999-2004

<https://pz.harvard.edu/projects/the-creative-classroom-project>

Teresa Cremin (ed.). Arts Creativity and Cultural Education. Impact Magazine, issue 7. Arts Creativity and Cultural Education. Chartered College of Teaching. 2019.

<https://my.chartered.college/impact/issue-7-arts-creativity-and-cultural-education/#thisissuesarticles>