

Press release: Wales' creative industries to benefit from major new research investment

- The Creative Industries Clusters Programme, a key deliverable in the Industrial Strategy's Creative Industries Sector Deal, brings together creative hubs across the UK with researchers and businesses to boost their world-leading status
- Sony UK Technology Centre, BBC Cymru and S4C are some of the partners involved in the research

Wales' thriving screen and broadcast industries are to join forces with researchers and organisations to explore new ways of boosting jobs and growth.

The Clwstwr Creadigol project, led by Cardiff University, is looking to transform the screen and broadcast industries in the Cardiff region by helping them to innovate and compete, aimed at responding to changing technologies such as the emergence of 5G mobile infrastructure and changing patterns of consumption.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

The screen and broadcast industries in South Wales are massive success stories for the whole of the UK, creating skilled jobs and business opportunities across the country.

The creative industries in Wales currently contributes over £1 billion a year to the UK's economy, and through our modern Industrial Strategy we are investing to enable the sector to keep on growing and bringing the benefits to all corners of the United Kingdom.

Led by the Arts and Humanities Research Council within UKRI, the £80 million Creative Industries Clusters Programme comprises nine creative clusters across the UK and a new Policy and Evidence Centre, led by Nesta in partnership with 13 universities. The programme will bring together world-class research talent with companies and organisations, including household names such as Aardman, Burberry and Sony, in a first-of-its kind research and development investment.

Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright said:

Britain's creative industries are an economic and cultural powerhouse and the Creative Clusters will ensure they continue to thrive in regions across the country.

These partnerships between business, academia and industry will encourage the use of future technology to develop new products and experiences, and boost employment opportunities across the breadth of the UK.

This investment, through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund and industry, offers support to Wales' globally important creative industries, which are already worth over £1 billion to the UK economy, and supports 63,000 jobs. The aim of the Clusters programme is to create jobs and drive the creation of companies, products and experiences that can be marketed around the world.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

Wales is a creative nation, and the creative industries provide valuable jobs and opportunities for thousands of people across the country.

This UK Government investment cements South Wales' place as a global leader in the screen and broadcast industries. Taken together with the benefits that will arise from the abolition of the Severn tolls, this funding will also provide added impetus to work collaboratively with the burgeoning creative sector in the South West of England, boosting the regional economy and enabling our businesses to promote their excellent work around the world.

Professor Andrew Thompson, Executive Chair of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, said:

Combining world-class arts and humanities researchers with our globally renowned creative industries will underpin growth in this vibrant and rapidly expanding sector within the UK economy.

These pioneering partnerships between industry and universities are providing a huge vote of confidence for a sector that is vital to the future prosperity of the UK.

A new Policy and Evidence Centre has also been established that will address gaps in the evidence base on the national economic strength of the UK's creative industries. Led by global innovation foundation Nesta, it will develop independent evidence that will inform decision-making across the creative industries and underpin future policy decisions.

ENDS

Press release: Foreign Secretary: Building blocks for Yemen solution are in view

- Serious consideration is being given to a set of political ideas and confidence-building measures that would allow for the start of political talks in Sweden by the end of November.
- Coalition agrees to Houthi medical evacuation, with agreed conditions. This is a major development given that this was a prior block to talks.
- UK to continue to discussions with partners on how Security Council can support political process and lead to improvements on the humanitarian situation.

Following the visit of Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the Saudi-led Coalition have agreed to the evacuation of wounded Houthis from Yemen, one of the key stumbling blocks to the UN Geneva talks in September.

Subject to final reassurances, Coalition forces will now permit the UN to oversee a Houthi medical evacuation, including up to fifty wounded fighters, to Oman, ahead of another proposed round of peace talks in Sweden later this month.

The Foreign Secretary's trip to the Middle East, during which he met with the senior leadership of the Saudi, UAE and Yemeni governments, and spoke with the Foreign Minister of Oman, helped improve understanding on steps that would lead to a cessation of hostilities.

The Foreign Secretary had constructive discussions on pathways to achieve de-escalation and reduce tensions, and was clear that both sides would need to play their part in confidence-building measures.

Meanwhile the UK will continue discussions with partners on how the UN Security Council can support the UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths' on the political process and improving the humanitarian situation. This will include discussions on

the draft UN Security Council Resolution on Yemen ahead of a Security Council briefing on the issue on 16 November.

The Foreign Secretary also used meetings with Saudi Arabia's rulers to push for real accountability against those responsible for the brutal murder of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi, pointing out both the strong international condemnation and the need for evidence that such an act could never happen again.

In the days preceding the visit, the Foreign Secretary spoke with his US, German and French counterparts in order to deliver a coordinated response to the challenges facing the region.

Speaking following his visit Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt said:

The world's worst humanitarian crisis is not a natural disaster. It is the man-made situation in Yemen. I have just been in Saudi Arabia and the UAE because there is a window of opportunity to tackle it.

75% of the population in Yemen require humanitarian assistance and 8.4 million are at risk of starvation. We have to act.

Diplomacy and negotiation remain the only path to ending the conflict and I am encouraged that Saudi Arabia and the UAE have shown their support for the UN peace process, led by Special Envoy Martin Griffiths.

In my meetings we have made progress in removing the largest stumbling block to previous proposed rounds of peace talks, and set out a credible path to a de-escalation of military activity.

I will continue talking to partners about the best way for the Security Council to support the UN Special Envoy's efforts on the political process and improve the humanitarian situation. We await Martin Griffiths' important briefing to the Security Council on 16 November.

Overall, I leave the region encouraged by these signs of progress, and I am determined to do what it takes to convert this into a lasting peace for the people of Yemen.

Further information

[Press release: Foreign Secretary: building blocks for Yemen solution are in view](#)

Jeremy Hunt has returned from meetings in Saudi Arabia and the UAE on the situation in Yemen.

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 - Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/foreignoffice), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/foreignoffice) and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/foreignoffice)
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News story: New immersive designs to transform audience experiences

Immersive experiences like virtual, augmented and mixed reality could transform how we interact with the world – from advertising to film, music and museums.

To ensure these experiences meet customer needs, £1 million in funding has been awarded to 32 projects which will use human-centred design (design focused on user requirements) to create new immersive experiences, products and services.

The successful projects will use customer research to generate ideas, and create and test low-cost prototypes. The best ideas will progress to further technical research and development (R&D).

The successful projects are part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund's audience of the future programme, which is delivered by UK Research and Innovation. Through this programme, government is supporting the best UK storytellers to create engaging immersive experiences.

The XR Audience Centred Design project will enable theatre audiences to experience a virtual reality performance without every audience member having to wear a headset. It will use audience feedback to test approaches to virtual reality in theatre.

The ALIVEmusic project will investigate how live music performances can be enhanced using mixed reality. It will use AI to capture the emotional states of performers and audiences, which will be transformed into visual content and displayed in real-time using mixed reality headsets or mobile phones.

The House of Alternate Realities will investigate how audiences can be engaged through immersive and interactive stories. People will pass through 5 rooms which are each more immersive and interactive than the last and their reactions will be studied. The project will determine how to deliver new forms of interactive content to UK television audiences.

The Emotion sensing project will use biosensors to capture real-time emotional responses and find out what makes an engaging immersive experience. This new evaluation approach will generate more reliable feedback to inform content creation and help to personalise immersive experiences.