

Creative and Digital West of England Local Sector Skills Statement 2017



Working together to develop the current and future skills of the sector.

Creative and Digital Local Sector Overview

The creative and digital industry continues to put the West of England firmly on the map and it is widely recognised as having two of the nine creative centres outside of London⁽¹⁾. Nationally, this sector contributes £84.1 billion GVA or 5.2% to the whole economy⁽²⁾ in particular Bristol and Bath.

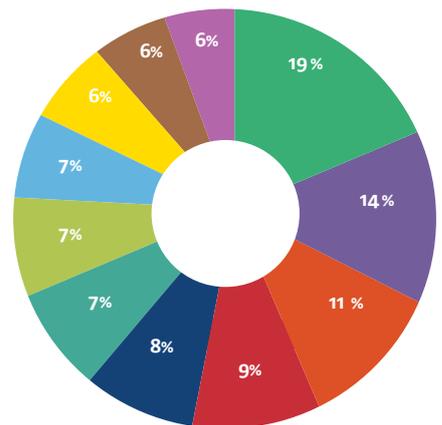
The West of England region is renowned for world class excellence in many of the creative and digital sub sectors. Prominent tech areas include digital advertising and marketing, gaming, app and software development, telecommunications and networking⁽⁴⁾. This combines with global creative frontrunners in animation and TV content with Aardman, and their phenomenal Oscar and BAFTA winning success of Wallace & Gromit, and with Bristol as the key centre for wildlife production globally.

The UWE Go West! Study (measuring Bristol's film and television industries) found Bristol to be the third largest centre for film and television production outside of London and Manchester, with a workforce made up of 3,700 (1000 employees at BBC Bristol with 1,200 employed through independent companies and supported by 1,500 freelancers). However, the study also shows an under-representation in diversity of personnel with lower numbers of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), disabled or financially disadvantaged crew.⁽⁴⁾

The strength of the digital sector in Bristol and Bath has been integral to the growth of a thriving gaming industry,

Employment Areas

- Programmers and Software Development
- Architects
- Journalists, Newspaper and Editors
- Sales Accounts and Business Managers
- Graphic Designers
- Managers and Proprietors on other services
- Architectural and Town Planning Technicians
- Arts Officers, Producers and Directors
- Advertising and Creative Managers
- IT Specialist Managers
- Marketing and Sales Directors



All data represents the West of England

which is behind cutting-edge innovations such as the development of virtual reality which is transforming the way we interact with film, games, TV and animation. Bristol & Bath has continued to grow impressively; turnover has increased by 53%, and it is recognised by Centre for Cities and McKinsey & Company as one of the two globally significant digital tech clusters in the UK, including over 60,000 digital workers in the broader region.

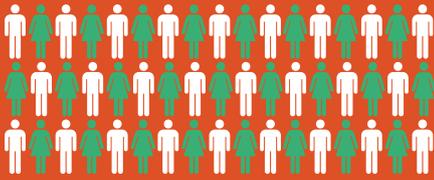
With a history in aerospace and digital software, the cluster's specialisms

now include telecommunications and networking, gaming, virtual reality, and cloud computing. Aardman, JUST EAT IMDb, Oracle, IBM, Sony and Hewlett Packard have all been attracted by the strong digital ecosystem.⁽⁵⁾

The sector continues to operate collaboratively with a massive 94% of respondents to the 2017 Bristol Media Barometer Survey engaged in collaborative activity with other local partners. 48% of businesses view the up-skilling of team members as a key benefit of collaboration.⁽⁶⁾

Annual Local Sector Skills Statements report on local sector knowledge and expertise, plus wider regional and national intelligence. Gain insight about skills challenges in your sector, notable achievements and skills priorities and objectives for 2017. The themes have been defined by the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This report has been designed for education providers and businesses to inform decisions and identify objectives for investment in training and development of curriculums.

Key Facts



THERE ARE **17,043 PEOPLE** EMPLOYED IN THE CREATIVE AND DIGITAL INDUSTRY ACROSS THE WEST OF ENGLAND, UP FROM 16,000 IN 2015, **AMOUNTING TO £660M IN GVA EACH YEAR**⁽⁷⁾.



THE CREATIVE ECONOMY IN THE SOUTH WEST INCREASED FROM 7.5% IN 2013 TO 8.3% IN 2014. THIS REFLECTED A **32.6% INCREASE** IN THE NUMBER OF JOBS IN THE SOUTH WEST BETWEEN 2011 AND 2014 (THE LARGEST INCREASE IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES RELATED EMPLOYMENT)⁽⁸⁾.



EMPLOYMENT IS INCREASING, WITH TWO THIRDS OF CREATIVE BUSINESSES IN THE BRISTOL AREA SEEKING TO TAKE ON MORE STAFF IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS AND 50% OF THOSE PEOPLE BEING SOURCED IN THE LOCAL AREA (AN INCREASE OF 8% SINCE 2015)⁽¹⁰⁾.



67% OF CREATIVE AND DIGITAL BUSINESSES IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND **CITED TECHNICAL SKILLS AS A BARRIER TO GROWTH** COMPARED TO 65% OVERALL. 85% OF RESPONDENTS NAMED EVERYDAY DIGITAL SKILLS TO BE IMPORTANT. 55% CITED **ADVANCED AND SPECIALIST IT SKILLS AS VERY IMPORTANT**⁽⁹⁾.



APPROXIMATELY 94% OF CREATIVE AND DIGITAL BUSINESSES IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND SAID THEY **DID NOT EMPLOY OR HAD NO PLANS TO EMPLOY APPRENTICES IN 2016-17**⁽⁹⁾.



IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 15/16 WE HAVE SEEN **NO INCREASE** IN APPRENTICESHIP STARTS FOR THE CREATIVE AND DIGITAL SECTOR. 80% OF THE STARTS ARE ADVANCED OR HIGHER APPRENTICESHIPS⁽⁹⁾.



93% OF RESPONDENTS SAID THAT IT WAS **EQUAL TO OR HARDER TO FIND NEW RECRUITS** WHICH ALSO REPRESENTS A 5% INCREASE ON THIS FIGURE IN THE 2015 BRISTOL MEDIA BAROMETER.⁽¹¹⁾



38% OF RESPONDENTS IN THE 2017 ADLIB CREATIVE EMPLOYMENT TODAY (SOUTH WEST) SURVEY **THOUGHT THAT THEIR CREATIVE TEAMS WOULD GROW WITHIN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS** WITH 76.7% OF RESPONDENTS AGREEING THAT THE SOUTH WEST AS A WHOLE HAD THE RIGHT CREATIVE TALENT TO SUPPORT THIS GROWTH.



7,155 GRADUATES WERE REPORTED TO BE STUDYING CREATIVE ARTS AND DIGITAL IN THE FOUR UNIVERSITIES OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND, WITH A TOTAL OF 16,055 GRADUATES STUDYING IN THE 12 UNIVERSITIES LOCATED WITHIN 1 HR OF THE REGION.⁽¹²⁾



GRADUATES



APPRENTICES

COMPANIES ARE INVESTING IN YOUNG PEOPLE, WITH 45% OF HIRES MADE IN 2015 HAVING BEEN RECENT GRADUATES AND 15% HAVING BEEN APPRENTICES⁽¹³⁾.



FEELING VALUED WAS THE CHIEF FACTOR TO STAFF RETENTION IN THE ADLIB CREATIVE EMPLOYMENT TODAY SURVEY (86%) FOLLOWED BY SALARY (67.4%) AND GOOD CULTURE (62.8%).⁽¹³⁾

Notable Local Sector Achievements



The **Bottle Yard Studios** has become a major cornerstone in Bristol's thriving film and TV industry which generated inward investment of £18.3 million in 2016/17. The latest high profile productions made at Studios include all three series of BBC One drama Poldark, Emmy award-winning Sherlock: The Abominable Bride and series three of ITV drama Broadchurch. In October 2016, Bristol City Council approved a £692,000 investment into the site for essential improvements to help it continue to raise the profile of filming in Bristol. In just six years it has transformed a disused area in South Bristol into a major filmmaking hub, with around 20 resident business tenants.



As part of the City Campus project, **UWE Bristol** has made significant investment in developing their site at Bower Ashton to refresh the facilities, grow its services, and ensure its students and staff have access to state-of-the-art learning and teaching environments.



Creative Bath have launched a new website and new networks TechSPARK grew to support the growing tech cluster. Also, incubation hubs Coworking Hub-The Guild, Desklodge, Pervasive Media and Bristol Games Hub grew to support the cluster.



SETsquared (the partnership of the universities of Bath, Bristol, Exeter, Southampton and Surrey), with bases in Bristol and Bath, ranked as the top university business incubator in the world in November 2015.



In April 2016 Bristol hosted the first **VR World Congress (VRWC)** organised by Opposable VR. VR World Congress brought over 750 buyers, sellers and developers from VR and its surrounding industries from across the globe to Bristol. Over 750 attendees from 20-plus countries were inspired by 36 world-leading speakers and 27 outstanding exhibitors; making it the leading international VR event. In April 2017 the event continued to expand, taking over Millennium Square in the centre of Bristol VRWC attracting over 2,000 attendees.



Bath Digital Festival 2016 festival ran over 8 days with 32 events and over 1,000 attendees, equating to over 100 hours of workshops, talks, hacks, competitions and socials for the digital and creative industries.



The University of Bath's **Centre for the Analysis of Motion, Entertainment Research and Applications (CAMERA)** is one of six world-leading research centres funded by the £23m EPSRC and AHRC led Digital Economy Programme. CAMERA works closely with industry at a national and regional scale to accelerate the application of motion analysis research to the creative, healthcare technologies and elite sports sectors.



In November 2016, **Bristol & Bath by Design** reported an 18-month research project measuring and mapping the impact of design in the region led by UWE Bristol, University of Bristol and Bath Spa University with funding from the Design Council and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It found that small design firms in the Bristol and Bath region are 14% more productive than the average small non-design company and 3% more productive than average small design-led companies across England and Wales.



Creative Employment Programme managed by the **Creative Skills Hub** created over 115 entry level positions across 32 businesses, leveraging over £676,000 into the local economy between September 2013 and March 2016.



Plans for **Engine Shed 2** were revealed in January, with a £4 million investment to triple the amount of incubation space currently available for high-tech, social, creative and digital businesses in the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone.



Bristol Media will be running their 6th Vision Conference for the creative sector in November 2017 with over 300 delegates attending. They have also put over 200 people through The Preddy Programme with trainer Shan Preddy this year and continue to remain active on social media with 31,500 followers on Twitter.



1. Improve Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

Issue:

The UK creative and digital industry is recognised as a world leader. It is innovative, fast growing and offers jobs that are less likely to be automated, providing sustainable future employment.

Career routes into the creative and digital sector are not clearly defined or transparent. Pathways and opportunities are not visible, or the knowledge/experience to support self-employment.

According to the 2016 Bristol Media Barometer survey results, building a network is the fail-safe route to ensure a steady supply of talent. The most popular ways to recruit staff for 77% of respondents is through word of mouth, referrals and recommendations. Respondents are more likely to make personal or direct approaches (61%) rather than use a recruitment consultancy (45%).

Objectives:

- Provide up-to-date labour market information to local schools (from primary level), colleges and universities to include the range of opportunities including apprenticeships, where they exist and employer's offers.
- Support industry led CPD programmes for careers advisers/lecturers (formal and informal) and innovative work experience/work placement opportunities for students and teachers.
- Industry to work with education providers, sector skills councils and related organisations to map and provide access to careers pathways information, creative and digital related initiatives and resources.
- Develop a recruitment strategy both in education and industry that aligns with high tech and engages with the diversity agenda and 'women in games' initiatives as a priority. Diversity of the workforce is crucial to ensure a continued world class competitive industry.
- Support industry to become part of the West of England LEP Network of enterprise advisers to work closely with leadership teams in schools and colleges to promote a better understanding of the local business market, widen students careers options and assist in making personal career path plans for young people.
- Encourage the sector to take part in careers fairs, panels and talks including Pathways to Professions.



2. Improve the quality and local responsiveness of education and training

Issue:

67% of creative and digital businesses that responded to the West of England Employer Skills Survey (2016) cited technical skills as a barrier to growth compared to 65% overall. 85% of respondents cited the importance of everyday digital skills to be important. And 55% cited that advanced and specialist IT skills to be very important⁽⁹⁾. 66% stated that at least one of their employees was involved in workforce development. The types of training that these businesses have been providing is management and supervisory (15%), basic and advanced (25%), health and safety (20%), job-specific and training in new technology (40%).

Technical skills present a skill gap for this sector. Specific specialist technical skills required include:

- design software, coding & programming for core gaming engines (Unity 3D, C#, HTML5)
- software development reports a sharp increase in Javascript & full-stack Node.js
- digital/web technology developers still using HTML5, SQL, Java, C#, PHP, Drupal, Python with a move to Go & MEAN to build software
- Animation & VFX software requirements include Flash, 2D, 3D, Maya 3D & drawing skills

Emerging specialist skills related to new technologies include:

- Internet & Industrial Internet of Things
- big data including capturing and storage
- analysis and application including related software and hardware
- cyber-security
- cloud computing
- virtual reality, robotics and 3D printing and fabrication

Supporting facts

- In the West of England LEP 2016 Employer Skills Survey (2016) many creative and digital businesses commented on the importance of social media and digital marketing. For example:

"Our issue is in terms of social media; we need to make more use of it so we need to look into training."

"Within marketing social media is becoming critical now and we need people with an ability to read/write for social media."

"With regard to updating websites there's a lot of content creativity, so people need to be able to write well."

"We need people with really good writing skills."

"Increased understanding and use of social media platforms for all staff, not just the communications team."

Objectives:

- Constant and relevant dialogue required between local training providers and industry to ensure provision is agile, up-to-date, relevant, accessible and cost effective.
- Of the creative and digital business respondents to the 2016 West of England Skills Survey 66% stated that at least one of their employees was involved in workforce development. The types of training that these businesses have been providing is management and supervisory (15%), basic and advanced (25%), health and safety (20%), job-specific and training in new technology (40%).
- Closer partnerships between industry, higher and further education; joined up working and input into curriculum development. 21% of the creative businesses stated that addressing current skills needs compared to 3 years ago is easier, whilst 11% have found it harder⁽⁹⁾.
- Industry bodies, sector skills councils and industry need to work closer together to identify adequate skills related funding and partnerships.
- Increase partnerships with further and higher education and awarding bodies to drive and develop advanced training skills packages to support existing employees.



3. Increase apprenticeship starts and availability of higher apprenticeships

Issue:

Apprenticeship starts both locally and nationally continue to remain low for the creative and digital sector at less than 1% (though this reflects the national level of 1%). There is a lack of higher level apprenticeships as an alternative pathway to graduate level training and to aid career progression.

Businesses do not consider employing apprentices as a way to employ new staff (when graduate entry level jobs remain unfilled). Apprenticeships are still not seen as a valid pathway (by both industry and influencers), or as a means to develop staff in-house (many agencies have to pay a 'high' price for experienced contractors or employing nationally and internationally to meet current shortages).

Increasingly there is a coordinated approach towards apprenticeships in the region but the quality, breadth of provision and flexibility of delivery is still a challenge.

Women made up only 44% of creative related apprenticeships in the region during 2014/15. Approximately 94% of creative and digital businesses in the West of England said they did not employ or had no plans to employ apprentices in 2016/17.

Objectives:

- Provide clear, accessible apprenticeship advice and guidance to individuals and employers with clear pathways and entry points.
- Ongoing employer engagement to ensure development of relevant quality creative and digital related apprenticeships.
- Focus needs to remain on SMEs and only a very small percentage of businesses will be required to pay the Apprenticeship Levy, the reforms are more significant for this sector. Of the 200 creative and digital businesses that responded to the West of England LEP Employer Skills Survey (2016) only 1% has a wage bill over £3 million therefore qualifying for the levy.
- Further partnerships with industry, further and higher education, training providers and sector skills councils, to develop and provide higher level apprenticeships for the sector.
- Promote apprenticeships as a valid recruitment pathway and be clear on entry points, as a development of the Creative Employment Programme.
- Explore different forms of apprenticeship delivery with sector such as shared apprenticeship schemes.

4. Engage SMEs to boost productivity and build capacity for growth



Issue:

Creative and digital skills are a core business function across all businesses; in a global digital economy SMEs require these skills and a diverse workforce to sustain growth and secure their economic future. Creative and digital skills gaps emerging in all sectors including retail, finance, healthcare. A shortage of leadership and management skills was cited by 3% of businesses as a barrier to growth⁽⁹⁾. Capacity often prevents SMEs nurturing new talent, lacking the resources to engage with work placements, apprenticeships and paid internships thus preventing diversity.

Objectives:

- Work in partnership to provide flexible and cost effective training for SMEs to develop staff into roles; to develop leadership, management and IP skills.
- Align to the other skills strategies of (inter-dependent) priority sectors such as high tech/robotics and neighbouring high tech cluster Swindon LEP.
- Sustain an impartial model (such as Creative Skills Hub) to support SMEs to engage with schools, colleges and universities to promote careers and offer entry level roles in industry to nurture future talent (e.g. regular graduate placement schemes).
- Engage with 'women in tech and games' programmes as a priority and consider recruitment practice, potential workforce and flexible working models.

5. Enhance equality and diversity through multiple career pathways



Issue:

In a global market, with diverse audiences, the economic growth of UK creative industries will be stifled unless equality and diversity employment is addressed. Of the creative and digital businesses that responded to the West of England Employer Skills Survey (2016) 31% stated that they had specific recruitment policies relating to equality and diversity compared to 36% of businesses overall. Whilst 90% of respondents stated that they offered flexible working arrangements in support of their equality and diversity policy.

Socio-economic factors still remain a barrier to accessing entry level roles in industry. 77% of the UK workforce has undertaken unpaid work experience in the sector⁽¹²⁾. Women and BAME continue to be a smaller proportion of the creative economy workforce whilst only 5% of the workforce stated a disability and 7% LGB. Whilst as little as 13.4% of women responded to the Adlib technology and development survey. Only 52% of people in industry are over 35 years of age compared to 65% across the UK.⁽¹²⁾

Objectives:

- To champion the creation of entry level roles within the sector through targeted liaison with skills providers and creative employers.
- Support an apprenticeship ambassador network⁽¹³⁾ will enable all schools access to ambassadors to encourage young people from diverse backgrounds, to enter the sector.
- Utilise existing networks to develop a 'bank' of industry mentors to provide role models to young people and offer ongoing support to sustain a career.
- Grow and support existing partnerships to develop pathways, workshops and training (linking to national programmes and funding) for diverse audiences and identify funding to support development and bursaries for training e.g. Junior Digital Producers, DigiMakers, Women into Code, Women Tech Hub and Girl Geeks.
- Support workshops across a diverse range of communities in the West of England LEP area that are gender focused in content and low in cost to ensure accessibility.
- Develop a recruitment strategy both in education and industry that aligns with high tech and engages with the diversity agenda and 'women in games' programmes as a priority.
- Support diverse recruitment/training programmes and challenge the 'unconscious bias' of employers. Incentives to encourage women returners into the workforce and into senior management positions.

Regional Centres of Excellence and Research

- Bath Centre for Digital Entertainment
- Bath Innovation Centre
- Bristol and Bath by Design
- Pervasive Media
- SETsquared - Engine Shed
- University of Bath
- University of Bristol
- University of the West of England (UWE Bristol) - Digital Cultures Research Centre

Key Providers

- Bath Spa University
- University of Bath
- University of Bristol
- University of the West of England (UWE Bristol)
- Bath College
- Cirencester College
- City of Bristol
- South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
- Weston College
- Boomsatsuma
- Calling the Shots
- Develop Me
- Knowle West Media Centre
- QA Training

Professional Networks and Organisations

- Arts Council England–South West
- BECTU
- BRISTech
- Bristol Games Hub
- Bristol Media
- Business West
- Coworking Hub – The Guild
- Creative Bath
- Creative and Cultural Skills
- Creative Skillset
- Cultural Forum for the Bath Area
- DMA / IDM West
- Institute of Directors
- Tech Partnership UK
- TechSPARK
- Theatre Bristol
- West of England Design Forum

Endorsed by

Paul Appleby, Creative and Digital Business Sector Group Chair, West of England LEP

Reference Documents

- 1) NESTA The Geography of the UKs Creative & High Tech Economies, January 2015
- 2) NESTA – The Geography of Creativity in the UK Report, July 2016
- 3) Burning Glass, May 2016
- 4) Go West! Bristol's Film and Television Industries Report, UWE 2016
- 5) Tech Nation Report, 2016
- 6) Bristol Media Barometer Survey, 2017
- 7) Bristol Media Barometer, 2014
- 8) DCMS Creative Industries Focus on Employment, June 2015
- 9) West of England LEP Employer Skills Survey, 2016
- 10) Bristol Media Barometer Survey, 2016
- 11) Bristol Media Barometer Survey, 2015
- 12) Adlib Creative Employment Today (SW) A Snapshot
- 13) The West of England Apprenticeship Hub West Strategic Plan, 2013-2020

Employment Areas Chart – NGaged Training / LMI Statement 2017 based on Labour Insights, May 2016 - May 2017 & EMSI

Get in touch today



businesswest.co.uk/skills



skillswest@businesswest.co.uk



0330 124 4446



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**WEST OF
ENGLAND**

Combined Authority

The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) covers Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. WECA also supports the Local Enterprise Partnership, which includes North Somerset.