



CREATE

CREATE: Pre-Launch Consultation

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1. Introduction

The Centre for Copyright and New Business Models in the Creative Economy (CREATE: Creativity, Regulation, Enterprise and Technology) aims to be the UK's leading research centre on digital innovation in the cultural industries. With an ambitious programme of research delivered by an interdisciplinary team of academics, CREATE is a pioneering initiative designed to help the UK cultural and creative industries thrive and become innovation pioneers within the global digital economy.

CREATE represents a partnership of internationally-renowned researchers in the fields of law, business, economics, technology, psychology and cultural analysis, drawn from 7 UK-based Universities: the University of Glasgow, Goldsmiths, the University of East Anglia, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Nottingham, the University of St Andrews and the University of Strathclyde.

The Centre will be supported by £5m of funding over four years (2012-2016) from three research councils: Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), and Economic and Social Science Research Council (ESRC). The Centre is known as an RCUK (Research Councils UK) Centre.

CREATE will formally launch in January 2013 with a research programme delivered across 7 interrelated themes: (i) Good, Bad and Emergent Business Models; (ii) Openness and Open Business Models; (iii) Regulation and Enforcement; (iv) Creative Practice and the Creative Environment; (v) Intermediaries and Platforms; (vi) User Creation, User Behaviour and Community Norms; and, (vii) Human Rights and the Public Interest.

This document provides a concise summary of pre-launch consultation work undertaken by EKOS on behalf of the University of Glasgow. The aim of the consultation was to seek initial input from a range of existing and potential non-research partners on:

- the relevance and value of the initiative and its proposed research programme;
- ways in which non-research partners would like to be involved, and how productive collaboration might be developed;

- the launch event planned for 31st January 2013, including useful topics to be covered and partners' interest in attending or being involved in other ways; and
- the most effective means of communicating with non-research partners as the project develops.

2. Consultation Feedback

2.1 Non-Research Partners

At the bidding stage, the University of Glasgow and its academic partners had a series of initial discussions with a range of non-research partners across the creative and cultural industries. Some of these discussions led to letters of support for the proposal, while in other cases, organisations preferred to await the outcome of the bidding process and then work with whichever project was supported.

Once the award to CREATE had been confirmed, it was therefore important both to re-engage those partners that had already pledged support and start to bring on board new partners that had not yet been involved. To this end, EKOS was commissioned to undertake a series of informal discussions with a sample of non-research partners.

The sample for the consultation work was drawn from contacts provided by the University of Glasgow, supplemented by contacts supplied by EKOS. The agreed list comprised a mix of organisations that had been involved with the CREATE consortium during the bidding process (some of which had provided letters of support) and organisations with no prior engagement with the project.

The overall sample was developed to provide a range of views and voices from different sub-sectors of the creative industries and across different kinds of organisations (public, private and representative organisations).

20 interviews were completed. The partners that took part in the consultation included:

- eight cultural institutions and organisations;
- six trade bodies representing different parts of the creative and cultural economy;

- two public sector stakeholders; and
- five private companies in the creative and cultural industries.

The sample also provided a spread across different parts of the creative industries as follows:

- two organisations involved in supporting the creative sector generally;
- eight involved in the arts and cultural sector;
- three from publishing;
- two from music;
- two from digital media;
- two from film/ TV/ broadcasting; and
- one from computer games.

2.2 Value and Relevance of the Programme

The consultation found widespread agreement as to the relevance and importance of the CREATE initiative and the proposed programme of research. However, some concern was voiced about reported perceptions in parts of the creative sector that CREATE was pursuing an ‘anti-copyright’ agenda, and that the academic community does not approach this field with an objective view. While it is important to acknowledge this viewpoint, it must be noted that this was very much a minority perception, voiced by only two of the consultees.

More generally, the initiative was seen as potentially very important so long as it delivers valuable, evidence-based knowledge at two levels:

- at a ‘macro’ level, CREATE should be in a position to influence copyright policy in directions that will support the economic success and growth of the UK creative economy; and
- at a more ‘micro’ level, the initiative should generate practical learning about effective business models that can be applied by organisations and companies in the creative and cultural industries.

While different partners identified different research themes as being of particular interest (as detailed in the spreadsheet), there was a strong focus on two:

- research on new and emergent business models; and
- research into the impacts of copyright on creative practice and the creative environment.

Most of the consultees, however, felt that the research programme as defined was comprehensive and wide ranging, and there were no major gaps. Nevertheless, some further comments and views on the research programme included:

- the importance of reflecting the interests of the individual creator in debates about copyright;
- the need to balance needs of the commercial creative industries with the less commercial cultural sector;
- the value in including consideration of high tech companies within the creative industries sphere; and
- the need to consider carefully the geographic relevance of research outputs – are they addressing issues of UK, European or global concern and policy?

2.3 Nature of Engagement

As noted above, the extent of prior involvement with (and awareness of) CREATE varied across the consultees. Those that were already 'signed up', either at a general level, or nominally attached to specific research projects, reported only limited understanding of how that engagement might actually proceed.

A few of the consultees said that they would need some financial input (or support in-kind) to be able to participate fully in collaborative research activity. Others, while willing to participate, noted the constraints on their own organisational resources as a possible limitation on the extent of that participation.

These issues aside, the strong support for the project was reflected in a widespread willingness to engage. A number of organisations offered access to facilities, data and research resources, while others (in particular trade associations) offered to be a conduit between the academic partners and the wider creative sector.

Facilitating and managing collaboration on this scale will always be challenging, and some commented on the need for a structured approach that:

- differentiates strategic engagement from collaboration at the level of individual research projects;
- attracts and engages partners with credibility and influence across the creative and cultural industries;
- provides clearly defined roles for partners;
- facilitates effective and regular communication in an easily accessible form; and
- mitigates the risks of large or influential industry partners exerting undue influence on the research programme and its outputs.

All of the partners consulted (with one exception) were interested in further discussion with the CREATE team to explore areas of mutual interest and identify ways of working together.

There was also some discussion of means of disseminating the outputs of CREATE. Few businesses and organisations in the creative and cultural sector have the time, or the inclination, to read academic journals, and there was strong interest in establishing more accessible means of disseminating the findings of the research.

Suggestions included:

- concise newsletters (electronic);
- articles in trade press;
- seminars and round-table discussions;
- an annual conference; and
- concise reports on each of the research themes.

Again, there was willingness on the part of some of the partners (notably the representative bodies) to help with the dissemination process.

Some also highlighted opportunities to develop more innovative means of communication and engagement, making use of digital platforms and tools such as a

user portal and video case studies. This is something that CREATE should investigate further as a means of disseminating knowledge in ways that are more accessible to a wider industry audience than standard journals and events.

Unsurprisingly, consultees favoured short and focused email communications to keep them updated with CREATE as it develops. However, there is an additional need for face-to-face engagement with partners to explore in greater detail the potential for collaborative working and the forms that this might take. For most, this will also require further information about the research projects currently underway and in development.

2.4 Launch Event

All of the consultees (again with one exception) expressed interest in the launch event, and the plans to make this a working session were very much welcomed. While the partners had different ideas about specific topics that could be covered, some more general comments are worth reporting:

- the launch could usefully focus on the ways in which CREATE will contribute to innovation in the UK's creative economy;
- some debate on different means of collaborative working between the academic and industry sectors would be helpful;
- the event is an opportunity to share more information about CREATE, including information on:
 - the research programme in more detail;
 - different structures for engagement;
 - dissemination plans;
 - key staff within the CREATE team; and
- in order to attract a sufficiently influential audience, the event should target high profile speakers from across the creative and cultural industries.

The focus on means of engagement may be particularly important here given some uncertainty about how this might work in practice. It may also be important to give non-research partners a clear opportunity to inform the research programme as it

develops such that it has relevance to their organisational concerns and interests, as well as academic merit.

All but one of the consultees welcomed further information about the launch and would be interested in attending given sufficient notice. A few also expressed a willingness to play a larger role in the launch either by giving a presentation or facilitating discussion.

A few of the consultees also commented on the value of having senior political representation at the launch.

3. Final Comments

The consultation was a positive exercise with much in the way of genuine interest in and enthusiasm for CREATE. Building on this initial enthusiasm, the CREATE team may want to consider the following actions:

- develop a clear structure (or set of structures) for the engagement of non-research partners in different ways around the project;
- initiate discussions with key partners to establish ways of working and clarify expectations;
- provide immediate follow-up to all consultees providing information about the launch event, and the development of the CREATE project;
- develop a communications strategy to ensure that non-research partners are kept fully informed about the project and its outputs as it develops;
- discuss with trade associations and representative bodies the ways in which CREATE might work with them to access the wider SME community in the creative and cultural industries; and
- identify new and innovative means of disseminating the learning from the project to the widest possible audience.



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