



**Press release**  
**30/09/2021**

## **NEW REPORT HIGHLIGHTS REVENUE POTENTIAL FOR BOOSTING UK ECONOMY THROUGH DIGITAL CREATIVITY**

Today the [Smart Fund campaign](#) launches a new report outlining how the UK could generate between £250-300 million annually to better support the cultural industries, local communities and boost digital creativity skills across the country.

The Smart Fund is a timely proposal by culture industry organisations to enable the tech industry to collaborate with creators and creative programmes purposefully by investment in digital creativity with local communities, helping rebuild the economy and project a truly global Britain. The Smart Fund does this by using funds from sales of electronic devices which copy, store, and share creative content, at no cost to consumers, taxpayers, or government.

The report published today, [The Smart Fund: Tech Enabling Creativity](#), details how at present, cultural organisations, programmes, and creators are missing out on potential funding that could help drive economic recovery, community cohesion and local pride. In 2019, the creative industries contributed £111.7bn to the economy and accounted for 61,000 new jobs, 2.7x the national average. The new report examines how The Smart Fund could generate up to £300 million annually, as a collaborative scheme between creators and performers, technology companies and the Government. The new fund could provide a direct way to invest in, grow, empower, and enrich the cultural DNA of our society, by supporting the creativity for which the UK is globally renowned.

At present the UK has no mechanism in place to pay creators fairly and performers when the content they have made is shared and copied on devices like smartphones and laptops and is in breach of their copyright. In 45 other countries, this issue is solved by government levies through the collection and distribution of earnings via technology manufacturers. Crucially, many countries also use these funds to invest in cultural programmes that benefit local communities, driving digital innovation and creativity for the next generation and supporting local cultural programmes.

“The Smart Fund is an innovative and collaborative solution, at no cost to taxpayers or users of electronic devices, that pays creators fairly whilst still allowing consumers to share and download creative content within the law. Through the Smart Fund, technology companies can invest back into communities and recompense the creators of content used. The Smart Fund provides a sustainable way to rebuild the UK’s cultural economy and local communities without putting additional pressure on public funds.”

Gilane Tawadros, Chief Executive, DACS

“This problem is unique to digital content, but our legislation and regulation haven’t kept up with technology. The Smart Fund is a very clever way to underwrite these cultural loans through the investment of technology producers in economic benefits for the entire creative community. It’s a not a tax or a subsidy. It’s a regenerative economic development plan to make and keep a vital

part of British industry and society more productive, diverse, and robust for years to come. If elsewhere, why not here? Why not now?"

Margaret Heffernan, CEO and Author, *Wilful Blindness*;  
Professor of Practice, School of Management, University of Bath; Faculty Lead,  
Responsible Leadership Programme, The Forward Institute

"Great ideas, like the Smart Fund, do not come along every day, certainly not ones that will deliver for our economy, for local communities and for Britain."

Sir Frank Bowling, artist

"This kind of contribution would bring so much to creatives who have already suffered such a huge blow due to the pandemic. Those creatives inevitably one day end up contributing to the content that we all enjoy watching on those devices! So supporting them on that journey feels appropriate and necessary."

Robert Emms, Actor

As the political leaders meet to discuss how we can reshape and rebuild the UK's economy, the new report from Frontier Economics offers an opportunity to reassess the imbalances within our cultural economy and to further reinforce Global Britain as a dynamic cultural hub and grow digital creative communities across the UK.

Ends.

#### Notes to editors:

[The Smart Fund](#) has been set up by a coalition of organisations who protect the rights of creators and performers. It works by placing a small additional payment on mobile phones, laptops and other devices that are built to allow people to store and download content. The Smart Fund ---provides a direct way for tech manufacturers to invest in, grow, empower, and enrich the cultural DNA of our society, by supporting the creativity for which the UK is globally renowned.

Information on the coalition of organisations can be found here:

[DACS](#) (Visual Artists)

[ALCS](#) (Writers)

[BECS](#) (Performers)

[Directors UK](#) (Screen directors)

#thesmartfund

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