Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre

Led by Newcastle University Business School with RSA

Analysis of over 168 million job postings suggests that Generative AI has not reduced demand for creativity skills, in new research from Creative PEC

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AI is redefining rather than replacing the need for creativity, with employers seeking both AI skills and creativity, according to new research published today by the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (Creative PEC). The analysis of over 168 million UK job postings also warns of the uneven geographical distribution of combined creative skills and technology, with regions identified by DCMS as creative clusters receiving the most benefit while other regions are potentially left behind.

The report, 'Demand for Creativity and AI Skills in the Post-ChatGPT Labour Market: Evidence from UK Job Vacancies', (by Zihan Wang, Aniket Baksy, Hasan Bakhshi and Josh Siepel) examines job postings before and after the release of ChatGPT 3.5 in November 2022, using Natural Language Processing (NLP) to assess the impact on employer interest in AI and creativity. The analysis reveals that co-occurrence strengthened post-ChatGPT.

The large-scale dataset of Adzuna job postings from 2016 to 2024 has been used to analyse labour demand across different UK geographical regions. The report draws attention to the potential risks of combining AI and creativity if it intensifies existing regional inequalities. Creative clusters with a highly skilled creative workforce are also best positioned to benefit from GenAI, while regions already disadvantaged may fall behind.

Key findings:

- There is a strong positive association between employer demand for AI skills and creativity across UK labour markets post-ChatGPT, indicating a structural change in skill requirements in response to the rapid development in GenAI, where AI skills and creativity are increasingly valued in tandem rather than in isolation.
- The link between creativity and AI skills is significantly more pronounced in creative clusters (as defined by DCMS-55) than in other places. The complementarity between creativity and AI skills is therefore another reason why existing geographical inequalities may be exacerbated by the emergence of new AI technologies.
- Aligning skills provision and education with labour market demands is essential to avoid skill mismatches and support place-based strategies for inclusive growth. Targeted

training and support for employees and in targeted areas will help make the shift towards creativity and AI convergence more equitable.

Lead author Zihan Wang, from the Science Policy Research Unit at the University of Sussex Business School, says:

"Our research finds a strong positive association between employer demand for AI skills and creativity across UK labour markets, particularly in those with a higher share of high-skill roles and identified as creative clusters post-ChatGPT. This labour-market-level evidence suggests that, in the context of Generative AI, employers are not choosing between AI skills and creativity. Rather, demand patterns indicate a growing complementarity between the two, pointing towards an increasing emphasis on hybrid skillsets. In this sense, the value of creativity is not diminished but amplified. These findings have important implications for education and training, skills policy, and place-based regional development. We hope this research offers timely food for thought across occupational, industrial and geographical levels."

Co-author and Creative PEC Director Hasan Bakhshi says:

"In theory, Generative AI may increase the demand for creative skills in the workforce insofar as it provides tools for creative workers to enhance their work, or decrease it insofar as it substitutes for creative talent. Our analysis of millions of job adverts in the UK shows that, so far, the net effect has been positive. This suggests that earlier research findings that creative occupations are more automation-resistant than many other occupations remain true in the age of Generative AI."

The NLP analysis used a range of creativity and AI terms, both specific and generic. This combined broad creative techniques and AI terminology with references to expertise in particular tools and software.

Released by the AHRC-funded Creative PEC as part of the Discussion Paper series, the report authors detail the methodology and outline the results and policy implications, as well as suggesting opportunities for further investigation.

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Download the Discussion Paper: https://pec.ac.uk/discussion_paper_/demand-creativity-ai-skills-post-chatgpt/

Read the accompanying blog: https://pec.ac.uk/blog_entries/what-uk-job-postings-reveal-about-the-changing-demand-for-creativity-skills-in-the-age-of-generative-ai/

This paper was authored by Zihan Wang, Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex Business School, UK, Aniket Baksy, Department of Economics, University of Melbourne, Australia, Hasan Bakhshi, Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (Creative PEC), UK and University of Newcastle, UK, Josh Siepel, Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex Business School, UK.

The research team and spokespeople for the Creative PEC are available for comment and interview.

Press contacts:

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

Notes to editors:

1. Discussion Papers

Creative PEC's Discussion Papers are a collection of publications designed to share ideas and foster debate among academics, policymakers and practitioners on creative industries' evidence and policies. The papers follow an editorial approval process aimed at preserving a pluralism of views whilst maintaining the high academic standards of Creative PEC.

2. 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 PEC works with a diverse range of industry partners.

For more details visit www.pec.ac.uk, follow us on LinkedIn and Bluesky, or sign up to our newsletter.

3. About The UKRI Arts and Humanities Research Council

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contributes both to UK economic success and to the culture and welfare of societies across the globe.