**PEC Review of Job Quality & Working Practice in the Creative Industries**

**Call for Evidence**

*The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre is embarking on a major new review of job quality and working practices in the Creative Industries to inform a ten-year roadmap for advancing Good Work across the Creative sector. This Call for Evidence is the beginning of a widescale engagement process: an early-stage request for input.*

*The rest of this document outlines: the background to the Review, aims of this Call for Evidence, and the questions where we are seeking to draw on the expertise, experiences and evidence from stakeholders from across the Creative sector, in each of the UK nations.*

**1. Introduction**

At surface-level, the Creative Industries encapsulate the vision of a high-wage, high-skilled, high-productivity modern economy.

More than eight in ten (83%) of those working in the Creative Industries work in professional or managerial roles, compared to 46% across the UK workforce. Nearly three quarters (73%) of those employed in Creative Occupations are qualified to degree-level or above (44% of those working across all industries are as well-qualified). In some parts of the Creative Sector productivity is 1.5 times the UK average and creative roles are amongst the best-paid in the economy.[[1]](#endnote-1)

But these headline statistics belie a much more mixed picture. While creative work can offer much fulfilment and purpose[[2]](#endnote-2), in parts of the Creative Industries pay can be low, hours long, and work precarious – often to the detriment of the diversity and wellbeing of those working in the Creative sector.[[3]](#endnote-3)

Modern ways of working – including part-time, freelance, and project-based work – provide considerable flexibility to the benefit of both workers and employers, but also raise important questions about employment status, rights and protections, collective representation and the balance of power and risk between creative businesses and the workforce.[[4]](#endnote-4)

Poor labour practices are often rooted in informality in the way the sector operates and an underlying sense of fragility of Creative business models that have struggled to adapt to changes in commercial risk, revenue models and margins.[[5]](#endnote-5) Past research has found management and leadership capability to be wanting – a critical skills gap that undermines the ability of creative businesses to maximise the value of talent and to advance product and process innovation.[[6]](#endnote-6)

Whether these challenges reflect ‘growing pains’ of a Creative sector transitioning to maturity or the position of many of these industries at the vanguard of technological change – what is clear is that, for the Creative Industries to achieve their full potential, we must consider how to enhance the resilience of creative business models, extend management and leadership capability, and ensure that all work in the Creative sector is Good Work.

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| **Box 1: What is Good Work?[[7]](#endnote-7)**  Good Work includes and extends beyond compliance with minimum statutory employment rights and protections, seeking to unlock the benefits of high-quality work for individuals, employers, the economy and society.  While there is no singular, widely adopted definition, most Good, Fair and Decent Work Frameworks suggest that ‘good’ work is characterised as offering: *fair reward, terms and conditions; that counterbalances security and flexibility; where workers have agency, voice and representation; which offers opportunity to utilise skills, develop and progress, in a safe, healthy and inclusive environment.*  Equality in access to opportunities and experiences at work for those from all backgrounds is a crucial underpinning principle. It is also important to acknowledge that what constitutes Good Work will be subjective, meaning different things to different people and varying throughout an individual’s working life. |

The need to enhance job quality[[8]](#footnote-1) is not limited to the Creative sector but part of a wider national and international agenda to promote work that is ‘good’, ‘fair’ and ‘decent’.

Over the past two decades or more, there has been growing recognition of the need to look beyond levels of employment in the economy and labour market participation rates, to consider how to deliver ‘more and better jobs’. This is in the context of record high rates of employment that have failed to translate into better quality work[[9]](#endnote-8); the UK’s ‘productivity problem’ being closely linked to management practices that are insufficiently people-centred[[10]](#endnote-9); and global megatrends, including (but not limited to) digitalisation, which have driven dramatic shift in where, how and how long we work[[11]](#endnote-10).

Enhancing job quality is now an explicit priority of UK Government, as set out in the [Good Work plan](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/766167/good-work-plan-command-paper.pdf) and enacted through recent and forthcoming labour market reforms. Much progress has also been made in the devolved nations, with the institution of the [Fair Work Convention](https://www.fairworkconvention.scot/) in Scotland; [Fair Work Commission](https://gov.wales/fair-work-commission) in Wales; and [Fair Employment Code of Practice](https://www.equalityni.org/FairEmployment) in Northern Ireland.

Government in each nation have acknowledged that pan-economy labour market reforms must be coupled with sectoral analysis, inquiries, and strategies. This recognises the value of a sectoral approach, grounded in an evidence-based understanding of the distinct structural features, priority issues and needs and which genuinely engages employers, workers and other stakeholders in shaping an approach to enhancing job quality that works in the industry context. This then provides the basis for collaboration, long term commitment and shared investment.

The Creative Industries have the opportunity to build on these developments, to be the first sector to develop a *roadmap for advancing Good Work*: comprising action by Government and Industry, over the long-term, and contextualised with the distinct challenges and policy priorities in each UK nation. This, in turn, will enable the Creative Industries to cement their position as a high skill, high productivity, high wage part of the economy, while also widening access, improving workforce diversity and representation and promoting inclusive growth and shared prosperity.

**2. Aims of the Call for Evidence**

To support the development of this roadmap, the [Policy and Evidence Centre](https://www.pec.ac.uk/)[[12]](#footnote-2) (PEC) is leading a major new review of job quality and working practices in the Creative Industries. The objectives of the PEC’s Review are to:

1. Establish a robust baseline picture of job quality in the Creative Industries, across a range of domains and benchmarked against other sectors of the economy;
2. Identify the key challenges and opportunities for promoting quality work, spanning the range of themes considered in the Taylor review and Fair Work Frameworks, but drawing out priority themes and the most pressing concerns in the Creative Industries context;
3. Consider sector-based policy levers for improving job quality and articulate a set of high-level priorities and detailed recommendations for Government in the four UK nations and industry, that could help shape a ten-year roadmap for advancing Good Work in the Creative Industries.

The PEC’s Review commenced in January 2022 and will report by July 2022. Further information is available in the accompanying Overview and Terms of Reference available to download [here](https://www.pec.ac.uk/news/good-work).

The PEC are actively seeking to engage with a multitude of stakeholders, throughout the course of the Review. The Call for Evidence is the beginning of this engagement process. It aims to foster an *open, effective and informed dialogue* on the critical issues and policy choices facing the Creative sector.

This is not a consultation on developed proposals, but rather an early-stage request for input. We are seeking to access a wide range of expertise, experiences and evidence relevant to the above objectives. We are keen to hear from a variety of stakeholders from across the sector and in each UK nation, including policy makers, industry bodies, unions, charities, subject matter experts, diversity champions, businesses and creative workers, particularly freelancers.

In the next section we set out a series of questions, where we seek input that will shape our approach, determine the areas of focus for the Review and inform the policy options we will deliberate later on in the engagement process. These questions are structured around two main areas:

1. Current picture of job quality in the Creative Industries
2. Promoting Good Work in the Creative sector – priorities and policy options

Please do not feel obliged to respond to all questions. We would welcome any supporting data, research evidence, practical examples or experiences, either included as attachments to, or hyperlinks within, your submission.

Many thanks for your support.

This Call for Evidence was launched on 21st March 2022 and will run until 29th April 2022. You can submit a response at any time before the closing date.

Please forward your response to our Call for Evidence to the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre at: [goodwork@pec.ac.uk](mailto:goodwork@pec.ac.uk)

Should you prefer to forward a paper submission of your evidence, please send it to:

Billy Beckett

Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre

c/o Nesta

58 Victoria Embankment

London EC4Y 0DS

If you are visually impaired, and would prefer to contribute to this Call for Evidence by participating in a telephone consultation with one of the PEC research team, please contact: [goodwork@pec.ac.uk](mailto:goodwork@pec.ac.uk)

**Privacy and data protection**

We are committed to protecting your privacy and we take all reasonable precautions to safeguard personal information.

If you submit a response to the Call for Evidence we will use your information for the purpose of this project. You will be asked in the survey whether you would like your response to be treated as anonymous or whether you would like your evidence to be attributed to you.

General principle: We will keep all personal data that you provide to us, for as long as is necessary to fulfil the purpose for which you gave us the information. We will securely delete the personal data when it is no longer needed for that purpose, as explained in more detail below.

Consent: We keep records of consent, and any withdrawal of consent, on our files for as long as your personal information is being used in line with that consent and for a period of 6 years after the consent is withdrawn (unless otherwise requested by you).

To the extent that personal data arising from any research is embodied within a research report or other research outcome, it will be retained in perpetuity as part of the published materials.

Processing for statistical analysis purposes: This type of processing will only be undertaken whilst we retain your personal data in line with the principles explained above.

*Who else has access to your information?*

We will share your personal data with Work Advance, who are conducting the Good Work Review Call for Evidence.

The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (the “PEC”), is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and led by Nesta.

For the “PEC” privacy policy please see: <https://www.pec.ac.uk/privacy-policy>

**3. Call for Evidence Questions**

Current picture of job quality in the Creative Industries

1. How would you define ‘Good Work’? What would you see as the key dimensions or defining characteristics?
2. Reflecting on this, and wider definitions and dimensions of Good Work (as set out in Box 1), how ‘good’ is work in the Creative Industries – overall and in different sub-sectors/jobs?
3. What do you view as the positive aspects of work in the Creative Industries? *Please note where these are evident in specific sub-sectors, artforms or creative contexts, or for certain types of creative workers.*
4. In what areas do you feel job quality needs to be improved in the Creative Industries? What poor or unfair practices are currently experienced by those working in the sector? What do you see as the underlying causes of these practices? *Please note where these are evident in specific sub-sectors, artforms or creative contexts, or for certain types of creative workers.*

Promoting Good Work in the Creative sector – priorities and policy options

1. What do you see as the biggest priorities for improving job quality and advancing Good Work in the Creative Industries? Please identify priorities for a) Government, b) businesses and c) individuals.
2. Where do you see the greatest opportunities for sector-based approaches[[13]](#footnote-3) to improving job quality, that complement pan-economy labour market reforms?
3. What do you see as the three most significant actions government or industry could take to improve job quality and advance Good Work in the Creative Industries?
4. What are the most significant barriers to the achievement of Good Work in the Creative Industries, and how might these be addressed?
5. Would you support stronger mandatory measures[[14]](#footnote-4) for improving the quality of work in the Creative Sector? Are specific measures needed in certain sub-sectors, artforms or creative contexts, or for certain types of creative workers? Do you have any evidence of the benefits and problems of existing mandatory measures?
6. Would you support additional voluntary approaches[[15]](#footnote-5) for improving the quality of work in the Creative Sector? Are specific measures needed in some sub-sectors, creative contexts or for certain types of creative workers? Do you have any evidence of the benefits and problems of existing voluntary approaches?
7. What greater role could social partnership[[16]](#footnote-6) play in promoting Good Work in the Creative Industries? How might such arrangements be enabled, supported and incentivised?
8. What greater role could employer leadership[[17]](#footnote-7) – including individual action and collective measures – play in promoting Good Work in the Creative Industries? How might this be enabled, supported and incentivised?
9. What greater role could place-based approaches[[18]](#footnote-8) play in promoting Good Work in the Creative Industries? How might this be enabled, supported and incentivised?
10. What would Good Work look like for Creative freelancers, and how can this best be enabled, supported and incentivised?
11. How might we support greater a) access to, and enforcement of, worker or employment rights; b) financial security between contracts; c) worker voice and representation; and d) investment in skills and professional development for Creative Freelancers?

**4. About you**

A critical concern for the PEC is that we hear from a diversity of voices from different backgrounds and all parts of the Creative Industries. To help us monitor the diversity of those we engage through the Review, we ask that you complete the following questions. Your personal information will only be used for the purposes of diversity monitoring and treated as outlined in the above Privacy and Data Protection notice. At the end of this section, you are able to indicate whether you would like your response to remain anonymous or be attributed to you or (where applicable) your organisation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Your Name:** |  | |
| **Sector(s) in which you currently / mainly work:** |  | |
| **Region(s) in which you currently / mainly work:** |  | |
| **Main Occupation:** |  | |
| **Employment status:** | | **Age:** |
| Employed  Self-employed or Freelance  Prefer not to say | | 16-24  25-34  35-44  45-54  55 or more  Prefer not to say |
| **Gender:** | | **Ethnicity:** |
| Male  Female  Prefer not to say | | White  Black or Black British  Asian or Asian British  Other ethnic group  Mixed or multiple ethnic groups  Prefer not to say |
| **Care responsibilities:** | | **Disability:** |
| Do you look after, or give any help or support to anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age?  Yes  No  Prefer not to say  Do you have any childcare responsibilities outside work?  Yes  No  Prefer not to say | | Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?  Yes  No  Prefer not to say |
| **Socio-economic background** | | |
| What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were about aged 14?  Modern professional & traditional professional occupations such as: teacher, nurse, physiotherapist, social worker, musician, police officer (sergeant or above), software designer, accountant, solicitor, medical practitioner, scientist, civil / mechanical engineer.  Senior, middle or junior managers or administrators such as: finance manager, chief executive, large business owner, office manager, retail manager, bank manager, restaurant manager, warehouse manager.  Clerical and intermediate occupations such as: secretary, personal assistant, call centre agent, clerical worker, nursery nurse.  Technical and craft occupations such as: motor mechanic, plumber, printer, electrician, gardener, train driver.  Routine, semi-routine manual and service occupations such as: postal worker, machine operative, security guard, caretaker, farm worker, catering assistant, sales assistant, HGV driver, cleaner, porter, packer, labourer, waiter/waitress, bar staff.  Long-term unemployed (claimed Jobseeker’s Allowance or earlier unemployment benefit for more than a year).  Small business owners who employed less than 25 people such as: corner shop owners, small plumbing companies, retail shop owner, single restaurant or cafe owner, taxi owner, garage owner.  Other such as: retired, this question does not apply to me, I don’t know.  Prefer not to say | | |

**5. About your organisation**

*If you are responding on behalf on an organisation, please complete the following:*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of the Organisation you represent:** |  |
| **Your Position:** |  |
| **Sector your organisation operates within:** |  |
| **Nation / Region your organisation operates within:** |  |
| **Number of employees (exc. freelancers)** |  |

**Thank you**

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this Call for Evidence.

Please indicate how you would like us to treat your response:

Anonymously  Attributed to yourself  Attributed to your organisation

Would you be willing to be contacted by the PEC Research Team in connection with its Review of Job Quality and Working Practices in the Creative Industries?

Yes  No

1. **Endnotes**

   Giles et al. 2020 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Hoffman et al. 2021; Everts et al. 2021; Bilton et al. 2021; Alacovska 2021 [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Brook et al. 2020; Carey et al. 2021; Conor 2021; Saha and van Lente 2021 [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Gill 2010; Carey et al. 2019; Wilkes et al. 2020; Kolbe 2021 [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Banks and Hesmondhalgh 2009; Gill 2010; Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2010; Longden and Throsby 2021; Carey et al. 2021; Hesmondhalgh et al. 2021 [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Christin 2019; Giles et al. 2020 [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Based on a review of: Dickens et al. 2019; Giles 2016; HM Government 2018; ILO 2008; Measuring Job Quality Working Group 2018; OECD 2016 and 2017; OFMDFMNI / NEF 2021; Scottish Government 2016, 2020 and 2021; Taylor 2017; Warhurst, Wright & Lyonette 2017 and 2018; UNECE 2015 [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Job quality refers to a family of interrelated concepts concerned with whether work is decent, fair, good, fulfilling, meaningful and supports the wellbeing of workers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
9. Green, F. 2006, 2007 and 2008; Green, A. 2004, 2019; Giles 2016; Sissons et al. 2017; Lee et al. 2018; [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
10. Bloom, Sadun & van Reenan 2017; Bank of England 2018; Belt and Giles 2009, Tamkin et al 2010, Combs et al 2006, Patterson et al 1998, Irvine et al 2018 [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
11. Wood et al. 2018 [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
12. Led by Nesta and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, as part of the UK Government’s 2017 Industrial Strategy, the PEC works to support the growth of the UK’s Creative Industries through the production of independent and authoritative evidence and policy advice. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
13. A sectoral approach refers to policies, programmes or practices implemented within specific industry contexts, often to address distinct opportunities and challenges and working through existing communities of practice [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
14. Mandatory measures could include (for example): certification; levies; minimum pay or conditions; quotas or targets; use of public or private sector procurement / funding levers [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
15. Voluntary approaches could include (for example): codes of practice; charters; workplace standards; voluntary accreditation schemes; resources or training for managers [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
16. Social partnership and social dialogue capture the formal and informal arrangements supporting engagement and collaboration between, for example, government, employers, sector/occupational bodies, trade unions and workers [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
17. Employer leadership refers to the actions that businesses can take to enhance job quality. This could include (for example) changing their own business practices to improve the quality of work offered to employees and contractors / freelancers; supporting and incentivising action by suppliers to improve business practices; and advocating and working collaboratively with other employers to drive change across the industry [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
18. Place-based approaches refers to policies or programmes that could be implemented in specific regions or local areas to improve the quality of work in the Creative Industries. This could include (for example) local procurement / funding levers; codes of practice; charters or standards; or activities that bring together groups of Creative employers to work together to improve practices. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)