**Creative Industries
Policy and
Evidence Centre**

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Creative PEC awards four networking grants on Artificial Intelligence, Creative industries and Place, and Sustainability

Today, The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (Creative PEC) has announced the award of four new Small Network Grants for projects focussed on AI, digital production, civic creativity and place.

Each of the awards of £10,000 is for a new network to be led by one of Creative PEC's Research Fellows to foster collaboration within the Research Fellows Network and beyond. The networks are designed to promote research and policy understanding in key areas and support initiatives that strengthen connections, encourage knowledge exchange and deliver tangible benefits within academic, policy and practitioner communities.

The Creative PEC Research Fellows Network aims to become the global network of choice for researchers working on policy-facing creative industries research. Its membership is large and multi-disciplinary, including Fellows from the UK and overseas, from both academic and private sector institutions, and with a growing cohort of early career researchers.

Introducing the four new networks:

Green Transitions and Sustainability

Convened by Dr Heidi Ashton and Professor Pietari Kaapa, University of Warwick.

This network explores sustainability and the green transition in media, screen, and digital production. These mediums shape environmental awareness yet are embedded within complex social, economic and political systems. The network will examine tensions in policy and practice, identify knowledge gaps, and inform future research aimed at fostering a sustainable and equitable industry.

Intended completion by March 2026.

Creative Industries and Place: Configurations and Scales

Convened by Dr Graeme Evans and Dr Patrycja Kaszynska, University of the Arts London.

This network will suggest new research and policy agendas by looking at the relationship between Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) and innovation through a place-based lens. Specifically, the Network will investigate the notions of scales, as applied to places, dataset construction, research analysis and policy interventions; and configurations, as implied in spatial/extended/infrastructural research and policy constructs (e.g., clusters and corridors, cultural districts and creative zones, intermediaries and anchors, and more). These themes will be considered in the context of research on the relationship between CCIs and innovation. This will prompt new research questions and identify barriers/blind spots and evidence gaps in current research and policymaking, leading to recommendations for how these can be addressed.

The Civic Creativity Network and Index

Convened by Dr Tom Fleming and Francisca Patrício, TF Consultancy (TFCC)

This new pilot network will seek to understand how local authorities and wider place-based partnerships support approaches to culture and creative practice as a foundation for sustainable development. The network will involve a sample of five place-based partnerships from across the UK - to help identify a set of tools and indicators as a basis for a prototype civic creativity index for place-based development. This project will:

- Develop knowledge and 'civic creativity literacy' for participating local authorities and their partners.

- Shine a light on good practice and build a micro community of good practice with room for growth.

- Inform a more nuanced relationship between intrinsic cultural and creative activities and socio- economic development.

- Contribute to policy dialogue on the role of culture in place-making and sustainable development, touching on topics such as partnership and funding models.

The project will commence in September 2025 and be completed by April 2026.

Building an Infrastructure for Research in AI and the Creative Industries

Convened by Professor Joanna Woronkowicz and Professor Doug Noonan, Indiana University

This network convenes global experts to strengthen research and policy at the intersection of AI and the creative industries. Through a series of collaborative

activities, the network will develop the infrastructure needed to support this emerging field—including shared data resources, empirical evidence, and frameworks to guide future work. Key outcomes include an open-access wiki and actionable recommendations for advancing research on AI and the creative economy. Running through April 2026, the project aims to ensure AI's role in the sector is shaped by rigorous, evidence-based inquiry.

The Research Fellows Network seeks to make original contributions to the creative industries' evidence base, regularly producing discussion papers, holding seminars, and presenting at conferences. The Small Network Grants are designed to promote knowledge exchange on key topics, led by Research Fellows but open to the wider research community, and leading to publicly available findings. They are funded through Creative PEC's AHRC grant.

Future outputs from the Small Networks will be shared on Creative PEC's social channels and website.

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The small networks research teams and spokespeople for Creative PEC are available for comment and interview.

Press contacts are Alice Kent alice.kent@pec.ac.uk (Monday-Wednesday) and Simon Jones (Thursday - Friday) simon.jones@pec.ac.uk

Notes to editors

1. About the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (Creative PEC)

Creative PEC works to support growth of the UK's Creative Industries through the production of independent and authoritative evidence and policy advice. Led by Newcastle University with the Royal Society of Arts and funded by the UKRI Arts and Humanities Research Council, the Centre comprises a core consortium of,

Newcastle University, Work Advance, Sussex University and the University of Sheffield. The Creative PEC works with a diverse range of industry partners.

For more details, visit http://www.pec.ac.uk

2. About The Arts and Humanities Research Council

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), part of UK Research and Innovation, funds internationally outstanding independent researchers across the whole range of the arts and humanities: history, archaeology, digital content, philosophy, languages and literature, design, heritage, area studies, the creative and performing arts, and much more. The quality and range of research supported by AHRC works for the good of UK society and culture and contributes both to UK economic success and to the culture and welfare of societies across the globe.