

Mayor's Cultural Leadership Board Minutes 24 April 2025

24 April 2025

Key information

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Attendees

Ambassadors

- Sade Banks-Tubi, CEO, The What If Experiment
- Eliza Easton, Founder, Erskine Analysis (**Apologies**)
- Brenda Emmanus OBE, Broadcaster, Journalist and Consultant
- Lilli Geissendorfer, Director, Theatre Green Book and Independent Consultant & Facilitator
- Dr Paul Gilluley, Chief Medical Officer - NHS North East London Integrated Health System
- Anu Giri, Executive Director, English National Ballet
- Adem Holness, Head of Music SXSW London
- Claudia Kenyatta CBE, Director of Regions, Historic England
- Helen O'Donnell, Director of Development TalentWorks, BBC Studios
- Cllr. Anthony Okereke, Leader of the Council, Royal Borough of Greenwich

- Amanda Parker, Co-Chair, Creative Industries Representative
- Martin Prendergast, Founder of Martin Prendergast Communications (MPC)
- Amaarah Roze, Independent Facilitator, Performer & Producer (**Apologies**)
- Freya Salway, Head of the Lab, Google Arts & Culture
- Justine Simons OBE, Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries
- Tom Sleigh, Co-Chair
- Emma Squire CBE, Director of Regions, Historic England
- Dr Jo Twist OBE, CEO, BPI
- Nigel Twumasi, Co-Founder & Consultant, mayamada
- Deborah Williams OBE, Independent Representative (**Apologies**)

Other Attendees

- Karen Amsden, Principal Policy and Project Officer, London Councils Representative
- Alice Hoffmann-Fuller, Nightlife Taskforce
- Rachael Wadsworth, Head of Creative Regions, Department of Culture, Media and Sport
- Shonagh Manson, Assistant Director, Culture, Creative Industries and 24 Hour London Unit
- Policy Officers, Culture, Creative Industries and 24 Hour London Unit

Item 1 and 2 - Welcome

1. The Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons OBE welcomed everyone to the meeting, made opening remarks and invited the Co-Chairs to speak.
2. Co-Chairs Tom Sleigh and Amanda Parker introduced themselves and made opening remarks.
3. Noting that it was the inaugural meeting of the 2024-2028 Mayor's Cultural Leadership Board on the theme of 'What is London's role in supporting good growth in the UK's creative industries?'
4. Apologies were noted as above.
5. There were no declarations of any Conflicts of Interest regarding any of the agenda items.

Item 1	Welcome	Justine Simons OBE
Item 2	Introduction and Outline of the Meeting	Tom Sleigh and Amanda Parker

Item 3	Presentation and Q&A – The Story so Far	Justine Simons OBE
Item 4	Workshop - What is London's role in supporting good growth in the UK's creative industries?	Rachael Wadsworth
Item 5	AOB and Close	Tom Sleight and Amanda Parker

Item 3 - The Story so Far

1. Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons OBE, set out the current context, including the political environment for the arts, funding landscape and societal issues facing Londoners. She then shared the Mayor's priorities for Culture. Key points included:
 - The UK is the lowest funder of the Arts in Europe and local authority funding for culture has dropped by 50 per cent since 2010.
 - Culture remains a driver for social change and financial growth.
 - Culture contributes £63.3bn in GVA to London's economy – up 25 per cent from 2020 and accounts for a fifth of the capital's jobs.
 - The Mayor's strategy for culture and the creative industries has underpinned his investment in East Bank the new cultural quarter at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and the London Museum at Smithfield.
 - The Mayor funds public art including Fourth Plinth Commission and the first memorial for the victims of the transatlantic slave trade.
 - London Borough of Culture and Liberty Festival ensures local participation in arts and culture.
 - Artists and creative businesses are being supported through his Creative Enterprise Zones and Culture and Community Spaces at Risk Office.
 - The Mayor's 24 Hour London Team is working in partnership to create a city that works for residents and businesses between 6pm and 6am. They are also supporting boroughs to create their night time strategies.
 - Through his Creative Health programme, the Mayor is helping to improve mental and physical health including his Dementia Friendly Venues Charter, created in partnership with the Alzheimer's Society and the London Museum.

Item 4 - Supporting Good Growth

1. The Rachael Wadsworth from the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) shared their approach for gathering input from the creative industries to help inform the thinking for the Government's Creative Industries Sector Plan.

2. The Board's table discussions were facilitated by members of the Culture, Creative Industries and 24 Hour London Unit. The Board discussed four questions through the lens of Current Context, Issues and Opportunities:
 - What are the opportunities to drive growth across London's creative industries? What are the barriers?
 - How can we work better in partnership with the private sector to deliver our ambitions?
 - How can we leverage London's strength in the creative industries to support growth across the UK?
 - How can we build on London's strengths to reinforce its global reputation as a world leader in creative industries and attract more Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)?

Suggestions and questions on 'opportunities to drive growth' included:

1. Content creation is increasingly freelance and street-based; how will strategy reflect this change in 10 years; who is engaging with them and how can growth areas be supported?
2. Research and development exist but lacks follow-through without business accelerators.
3. AI is influencing content production and may impact what and how people consume content – what will they pay for?
4. Policies are outdated and focused on traditional media.
5. There is still a perception of some creative jobs as hobbies.
6. Little or fragmented support for freelancers (and microbusinesses) to enable growth. How can they be supported to professionalise or commercialise?
7. Develop entrepreneurial and skills transfer pathways.
8. Unlock infrastructure funds for cultural use e.g. community infrastructure levy.
9. Develop a targeted export strategy for creative outputs.

??Suggestions and questions on working in 'partnership with the private sector' included:

1. Most corporate sponsorship goes to sport; cultural institutions have less visibility.
2. West End theatres outperform football in attendance. How do we increase corporate sponsorship of the creative industries to reflect these numbers?
3. Some international models (e.g., France (Aillagon), Brazil (Rouanet)) incentivise private investment in culture. Are there opportunities to explore these models?
4. Limited risk appetite from private investors.
5. Insufficient data visibility on creative sector impact.
6. Some arts organisations need more professional fundraising strategies.
7. Create forums for arts business collaboration.
8. Develop tax incentives or levies to support culture.
9. Highlight social and financial return on investment (ROI) of creative products.
10. Develop skills partnership to support young people into the industry.

Suggestions and questions on how to 'leverage London's strength' included:

1. Many of the top creative education institutions are London-based but levelling up moved funding away from grassroots venues. What is the impact of this?
2. London's access to regional investment is limited. Local authority funding to cultural infrastructure has reduced by 50 per cent since 2010.
3. Touring infrastructure is underfunded, and international touring has been affected by Brexit with touring midscale distribution in decline.
4. Perceived competition between London and regions. How do you encourage collaboration?
5. Visa and permit systems hinder international collaboration.

6. Perceived competition between London and other regions. How could government encourage collaboration for mutual national benefit?
7. Use London's success to model cultural devolution i.e. the German model for Berlin.
8. Promote collaborative over competitive funding models - perhaps a UK version of World Cities Culture Forum.
9. Introduce tax on AI and tech companies with percentage going into creative industries.

Suggestions on how to 'attract more Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)' included:

1. London has strong global brands in film, fashion, and games; these should be promoted more.
 2. Higher education institutions attract international talent.
 3. Foreign Direct Investment varies by subsector and is influenced by immigration rules and costs.
 4. Need consistent national support for global events rather than 'emergency funding'.
 5. There is limited access to international markets for smaller organisations.
 6. There is insufficient data on Foreign Direct Investment by subindustry.
 7. Conduct SWOT analysis of Foreign Direct Investment landscape for the sector.
 8. Work with London & Partners to target sponsors and investors.
 9. Build international city partnerships and (virtual) trade missions. The British Council used to do this for creative economy.
 10. Help creative businesses to become investment-ready and facilitate conversations between them and investors. Explore loan models.
- **Action:** Secretariat to share the Board's input with the Department for Culture Media and Sport and contribute to the development of the Government's Creative Industries Sector Plan.

Any Other Business (AOB)

1. Co-Chair, Amanda Parker, asked if there was any other business.
 - An ambassador asked if there are any opportunities to speak to members of the Mayor's other boards, particularly business and environment.
 - An officer responded that this would be explored for every meeting depending on the topic.
 - ??????????????The Co-Chairs each reflected on their first meeting.
 - The Board were reminded that the next meeting was scheduled for 24 July 2025.
 - The meeting was closed

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