

Equality Impact Assessment

EIA-786112993 - Coventry Creative Industries Strategy 2026 – 2029

Details

Title	Coventry Creative Industries Strategy 2026 – 2029
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Cabinet Member	Cllr Naeem Akhtar (Housing and Communities)
Director	Andy Williams (Regeneration and Economy)

Context and background

EIA carried out on	New policy or strategy
Background	<p>The EIA relates to the development of a new strategy for Coventry's creative industries, which is intended to strengthen the city's creative sector, and drive economic growth through business support, fundraising, skills and workforce development. The Coventry Creative Industries Strategy 2026–2029 aims to achieve this through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growing Coventry's creative economy by supporting sustainable business growth, innovation and investment across creative industries. - Developing skills and talent pipelines to improve access to creative careers, retain local graduates and build a future ready workforce. - Promoting inclusive and fair participation by reducing barriers for under represented and socio economically disadvantaged groups. - Strengthening infrastructure, partnerships and place making to position Coventry as an attractive, connected and supportive city for creative businesses and practitioners.

Stakeholders

University of Warwick (delivery partner)
Coventry University (delivery partner)
Createch Frontiers (delivery partner)
Coventry & Warwickshire Exchange (delivery partner)
West Midlands Combined Authority (delivery partner)
Coventry FE Colleges (delivery partners)
Coventry Cultural Education Partnership (delivery partner)
Destination Coventry (delivery partner)
Local businesses and freelancers working in or with the creative industries sector (both partners in skills development and beneficiaries of business support and development)
Coventry graduates and young people (beneficiaries of skills development and opportunities for careers in the creative industries)

Responsibility

Salla Virman, Head of Culture and Creative Economy

Consideration of impact

This strategy does not constitute a cessation of service/support and does not affect any one group or protected characteristic who would be singularly adversely impacted by implementation of the strategy. The strategy does not favour any one group or protected characteristic over another.

A commissioned baseline Coventry Creative Industries Mapping report identified that the creative industries in the UK are not diverse in terms of their workforce or leadership, whilst a national Leadership Diversity in Creative & Cultural Industries report by Creative UK (2025) highlighted a significant underrepresentation in leadership across gender, ethnicity, disability, and socio-economic backgrounds. The strategy seeks to address inequity in the local sector by embedding diversity and inclusion across key actions and delivery from the start.

Headline findings of national research into the diversity of sector leadership include:

Baseline data and information

- Despite accounting for over 48% of the UK workforce, women occupied just 21% of Director/CEO roles and 30% of managerial roles in the UK games industry
- There are significantly fewer women musicians earning a living through music for over 30 years compared to male musicians – 20% vs 30%
- People from Global Majority heritage make up 15.9% of the currently employed UK workforce yet just over 9.8% of managers and directors were from ethnic minority backgrounds across the entire cultural sector.
- Just 12% of executive or corporate roles in film & TV are held by Global Majority, alongside just 9% of senior-level roles, and only 7%, 8% and 11% of senior management in VFX, Animation, and Post-production were from Global Majority backgrounds
- People from an ethnic minority background held only 6% of Director/CEO positions in the games industry and 10% of managerial positions
- Disabled people make up 18% of the UK workforce, but just over 7.7% of managers and directors in the cultural sector identified as disabled
- Just 8% of senior off-screen TV roles are occupied by those with a disability along with just 6.5% of UK based film & TV directors
- Only 4% of Directors/CEOs and 3% of managerial staff identified as having a disability in the video games industry
- Across the wider economy, working class people make up 35% of the workforce. Yet only 17% of UK based film & TV directors are from working class backgrounds
- Only 10% of video game company Directors/CEOs and 12% of Managerial staff were from a working-class background;

Marmot Principles

4. Create fair employment and good work

5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities

Protected groups - Impact on Coventry Residents and Visitors

Age 0-18

Positive impact - Children and young people will be impacted positively through future career opportunities in the creative industries, with early engagement to communicate creative career options and pathways

Age 19-64

Positive impact - This group will be positively impacted through skills programmes to fill the skills gaps identified in the creative industries that hinder growth. Younger people will experience opportunities and support through improved talent pipelines, creative careers pathways, and stronger graduate retention, particularly through strategic partnership with Coventry University and the University of Warwick.

Working age Freelancers and SMEs in the creative industries will be supported to grow and sustain their businesses, supporting growth in the local economy, increased job opportunities, business survival and graduate retention. Business start ups will be supported to foster entrepreneurs and the future sector leaders.

Age 65+

Positive impact - Older persons will benefit from a more vibrant and sustainable creative industries sector, with increased opportunities for cultural and creative engagement, and activity that supports social inclusion, health and wellbeing

Disability	<p>Positive impact - There is an identified lack of diversity in the Creative Industries workforce and leadership, most notably with respect to gender, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic background. Disabled people are significantly under represented in creative employment nationally,</p> <p>The strategy prioritises targeted skills development activities based on industry needs, including training, mentoring, work-placements and internships, with a specific focus on diversifying the workforce and leadership of the sector. Additionally, the strategy's focus on creative hubs, venues and infrastructure offers opportunities to embed accessibility standards from the outset.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Positive impact - There is an identified lack of diversity in the Creative Industries workforce and leadership, most notably with respect to gender, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic background. The strategy prioritises targeted skills development activities based on industry needs, including training, mentoring, work-placements and internships, with a specific focus on diversifying the workforce and leadership of the sector.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	No impact -
Pregnancy and maternity	No impact -
Race	<p>Positive impact - Coventry is one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the UK, and diversity is identified as a defining strength within the city's cultural identity, yet there is an identified lack of diversity in the Creative Industries workforce and leadership, most notably with respect to gender, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic background. The strategy prioritises targeted skills development activities based on industry needs, including training, mentoring, work-placements and internships, with a specific focus on diversifying the workforce and leadership of the sector. This support will provide a platform to develop ethnically diverse creative businesses, and increase representation in leadership, commissioning and programming.</p>
Religion and belief	No impact -

Sex

Positive impact - Women are well represented in entry level creative roles but are under represented at senior and higher paid levels, particularly in technical and digital sub sectors. The strategy prioritises targeted skills development activities based on industry needs, including training, mentoring, work-placements and internships, with a specific focus on diversifying the workforce and leadership of the sector. Interventions to support women into leadership roles in the creative industries may help reduce gender pay and progression gaps locally.

Sexual orientation

Positive impact - There is an identified lack of diversity in the Creative Industries workforce and leadership, most notably with respect to gender, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic background. The strategy prioritises targeted skills development activities based on industry needs, including training, mentoring, work-placements and internships, with a specific focus on diversifying the workforce and leadership of the sector. Opportunities exist to embed inclusive commissioning standards, safe working environments and visible LGBTQ+ representation across funded initiatives.

Additional groups

Care experienced

Positive impact - There is an identified lack of diversity in the Creative Industries workforce and leadership, most notably with respect to gender, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic background. As this group is often associated with deprivation and challenging socio-economic backgrounds, they will be positively impacted by the strategy's priority for targeted skills development activities based on industry needs, including training, mentoring, work-placements and internships, with a specific focus on diversifying the workforce and leadership of the sector.

Armed forces

Positive impact - Opportunities exist for targeted promotion via Veteran's charities and networks of skills development opportunities, and work-placements to pursue careers in the creative industries. Growth and sustainability in the arts, culture, heritage and wider creative industries also presents opportunities for targeted projects and programming that supports creative health and wellbeing initiatives for armed forces personnel.

Socio economic groups

Positive impact - National evidence consistently shows that people from lower socio economic backgrounds are under represented, particularly in higher paid and leadership roles within creative industries, and face additional barriers to entry and progression. The strategy prioritises targeted skills development activities based on industry needs, including training, mentoring, work-placements and internships, with a specific focus on diversifying the workforce and leadership of the sector. The Strategy has the potential to improve access to skills, employment and entrepreneurship by supporting creative careers, local business growth and investment in creative infrastructure. This could help reduce barriers for people who have historically been excluded from the creative sector due to low income, limited networks or insecure employment.

Next steps

Inequality	Action	Owner	Timescale

Monitor and evaluation

The evaluation of the strategy will include a specific evaluation framework and a baseline aligned with each delivery area. This framework is still in development but will track inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts over the delivery period. We will be working closely with University of Warwick and Coventry University to ensure that the evaluation of the strategy is closely aligned and informed by the evaluation processes for CreatTech Frontiers and CWX. Data from other sources will be captured through surveys and sector consultations. A specific KPI focussed on Diversity of Workforce and Leadership will form part of the 'Skills & Workforce Development' evaluation strand.

Impact on Council staff

Will there be an impact? No

Completion statement

Potential equality impact	Positive impact has been identified for one or more protected groups
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