



## **UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity**

### **UKCCD Submission to Labour Party Policy Forum**

#### **“Cultural Sovereignty, Diversity and Pluralism at the heart of government policy”**

**20 March 2023**

The UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity, UKCCD, is the UK’s leading civil society network supporting UNESCO’s groundbreaking Convention on Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 2005. UKCCD acts as a consultative partner to UNESCO-UK and the UK government on the implementation of the aims and obligations of the treaty, which became legal in this country in March 2008. UKCCD is a founder member of the International Federation, IFCCD, which links over 600 creator and cultural organisations worldwide.

Since 2007, The UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity has promoted policies to support cultural diversity of expressions in all sectors of the arts/culture and creative industries in the interests of democracy, social inclusion and strong local investment in our arts/culture/creative industries.

We believe these are values that Labour in government will wish to translate into various progressive policies.

We are concerned that support for the creative industries is at present inadequate, indeed the sector is never given the privileged attention it deserves. It contributes equally to GDP as the financial sector and its rate of employment is far higher. Most importantly, making cultural considerations central to the Labour Party’s programme will serve growth and sustainability in the economy, social cohesion and strengthen UK’s sense of pride in its legacies and potential going forward.

Cultural Policy also plays a critical role in our sustainable development. The Labour Party should strongly support UK organisations leading the way. Any UK government should support culture as the 18<sup>th</sup> Goal for Sustainable Development in 2030 and promote initiatives to give our cultural sector a pioneering role in its green policies.

Nationally, the forthcoming Media Bill is one of the most important areas because of the cultural/industrial impact of all our screens on UK values, identity and cohesion. The UKCCD is concerned at the absence of proper mention and/or strategic support for key areas of interest to UK audiences such as children’s programming and original, locally produced British independent film. These require government intervention going forward if this proposed legislation is to deliver its aim to sustain universal public service provision in the digital era.

## Summary of recommendations

We believe it is important to define the overall objectives for our creative future, to include:

- enhancing the cultural sovereignty of the UK
- encouraging cultural diversity and pluralism in all our arts/cultural sectors and particularly in all media & audio-visual media both linear and online
- making cultural policy central to sustainable development and green initiatives
- putting the creative sector at the centre of industrial strategy for growth and civic participation

We recommend the following measures for consideration:

- Policy to support **accountable public service broadcasting institutions** and local independent production in the digital era
- Ensuring the **independent governance of the BBC** and a **progressive form of funding that keeps pace with inflation**
- Adequate regulation of the internet to ensure diversity of local audio-visual production, its **prominence/discoverability** for viewers, and data transparency
- **Safeguarding truly UK independent film** (which is different from US backed inward investment production)
- Guaranteeing a **Youth Audience Content Fund** or other provision for this vital area of specialist programming.
- Regulating for a **proportionate contribution from the streaming services** (including SVoD, AVoD3 and maybe TV broadcasters) to rebalance the market for UK independent production and the needs of our UK audience. This could be paid into a national Film Fund. We recommend that OFCOM should study the possibility for such levies as applied in Canada, Australia and our major European partner countries.
- Rejoining the **Creative Europe** programme of the EU as a third country
- Rejoining the Council of Europe, **Eurimages** film funding scheme
- A **fair copyright regime** that rewards creators proportionately for the exploitation of their work online
- A **Status of the Artist** framework to combat precarity especially for freelancers
- A **cultural exception in trade agreements** to defend national cultural sovereignty
- A **Smart Fund** to enable technology manufacturers to pay a return to creators and establish a digital culture & communities fund
- Measures to ensure **cross border mobility** for artists and performers
- Measures to ensure **greater media pluralism** with support to public service journalism
- To **restore aspects of the 2010 Equality Act** removed by the Conservatives, e.g restoring protection from third-party harassment; strengthening time limit for bringing discrimination cases; banning NDAs in cases involving harassment; ensuring creative freelancers are covered under the definition of 'worker' in the legislation.

We consider that the Labour Party should make strategy for our creative industries central to the regeneration of our economy, regionally and nationally. This would also strengthen civic engagement and nurture trust in our increasingly fragmented society.

**Carole Tongue**

Chair

**Holly Aylett**

Director

These recommendations are supported by submissions to government departments, parliamentary committees which are to be found on our website: <https://ukccd.org/>

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