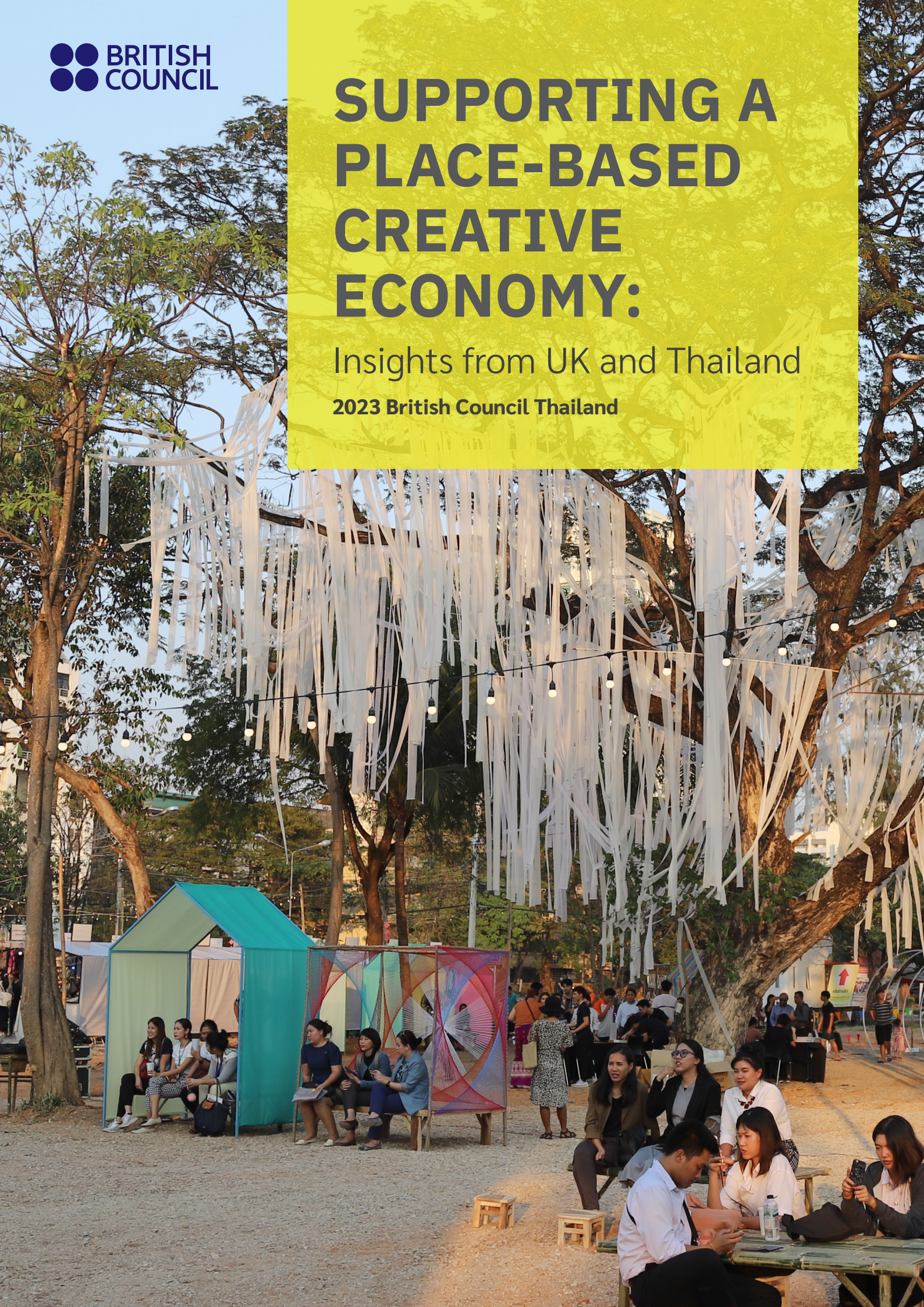


SUPPORTING A PLACE-BASED CREATIVE ECONOMY:

Insights from UK and Thailand

2023 British Council Thailand



COVER IMAGE

CAPTION: Festival at Khon Kaen

CREDIT: CEA

Written by Joyce Yee, Ko-Le Chen & Khemmiga Teerapong
Northumbria University and Bangkok University

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Abbreviations

AHRC Arts and Humanities Research Council

CN Creative Nakhon

CCIP Culture and Creative Investment Programme

CCZ Culture and Creative Zone

CE Creative Economy

CEA Creative Economy Agency

CI Creative Industries

CIC Creative Industries Council

CloS LEP Cornwall Council and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership

CS Creative Scotland

DCSM Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports

ECOC European Capital of Culture

EDI Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GVA Gross Value Added

ICH Intangible Cultural Heritage

KPI Key performance indicators

NCTA North Tyne Combined Authority

OKMD Office of Knowledge Management and Development

PEC Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre

TCDC Thailand Creative and Design Center

TCDN Thailand Creative Districts Network

UKRI United Kingdom Research and Innovation

Foreword from the British Council

Since 2018, the British Council has been working closely with the Creative Economy Agency, as well as creative hubs, networks, and local communities on the ground, to promote the development of Thailand's creative economy. Our efforts have contributed to building a comprehensive understanding of the creative economy landscape across the country. We have supported local initiatives aimed at fostering creative cities and districts in various Thai cities, such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Songkhla, Phrae, Sakon Nakhon, and Suphanburi. Furthermore, we have commissioned several research reports, including *"Creative Hubs Mapping: Bangkok"* (2018), *"Creative and Cultural Districts in Thailand"* (2019).

The post-pandemic landscape has brought to the fore the significance of developing creative and cultural districts as mechanisms for enhancing economic competitiveness at the city level. This, in turn, will further strengthen the national creative economy, promoting community resilience, well-being, cohesion, and nurturing artistic and cultural talents. The roles played by local governments and local creative networks and hubs have also been highlighted as pivotal.

Consequently, in 2022, the British Council partnered with the Creative Economy Agency to initiate a research project focusing on the sustainability and management of creative and cultural districts for long-term socio-cultural and economic impact. The project aimed to identify the best mechanisms and models to ensure the districts' continued growth while sustaining the impact within local communities.

The research project was conducted by Northumbria University, providing an overview of the governance of creative and cultural districts in both the UK and Thailand, along with best-practice models for developing sustainable communities and advancing the local creative economy. The report highlights five key areas to create a basic framework of local governance that can better sustain local creative economies, including developing the creative capacity of local governments, identifying suitable anchoring institutions, integrating sustainability into policies, facilitating public decision-making processes, and supporting more equal, diverse and inclusive growth through creative economy activities.

We would like to thank the research team from Northumbria University and Bangkok University for their excellent work. By synthesising the knowledge and experiences gained from creative and cultural districts in both UK and Thailand, we envisage that this research report will further contribute to capacity building and knowledge sharing among professionals and communities involved in developing creative districts and cities.

We also hope that the findings and our collaborative efforts in this project will significantly influence urban, municipal, local government, and national policies. We eagerly anticipate working more closely with local governments and communities to deepen our understanding and develop creative districts and cities in both countries.

Helga Stellmacher, Country Director

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Executive Summary

This report is based on commissioned research by British Council Thailand in collaboration with Creative Economy Agency. It provides an overview on the UK and Thai contexts in relation to how a place-based creative economy is supported, governed and funded by drawing on best practice examples from both countries. Our case studies draw from a range of different geographic regions ranging from rural to urban contexts. Our Thai case studies include the northeast city of Khon Kaen and southern cities of Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla (Old Town). The case studies from the UK cover Scotland, the southwest region of Cornwall and northeast England, covering Newcastle and Northumberland.

Our findings reveal the importance of having joined up policies, structures, funding and governance from national to local levels that speak to local priorities and contexts. Having a national policy on the creative economy is important because it provides a clear direction for the government's investment in the creative sector. This can help stimulate economic growth,

create employment opportunities, and foster cultural development. However, it is equally important to adopt a place-based approach supported by and embedded in local governments that can understand the unique needs and characteristics of their region and address them accordingly. This can lead to the development of more targeted and effective policies that cater to local industries and communities. Additionally, we found that anchor institutions such as a university or a local community interest group can play a critical role in enabling and connecting local and national actors in the creative economy. These institutions can provide resources, expertise, and networking opportunities, which can help to drive innovation, collaboration, and growth in the sector. Overall, a combination of national policy, local government, and anchor institutions can create a sustainable creative and cultural ecosystem that nurtures the creative economy and benefits society as a whole.

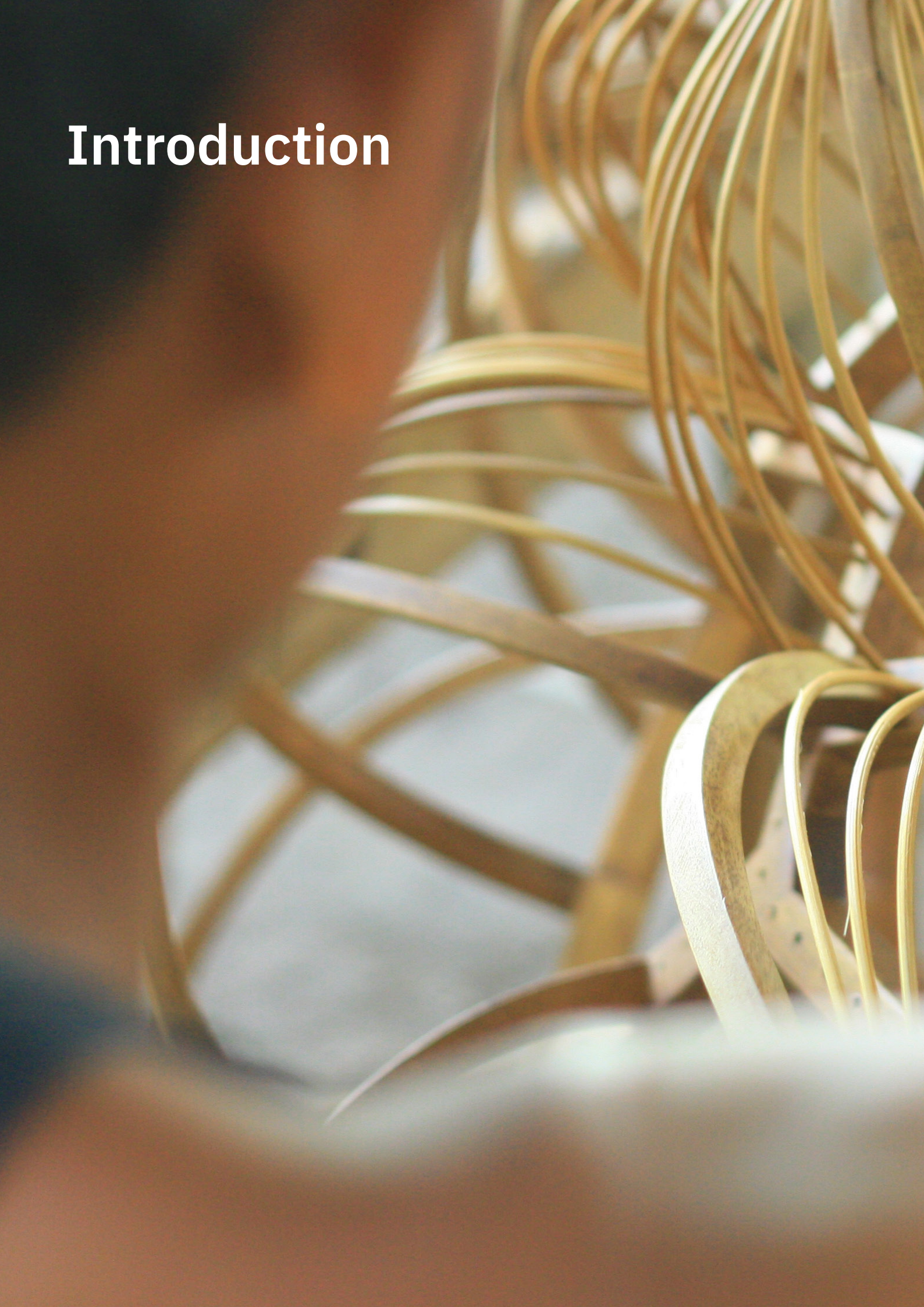
Our insights have led to five key policy recommendations for local governance that can better sustain local creative economies. They are:

- 1** Develop local governments' creative capacity and ensure they have legislative power and funding to support place-based creative initiatives.
- 2** Identify suitable anchoring institutions with the appropriate influence, skills, and knowledge to secure investments and/or make interventions to grow the local creative economy.
- 3** Consider sustainability (economic, environmental, cultural, social and political) at the heart of any local creative economy policy. Securing multi-year funding that allows for long term planning as well as flexibility in how funds can be spent allows policymakers to plan for sustainable outcomes. Creating a dedicated creative and cultural programming team with an economic development remit ensures longer-term support and capacity to sustain future activities.
- 4** Broaden debates and access to the values of arts, culture and design through increasing public consultation and inviting key stakeholders as part of local government decision making process.
- 5** Frame creative economy activities as key to supporting a more equal, diverse and inclusive growth. Establishing a working group with dedicated budget, clear evaluation criteria and training to support local teams to better understand Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) issues will help translate national EDI policies into actionable local outcomes.



CAPTION: Shop keeper in Khon Kaen
CREDIT: CEA

Introduction





CAPTION: Craftsman at work in Nakhon Si Thammarat
CREDIT: CEA

Introduction

The British Council in Thailand has been working to support the development of the creative economy in Thailand since 2018 through its Creative Hubs for Good programme, following the introduction of the Thai Government's 4.0 policy. This policy identified the creative economy as a key driver to move Thailand out of the middle-income trap by promoting innovation and creativity in all sectors. It has sparked a lot of changes in Thailand, especially in terms of government and private investments in innovation and creativity agendas. With the founding of the Creative Economy Agency in 2018 as a key government agency in charge of creative economy development, an emphasis has been placed on creative districts as catalysts for social and economic changes. This period saw a rise in the number of creative hubs in Thailand working to tackle arts, social, and environmental issues as well as playing a crucial part in the development of cities and creative districts.

Since 2022, the British Council has partnered with Thailand's Creative Economy Agency (CEA) to promote the development of creative districts in Thailand. The aim is to increase the level of engagement and support towards creative districts and hubs, and promote a wider recognition of the value of the creative industries by communities, enabling a high degree of influence on urban, city, local government and national policies.

The Thailand Creative Districts Network (TCDN) was set up in 2020 as a platform for key stakeholders in each district and city to collaborate with each other and leverage their creative and cultural assets. So far 33 districts have been identified and are participating in the network. TCDN is now in its third year and the CEA's next step is to focus on the sustainability and the management of the creative districts in order to ensure longer-term socio-cultural and economic impacts. They are looking to draw on their learnings from the past three years to identify best mechanisms and models which allow the districts to continue to grow and the impacts to be sustained by the local communities.



Within the framework outlined above and building on existing work, the CEA and the British Council Thailand are keen to synergise the knowledge and the experience gained from creative and cultural districts in both the UK and Thailand. Based on commissioned research by the British Council, this report provides an overview on the UK and Thai context in relation to how their creative economy is supported, governed and funded by drawing on best practice examples from both countries. These insights have led to a series of policy recommendations that will inform the development of a two-year programme for the Thai development of creative districts, affecting policy change at the local and national levels.

We start by firstly providing an overview of the UK and Thai creative economy context and in particular, identifying specific strategies, policies, funding, organisations and governance set up to support their respective ecosystems.

CAPTION: Songkhla Old Town
CREDIT: CEA

UK Context





CAPTION: Re.Voice performance dir. Agnieszka Blonska, Tate St Ives, April 2023
CREDIT: Steve Tanner

UK Context

Strategies and policies

Governance, funding and policies pertaining to the creative industries, arts and culture in the United Kingdom have been devolved to individual countries – England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The UK central government is responsible for England’s legislation, while the devolved governments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are responsible for matters pertaining to many domestic policy issues such as health, education, culture, the environment and transport¹. Policy and funding relating to the creative sector are usually classed under culture, and therefore each country has different government agencies, policies and bodies responsible for the creative economy. For the purpose of this report, we will be focusing on the English and Scottish context due to the location of the UK case studies.

Creative industries² are a key contributor to the UK economy. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, creative industries in the four countries contributed £116bn in Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2019 (equivalent to 6% of the UK’s total Gross Domestic Product) and accounted for 2.2 million jobs³. In 2021, they employed 2.3 million people, a 49% increase since 2011. The UK is amongst the top ten exporters⁴ of creative services in the world. It is therefore unsurprising that the UK government recognises the creative industries sector as a key contributor to the country’s GDP, made particularly evident by its inclusion in the industrial strategy in March 2018⁵ and, more recently, its identification as one of five priority sectors to deliver future growth in the UK’s 2023 Spring Budget.

1. Gov.uk, 2022
2. The UK’s Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) defined creative industries as those industries ‘which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property’ (UK Government 2021). It lists nine sub sectors which are: Advertising and marketing; Architecture; Crafts; Design and designer fashion; Film, TV, video, radio and photography; IT, software and computer services; Publishing; Museums, Galleries and Libraries; Music, performing and visual arts.
3. Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2021
4. Top ten exporters of creative services worldwide in 2020: United States, Ireland, Germany, China, United Kingdom, Japan, Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Sweden
5. Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2018

The UK government has been a long-standing supporter for the creative industries. The **Creative Industries Council (CIC)** was set up in 2011 as a joint forum between creative industries and government and its aim is to be a voice for creative industries focused on addressing challenges and opportunities facing the UK's creative industries. The **Creative Industries Sector Deal** agreed in 2018 (which includes £150 million of public investment, matched by more than £200 million from industry) between the government and industry under the leadership of CIC, the **Culture Recovery Fund** (£1.5 billion to support post-Covid recovery) and the more recent **2030 Creative Industries Sector Vision** illustrate ongoing committed policy and funding support from the UK government. UK have so far invested more than £310 million across the lifecycle of creative businesses focusing on ideas, people, infrastructure, business environment and places. This includes £233 million of existing public funding since the 2021 Spending Review and £77 million in new government spending announced to support 2023 creative industries growth.

The UK has seen a continuous track record of high-level government policy directly overseeing creative industries and producing statistics on the UK creative economy. The approach taken by UK policy makers in

relation to industrial policy (under which creative economy policies mainly sit under) includes “both ‘horizontal’ policies which focus on activities such as innovation, provision of infrastructure etc. while ‘selective’ policies aim to increase the size of particular sectors”⁶. A horizontal policy means that it is dispersed across different policy domains such as education, labour markets, regional development and urban regeneration policies. For example, a recent report published by the House of Lords⁷ has warned that the UK is at risk of losing out on global competition, highlighting school education in England as insufficient in preparing pupils for future work in the creative sector⁸. Such a report and its level of scrutiny is an example of the central government's role in shaping the policy landscape of the UK's creative economy.

At the country level, each location has their own local strategy and policies related to their own context. For example, Scotland's **Creative Industries strategy** is underpinned by its **Economic Strategy** which identifies creative industries as a growth sector and in particular aim to develop Scotland as a production centre for screen industries. **Legislation in 2010** led to the creation of Creative Scotland (one of our UK case studies) as a national public body for the arts, screen and creative industries, to develop and promote creative talent in Scotland.

6. Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2010, p.3

7. House of Lords, Communication and Digital Committee, 2022

8. Communications and Digital Committee, 2022

Funding

The UK's preference for a horizontal cross-sectoral approach to supporting the creative industries has meant that funding is often dispersed across different sources. For example, funding for culture and arts have mainly been channelled through **regional development agencies** (England only), local authorities and arms-length bodies such as **Arts Council England** and **Creative Scotland**. The government provides other forms of support, for example **through tax reliefs** and non-departmental bodies like the **National Lottery Community Fund**.

Creative industries and creative activities in England have mainly been the remit of two government departments: the **Department for Culture, Media and Sports**⁹ and the **Department for Science, Innovation and Technology**¹⁰. Funding from these departments for creative activities is channelled through the following bodies: **Arts Council England**, and **United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI)**.

Direct funding for the Scottish creative economy falls under the remit of two departments: **Arts, culture and sport** and **Business, industry and innovation**. Funding is channelled through **Creative Scotland**.

9. This Department was originally called the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports.

10. This was originally under the remit of the Department for Business, Energy, Information and Industrial Strategy, which has been reorganised

It is hard to estimate the total spend by the UK government to support creative economy activities, especially when budgets are devolved, but in recent years and as part of **the Creative Industries Sector Deal**, various schemes and funds have been announced to support creative industries such as:

1. Cultural Investment Fund, £250m, launched in 2019 (£125m to be spent on regional museums and libraries).
2. Culture Recovery Fund, £1.57bn, announced in 2020.
3. Create Growth Programme, £17.5m, launched in 2022 (for regions outside London, with each region receiving £1.275m).
4. Creative Clusters Programme, £120m from 2018-2023. This United Kingdom Research & Innovation (UKRI)/Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) programme exceeded co-investment expectations by 600%¹¹.
The programme is ending in 2023, however, further funding has been announced for the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) for another 5 years, which was set up as an outcome of the programme.
5. 2030 Creative Industries Vision, £75 million, announced in 2023 to unlock the growth potential of the creative industries and creative clusters across the UK.

It is fair to conclude that although funding centrally and regionally differs, the various schemes and funds that have been offered in the last 10 years indicate that the UK government is backing up its policy on growing its creative economy with ring fenced financial support.

11. At risk: our creative future

Governance

Who looks after the creative economy activities locally?

Local authorities in the UK typically have an arts and culture office with dedicated staff(s) who manage arts and cultural activities that benefit the public. This is a well-recognised role at the council level and is consistently found across the country. Their remits vary depending on the size of the area they serve. However, some public services, such as library services, are legislated and therefore it is one of the statutory responsibilities of a council to provide library access to its public. A local council is also required by law to plan and develop the area they serve, to maintain or improve the quality of civic life, and this can include activity such as public art commissions.

How is the responsibility devolved and organised?

Devolutions in the UK are outcomes of long-term negotiations between the central government and a regional government. Such negotiations are currently taking place in one of our case study areas: the North of Tyne combined authority. This newly formed regional authority offers early insights to how a regional creative economy might benefit from place-based leadership and sustainable approaches.

Advocacy and lobbying organisations

England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have an ecosystem of organisations acting as lobbying, advocacy and development agencies that play different roles in supporting and developing their country's respective creative economy. For example the **Creative Industries Council (England)** is a joint forum between the creative industries and government whose memberships¹² are made up of government officials, creative industry managers and research institution managers. The **Creative Industries Leadership Group** performs a similar role in a Scottish context. There are also non-governmental bodies such as the **Design Council** that work in the public interest with the aim to advance the use, understanding, education and research of design to support the public good. Support from the perspective of research and innovation funds from UKRI has also resulted in the

Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre which offers independent research and policy recommendations for the UK's creative industries. Led by Nesta, an innovation foundation with key university partners in England and Scotland, their core programmes cover a wide range of issues, including skills, jobs and education, diversity and inclusion and business models which might be of interest to the CEA.

At city level, there are professional networks like **Creative Dundee**, **Creative Edinburgh** and **Bristol Creative Industries** who act as key connectors and facilitators, offering training and programmes to serve their local creative community. Often they are funded and supported by the local council (and/or regional development agency) and work in partnership with universities and local businesses.

12. A list of membership can be found here to better understand the range of people and organisations involved in this council

Thai Context



History of creative economy development in Thailand

Thailand's creative economy policies started developing in the early 2000s as a way to diversify the economy away from being heavily export-dependent and to prevent the recurrence of major economic slumps, as experienced in the global crises of 1997 and 2008. The initial incubation period from the early 2000s to mid 2008s planted the seed for creative economy (CE) and creative industries (CI) policies¹³. The incubation period led to interests and establishments of creative spaces and new creative enterprises, with the aim to transform Thailand into a creative nation.

Thailand national strategy on creative economy¹⁴ is the responsibility of the central government under the Office of National Economic and Social Development Board. The Office of Knowledge Management and Development (OKMD) was established in 2003 by national decree and subsequently, the Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC) was established in 2004 under OKMD. TCDC is located in the Charoen Krung area of Bangkok and acts as an outward facing organisation that continues to facilitate knowledge and advocacy on the value of design by hosting

events, delivering programmes and offering public access to a design source library. In 2018, after extensive research covering the different models of creative industries, policy and approaches, particularly those of the UK, the Creative Economy Agency (CEA) was created to focus on delivering policy and promoting the creative industries and activities as the driving force to a balanced and sustainable economy.



CAPTION: Engaging with the local business community in Khon Kaen
CREDIT: CEA

13. Note that in the early stages, these two terms – creative industries and creative economy – are used interchangeably.

14. https://www.nesdc.go.th/ewt_dl_link.php?nid=3789

Creative economy initiatives

The Creative Economy Agency (CEA) is focused on economic value creation and human development through creativity. Their aim is encapsulated in their three pillars: to develop people, creative places and creative businesses. Therefore, their activities promote and develop the creative economy by connecting local communities, education establishments and creatives, fostering creative activities and ecosystems through the establishment and sustainment of creative districts. The CEA is also responsible for collecting data as evidence to inform policy making and enabling knowledge transfer through collaborations with private and public organisations¹⁵. Similar to Creative Scotland (one of our UK case studies), CEA acts as a developmental agency for Thailand's creative economy. However they do not distribute funds directly, but instead commission programmes and work with locally-based creatives in their targeted location. This allows them to directly support individuals and organisations on the ground.

Since its establishment, CEA has initiated and supported many initiatives across Thailand, some ongoing and larger scale programmes include the Bangkok Design Week, Chiang Mai Design Week, Isan Creative Festival and the Bangkok Creative City Dialogue¹⁶. As one of its largest and most ambitious national programmes to date, the **Creative City Development** programme was set up by CEA to develop area-based creative

economy, creative people, and creative industries, in order to create social, cultural, and economic impacts in those areas. As part of this initiative, the **Thailand Creative District Network (TCDN)** was set up in 2020 as a platform to collaborate with key stakeholders in different districts and cities. Cities applied to be part of the network, and CEA's team follows an established process and methodology of evaluating the creative and cultural capital of the place in order to identify strengths and local assets. This enables them to identify their creative and cultural assets as well as map requirements in order to propose interventions that go towards supporting the establishment and growth of the city as a creative district. Thus far 33 districts have been identified across the country, 15 provinces in their first year, seven provinces in their second year and finally eight more provinces in their third year.

15. <https://www.cea.or.th/en/about>

16. More information about CEA's project can be found here: <https://www.cea.or.th/th/projects/1/>



CAPTION: Chao Por Lak Muang shrine in Khon Kaen
CREDIT: CEA

Governance, responsibility and funding streams

In order to better understand how creative economy activities in the different districts are supported and funded, we have to first understand the governance structure, the respective responsibilities undertaken by various national and local agencies and the role they play in supporting the local creative economy.

Local administration in Thai provinces is divided into two main levels. The first level is the central government-run provincial office led by a government-appointed governor, under the Ministry of Interior, who is rotated every few years, overseeing all provincial-level central government offices as well as representatives from different ministries. The second level is the local government, consisting of two main offices. At local government level, there is a provincial administrative organisation, led by an elected president of the provincial administrative organisation council. The second office is the municipality, led by an elected mayor of the municipal council. At the provincial office, there is an appointed Cultural Officer and a team under the Ministry of Culture looking after hard and soft infrastructures in each province related to tourism, culture and heritage buildings. They have access to larger budgets, but have to submit a five year plan that has to be approved by the central government, and adhered to strictly without much deviation¹⁷. This can

sometimes prove challenging in relation to promoting creative activities as the provincial culture team is unable to respond to changing socio-economic needs, as witnessed by the disruption and devastation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Municipal offices have direct responsibilities for towns and cities, providing services and maintaining hard infrastructures like roads. There is a democratically elected Mayor who is the head of the municipal council who has access to their own local funds and answers to elected council members. Municipal offices usually have an architecture/urban planning department that employs engineers, urban planners and architects. They have access to funds but usually smaller amounts (from local taxes and central funds), and are bound by specific rules. Examples of budget size vary, at the level of municipality, it ranges from 500,000–1 million baht a project. In comparison, at a national level for example, the Tourism Authority of Thailand can spend ten times more, between 5million–10 million (for a project).

17. Source: Interview conducted with a provincial culture officer in Nakhon Si Thammarat

Case Studies





CAPTION: Khon Kaen
CREDIT: CEA

Approach

From our discussions with our interviewees based in Thailand and the UK, it is clear that there is a shared vision for communities in rural and post-industrial cities to build vibrant futures and prioritise their creative economies by securing long-term investments from public and private sectors. The examples detailed below are not intended to serve as definitions of “successful” creative economies, instead, our analysis is based on a pluralistic and place-based approach¹⁸. By presenting a range of sustainable approaches shared by our interviewees, we hope to put key actors of CE based in the UK and Thailand in virtual dialogues with each other to promote awareness around emerging practices and also highlight challenges in supporting CE. In the following sections, we offer a brief context to the different creative districts in Thailand and the UK, highlighting key lessons we can learn from each instance. We unpack themes that emerged from our data collections that have direct implications on creative economy governance, policies and management.

The interviews were conducted virtually between December 2022 and March 2023. Interviews were conducted in English for all the UK participants and a mixture of Thai and English for the Thai participants. In some cases, our Thai researcher or a member of CEA’s Creative Cities team acted as a translator and cultural interpreter. All interviews were semi-structured with the aim to locate micro examples of community



CAPTION: Srichan Makeover project, Khon Kaen

CREDIT: CEA

18. Akama & Yee, 2019

practices that either directly or indirectly inform long-term development of rural and post-industrial creative economies. Interviews were audio recorded and manually transcribed. The transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis¹⁹ to firstly identify codes which led to themes that speak to our research questions.

In total we conducted 15 interviews and have spoken to at least two different individuals from each area to ensure we gather different organisational and cultural perspectives on aspects of the creative economy.

Our case study included the Thai cities of Khon Kaen, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Songkhla (Old Town), and regional locations in the UK; Scotland, Cornwall, and Newcastle and Northumberland. The Thai examples are members of the **Thailand Creative District Network (TCDN)** and have been working closely with CEA for a number of years. CEA acts as both a facilitating and anchoring institution to support each city's creative economy activities. Working closely with stakeholders, they work to ensure that the three main stakeholder groups (public, private and civil society) collaborate well together. The three examples put forward by CEA offer different best practices in how the creative economy is supported by these three stakeholders.

Consideration was also given to ensure that the three examples chosen represented different socio-economic contexts in relation to how CE has been used to support social and economic development of the place. Similarly, the UK case studies were chosen to offer different financial models, approaches, and activities to complement the Thai examples.

19. Braun & Clarke, 2021

UK Case Study

Creative economy in Scotland





CAPTION: Glasgow city skyline
CREDIT: Anna Urlapova

Creative economy in Scotland

Context

Looking at Scotland as a whole offers us an insight into how the creative economy is supported at national level, highlighting the challenges in addressing local contexts and needs, as well as servicing a range of different stakeholders and agendas. Our interviews with the Director of Creative Industries in Creative Scotland and a prominent member of the creative community in Scotland allowed us to better understand the challenges in delivering national policy to a diverse and dispersed creative sector and the role it plays in the regeneration of a post-industrial economy. It offers two complementary perspectives in how a national creative economy strategy is delivered and experienced from a funding and developmental body, and from a member of the creative community.

Scotland has a mature and established creative sector with a track-record of support from central and local government. The creative industries sector is recognised as one of the government's seven growth sectors²⁰. The creative industries policy (set out in 2016) is aimed at supporting some of the 14,000 creative businesses in Scotland across 16 sub-sectors with a focus on sustainability, innovation and specialisation in order to build resilience for the 21st century economy. Scotland's creative industries are varied and range

across different sectors, from games, crafts, films, music and publishing, fashion to architecture. The creative sector in Scotland draws on a range of assets, from their strong identity, textile and craft manufacturing and distinct languages such as Gaelic and Scots with newer areas such as digital tech and games.

Creative Scotland (CS) was established by the Scottish government to deliver government objectives on the creative industries. It was a merger between the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen and hence it has a particular focus on film with aspects of legacy of the Scottish Arts Council still evident in its current form. Scottish Enterprise and Scotland's other regional enterprise bodies are key partners to CS and together they develop growth in the creative economy sector on key goals set by the Scottish parliament such as net zero²¹ and fair work²² (pay). The ultimate mission of CS is to deliver programmes that best serve public benefit through funding, capacity building, facilitation and advocacy²³.

See Figure 1 for an illustration of Creative Scotland's funding model.

20. The other growth sectors are: food and drink (including agriculture and fisheries), sustainable tourism, energy, financial and business services and life sciences.
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/growth-sector-statistics/>

21. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/climate-change/>

22. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-work-first-guidance-support-implementation/>

23. <https://www.creativescotland.com/resources-publications/publications/plans-and-strategy-documents/annual-plans/annual-plan-2022-23>



CAPTION: Edinburgh
CREDIT: Szymon Shields

Creative Scotland Funding Model

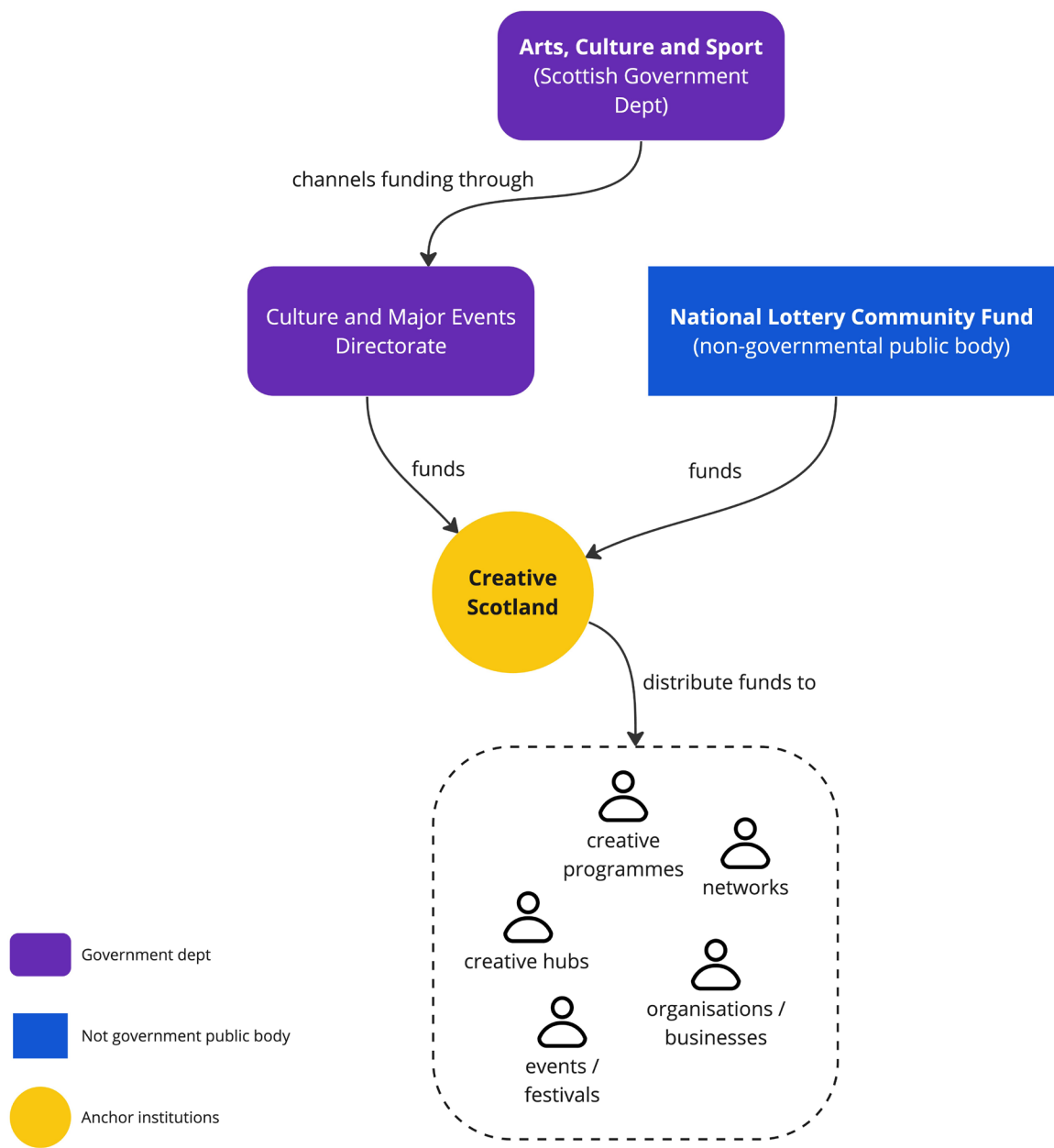


Figure 1

What can we learn from this example?

Place-based regional policy

Unlike the trend towards regionalisation in England, Scotland's strategy and policy relating to CE has not explicitly been translated into regional or city-specific needs. This poses a challenge when the needs of a post-industrial city like Glasgow are very different from the rural economies outside the major urban conurbation. That said, there are local networks of creatives like Creative Dundee and Creative Edinburgh working collaboratively with local councils and universities that are driving local strategy and policy. However at the moment, it is really council dependent, whether supporting the creative economy is prioritised in their own areas and if so, whether they have the creative literacy and funding to support their local industries.

EDI approach based on sectoral context

Whilst all creative sectors suffer from similar intersectional inequalities such as ethnicity, gender and class, each sector has its own particular challenges relating to equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) issues. For example, the UK Computer Games industry is heavily male dominated²⁴, while the craft sector is heavily female dominated, with three quarters of makers identifying as female, with only 4% of professional makers coming from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds²⁵. In the publishing sector, there is a huge class

imbalance. For this reason, our interviewees suggested that a sub-sectoral approach is a more appropriate way to address EDI issues and concerns directly rather than having a blanket EDI policy across the creative industries.

The challenge of measuring growth

When discussing the value of the creative economy, our interviewees pointed out that traditional ways of measuring impact and growth often exclude the social and cultural values of investments.

'...our ability to define the measures for those key performance indicators lags a long way behind the aspirations that we have for how we work and the philosophy of what it is we're trying to achieve.' (Director of Creative Industries, Creative Scotland)

24. Based on the 2021 UK Games census, 70% of people working in the games industry are male, compared to 28% female and 2% non-binary workers. Female representation in the workforce is significantly under the national average of those in work, as well as less than in cultural and creative roles more generally. More information: <https://ukie.org.uk/UK-games-industry-census-2020>

25. https://media.craftscouncil.org.uk/documents/Market_for_craft_full_report_2020.pdf (pg 8)

26. Value Added Tax is tax added to most products and services sold by VAT-registered businesses. The UK threshold to be VAT registered is £85000 turnover per year.





Additionally, even if economic measurements are used, businesses operating under the VAT threshold²⁶ are excluded since they are not counted towards official statistics relating to contribution to GDP.

'Every month I write a design column for a cultural magazine so I've probably featured over a hundred different design studios or brands. I've written about 100 different designers and studios over the last three, four years. Probably 70% of them, conservatively, don't make over the VAT threshold, so they're invisible and don't exist in those statistics that governments are using.' (Design curator)

Although there is recognition in the government of the value of the creative economy to Scotland's economic growth and prosperity, challenges remain when trying to reconcile that with accounting driven key performance indicators (KPIs) that are used to measure value that creative activities bring. Monitoring the impact of investment needs to be reviewed to better address the economic contributions of micro business, and also expand the criteria of contribution to include innovation ideas and knowledge, local authorities need support and training to better address the value of the creative sector.

CAPTION Edinburgh

CREDIT: Saifullah Hafeel

UK Case Study

Falmouth University and Cornwall Council



A photograph of the Launchpad building at Falmouth University. The building features a modern design with a black upper section and a glass-walled lower section. A prominent stone wall is in the foreground, and a metal railing runs across the middle. The sky is blue with scattered clouds. Two cylindrical ventilation units are visible on the roof.

Launchpad

CAPTION: Launchpad building at Falmouth University
CREDIT: Matt Jessop

Falmouth University and Cornwall Council

Context

Cornwall is a predominantly rural county located in southwest England. Famed for its beautiful coastline, wild moorland landscapes and attractive villages, it has for years attracted artists, creatives and makers to its area. It has a rich cultural heritage drawing from its distinct Cornish culture, coupled with mining, fishing and agricultural traditions that create a strong Cornish identity. It is known as the UK's leading rural creative economy and proof that CE can thrive in rural regions²⁷.

The strong partnership between Falmouth University, Cornwall Council and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership (CloS LEP²⁸) offers a clear example of how a rural creative economy may thrive and become sustainable through a holistic place-based approach. Professor Emma Hunt is the creative sector lead on the CloS LEP, which sets the economic strategy for the region. Alongside other senior leaders involved in economic strategies for the region, the Board recognised the value of the creative sector and identified what sub-sectors were its priority growth sectors. The local government followed an European Union guidance on assessment which created an evidence base for economic policy and decision making. Our interviews were with

Falmouth University's Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, the Programme Lead for their ongoing Creative Industries Futures Programme and a Strategic Projects Manager (Research & Knowledge Exchange) involved in developing creative economy policies. The conversations helped to locate specific practices and personal insights to the creative culture of Cornwall and the impact of anchoring institutions on their rural creative economy.

See Figure 2 for an example of how creative industries are supported by Falmouth University and Cornwall Council

27. O'Hara, Naik and Gorton, 2021

28. Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise partnership (CloS LEP) was established in 2011 as a partnership between the private and public sectors and is driving the economic strategy for the area, determining local priorities and undertaking activities to drive growth and the creation of local jobs. Cornwall Council acts as accountable body for LEP and in this capacity receives and administers all grants on behalf of the LEP.

Funding model for creative industries in Cornwall

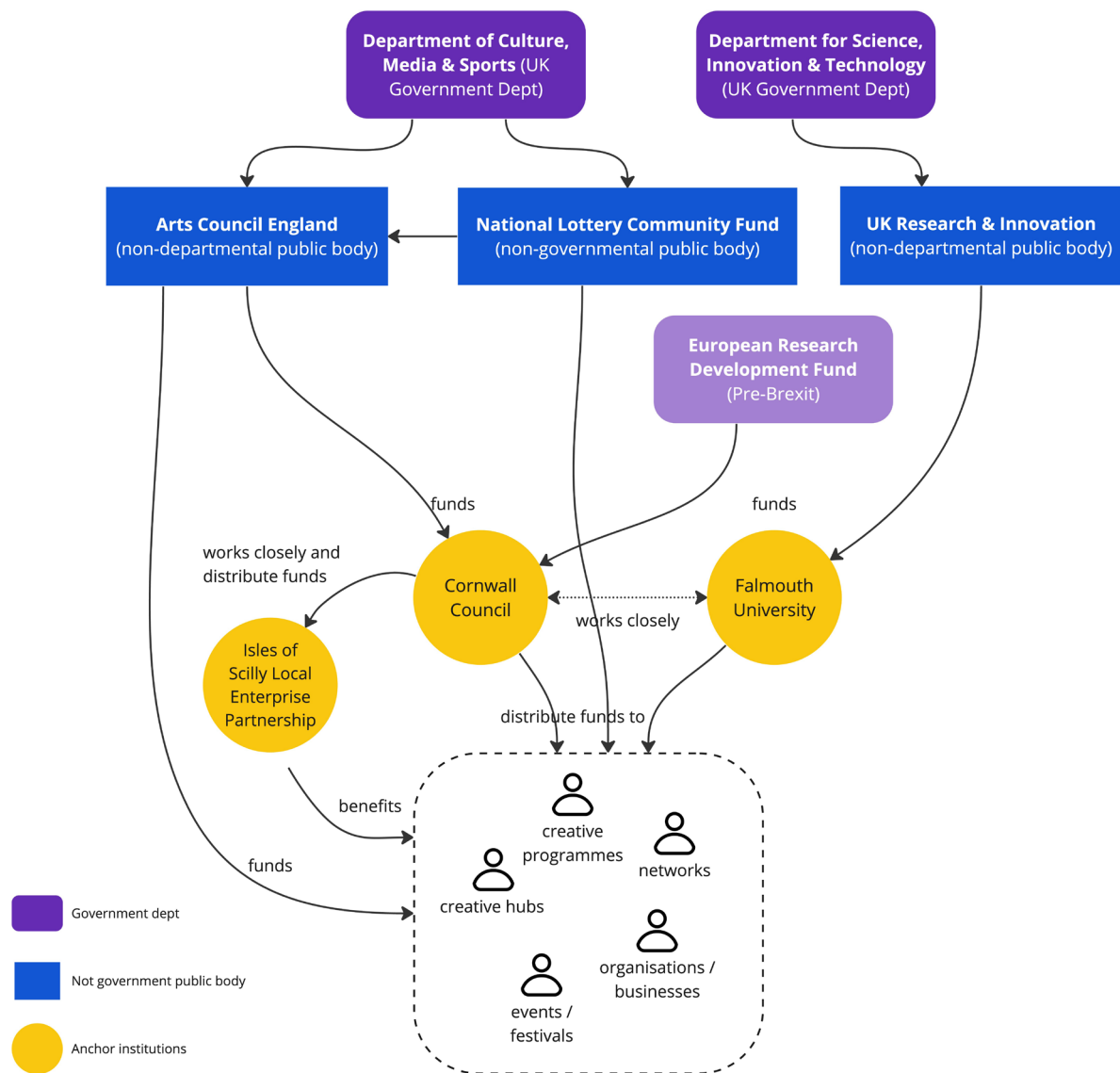


Figure 2

What can we learn from this example?***The importance of an anchoring***

What is an anchor institution²⁹? It is a term used to refer to key organisations who have the capacity to shape and grow the future of a place. It is usually made up of several organisations such as local governments, universities, and local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) boards (usually attended by local business leaders). In this example, Falmouth University has framed themselves as a key anchor institution supporting the creative economy of their region, working closely in partnership with Cornwall Council and the CloS LEP, described below by

‘...there’s an absolute commitment, through the university’s role as an anchor institution, to deliver social, environmental, cultural, and economic impacts in the region.’ (Strategic Project Manager)

There are a few key elements of effective anchoring as evidenced in this case study:

Evidence-based decision making

Falmouth University has a number of research programmes such as the Creative Industries Futures programme that coheres research exploring the direction of the creative industries by working with industry partners and stakeholders. By leveraging on

the research capacity from the university, it means that local policies are better informed by the outcomes of research (collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data on the creative sectors). For local governments, having partners such as local universities or local research consultants who can help produce an evidence base will give them the confidence that they are addressing the right issues, and lead to strengthening their capacities to address existing sub-sectoral issues and identify emerging growth sectors. Evidence-based practice also improves the transparency of policy-making, which in turn improves trust in the community.

Long-term personnel involvement and secondments

Falmouth University and Cornwall Council have been involved in staff exchanges through secondment for a number of years. For example, the Chief Executive of Enterprise Partnership and Service Director for economic growth was seconded to Falmouth University as Director of Strategic Innovation projects between 2017-2018; while a member of the Council’s Department of Business, Economic and Industrial Strategy was seconded to take on role of Director of Innovation and Research Funding at the university between 2018-2020. This means that cross-organisational partnerships are sustained

29. The idea of ‘anchor Institutions’ varies depending on the context it is used (i.e. top-down economic development project, bottom-up community building efforts or somewhere in between). However, the term generally refers to: ‘large organisations that are based in and have a long-term commitment to an area, often demonstrating this commitment by using their place-based economic power to align themselves with and strengthen their local communities. These institutions generally have a mission or purpose which is closely connected to the current and future wellbeing of a particular geographic community.’ (LGIU, 2022)

by long-term working partnerships between individuals working in these organisations. Senior management staff's secondments between local authority and university are an effective way to ensure that policies (especially for creative economy) do not become vulnerable to leadership changes. It also offers a means to build creative literacy in the local authority that helps increase knowledge and expertise beyond the anchor institution.



CAPTION: Launchpad studio at Falmouth University

CREDIT: Matt Jessop

UK Case Study

North of Tyne Combined Authority and
the Culture and Creative Investment Programme



CAPTION: Newcastle upon Tyne

CREDIT: Markus Spiske



North of Tyne Combined Authority and the Culture and Creative Investment Programme

Context

The North of Tyne Combined Authority (NCTA) is a partnership of three local authorities: Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland, located in the northeast of England, north of the River Tyne. Governed by a directly-elected mayor, the NCTA is a new entity created in 2018 by the UK government as part of ongoing devolution efforts to shift power from central government to the nations and regions of the United Kingdom. Combined authorities allow local authorities (equivalent to provincial level in Thailand) to pool their responsibilities and resources to deliver transport and economic policy.

The North of Tyne generates almost £17 billion in economic output (GVA) and is home to over 815,000 people. It has 30,000 businesses providing 415,000 jobs. It has significant cultural assets with significant growth sectors relevant to the creative economy such as digital technology and leisure and culture. Part of the devolution deal includes an Investment Fund worth £20m per year to drive growth and take forward its economic priorities. NCTA recognises that the cultural and creative sector is a key part of the future economy in the North of Tyne and has committed £3.25mil for the Culture and Creative Investment Programme (CCIP) delivered in partnership with Creative England.

CAPTION: Newcastle upon Tyne quayside
CREDIT: Anthony Holmes



The CCIP programme involves the identification of geographic zones working to deliver five-year pilot projects. A Cultural and Creative Zone (CCZ) is described as a *'place-based approach to investing in the development, sustainability and growth of the culture and creative sector.'*³⁰

The funding will be divided into investing into home-grown events, innovation and product development for the tourism industry and in building sectoral skills. Each zone (Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland) was initially asked to put forward proposals to outline their plans and vision to establish their zones as culture and creative enterprise areas. The zones are led by the local authority working closely with local stakeholders that includes creative businesses, freelancers, cultural organisations, universities and local non-creative businesses. A key criterion in the programme is achieving financial sustainability and all zone proposals must seek to deliver self-sufficiency within five years of a zone's launch.

The NTCA funds and coordinates the development of CCZs in the areas they serve. We spoke with the Senior Economic Development and Regeneration Officer (Culture and Creative) and Culture and Creative Zones Lead at NTCA. We also spoke with the project manager from Newcastle City Council's CCZ. The ongoing nature of this case study provides a great opportunity to learn directly from the emerging policy landscape, providing us with early insights to the effects of interventions and the immediate challenges policymakers are facing. It also offers an interesting comparison with CEA since the role that NCTA plays is not too dissimilar to how CEA operates but at a regional scale.

See Figure 3 for an illustration of how CCZ is funded.

30. NCTA Prospectus, 2021, p. 4

Funding model for Cultural and Creative Investment Programme

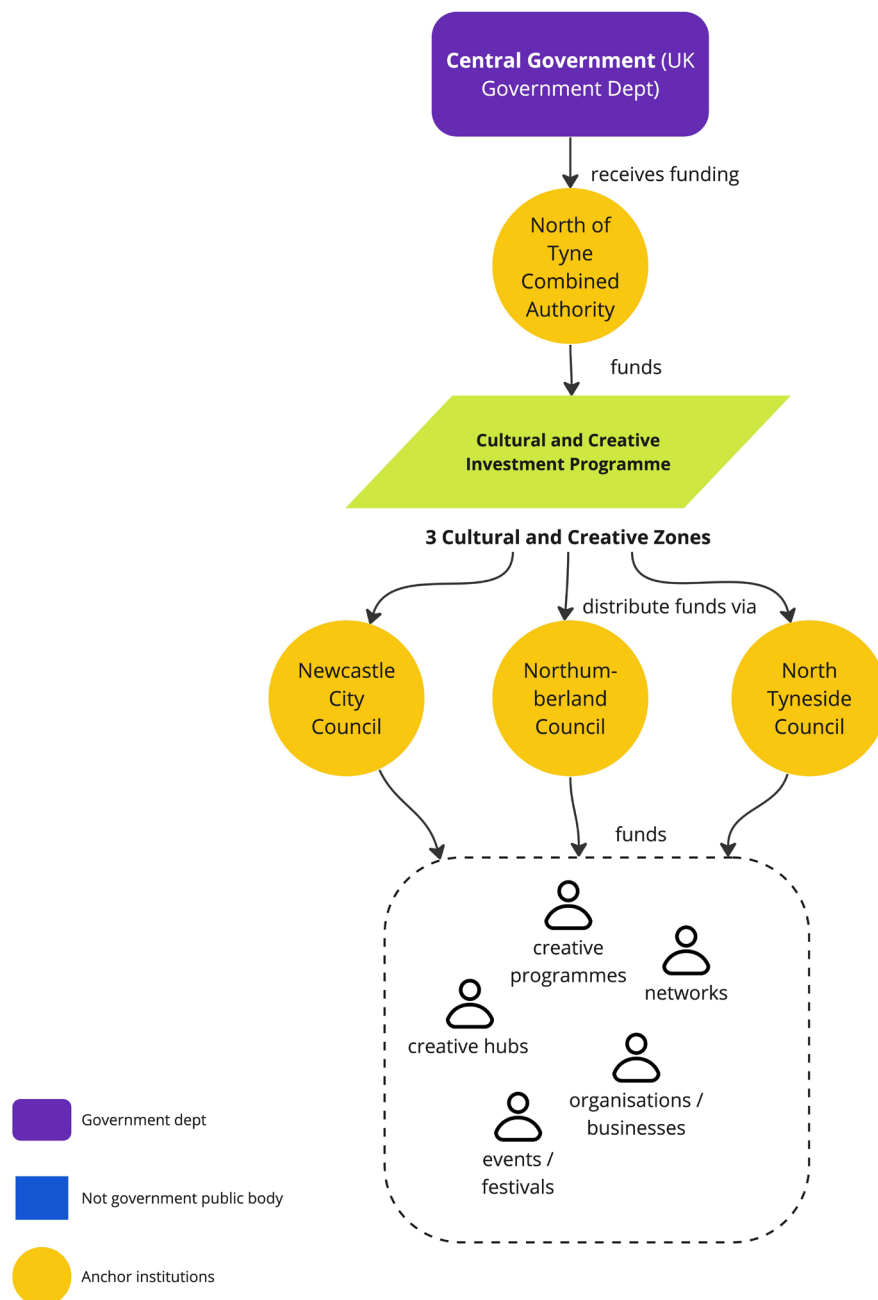


Figure 3

What can we learn from this example?

Place-based creative economy policy

The Culture and Creative Zones Programme was conceived as a five-year pilot programme. Early indications suggest that it is likely to continue and be expanded beyond its pilot phase. The interviewees highlighted the importance of having a specific programme that has explicit goals to support the growth of the culture and creative sector. The plan for each zone provides a clear strategy and action plans not only for the people involved in its delivery, but also for its public acceptance. Having a ‘thing’ to point to helps other stakeholders and the public to understand its aims, and what it is trying to achieve. This is especially important when all the plans hinge on strong partnerships with key stakeholders.

Adopting a place-based approach and engaging in grassroots work can be very challenging and the values embedded in a place-based approach cannot be assumed to be immediately compatible with top-down cultural regeneration programmes. Having stakeholders who can act as intermediaries, who are embedded in the local creative economy and understand local history of the negative impacts of regenerations on the sector, helps to build trust in policies from the public.

The council’s place-based approach has been welcomed by local artists as evidenced by comments collected during an early intervention in Newcastle:

‘For the first time, Newcastle City Council have made space (and paid) for grassroots artist reps on the Advisory Group and in one of the Task and Finish groups. They also invited artists to be part of an interview panel and have indicated they will do so again in the future. This is really encouraging.’³¹

Having a place-based approach also means considering how wealth generated from local investment can be more fairly distributed across the local communities. This includes rethinking how the procurement process is managed and how it can better reflect the broader ethos of community wealth building. Some councils have started to adopt the **Preston model** although it is also taking place in other places such as **Manchester city**. A similar approach is also evidenced in one of our case studies, as the project manager of the Newcastle city council CCZ shared:

‘...I don’t think we could say that an organization must be excluded, but we did weight it heavily that we were particularly interested in local providers and on the application they really need to be able to explain what sorts of tangible impact within the zone would be, which is really hard I think...We tried to be as open as we could be because we want it genuinely to be accessible for artists and small organisations and partnerships.’
(Newcastle CCZ Project Manager)

31. Coffield, E. et al., 2022, p.64

CAPTION: St. Mary's Lighthouse, North Tyneside
CREDIT: Ray Bilcliff



Newcastle CCZ is also setting examples of how local government is able to identify and address specific issues and barriers faced by creative practitioners in ways that central government policies may not be able to address. For example, this could mean lowering the barriers of participation for artists through the offer of bursaries to support their participation or offering free entry to events to the public to increase footfall.

‘The bursary places were very popular. Artists are often expected to work for free or for minimal payment and this forms a barrier to engagement. It is imperative that we set the standard and pay artists and creative practitioners fairly for their time, knowledge and experience.’³²

It is interesting to note the governance model for CCZ (see *Figure 4*) and the roles that the various anchor institutions such as the NTCA, the local councils and the Advisory Group play in delivering the objectives of the programme.

This example highlighted the importance of aligning any local CE strategy under appropriate sectors and teams in the local council in order for it to be sustainable. The alignment of the CCZ and its delivery under the Economic Development team in Newcastle City Council was significant as it signalled that creative and cultural sectors are important economic drivers. Activities relating to economic development often have access to more resources with a bigger team, and are perceived as having more credibility than perhaps the usually under-funded Arts and Culture team.

32. Ibid. p.52

Governance model for the CCZ programme³³

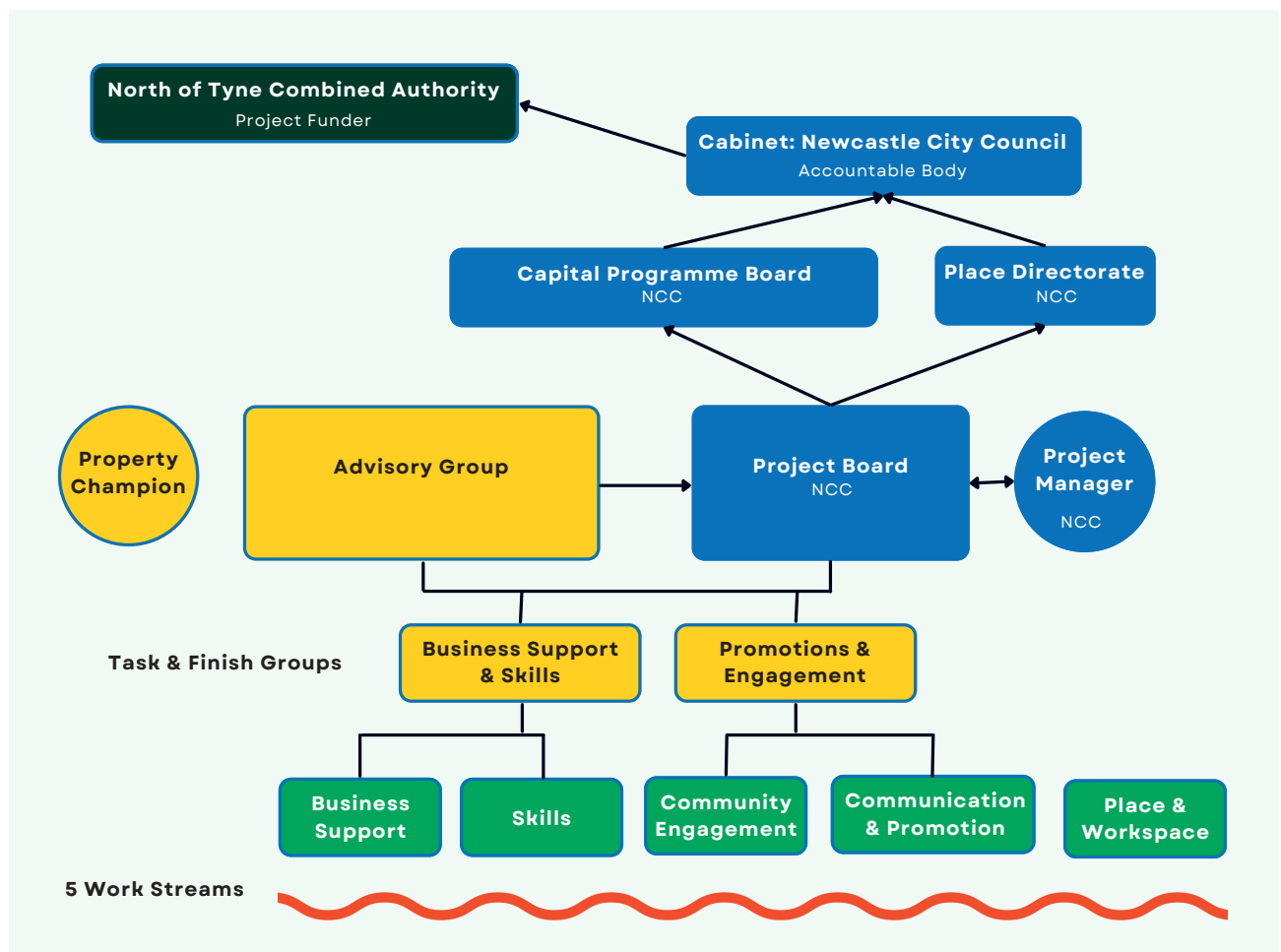


Figure 4

33. Diagram by Hannah Marsden for the Making Clayton Street Corridor project: <https://makingtheclaytonstreetcorridor.wordpress.com/2022/12/14/governance-structure-for-the-ccz-clayton-street-corridor/>

Thai Case Study

Khon Kaen City



[illegible][illegible]

Khon Kaen City

Context

Khon Kaen is a city located in the northeast of Thailand and is one of the largest cities in the Isan region. The city is looking to bring together their long-term focus on technology with new potential for developing their local creative economy. Khon Kaen Municipality is one of the key actors involved in developing creative districts in Khon Kaen. In the past few years, various events and activities have been organised to raise public awareness of the value of creative activities and enterprises by focusing on the regeneration of two key central city sites. The area around Srichan Road (ถนนศรีจันทร์) and Bor Kor Sor 1 (สถานีขนส่งผู้โดยสารจังหวัดขอนแก่น 1 หรือ บขส.1) used to be the business hub of Khon Kean but have suffered economic decline over the years. Many traditional businesses were closing down due to a lack of interest from the younger generation unwilling to continue the family business. With the support of CEA, the **Srichan One-Stop Business Hub** project was born with the objective of setting guidelines for the development of the Srichan commercial area. This physical space has a meeting area for business people and entrepreneurs and offers services and activities that support the district's business. The **Srichan walking street** was a project to develop the Srichan area into a pedestrianised area in order to encourage more footfall,

as well as develop new spaces for small pop-up businesses to operate, making Srichan an attractive area to visit. Apart from the physical infrastructure, CEA and Khon Kaen municipality have also focused interventions that build capacity as well as small events to attract interest. For example, they started the **Srichan Club** as a way to encourage stakeholders in the area to gather, network and collaborate with the aim to drive and develop the Srichan area in a community-led way.

See Figure 5 for an illustration of how Khon Kaen's creative economy is funded.

CAPTION: Khon Kaen City
CREDIT: CEA



Funding support for Khon Kean's creative economy

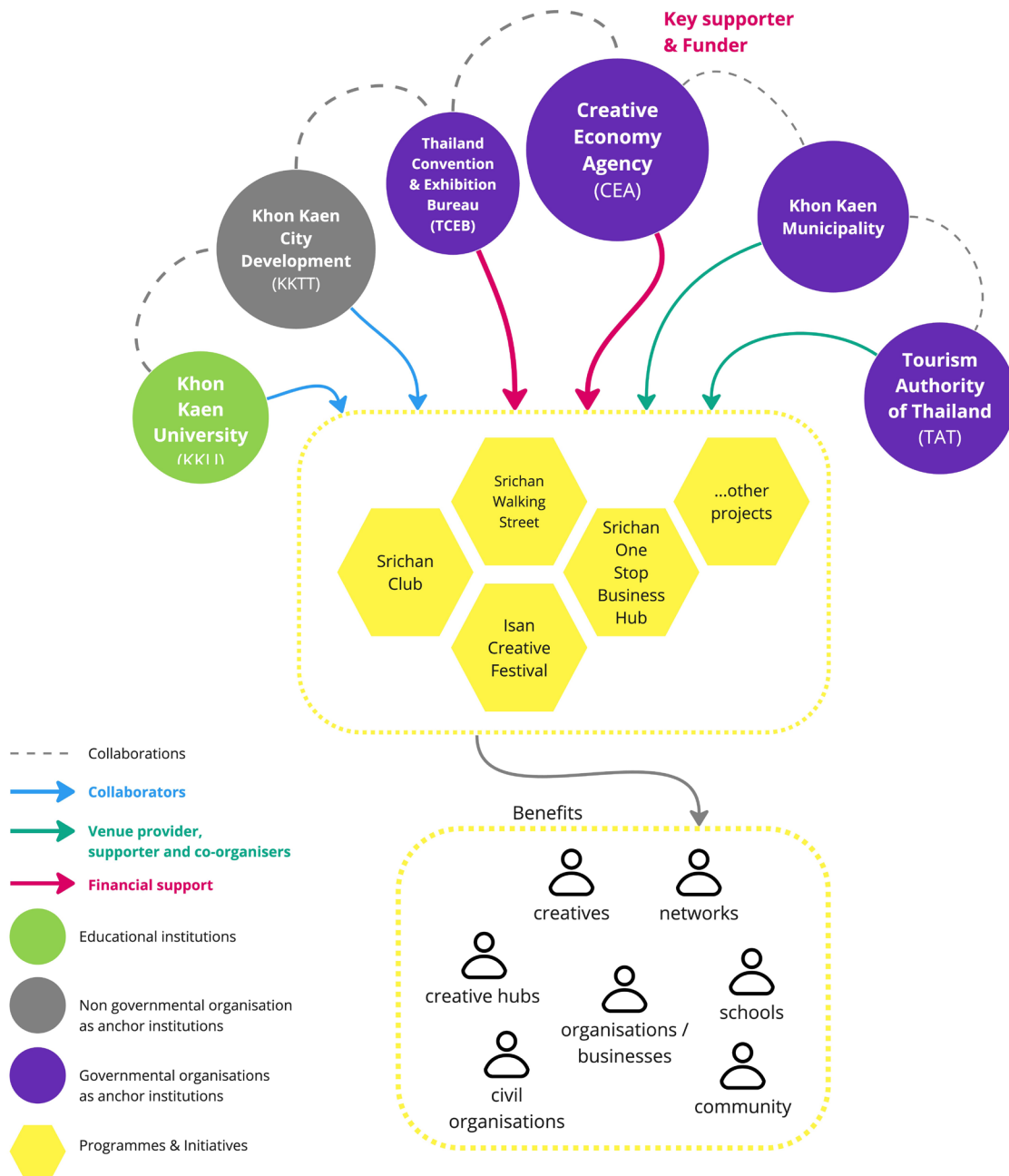


Figure 5

What can we learn from this example?***Local leadership and support from municipal office***

Khon Kaen offers us an example of the importance of buy-in and support from local leadership in sustaining and growing the creative economy of a place. This is due in part to having a mayor who understands and sees the value of the creative economy as a route to sustainable economic development. The municipality has supported the growth of CE through funding, offering resources (their research unit), and acting as a key connector by bringing in internal and external organisations to connect with local businesses. The Khon Kaen Municipality works as a connector to help the locals to work with other organisations outside and inside the city. It also helps to connect national and local organisations working to develop the city through a participatory process.

Aligning strategies

The development of Khon Kaen has been driven by government priorities and policies aiming at sustainable development. There has been a long-term focus on developing Khon Kean as a smart city, under Thailand's **Smart City plan**, sponsored by the Digital Economy Promotion Agency. The city is known for its innovation in the areas of medical and wellness, mobility (a light railway project) and MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions). Focusing on the creative economy is

just another avenue for the Khon Kaen municipality to accelerate development to its city and people. They recognised the benefit in drawing on the city's creative capital to help rejuvenate key areas in the city. They have strategically linked the development of their creative economy with their main city-wide development as a **smart city**, leveraging resources, funding and links that are readily available.

Participatory approach

The municipality prides itself on its commitment to following a participatory process with local residents and communities to ensure that their future is truly co-created. For example, during the nine-day **Isan Creative Festival in 2023** (which is in its third iteration) activities and workshops were held as public consultations to better understand how to develop the two identified creative districts in Srichan and Kangsadarn. In the past they have organised public hearings, inviting local communities, academics, universities, students as well as the Federation of Thai Industries, Tourism Authority of Thailand and research institutions to discuss the future of the city in a range of matters. This ensures that the city's development is driven and informed by local needs, crucial if citizen support is needed to deliver their goals.

Thai Case Study

Songkhla Old Town





CAPTION: Songkhla Old Town
CREDIT: CEA

Songkhla Old Town

Context

Songkhla Old Town is located in Songkhla province, one of the largest in southern Thailand. Ongoing efforts by various civil and community groups over the last 10 years have rejuvenated the Old Town centered around three streets – Nakorn Nok (ถนนนครนอก), Nakorn Nai (ถนนนครใน) and Nang Ngam (ถนนนางงาม). The area has suffered a decline since the 2000s due to a combination of a reduction in commercial fishing, which has traditionally operated in the area with the social-economic trend of younger generations moving away to larger cities for education and work. Over the past 15 years, efforts from local cultural and heritage groups have catalysed a rejuvenation and regeneration of the area. These efforts in part have been driven and supported by the city's aim in wanting to be recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. These heritage-related activities have succeeded in bringing a new lease of life to the Old Town and attracting attention from creative groups and networks. In the past five years there has been a rise of small businesses involved with creative activities in cafes, studios and galleries. Networks such as the Songkhla Heritage Trust and the Art Mill, and creative hubs like the Red Rice Mill and A.E.Y. Space indicate a vibrant creative scene that has been self-sustaining and growing for the past 10 years.



CAPTION: A.E.Y. Space in Songkhla Old Town

CREDIT: CEA

The Old Town has seen a significant shift in demographics, due to new people moving in from Bangkok and Chiang Mai and younger generations returning. In the last two years, new businesses have emerged whilst new landlords are looking to attract more creative businesses into their space as they recognise the economic and social benefit of a vibrant creative atmosphere.

In leveraging an established and growing creative scene, CEA's intervention was focused on strengthening the creative place-based making of Songkhla Old Town. They recognised that while the area was attracting new visitors who valued the rich cultural heritage of the place, there was perhaps less palpable recognition from the local residents. In order to reawaken interest and pride in the area, working with the local creative groups, they sought to rediscover histories, stories and narratives of its residents. *The Portrait of Songkhla (2020)* project aimed to capture and convey the stories of the communities living in the old town. Local photographers were commissioned to photograph residents, shop owners and workers as they went about their daily business. In the process they uncovered over 70 stories that speak to the living heritage of the place. *Made in Songkhla (2021)*, held the following year, matched up nine design studios with different local businesses with the aim of giving Songkhla's specialities a fresh makeover to accentuate their local

identity and make them more distinctive. Recognising the potential of Songkhla as a flourishing creative district, CEA is aiming to establish a local office in Songkhla in the near future.³⁴

See Figure 6 for an illustration of how Songkhla's creative economy is funded.

34. CEA has two other regional offices in Khon Kean and Chiang Mai.

Funding support for Songkhla's creative economy

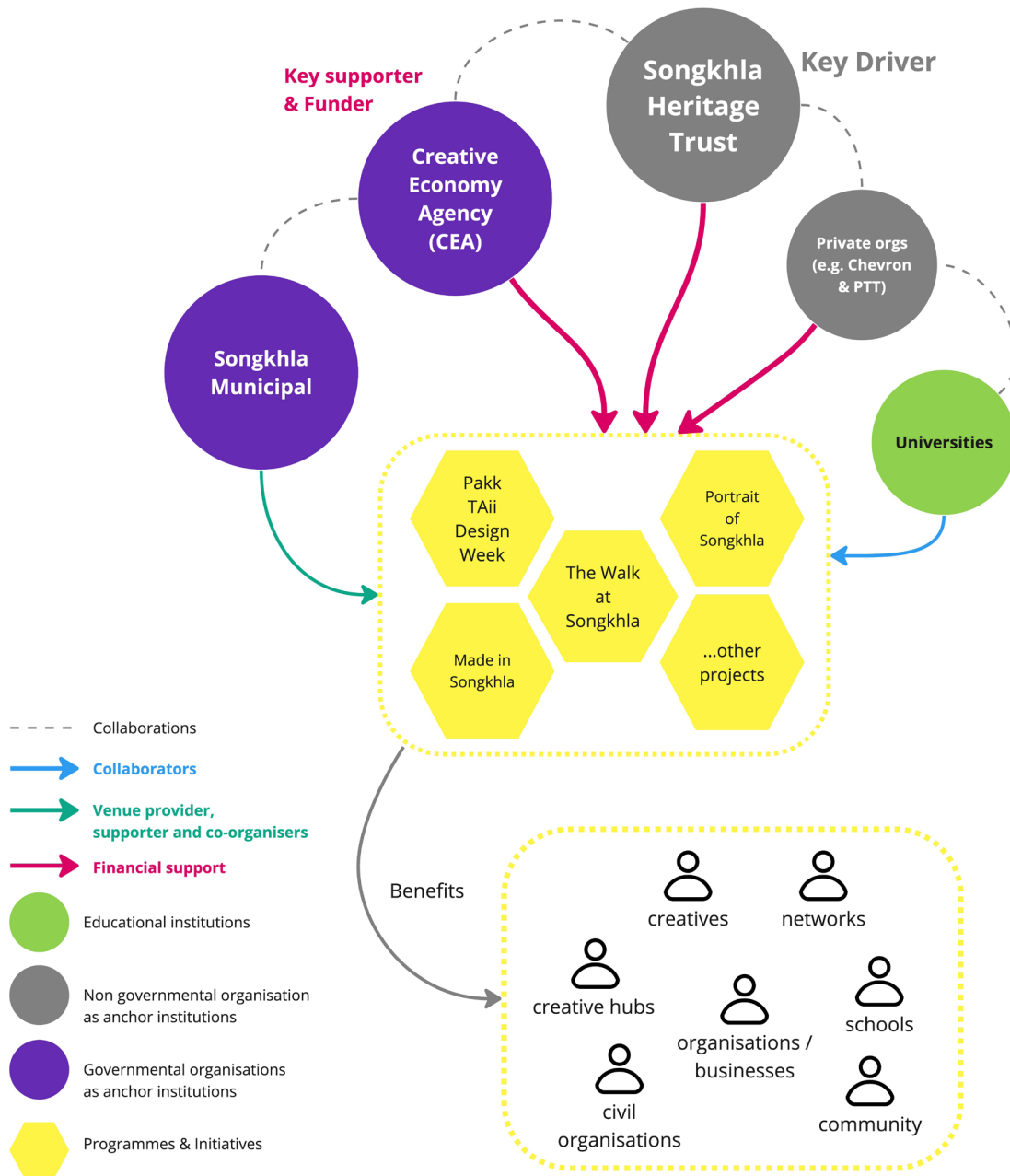


Figure 6

What can we learn from this example?***Building on an established creative ecosystem***

CEA recognised the potential of Songkhla as a creative district quite early on. Its rich cultural and historical assets and histories, coupled with strong grassroots heritage and arts communities meant that there was already a stable foundation to build from. Recognising that the strength of the area is in its rich local heritage and history, they developed programmes aimed at strengthening a sense of place for the community. While the events and programming have generated interests from outside and increased tourism to the area, they were also keen to ensure that the local residents are equally enthused and supportive of the regeneration efforts. They also hoped that local businesses would take advantage of the increased interests and visits by updating and refreshing their products and services through projects like the *Made in Songkhla*. Both this and the *Portrait of Songkhla* project focused on engaging with local residents and shop owners, working with 76 families and 12 shop owners that not only brought attention to the area but also enabled the local residents to rediscover their pride, heritage and family histories tied to the place.

Strong partnerships with different local and national organisations

Songkhla Old Town's creative ecosystem has thrived and been sustained due in part to the strong partnerships and collaboration between the local municipality, community groups, universities (e.g. Rajamangala University of Technology Srivijaya and Silpakorn University), government agencies (e.g. TDCD and CEA) and private organisations (e.g. Chevron & PTT).

These partnerships have developed over time, driven mainly by a shared focus on regeneration of the Old Town. As the memberships of the groups are diverse, it means that there will always be a core group of people with shared interests and goals in sustaining the creative ecosystem.

Importance of long-term strategy

Having a diverse and distributed range of actors supporting the creative economy in Songkhla is one of its strengths, but also poses ongoing challenges in aligning differing agendas and ambitions of the various groups. Each group contributes to the diversity and richness of activities to make a place creative; however in order for Songkhla to sustain its creative economy, it needs a longer-term strategy and source of funding to ensure it continues to build on its successes. At the same time, as expressed by one of the key actors in the scene, it is important to continue to talk to each other and ensure that decisions made continue to be community-led.

A dedicated regional development agency

A strategic plan also requires funding support and at the moment due to funding rules, there are limits to how much creative economy activities can be funded by the local municipality or provincial office. Often the amount that can be spent is limited and the budget has to be planned on a yearly cycle making it difficult to be agile and respond to emergent trends or needs. Stakeholders that we spoke to suggested a need for a permanent key connector and enabler like CEA that can come in to unite the various groups and to direct efforts towards agreed goals. Examples like ThinkCity, a development agency set up by the investment arm of the Malaysian government to oversee



the urban regeneration of selected cities (Georgetown, Malacca and Kuala Lumpur) through financial and technical support was mentioned as a possible model. Similar to the role that the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) and CEA is playing, our interviewees highlighted the need for an organisation that not only has a dedicated fund to support creative economy activities, but also acts to coordinate people, activities and resources as well as broker relationships.



PREVIOUS PAGE:

CAPTION: Made in Songkhla products

CREDIT: CEA

CAPTION: Portrait of Songkhla project

CREDIT: CEA

Thai Case Study

Nakhon Si Thammarat City





CAPTION: Rememory project
CREDIT: CEA

Nakhon Si Thammarat City

Introduction

Nakhon Si Thammarat is a city located in the central province of the same name. It is one of the largest cities in the South of Thailand. It is known as the centre of historical arts and craft like niello ware (เครื่องถม), cotton and silk brocade (ผ้ายก) and lygodium (ย่านลิเภา) (a type of climbing fern) weaving. Although famed for its traditional high-end crafts, local interest in these traditional crafts has been waning over the years. Young people, either unaware or uninterested in the craft traditions of the area do not see them as viable employment options, often moving away from the city to study and work. This lack of interest and awareness has made it challenging for its craft industries to retain a creative workforce to continue its tradition of arts and crafts production for export or local tourism.

Creative activities and interest in the city have mainly been driven by the presence of the Creative Nakhon network set up and led by Mr Supachai Klaewtanong. He is a local creative who returned to Nakhon after spending 10 years working at the hospitality brand, Banyan Tree Group in Singapore³⁵. Seeing how culture is valued and celebrated through the work of the group showed him how cultural heritage could be modernised and called on to rejuvenate a place.

Recognising that Nakhon has the necessary resources (skills, knowledge and people) to produce creative work, he started the Creative Nakhon network with the aim to reawaken creative and cultural assets by attracting and nurturing local talent.

Creative Nakhon (CN) started as a single-site exhibition with support from the provincial culture office. Throughout the years, the strategy has been to use the format of an exhibition to bring creatives together. It started small, in the first year 13 local artists and four members from CN participated in the exhibition. In the second year, with the theme of 'food', it brought together 18 local and regional artists. In the third year, it expanded to feature work from 50 artists and designers, coming from local provinces in the south of Thailand. With support from CEA, the fourth Creative Nakhon event was much more ambitious and expanded to multi-site locations with many more activities programmed. The call for participation was open to anyone looking to join and contribute ideas for activities and events. CN and CEA decided to focus activities around the Tha Wang (ท่าวัง) old town area. Tha Wang is situated in the centre of the city, and was one of the first places to be settled by the Chinese, Mon and Muslim communities. However in recent years, due to further urbanisation

CAPTION: Creative Nakhon Festival 2021

CREDIT: CEA

35. Banyan Tree is a Singaporean multinational hospitality brand that manages and develops resorts, hotels and spas worldwide. Its philosophy is centred on a purpose-driven mission of stewardship and wellbeing while offering considered design-led experiences.





and expansion of the city, many people have moved out of the Tha Wang area, leaving it quiet and lacking businesses. CEA, CN and the municipal office were keen to turn the area into a busy hub again, with the aim of attracting tourists into the city centre, as well as bringing back multi-generational local visitors.

The impact of CE-related activities has helped raise awareness and generate interest in the creative and cultural history of Nakhon Si Thammarat. Local communities are more aware and appreciative of the local creatives and their work. The buzz created from the yearly event also saw increased interest from the design community who were interested in developing business opportunities in the city. By the fourth year, visitors from outside the city and region were interested in visiting, indicating an impact beyond its local vicinity. Crucially, there was more intergenerational engagement especially in the Tha Wang area, with younger people showing interest in and making more visits to the area.

See Figure 7 for an illustration of how Nakhon Si Thammarat's creative economy is funded.

CAPTION: Creative Nakhon Festival

CREDIT: CEA

Funding support for Nakhon Si Thammarat's creative economy

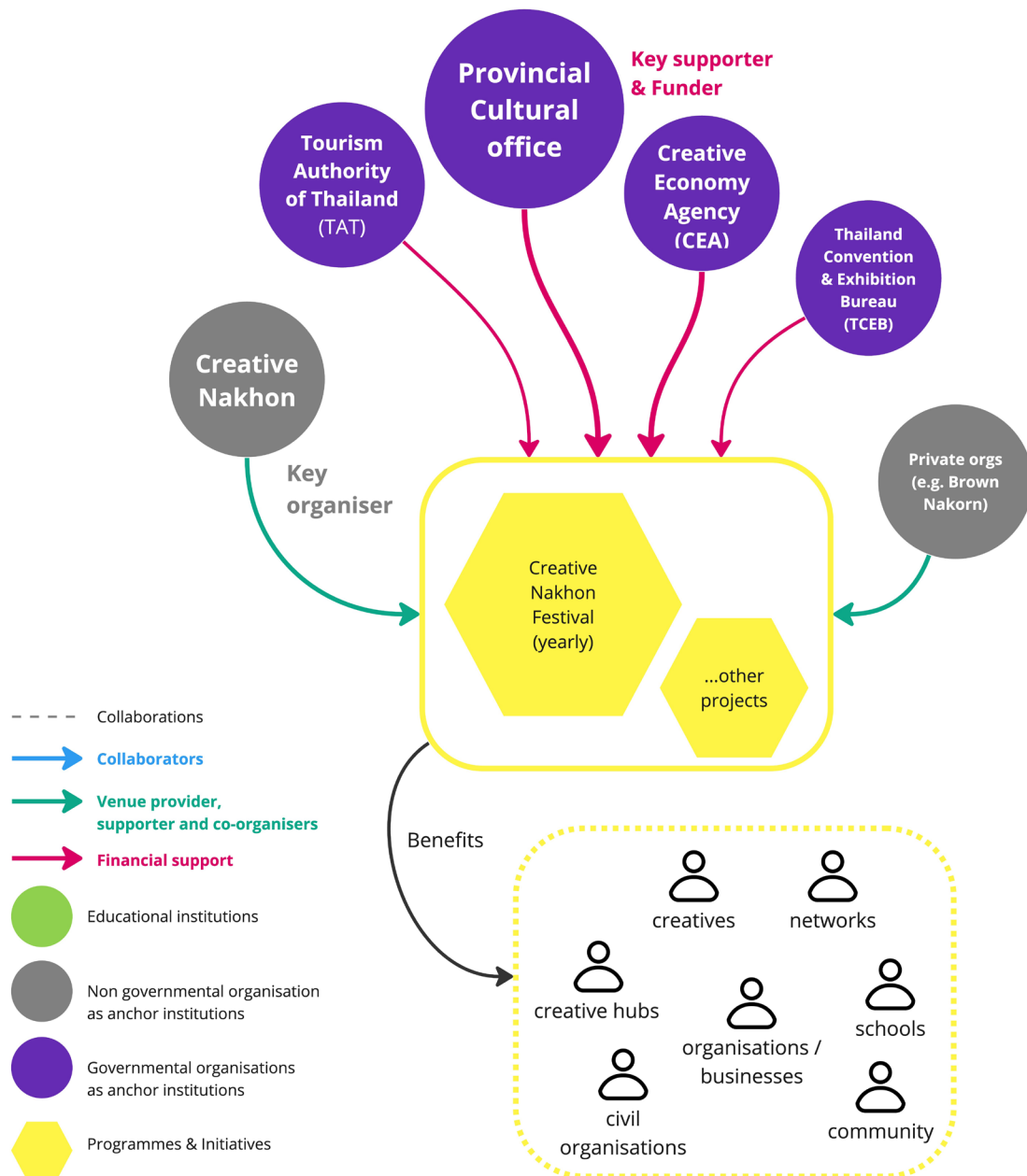


Figure 7

What can we learn from this example?***The importance of local champions***

Although Creative Nakhon is supported by a team of people, the key actor and initiator is Mr Suphachai. It was his vision and tenacity that has resulted in the creation of Creative Nakhon, which highlighted the potential of Nakhon Si Thammarat as a creative city to CEA and the local municipality. He built a mutually beneficial relationship with the provincial culture officer who recognised the value of building the creative infrastructure as a sustainable urban regeneration approach. It also helped that there was a clear policy from the government to support the 5Fs of Thai culture (food, fashion, festival, fighting and films). The strategy to use an event to attract and bring creatives together to build awareness and build capacity is an approach that we have seen in other places (like the Sakon Hed/Sakon Junction festival).

Partnerships with local government officials

There is a Head of the Provincial Culture Office for each province. The person acts as a representative of the Ministry of Culture and their role is to support arts and culture related activities at a provincial level and to deliver to government policy. They have funding to support culture related activities such as festivals, which is how the team at Nakhon Si Thammarat culture office came to support Creative Nakhon's work. It is important to point out the critical role that government officials play in supporting and sustaining local creative activities. The culture office has set up various committees and working groups to work on different initiatives and to leverage existing expertise in the city. For example, an academic committee was set up to advise and direct the Mahathat Temple Unesco Heritage Status application, while a group of architects, designers and engineers were tasked with coming up with a creative brief to help promote the culture of the city in the Year of the Rabbit in 2023. Working in a networked way has benefitted the provincial culture office as well as organisations like Creative Nakhon. CN is not only able to access relevant funding but contribute to the overall strategy and budget planning through the involvement in committees.

Aligning local priorities with national policies

The first three years of Creative Nakhon has been funded through small pots of funding from the provincial office and local sponsorship. Prior to the support from CEA, funding was hard to come by and often difficult to plan in advance. There is also the issue of continuity in policy direction and focus. Although nationally, creative economy is an important agenda, this does not often filter through to local municipal level, due to local needs and prioritisation. Prior to CEA, funding for these creative activities and initiatives often fell between the cracks, as it could come under culture, tourism or business support. In Nakhon Si Thammarat's case, framing Creative Nakhon as a 'festival' allowed them to access funding from the provincial culture office. However this strategy does not necessarily reduce the risks associated with changing funding priorities when there is a change of leadership. A change in Governor might bring unwanted instability and a new set of challenges if they do not understand the value of the creative economy and seek to de-prioritise its development.



CAPTION: Creative Nakhon Festival

CREDIT: CEA

Insights





CAPTION: Traditional rooftop tiles found in Songkhla Old Town

CREDIT: CEA

Definitions of Creative Economy in different regions (Thailand, England and Scotland)

In Thailand, various government offices and agencies have been allocated budget to implement programmes and activities to promote the creative economy in different sectors. In Thailand, the CEA works with these agencies to ensure their programmes align with the national strategy on creative economy. In the UK, national budget to support the creative economy is allocated through various national funding bodies like Creative Scotland and the Arts Council in England, whilst also being channelled regionally through local anchor institutions like Falmouth University and Cornwall City Council, and the North of Tyne Combined Authority. Although the yearly budget to support the national creative economy in Thailand or the UK fluctuates year-on-year, the broad trend is that both governments continue to be supportive in growing their respective creative economies through dedicated funding and support. By locating where governments place their creative-economic discourse, we can better understand the intention and motivations for investment in particular initiatives or sub-sectors.

In order to understand the roles that different governments play in sustaining the creative economy it is important to first point out the key difference between the term creative industries and creative economy. Incidentally, it is the precise style of governance that gives meaning to these two terms. Which term an authority chooses to use incidentally reflects the governance style that underpins the operations and functions of creative ideas in their society. We are not taking an essentialist view of civic life as determined solely by politics or the act of governing. However, it is critical to pay attention to which term an authority uses, as it reflects their understanding of their own approach to the creative sector. Unsurprisingly, we have found that authorities that focus on 'creative industries' and its associated terms tend to adopt an economic lens, where policies are weighted on growing business sizes and workers skills. In contrast, the use of the term 'creative economy' often indicates a more holistic approach that considers creative activities through social, economic and cultural lens. In practice, even professional policy makers, including some of our interviewees, use these terms interchangeably, which reflects the complexities and challenges that the creative sector presents.

NEXT PAGE:

CAPTION: Khon Kaen City

CREDIT: CEA

CAPTION: Newcastle upon Tyne

CREDIT: Markus Spiske

CAPTION: Edinburgh

CREDIT: Thomas Ortega



Role of governmental development agencies

Our discussions with our UK participants provided us with varied perspectives into the role that government funding and development agencies play in supporting their respective creative economies. Creative Scotland is probably the closest to CEA in that it is a government agency that is tasked with delivering the government strategy and plans for the creative economy. It distributes funding directly (unlike CEA) but also focuses on skills development and business support. All organisations that we spoke to, are in some way involved as key connectors and brokers, by bringing together a range of relevant stakeholders such as individual creatives, local businesses, cultural organisations, government agencies and private businesses. The NCTA in particular has the role of overseeing and managing the Culture and Creative Zones Programme, providing a more direct oversight of a strategic plan. Falmouth University acts as an anchor institution for their region, built from a strong partnership with the local council.

Our Thai interviewees were particularly appreciative of the support given by the Creative Cities team at CEA, which not only allowed them to run programmes, events and festivals but also connected them to other networks and organisations that are doing similar things. For example Mr Supachai from Creative Nakhon was introduced to the Songkhla creative networks through CEA. They appreciated having dedicated funds they can call on to help support their work without needing to frame their work in ways that fit specific criteria of funding from the municipal and provincial offices. That said, some

participants also expressed a desire for this support to be available longer-term, as well as a more place-based strategic approach to supporting the local creative economy. Examples like Thinkcity have been mentioned by some participants as a model they would like to see happen.

What is the role of government in supporting creative businesses and individuals to thrive? How do they encourage growth in new emerging sectors while also balancing support for sectors that may not be financially sustainable? Who decides what type of creative activities and industries deliver economic, social and cultural value? Would creative activities or sectors be continually supported if they are not economically viable but recognised to bring social and cultural value? Does 'sustainable' always require all triple bottom lines to balance? These are some of the questions that a government development agency often grapples with when deciding how funding should be distributed. Ultimately, as our case studies have shown, the role that a government agency plays is dependent on the government's approach to the creative economy, how it is prioritised and how it is funded and resourced.



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Local government: policies, funding, capacity

Research³⁶ has shown the importance of place in fostering a vibrant creative economy and that each creative district has its own unique identity and ecology based on its people, culture, history and pre-existing physical and social infrastructures. The focus on developing creative districts and creative cities is an explicitly place-based strategy adopted by the Thai government to catalyse social and economic changes at a local level. It has provided different regions and cities with opportunities to have their creative and cultural assets recognised and supported. That said, a truly place-based approach requires dedicated local policies, ring fenced funding, human capacity and governance power to enact.

Bangkok and Pattaya cities have been designated as having special administrative status and operate at the level of provincial office, with their own legislative and executive bodies. However all the other towns and cities in Thailand are still governed locally through municipal and provincial offices. And while the 2007 constitution (completed in 2016) states key principles of decentralisation and guarantees local government autonomy especially in matters of policy formulation, administration, finance and human resources management, it is hard to ascertain how, in practice, it has supported the growth and sustainment of local creative economies. The benefit of specific policy and funding focused on specific needs of a place can already be seen in the Cultural and Creative Investment Programme funded by the North

Tyne Combined Authority in the northeast of England. The negotiated devolution deal from the UK central government laid out their region's priority, with a key commitment to supporting their creative industries.

The limitation of current local government structures has also proved challenging in finding and securing long-term funding to support the sustainment of creative activities. The challenge is accentuated in the Thai context due in part to two main issues. Funding for creative and cultural activities from local governments tends to be limited both in terms of amount and ways in which it could be spent. Funding from central agencies is available, but often comes under the remit of different agencies that have different expectations and outcomes, making it difficult to develop an integrated local strategic plan for a city or region. The siloed nature of funding and priorities means that continued funding is scarce, and projects and programmes are piecemeal in nature. It is also challenging for local governments to be agile, since budgets need to be submitted at least a year in advance, and in some cases a five year plan is required (as in the case of the provincial culture office) making it difficult to divert funds if priorities or situations change. In some cases like Songkhla, collaboration from the private sector has been very successful in overcoming governmental funding constraints but not every city has the opportunity to rely on strong local partnerships.

36. Yee et al., 2020

Continuity in public officials was also mentioned as a challenge, especially when public officials who have been strong supporters and close collaborators of the creative networks leave office, the same level of support may not be possible with a new incumbent who might prefer to pursue other agendas. If local governments are to take on the role as the key actor in driving the creative economy, they also require additional capacity in terms of people who have the experience and knowledge of the creative sector. The close collaboration between Nakohn Si Thammarat's Provincial Culture office with Creative Nakhon and the enthusiastic advocacy given by the Mayor of Khon Kean have shown the positive impact of having long-term local government support and capacity in growing the cities' creative economy. Similarly, we observed the clear benefit in having dedicated officers like the CCZ Programme Manager at Newcastle City Council that can lead and deliver on local creative economy strategy.



CAPTION: Isan Creative Festival in Khon Kaen
CREDIT: CEA

Equality, diversity and inclusivity in CE

We have so far discussed government policies that have direct implications for people working in the creative industries, but our case studies have also shed light on the potential of CE policies to address poverty and equal opportunities. Many of our interviewees have shared candidly how their lived experiences motivate their work. For example, as Mr Rujiravilai explained, his involvement with the CEA was the first time he took on work with a government agency, and his decision to take part was motivated by witnessing the pandemic's impact on Songkhla Old Town's livelihood:

'During the pandemic I stayed in Songkhla all the time. So I saw what was happening in terms of business and the people. I think they were affected a lot, especially in the old town. There are a lot of old shops, old vendors and old tea houses, they had to just shut the door. They couldn't sell anything because people stopped coming out and eating out. Businesses had really low sales at that time. So that is the starting point, that's when CEA contacted me, and I thought it was a good opportunity, because I didn't know when the COVID-19 would end. And it was a case of doing a lot of research into what's going on in Songkhla Old Town, teaming up with designers, and it came out as a design project 'Made in Songkhla' with CEA, to help the old stores get business again.'

The collaboration between the CEA, Mr Rujiravilai and the small businesses of Songkhla Old Town provides a clear example of a place-based approach, and how such partnerships could address the gaps left by large-scale regeneration programmes or national relief schemes³⁷.

In Cornwall, poverty has been a visible barrier to young people's engagement in the creative industries. Towns in West Cornwall such as Camborne and Redruth have endured decades of deprivation and various national schemes and local initiatives have been put in place since 1945 which are well-documented in literature³⁸. Here we share invaluable insights from our interviewees who have experience working in policy on how they are planning to extend their work on CE policies to reach beyond the expected demographics:

'Cornwall is a place that has always attracted creative people, and the university is part of that. But we also need to make sure – and this is something I'm trying to think about in my research – that opportunities to work in the creative industries are available as equitably as they can be, whether that's about class, access to networks, or any other groups of people who have historically not been included in particular sectors or practices.' (Creative Economy Research Programme Lead)

37. 'Thailand's social assistance response to COVID-19 crisis helped to offset loss of income and poverty increase. Without this assistance, poverty would have reached 8.1 percent in 2021 (27 percent higher than observed levels), while inequality would have been over 4 percent higher than its current level.' Thailand Economic Monitor (2022, p. v)
38. 'West Cornwall has been characterised by high levels of material and social deprivation in the post-1945 period (e.g. low incomes and wages, seasonal unemployment, poor housing, ill health)' (Cemlyn et al. 2005, p.77)

'I worked in policy and there were constant government restructures. There's constant problems with funding, local authority, so there was a constant risk of losing your job. And I always found that really terrifying in a county where I knew I couldn't get another policy job. So working in this area where the university is really striving to support economic growth and to make those opportunities available to people in Cornwall and make Cornwall a more prosperous place. That's definitely my motivation.' (Falmouth University's Strategic Projects officer)

Reflecting on lived experience not only on a personal level but societal level also offers a way to further nuance governments' visions for the future. There are more serious implications on the representation of lived experience when creatives are being excluded from decision-making at national and local levels, as explained by a design curator based in Scotland:

'If you're in a situation where you have complete consensus very quickly, you should be worried about that because it means that other people's voices have been quieted down or eradicated completely.'



CAPTION: Social life in Songkhla Old Town

CREDIT: CEA

At the same time, programmes designed to rejuvenate a city or region can also run the risk of addressing the symptom and not the cause of economic or social issues as shared by the same curator:

'It (New Urbanism) creates a programme that edits out homeless people, drunk people. They're still part of society, but it doesn't allow for any porosity within the city for people to coexist in ways where they are morally opposed.'

Globally, we can see that there is still a great deal of work to be done to better understand the role that CE plays in improving equality, diversity and inclusivity of marginalised communities. EDI issues tend to be complex and intersectional, but one way in which it could be tackled is by focusing on sub-sectoral issues, a strategy adopted by Creative Scotland:

'Across all the different sub-sectors, the profiles (of organisations) are very different, so what we then have to do quite often, is to try and make interventions around sub-sectorally specific issues and concerns...

We had an event around the game sector that took place in Scotland back in November. The role that we performed within that was to try and ensure that there was good representation across genders, so we supported the events to make sure that they could bring in women to talk about the game sector rather than just the default position that quite often might happen, in that they just line up a load of guys to talk about it.' (Director of Creative Industries, Creative Scotland)

While this approach offers a pragmatic way to tackle specific EDI issues in the creative sectors, having a robust EDI policy based on a legislative framework, monitoring and clear funding criteria with a dedicated working group to deliver to the objectives of an EDI plan is crucial in improving equal opportunities, tackling underrepresentation and increasing diversity in the creative sectors³⁹.

39. In 2021, Creative Scotland set up an EDI Advisory group as part of ongoing measures to embed EDI across its work, to ensure equality of opportunity and to tackle under-representation in the arts, screen and creative industries. See <https://www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/latest-news/archive/2021/02/equalities-diversity-inclusion-advisory-group>

Sustainable approaches towards long-term development of creative economy

Reflections on the UNESCO initiatives in Thailand

Our consultations with Thai and UK stakeholders revealed a shared vision amongst different creative communities for long-term funding of the arts, culture and design industries in their cities. Amongst our Thai case studies there is a recurring strategy where lobbyists invest their own time and resources, along with the support from local governments to apply for UNESCO related status. Songkhla Old Town is aiming to be designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, while Nakhon Si Thammarat is aiming to join the UNESCO Creative City Network⁴⁰ as a City of Crafts and Folk Art. This strategy in applying for accreditation and recognition from an international body is seen as a way to secure longer term funding support from the government. Additionally, any government with a designated UNESCO Heritage Site is required to protect, conserve, present and transmit to future generations its World Heritage Sites, thereby guaranteeing support in its preservation.

However, as expressed by our interviewees who are involved in preparatory work for UNESCO applications, the process can take years to complete and is a long-term commitment, often involving many stakeholders and investment of resources. Despite these challenges, we do see this as a collective effort to create a sustainable environment for the creative economy in Thailand. This approach resonates with the legacy of the European Capital of Culture⁴¹ (ECOC) experience in UK cities where local governments took part in bids to become an ECOC. Even for cities who were unsuccessful, their participation proved to be valuable as the process helped synergise creative and cultural stakeholders in the cities. The ECOC competition prompted local governments to put in place dedicated funding to accentuate their cultural offer, and oftentimes as a result, many UK cities curated new cultural programmes that gave local residents new ways to engage in arts and cultural activities, increasing a sense of pride and place, as well as boosting tourism, as identified by a research report looking into the role of cultural events at the centre of strategies for change in cities:

40. The Creative City Network was set up to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.
See <https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/home>

41. The European Capital of Culture initiative is designed to highlight the richness and diversity of cultures in Europe and foster a role for culture to support the development of cities. Cities bid to become a designated ECOC and use the opportunity to support regeneration efforts, increase tourism and raise their profile.

‘The process of being a candidate city for a major event such as the ECOC encourages a city to review or develop its strategic aims and objectives and approaches to the raising of the required resources and to further enhance stakeholder networks in the city. The process of bidding can act as a tool for rallying stakeholders in the city and instilling pride in the local population, even if the outcome of the bidding process itself is negative’⁴²

This ‘winning through losing’ model was evidenced in the Newcastle/Gateshead Culture 10 programme in 2010 which was created in response to their failed 2008 bid to be named ECOC. As one of our interviewees pointed out, their experience and knowledge gained from working in the Newcastle/Gateshead Culture 10 programme are now being extended, more than 10 years later, to inform Newcastle City Council’s Culture and Creative Zone programme, which further demonstrates the value of prioritising sustainable outcomes in arts and cultural events management.

42. Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 391



CAPTION: Isan Creative Festival
CREDIT: CEA

Integrated grassroots cultures with heritage management

‘Cities of today face two choices. Either they develop to meet the challenges created by the pace of global change, or they resist the impulse for transformation and stagnate. At a time when economic systems are no longer predictable, in order to remain competitive, cities are turning to strategies that focus on their own innate resources – their histories, spaces, creative energy and talents.’⁴³

Events that have built on grassroots cultures showed the benefits of such strategy in not only economic terms but social and cultural terms: giving pride and ownership to local residents, promoting and passing on intangible heritage, offering a sense of optimism in communities, and raising confidence in the future of the creative economy. Overall, festivals are still seen as an accessible form of creative events in most of our case studies. It is described as a way of convening people, hosting intergenerational dialogues and reinvigorating declining businesses. For design curator Mr Klaewtanong, building a creative community with the local residents is at the heart of Creative Nakhon’s mission:

‘The first few years (of Creative Nakhon) was about raising awareness among local people, to let them know that there are creative people here. And it started to draw

interest from the business sectors who wanted to join and do business with the creative people. The creative exhibition was initially not that big, the audience were mainly family and friends who were invited. But by the fourth year, the event was drawing tourists from other parts of Thailand, and the young generations came, and people started to say that they should have this type of event in this area and these districts. So people have accepted the creative activity and the creative works as part of Nakhon Si Thammarat.’

‘Portraits of Songkhla’ and ‘Made in Songkhla’ were both inspired by the local residents of Songkhla Old Town and their ways of living. Both events were very popular with people of all ages which sparked intergenerational dialogues and drew tourists from other parts of Thailand. These events owe their success to the local people who took part, as curator and gallery owner Mr Rujiravilai explained:

‘Here in Songkhla I think people are starting to understand if you want to run a community event we have to also be with the community and ask them to join us, too. It’s not just a case that we work for them, but that we work together.’

43. ibid



CAPTION: Sri Chan District makeover project
CREDIT: CEA

The aforementioned events in Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat celebrated people's ways of living, and in both cities the local residents showed strong interests and ownership over those events. The local government in Nakhon Si Thammarat is playing a vital role by providing long-term funding⁴⁴ to help make the community-based project sustainable.

Local governments are also well-placed in terms of promoting intangible heritage through annual events. For example, Golowan is a midsummer festival based in Penzance, UK, dating back centuries. It was revived in 1991 by the local council and local artists and is now widely recognised as a major Cornish event. In 2016, Penzance council awarded Golowan Festival CIC the contract⁴⁵ to deliver the festival for three years (2022-2024). As well as delivering the festival, the CIC is also responsible for ensuring that community participation is as wide as possible and it does so by actively building partnerships with other community groups/organisations (including Falmouth University) and businesses.

*'Seeing ICH (Intangible Cultural Heritage) as a contemporary social practice – rather than a vestige from the past to be preserved – raises questions around the role of society as a whole in engaging with ICH, not least given pluralising shifts in the demography of traditional ICH areas. The everyday discursive landscape that mediates these encounters is constructed by various social actors: institutions (tourism and heritage organisations, local and national media, councils and cultural organisations) and individuals (tourists, permanent and temporary residents, creative practitioners).'*⁴⁶

44. Creative Nakhon is included in the local government's 5 year plan, which will receive a budget from the central government, however the amount of funding has not yet been announced at the time of our interview.

45. Penzance council report on Golowan festival

46. <https://revoice.falmouth.ac.uk/2023/02/15/412/?c=008c2e>



CAPTION: Nakhon Si Thammarat's local residents
CREDIT: CEA

Place-based leaderships

It almost goes without saying but long-term development of a local creative economy requires the support of the local community, as well as proactive and consistent leadership that is place-based. One of the most common mechanisms found in both UK and Thai examples that supports place-based leadership is the establishment of a local steering or working group. These discussions and decision making forums allow multi-stakeholder participation and can directly inform the strategic directions that a local government decides to take in terms of investment. One of the most important functions of a local steering group is to ensure that there is continuity of policies. As literature shows⁴⁷, the creative sector is still prone to being overlooked by central governments, and it requires constant effort by steering groups to keep investment for the sector high on the agenda of local anchoring institutions.

In Cornwall, the Local Enterprise Partnership boards are led by a Chair from the local business community and board members are local leaders of industry (including SMEs), educational institutions and public sector organisations. The Cornwall and Isle of Scilly (CloS) LEP Board has been through a rigorous process to establish the LEP area's economic strategy.

This is described in the Local Industrial Strategy, which identifies priority sectors for investment and formally recognises the creative economy as a cross cutting theme:

'The CloS Local Industrial Strategy's principles of design will drive productivity through leveraging the Creative economy: Using the region's cultural distinctiveness, innovation and creativity to improve productivity through its innovation, ideas and creative expression'⁴⁸

The CloS LEP Board has established priority sector subgroups, attended by senior sector representatives, to work together to ensure a strategic and coordinated approach to accelerating the growth of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly's priority sectors. The CloS LEP Creative Industries Sector Body is chaired by Professor Emma Hunt, Vice-Chancellor for Falmouth University, a specialist creative industries university and the only HEI headquartered in Cornwall. The Sector Body is attended by key representatives from creative industries.

47. At risk: our creative future (2023, p.10)

48. CloS Local Industrial Strategy

The Sector Body is attended by key representatives from creative industries including:

‘The Hall For Cornwall which is the main theatre body in the region, representatives from Screen Cornwall, which is an organisation helping to develop the screen sector in the region, representatives from the local authority and from Cornwall Museums Partnership. There is also an organisation called Creative Kernow, which is a creative and cultural support organisation and conduit to the sector’s business community.’ (Strategic Projects Manager, Falmouth University)

This example illustrates the importance of gathering relevant stakeholders to contribute to the steering group and to ensure there is appropriate and equitable representation on it. More importantly, the group has to be given the power and agency to make and deliver objectives in order for it to effectively support a place-based leadership approach.

CAPTION: Nakhon Si Thammarat town centre

CREDIT: CEA



Tailored research and evidence-based policies

‘Councils, sector bodies, government – as well as businesses and investors – all struggle to find data which is specific to the creative part of a local or regional economy. Between them they have different parts of the puzzle – but these need to be connected together and combined with other research to get an overall picture.’⁴⁹

Creating an evidence base is an essential but often overlooked aspect of policy making and governance. Across local authorities in the UK there is a wide spectrum of approaches in how research and data are used to inform decisions. Our interviewees have shared both qualitative and quantitative approaches to creating an evidence base, and what research methods local authorities choose will inevitably depend on the disciplinary backgrounds of the policy makers/decision makers, however, having an evidence base helps to improve the accountability of decisions, and to avoid confusions in planning as one of our interviewees explained,

‘...having all of the right partners around the table with a very clear evidence base and strategy. That really helps to focus minds.’

Here we list a few examples of research tools and a commissioned report shared by our interviewees that they have adopted to help inform policy-making:

- **Smart Specialisation** is a tool developed by the European Commission. It is a framework that allows local authority to identify a new sector that has potential in growth.
- **Location Quotient data** shows the proportion of the local size to the national size of an industry. It allows local authorities to assess which of their local industries may have advantages of growing to be more competitive and/or leading.
- **Making Clayton Street Corridor** workbook was created to document ongoing discussions and between grassroots artists/creative practitioners and policy-makers in determining how to develop a key area in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, funded by the city council.

Policy Recommendations





CAPTION: Songkha Old Town port area
CREDIT: CEA

Policy Recommendations

While it is important to have a robust creative economy national policy to ensure that there is a joined-up approach to supporting creative and cultural activities, many central governments often lack insights at a local level to effectively support local needs. The strengths of local governance lie in the way authorities are able to make investment and interventions which target sub-sectoral issues. However, despite having better insights to local issues, local governments are not always equipped with the capacity or have the legal power to address those issues. Here we present a list of practices that we see as a basic framework of local governance that can better sustain local creative economies.



CAPTION: Creative Nakhon Festival

CREDIT: CEA

Building on local strengths and assets

As the global creative economy continues to thrive post-pandemic, it also adds pressure on rural and post-industrial creative economies. Policymakers wishing to adopt a place-based approach should be attentive to the individual circumstances of micro businesses and offer support that will help strengthen their abilities to navigate through the challenges of globalisations. Collaborative projects between creative agencies and micro businesses, as exemplified in the ‘Made in Songkhla’ project, are innovative ways to identify new predictable incomes, which in turn create and strengthen a resilient local creative economy. Meanwhile, building awareness around the value of design-led interventions helps to create tangible examples that further illustrate the creative sector as a driver for growth.

Take for example, Nakhon Si Thammarat. The city is famous for the craftsmanship and rich histories surrounding those traditional crafts and has abundant natural resources for making traditional weaving such as Niello Ware (เครื่องถม), cotton and silk brocade (ผ้ายก) and lygodium weaving (ย่านลิเภา). There are great opportunities to transform crafts into contemporary products, but it will require coordinated and collaborative efforts between the anchor institution and the local community to identify the strengths and business potentials of existing practices and find the best sustainable business model to be integrated with local culture.

‘Projects that are embedded and thriving within their communities often present a values-based approach underpinning their work. A shared aim being part of, and for the benefit of, their local community. This holistic thinking informs their decision-making to consider wider community issues outside of more traditional models based on bottom-line and profit only criteria. In addition, contribution of the creative sector has long been under-represented in traditional growth measures. Movements towards a greater role for social value in procurement and investment, and a greater recognition of the need for co-production, represent important shifts towards a meaningful approach.’⁵⁰

50. Lewis et al., 2022, p. 36

Clarity, Criteria and Funding for a Creative City

Local governments looking to develop and support a vibrant local creative economy must firstly understand what it means to be a creative city. The concept and activities are often conflated with activities aiming to make a city a tourist destination. While CE activities have proven successful in attracting new interest and visitors to a city through the regeneration of areas (like in the Srichan Road and Bor Kor Sor 1 area in Khon Kaen city, and in Songkhla Old Town), there needs to be clear understanding and framing that a creative city is very different from a tourism focused city. There should be clear criteria and KPIs that differentiate the two approaches to city development. In terms of financial models, local governments should be encouraged to, within their mandates, allocate funding to support working with local anchor agencies and community-based organisations. This will ensure that there is dedicated support to develop and grow the local creative economy of a city.



CAPTION: Srichan district in Khon Kaen (top), Songkhla Old Town (bottom)
CREDIT: CEA

Anchor institutions

As our case study suggests, anchor institutions are vital in ensuring that development of a local creative economy is sustainable. Having anchoring institutions in place means that local governments do not have to work alone and can draw expertise from organisations based in the same area to help produce strategic plans of developments. Many interviewees in this report are representatives of such organisations, for example, Falmouth University, the Khon Kaen municipal government, and Songkhla Heritage Trust (whose founder is a business leader). Previous research⁵¹ has also identified the importance of creative hubs as anchor institutions that have been influential in supporting effective collaboration between the local governments and community-based organisations. Often these hubs and organisations overlap, like the Songkhla Heritage Trust which is housed in the Red Rice Mill in Songkhla Old Town. The creative sector as we understand it in the 21st century is becoming increasingly embedded in almost every industry. Having people working in different organisations across industries all joined up to form a critical task force would better serve the policy landscape and pivot public and private resources towards sustainable growth.

Policy at central governments around the world is often preoccupied with economic concerns. The potential to develop a thriving creative economy can be easily

overlooked, especially in rural areas. Anchoring is key in navigating uncertain futures as well as ensuring social and political sustainability. Public and private sector partnerships, as we have learned in both Thai and UK case studies, are the backbones of place-based leadership. When there are close and collaborative relationships between senior figures in private and public sectors, it allows knowledge to flow and creates a high-level network of stakeholders who are committed to supporting the creative economy. In practice, the memberships of such partnerships will vary depending on what industries and creative sub-sectors are growing in any given area. But having a consistent body where experienced stakeholders' views can be heard means that governance is not entirely reliant on a local authority and grassroots issues can be shared.

We suggest that policymakers wishing to instigate an anchoring body should first conduct stakeholder analysis to ensure that effective anchoring may take place. In practice, this means validating existing stakeholders' roles and contributions to the local creative economy and identifying new stakeholders who have influence, skills, and knowledge to secure investments and/or make interventions to grow the local creative economy.

51. Dovey et al., 2016; O'Hara et al., 2021

Sustainability as creative economy's heart

Sustainability is multi-faceted (economic, environmental, cultural, social and political), and understanding these aspects as interlinked helps to reorient traditional, event-centric regeneration strategies where events programming can inadvertently create stagnant, out of season periods in a city. As we learned from case studies in Thailand and the UK, when key stakeholders have clear grasps of the social values and intended social outcomes of events programming, not only are the work and funding more likely to be continued, their social values can also be extended further to reach more people in the community.

Prioritising social impacts of creative events is key to adopting sustainable approaches in managing the creative economy. Instead of focusing on creating and curating content for one-off creative events, policymakers working on creative and cultural programming need to plan for sustainable 'outcomes' of events, that means laying down an overarching plan with sustainable goals at the start of a programme. For example, Cornwall is known as a popular tourist destination, with its dramatic sea cliffs and beautiful coastline. It would be tempting for the local council to rely on show-piece events to further strengthen its position as a tourist destination. However, their foresight in seeing the potential of its creative and cultural heritage to attract creative talent and ideas and build critical

mass that is resilient to future socio-economic shocks has created a strong regional focus. Sustainability has to be a key principle of a strong creative economy:

'As ephemera, events themselves may not be sustainable. For certain events, the organisation is dismantled or reduced in size soon after the event ends. This might lead to the loss of expertise that would be required in legacy planning or the planning of future events'⁵²

'Programming is a process that is subject to a wide range of pressures, both internal and external. The programme for the eventful city should be a product of the vision for the city: a means of reaching and engaging with its stakeholders and publics as well as positioning itself relative to other cities'⁵³

Local authority needs long-term paid leadership roles that are either in-house or based at arms-length organisations to oversee policy and programming specifically addressing sustainable growth issues around the creative economy. This also means a commitment to invest in capacity building and training for teams to support these place-based leaders. This not only ensures that there is local expertise in creative economy but also supports the sustainability of ongoing efforts for when dedicated funding for specific programmes ends.

52. Richards & Palmer (2010, p.383).

53. *ibid*

As exemplified in the UK case studies, it is clear the creative economy is being positioned as a key economic sector of the 21st century, evidenced by the placement of senior policymakers within local economic development teams. It is also becoming commonplace practice for publicly-funded creative hub programmes to employ hub managers. This is different from a traditional project manager whose main remit is to ensure outcome delivery. The importance of the role of a hub manager cannot be overstated in a place-based approach to supporting the local creative economy, as explained by O'Hara et al.:

*'...the important role of hub manager or leader, which is shown to be critical to the success of creative hubs. Hub managers are trusted individuals; they are often well-networked and carry job titles such as CEO, Community Manager and Producer. "They are the primary curators, intermediaries, brokers and knowledge agents", which means they tend to not only influence the membership mix of a hub, but also to act as animateurs.'*⁵⁴

54. O'Hara 2021 cited Virani (2015)

CAPTION: Isan Creative Festival, Khon Kaen
CREDIT: CEA



Broaden debates and access around the values of arts, culture and design

From our literature reviews and case studies it is clear that local authorities can benefit hugely from employing arms-length bodies to organise consultations with grassroots actors and the public. This approach offers flexibility in the ways a public can take part in early typological studies of potential creative districts. Formats such as walking tours and focus groups offer local authority sounding boards to gauge public acceptance of their plans. Although it is not always possible for local authorities to organise initial consultations, it is critical to be as transparent as possible. The design of information and its transparency and accessibility, including public feedback mechanisms, can have a direct impact on the uptake of policies at grassroots levels. There are valuable lessons to be learned from our UK case studies, where communication of policies is directly linked with trust issues in the communities.

The future of the creative economy touches almost every aspect of our lives. It is particularly urgent for policymakers to engage in educational discourses, as it pertains to issues of talent pipeline for future work. There is a lack of intervention programmes that focus on educating the next generations of the creative economy workforce. Across our case study areas, we have found limited evidence from local

governments investing in future work provisions at school levels. Overall, ensuring that creative practitioners have a seat at the decision-making table helps to connect policymakers with the creative task force that local authorities need to have on board for effective anchoring. Exploring different avenues for public debates also means that government initiatives can reach beyond the expected audience. Cultivating audiences in sectors that are not deemed as creative helps to keep creativity high up on everyone's agendas. As more established creative zones have shown, synergising arts, culture and design sectors and making creativity a cross-cutting theme in future development policies is key to ensuring that stakeholders from across various industries can contribute to growing a vibrant and place-based creative economy.

Translating EDI Policy into practice

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) is a top agenda for all the UK examples featured. There is an acknowledgement of a lack of equality, diversity and inclusion in the creative arts sector, which has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic⁵⁵. Each of the UK examples has developed locally-based approaches to tackle the diverse EDI issues present. For example, Creative Scotland has a robust EDI policy that underpins their work, but also develop sector-based interventions (such as their programme looking to diversify the gender balance in the computer games sector) and resources (like a toolkit⁵⁶ to support funded creative organisations) to ensure that they are effectively translating their EDI policy into practice. The UK is also supported by a long established legislative context in which organisations like Creative Scotland is subject to legal duties under the Equality Act 2010⁵⁷ that brings together 116 pieces of previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. Because of this, EDI policies and practices are often well-developed and embedded in creative economy activities that we have seen in our UK examples.

It is also important to point out that creative economy activities are being explicitly employed to address socio,

economic and cultural inequalities of a city or region. The Culture and Creative Zones programme in northeast England is framed as ‘an exemplar for culture and creative-led inclusive growth’⁵⁸ with one of its key aims being to increase public access to creative sectors and spaces. In a similar manner, the Thai examples embody different ways in which EDI national policy can be transplanted locally. At the national level, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand has released a national plan and policy⁵⁹ to support healthy living and career opportunities for marginalised, disabled and elderly people to engage in creative economy activities. This national policy has been applied via various agencies such as private sectors and city municipalities supporting creative projects and activities that focus on improving citizens’ quality of life. For example, the regeneration of the Tha Wang (ท่าวัง) old town in Nakhon Si Thammarat city has brought back young people into the city centre, resulting in increased intergenerational interaction. In Angthong, the land of Thai traditional performing art, the local government has supported Chara Chatrri, a troupe that consists of elderly artists, to perform as well as transfer their wisdom to the younger generations. Other examples from the Thai Creative City

55. Wreyford, O’Brien & Dent, 2021

56. <https://www.creativescotland.com/resources-publications/guides-toolkits/equalities,-diversity-and-inclusion-action-plans-a-toolkit>

57. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

58. North of Tyne Culture and Creative Zones Prospectus, 2021, p. 2

59. see https://www.m-society.go.th/ewtadmin/ewt/mso_web/download/article/article_20221214104920.pdf

Network include later life friendly markets in Chiang Mai, Phrae and other cities which not only support older people to create craft products to sell, but also acts as an informal community hub where they connect, share stories and strengthen their social engagement.

Going forward, it is important for the Thai context that EDI policies and actions are explicitly supported at the local level. This will involve assigning a dedicated budget to support EDI related activities, a clear set of evaluation criteria and training to support local teams to better understand how EDI national policy can be translated for the local context. Key to this is framing creative economy activities as supporting more equal, diverse and inclusive growth.

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