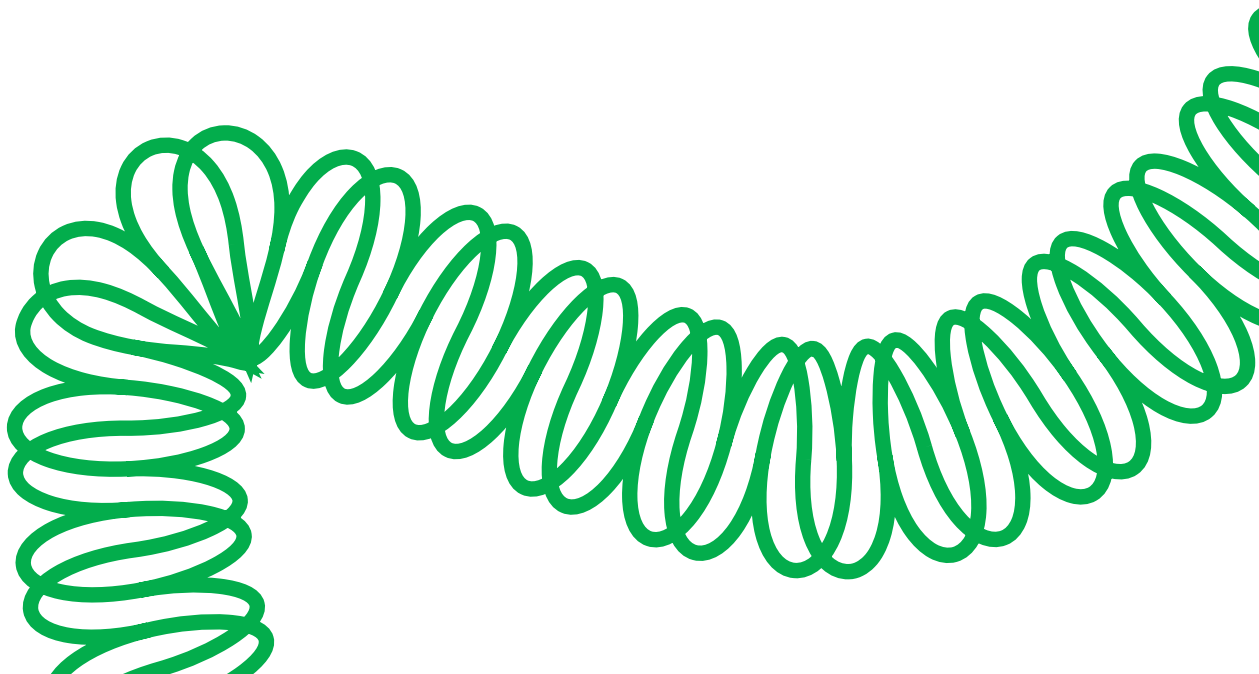




**CENTRE** FOR  
**CULTURAL VALUE**

**Policy review:  
Cultural policy responses to  
COVID-19 in the UK**

Version 1  
October 2020



## About the Centre for Cultural Value

The Centre for Cultural Value is building a shared understanding of the differences that arts, culture, heritage and screen make to people's lives and to society. We want cultural policy and practice to be shaped by rigorous research and evaluation of what works and what needs to change. To achieve this, we are working in collaboration with partners across the UK to:

- Make existing research more relevant and accessible so its insights can be understood and applied more widely.
- Support the cultural sector and funders to be rigorous in their approaches to evaluation and to foster a culture of reflection and learning.
- Foster an evidence-based approach to cultural policy development.

Our approach is primarily pragmatic: we want empirical research to drive decisions about cultural funding, policy, management, engagement and evaluation.

Based at the University of Leeds, the Centre's core partners are The Audience Agency and the Universities of Liverpool, Sheffield, York and Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. The Centre is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (part of UK Research and Innovation), Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Arts Council England.

## About our policy reviews

Our policy reviews are based on a rapid assessment of published literature (both peer-reviewed and non-academic) to present a 'snapshot' of cultural policy across a number of core themes that have been developed through consultation with stakeholders. The reviews present an overview of key policies and findings, highlighting what we know for certain, where there is emerging evidence and where further research is needed. We use the evidence gained through the review process to make conclusions about the current state of the evidence, and what policy implications this has going forwards.

Other formats of this document are available on request. If you require an alternative format, please contact: [ccv@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:ccv@leeds.ac.uk)

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This policy review was prepared by Dr John Wright for the Centre for Cultural Value and supervised by Professor Ben Walmsley. If you want to cite this work please use the following citation:

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## Highlights

- **Precarity for freelance artists and cultural workers.** COVID-19 has further exposed the complexities of how individuals generate income through ‘portfolio’ working and short-term contracts.
- New forms of virtual artist-led activity emerging but **96% of artists have lost income due to Government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- Initial emergency investment in culture saw **Northern Ireland spend more *per capita* than the other three UK nations.** However, with the announcement in July of the UK Government’s £1.57 billion **Cultural Recovery Fund** this picture shifted. The current figures are as follows: **England: £25.37 *per capita*, Scotland: £17.75 *per capita*, Northern Ireland: £ 18.33 *per capita* and Wales: £18.71 *per capita*.**
- **England** has received **87%** of the **Cultural Recovery Fund.**
- **Differences in approach to governmental support for the culture sector across the different nations of the UK.** Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales invest more in individuals whereas England moves towards protecting organisations and institutions.
- **Many cultural organisations are struggling to adequately demonstrate an immediate short-term financial threat to their organisation** and are therefore missing out on relief funding.
- **Inequality within the cultural sector is further illuminated by COVID-19.** Further research is needed to scope out the impact of COVID-19 across the culture sector in different regions and localities.



## Executive summary

Our research aimed to produce a rapid review of the four UK governments' cultural policy responses to the global pandemic. We implemented a rapid review methodology in order to capture the rapidly changing and often unpredictable decisions made by governments and the sector responses. The key findings of this review reveal the differences in the approach of the four nations, with Westminster signalling a focus on maintaining national institutions and organisations, whereas, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and to an extent Wales, have focused on supporting individuals. This support has been administered via specific grants targeted at cultural workers and artists that have been ineligible for both the furlough scheme for employees, and later the scheme for self-employed workers. It should be noted that the equivalent Arts Council England grant fell in line with the same eligibility criteria, i.e. 50% of income through self-employment, which excluded individuals from accessing both UK Government backed assistance schemes.

There is emerging evidence that the crisis has exacerbated inequalities within both the cultural sector and wider society. Studies from Exeter University and through the Doreen Lawrence Report have revealed that individuals from Black, Asian and diverse ethnic backgrounds are more likely to face adverse financial and social barriers. Similarly, women are more likely than men to lose their job or face redundancy. A report by Arts Council England on its emergency funding grant for individuals revealed that the success rate from Black, Asian and diverse ethnic backgrounds was lower than that of individuals from the LGBTQ+ community. These reports, coupled with a rise in mass protests on these issues, have identified inequality as an area which requires both in-depth and longitudinal research to determine the scope of these issues in relation to the culture sector at local, regional and national levels. It is important to note that Arts Council of Northern Ireland is the only national arts council to allocate a specific fund to assist D/deaf and disabled artists and cultural workers.

Our research has found that the majority of cultural policy decision-making has centred on economic relief for certain parts of the sector. However, both the Scottish and Welsh Governments are increasingly turning to policies designed to look to the future, beyond the immediate Covid-19 crisis, to integrate culture with wellbeing and with the health and education sectors. Similarly, new forms of artistic and cultural activity are developing through virtual formats including digital film commissioning, online artist-led art markets and non-venue based digital content creating. These developments raise questions of accessibility and audience participation which will also require future research.



## Background

On 23 March 2020, the entire UK entered lockdown. The UK Government had started implementing a series of restrictions on public movement from the 16 March which culminated in a [national address](#) by the UK Prime minister Boris Johnson on the evening of 23 March, in which he urged the citizens of the UK to stay at home in order to limit contact and thus reduce transmission of the Coronavirus (FullFact.org, 2020). As part of these restrictions cultural venues such as theatres, museums and galleries, music venues and heritage sites were temporarily closed. The restrictions also banned large gatherings and initially prohibited different households from physically meeting. Further, the UK Government implemented a policy of homeworking wherever possible (UK Government, 2020). This policy was initially accompanied by a ‘furlough’ scheme for employers, and later a scheme for self-employed workers. These schemes were financially backed by the UK Government and would pay up to 80% of an employee’s wage up to £2,500 per month (HM Treasury, 2020).

The implications of these measures affected both organisations and individuals within the cultural sector. Indeed, a [survey](#) of 4,000 members of Artist Newsletter (a-n) found that ‘96% of respondents indicate income reduction as a significant immediate impact of the pandemic, with 60% expecting income to be down over 50% in 2020’ (a-n, 2020). Meanwhile many individuals and organisations began to explore the potential of virtual platforms. Many artists, cultural workers and non-building-based networks have been using these channels for years, but the shift became considerable in the initial stages of lockdown (Banks, 2020, p.649).

The aim of this review is to provide a rapid review of the governmental cultural policy responses to the COVID-19 epidemic across the UK. This review will then draw out some implications based on an analysis of these policies decisions. The Centre for Cultural Value has chosen this as an urgent topic on which to produce a policy review because it is of paramount importance to review how and why the cultural sector has been affected by the measures that the governments of the UK have implemented and reflect on how these measures may shape the future of the sector.

It is important to note that cultural policies have been aimed at both organisations and individuals within the cultural sector and as such this review will aim to address both. This review will outline what each of the four nations’ cultural policy responses were and then offer a thematic analysis.<sup>1</sup> This is vital research to contribute towards the collective task of future-proofing the UK in the event of any related crisis in the future.

The research which is summarised in this rapid review was carried out over a 2-month period from the 01/06/2020 to 31/07/2020.<sup>2</sup>

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1 The four nations are England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

2 With any rapid review, there is a possibility that we have not identified all published journal articles in a field. If you feel we have missed a vital piece of research that should be embedded within our policy review, please get in touch using: [ccv@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:ccv@leeds.ac.uk)



## How did we review the evidence?

We conducted a rapid review of government policy, grey literature and academic literature that was published in 2020 in order to gain a snapshot of the evidence to date relating to cultural policy responses to COVID-19 across the UK. Research on cultural policy responses to the pandemic is in its infancy as this is clearly a new and ongoing phenomenon. As a result, the literature searches were focused predominantly on government press releases, economic reports and databases compiled by international bodies. These databases included Compendium Cultural Policies & Trends, UNESCO COVID-19 Response and The International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA). We supplemented these searches with evaluations published by cultural organisations and media reports.

## What did we include?

We included peer-reviewed articles in journals on cultural policy and arts management published between January and July 2020. As these were relatively scarce, most of the literature included in our research was grey literature. We included in these searches specific material on the implications of COVID-19 in relation to culture in the UK. We set the parameters on ‘the cultural sector’ in the UK to include arts, heritage and the wider cultural industries.<sup>3</sup>

## What did we not include?

We did not include broader impacts on tourism and the travel sector. Further, a number of funds produced by the UK Government targeted general support for charities. Although arts and cultural charities could apply for these funds, analysis of these funds lay outside the scope of this review because they were not specifically targeted at the cultural sector. Similarly, we did not include the creative industries in their entirety as they include marketing, IT, fashion and software companies which lie beyond the scope of this research and are covered by other research centres such as the [Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre](#).<sup>4</sup>

## What questions guided our analysis?

The key questions that guided our investigation were as follows:

1. What are the COVID-19 measures that have been announced to date and what has the immediate impact been?
2. What are the potential implications of these measures?
3. What are the different approaches to cultural policy across the devolved governments of the UK?
4. How and why do these differences manifest?

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3 The specific parameters of the sectors included in the review are film, screen production, visual arts, museums and galleries, performing arts and music, and heritage. Libraries and the craft sector have not directly been included in this report.

4 In 2015 DCMS identified 9 creative sectors: Advertising and marketing architecture, crafts, design: product, graphic and fashion design, film, TV, video, radio and photography, IT, software and computer services, publishing, museums, galleries and libraries, music, performing and visual arts.



## Findings

This section will outline what policies each government has implemented and then draw out implications of these policies. This section will also compare and contrast the differences in approach across the four nations of the UK.

### What were the governmental cultural policy responses across the four nations?

All four nations of the UK produced emergency funding packages that were administered through their arm's length national arts/cultural funding bodies. Financial stimulus has, so far, provided much of the cultural policy interventions by the UK's devolved governments during the initial emergency stages of lockdown. However, as governments seek to recover and relax measures different policies have become apparent.

#### Scotland

On the 27 March 2020, Creative Scotland announced the following measures to assist the cultural sector:

##### Individuals

**The Creative Scotland Bridging Bursary Fund** for freelance creative workers who have lost earnings due to the cancellation of work due to the crisis. The scheme was aimed at those who were least likely to benefit from the UK Government's **Job Retention Scheme** and the **Self-Employment Income Support Scheme**. The Fund offered a one-off payment of between £500 and £2,500 to help support immediate needs and opened on 30 March 2020 (Creative Scotland, 2020). This scheme was originally funded at £2 million but received an extra £1 million directly from the Scottish Government and £1 million from the [Freelands Foundation](#), making the total available **£4 million**. This fund closed on 25 April 2020 (Creative Scotland, 2020).

In parallel to the **Bridging Bursary** was the **Screen Scotland Bridging Bursary Fund**. This fund totalled £1.5 million and was aimed at freelance or self-employed screen practitioners who had lost income from their work due to the crisis (Screen Scotland, 2020). The Fund worked in the same way as the Creative Scotland Bridging Bursary Fund. This fund closed on 20 May 2020.

Creative Scotland re-purposed their **Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development** which aims to support individuals and organisations 'adapt and respond' in these changing times. This fund is open-ended and can support activity for one year and is funded by the National Lottery with a budget of £7.5 million (Creative Scotland, 2020).





## Organisations

Organisations can claim £1,000 to £15,000 or £15,000 to £50,000 from the **Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development scheme** (Creative Scotland, 2020). The Scottish Government also announced a raft of funds for small to medium sized businesses worth approximately £2.2 billion (Scottish Government, 2020). These funds included a £20 million **Creative, Tourism & Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund**, managed by the Enterprise Agencies in partnership with Creative Scotland and VisitScotland for creative, tourism and hospitality companies not in receipt of business rates relief. Companies of up to 50 employees not receiving business rates relief will have rapid access to £3,000 hardship grants or larger grants up to £25,000 where it can be demonstrated support is needed.

An additional £45 million **Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund** is managed by the Enterprise Agencies for vulnerable SME firms who are vital to the local or national economic foundations of Scotland (Scottish Government, 2020). However, engagement with these funds within the cultural sector in Scotland remains unclear.

On 6 July, the Scottish Government announced a new fund of £10 million for arts organisations and venues that had not received any COVID-19 related funding (Scottish Financial News, 2020). This was then followed up by the announcement by the UK Government of the £1.57 billion relief fund to support the arts, heritage and culture sector through the crisis. From this amount the Scottish Government received **£97 million** which has been specifically designated to help prevent cultural venues and organisations from closing (BBC, 2020). From this fund the £4 million **Museums Resilience and Recovery Fund** was introduced to support museums and galleries throughout Scotland (Scottish Government, 2020).<sup>5</sup>

On 13 July, the Scottish Government announced a new targeted fund aimed at assisting grassroots music venues. This fund was designed to ‘stabilise’ venues to allow them to develop. The fund’s budget is £2.2 million. Venues can apply for between £5,000 and £50,000 and must demonstrate that they are working with emerging practitioners. The fund will be closed on 3 September 2020 (Creative Scotland, 2020).

## Non-economic based policies

On 31 July Scotland’s outdoor events and concerts were permitted to recommence as long as they followed strict new safety guidance provided by the Government. This followed the news that drive-in cinemas and live concerts could open on the 22 July (Scottish Government, 2020). These changes in policy are part of the Scottish Government’s phased [Route Map](#) that saw some museums, galleries, cinemas and libraries re-opening with social distancing measures from 15 July (Scottish Government, 2020). However, most museums and galleries were due to open in August. The re-opening of indoor venues such as theatres and concert halls has been pushed back to the later stages of phase-3 of the Route Map due to safety concerns (Scottish Government, 2020).

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5 This is as of 31st July 2020 with more funds from the £97 million to be announced in August.



**The Culture Collective Programme** was designed to ‘support organisations employing freelance artists to work in communities across Scotland’ (Scottish Government, 2020). The exact detail of this programme has not yet been announced by the Government but it comes after consultation by an **Economic Recovery Advisory Group** appointed by the Scottish Government (Hill, 2020). The group had previously advocated for a [National Arts Force](#) to work ‘with the sector to create a **National Arts Force**, comprising freelance and gig economy workers across the sector, to work in schools, care homes and communities’ (Hill, 2020).

## England

On 24 March 2020 Arts Council England announced a **£160 million emergency support fund** for both individuals and organisations.

### Individuals

Arts Council England announced that a dedicated fund for [individuals](#) with a **budget of £20 million would be made available for artists and cultural practitioners** (Arts Council England, 2020). This fund was distributed over two rounds from 9 April 2020 and ran for three weeks in total. The fund was open to individuals working in music, theatre, dance, visual arts, literature, combined arts and museums practice fields (magicians and comedians could apply if they had a track record of receiving public funding); £4 million of this was granted from benevolent funds targeted at other cultural workers (Arts Council England, 2020).

From July 2020, Arts Council England announced the re-opening of the [Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants](#). This fund is designed to ‘focus on the needs of smaller independent organisations and individual practitioners’ and to ‘support projects that directly create and deliver creative and cultural activity and content for audiences, visitors and digital users’ (Arts Council England, 2020). According to the [supplementary guidance](#) for the grant, consideration will be given to the shift in conditions in the sector. Arts Council England states that the Project Grants will work in ‘very different ways’ in the post COVID-19 world (Arts Council England, 2020).

### Organisations

Arts Council England created a **£50 million fund for organisations outside of their National Portfolio**. This fund was launched at the same time as the individuals fund. However, to be eligible organisations required a ‘track record in receiving public funding, with the aim of addressing cashflow challenges and commissioning work now, to be available to people during the crisis, thus supporting artists as well’ (Arts Council England, 2020).

Arts Council England invested **£33 million in their National Portfolio Organisations** (NPO). This third fund was opened in May 2020 and originally had a budget of £90 million. However, Arts Council England found that when they received the applications from 196 NPOs, 95 of them did not meet the emergency needs criteria because of changes to the Government’s Job Retention Scheme, including support for self-employed and freelance workers (Redmond and Hill, 2020). The remaining funds will be repurposed into new funds following the UK Government’s announcement of the £1.57 billion cultural sector support fund.



In July 2020, **the UK Government announced a financial cultural support package of £1.57 billion** (DCMS, 2020). From this budget, England will receive £850 million worth of grants, £270 million in repayable finance loans plus a £100 million to support national cultural institutions in England and the English Heritage Trust. This fund will also see £120 million made available for capital investment schemes in heritage construction projects which had been paused (DCMS, 2020). From this amount Arts Council England will administer a **£500 million Culture Recovery Fund** aimed at organisations that are at risk of failure because of COVID-19 (DCMS, 2020). The British Film Institute and Historic England will also receive funding to administer for their respective subsectors. The full details of how these funds will be disseminated will take place over the coming months.

## Non-economic policies

The closure of cultural venues in England has closely mirrored that of Scotland, albeit 11 days earlier, with the re-opening of museums, galleries and heritage sites from 4 July. This is an ongoing process, as all venues must adhere to social distancing and new health and safety risk assessments (DCMS, 2020). Outdoor performing arts spaces were able to open from the 11 July in England. However, the re-opening of both indoor music venues and theatres are yet to be announced.<sup>6</sup>

On 25 March the BBC's **Culture in Quarantine** virtual programme was announced (BBC Arts, 2020). This was jointly funded by Arts Council England and the BBC to showcase new digital work. The BBC stated there will be '25 new works by independent artists, in response to the Covid-19 outbreak. This will be reflected throughout the nations' (BBC, 2020). The programme included access to national collections through different virtual platforms, new broadcasts across media and the development of [virtual festivals](#) (Williams, 2020).

## Wales

### Individuals

On 1 April 2020, the Welsh Government announced an **£18 million fund** to support the cultural sector (Welsh Government, 2020). From this fund the Arts Council of Wales administered a £7 million **Arts Resilience Fund** for individuals most at risk in the immediate aftermath of lockdown. The first part of the fund opened on 14 April and the second on 29 May and comprised the **Urgent Response Fund for Individuals** and a **Stabilisation Fund for Individuals** (Arts Council of Wales, 2020).

As part of the UK Government's £1.57 billion sector support fund the Welsh Government was allocated a **Cultural Recovery Fund** of £53 million. From this fund the vast majority was singled out for national institutions and organisations (Arts Council of Wales, 2020). However, it is still unclear if any new funds will be available for individuals.

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<sup>6</sup> This was still the case as of the 31<sup>st</sup> of July 2020.



## Organisations

As part of the **Arts Resilience Fund** cultural organisations could claim in much the same way as individuals with a similar two-round system. The first round was based on emergency funding and the second on stabilisation funds in late May 2020. Other grants which have been announced under the initial £18 million fund are a £1m **Creative Wales** fund for grassroots music venues and additional support for TV and publishing sub-sectors (Welsh Government, 2020). Further, a £1 million **Cultural Resilience Fund** was created for ‘museums, collections, conservation services, archives and community and public libraries to respond to short-term pressures and recovery actions on a grant application basis’ (Welsh Government, 2020). Finally, a £750k **Emergency Relief Fund** was created to ‘to support the smallest and most vulnerable independent sector sport, museum and heritage organisations with cash flow and other critical issues. This includes two grant programmes administered by the Welsh Museums Federation and Sport Wales’ (Welsh Government, 2020).

## Non-economic policies

The re-opening of cultural venues in Wales has been more cautious than in England and Scotland. Officially, museums, galleries and heritage sites have been able to open from 27 July. However, much like other parts of the UK, they must adhere to strict social distancing and health and safety measures which has resulted in a slow opening of different venues over time. The phased return of theatres and performing arts venues is yet to be determined but will follow the guidelines as set out by the Welsh Governments [Culture and heritage destinations and venues: guidance for a phased return](#) (Welsh Government, 2020).

The Welsh Government brought into law the ([Well-Being of Future Generations Act](#) 2015). The Act establishes arts, culture and heritage as central to the country’s sustainable development plan and legislation has been brought in which integrates culture into both traditionally non-arts-based national institutions and government projects (Ó Conchúir, 2020). Although this act is not strictly a COVID-19 related cultural policy (since it was enacted in 2015), the Act is seen a possible roadmap to futureproofing the culture sector in Wales. This was explicitly stated in a [blog](#) post on the Arts Council of Wales website by choreographer Fearghus Ó Conchúir (Ó Conchúir, 2020). Ó Conchúir suggested that ‘[t]his is a commitment to recognise the value of artistic knowledge and experience in building a sustainable future not just for Wales, but for the world’ (Ó Conchúir, 2020). It is therefore worth attention in the context of this review.



## Northern Ireland

### Individual

**The Artists Emergency Programme** (AEP) was announced by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland on 27 April 2020. The fund was designed to give freelance artists, creative practitioners and performers the opportunity to apply for grants of up to £5,000 each. The fund's budget was £500,000 and has to date supported 238 individuals (Arts Council of Ireland, 2020).

**Deaf/Disabled Artist Support Fund** was announced by Arts Council of Northern Ireland and University of Atypical on 6 May 2020 and will remain open until 31 March 2021. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland stated that 'the grants can support artistic output across any discipline and scale, alongside any associated access support requirements that D/deaf and disabled artists have. This fund operates in addition to, not instead of, the arts council's other schemes such as the Artists' Emergency Programme and so D/deaf and disabled artists can apply for both (Arts Council of Northern Ireland, 2020).

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland opened its **Support for the Individual Artist Programme (SIAP)** on 23 June 2020. This is an annual programme which has been re-purposed to be available to artists that have already made a contribution to Northern Ireland's cultural sector in the previous five years and it was open to any discipline. The fund closed on 24 July.

The arts council has since announced a new **Emergency Resilience Programme** (IERP), worth £1 million from the Department for Communities and an additional £100,000 from Future Screens NI. Individuals can apply for grants of £1,200, £3,000 or £5,000 each. The Fund is 'designed to support those working in the Creative Economy including freelancers, musicians, actors, artists and craft workers during the COVID-19 crisis' (Arts Council of Northern Ireland, 2020).

### Organisations

The annual funding budget for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland was announced on 10 April 2020. The budget was **£12.9 million** and was earmarked to help 97 key arts organisations throughout the emerging epidemic in Northern Ireland.

On 1 June Arts Council of Northern Ireland announced a new fund for organisations entitled the **Organisations Emergency Programme** (OEP), worth £500,000, which offers organisations the opportunity to apply for grants of up to £25,000 each (The Arts Council of Northern Ireland, 2020). On 7 July 2020, the arts council announced the **Lottery Project Funding** which has a budget of **£1 million** to fund a range of interdisciplinary cultural events, festivals, concerts and projects that will be both virtual and socially distanced. This fund is available for organisations for one year's worth of programming (Arts Council of Northern Ireland, 2020).



## Non-economic policies

Akin to the other nations in the UK, Northern Ireland has seen a phased relaxing of restrictions. Theatres and art centres (performing art spaces) remain closed to the public. However, the Northern Irish Government allowed the re-opening of museums, galleries and heritage sites from 3 July 2020. Like other nations in the UK, Northern Irish museums and galleries have now typically begun their re-opening process, which in theory means that they will be opening slowly throughout the following year (Knott, 2020).

## Analysis and implications

### Comparing and contrasting some devolved approaches

In the initial emergency phase of the epidemic in the UK, Arts Council England announced a £160 million fund on 24 March 2020. On 27 March, the Scottish Government announced a £14 million bursaries and grants scheme for the arts and cultural sector. In Wales this initial fund was £7.5 million, announced on the 1 April 2020 and in Northern Ireland £13.9 million for the arts was announced on 10 April. Although assistance from Arts Council England was relatively timely compared with Northern Ireland, when the initial spend *per capita* is considered the picture changes. Northern Ireland injected £13.4 million in the initial phase, which works out as £7.02 *per capita*. The remainder of the UK was almost at parity with £2.84 *per capita* in England, £2.38 in Scotland, £2.23 in Wales.

This comparative picture shifted over the following months with a cluster of further announcements emphasising cultural recovery rather than emergency funding. For example, the UK Government's announcement of £1.57 billion relief package was divided between the four nations as follows: Scotland received £97 million, Wales £59 million, Northern Ireland £33 million, and England received the remaining £1.37 billion (DCMS, 2020). This injection of funding shifted the balance in terms of investment strongly in the favour of England. The aggregated spending *per capita* currently stands at: £25.37 in England, £18.71 in Wales, £18.33 in Northern Ireland and £17.75 in Scotland.<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that the devolved governments within the UK reserved the right to spend this fund on whatever they decided and the exact details on this allocation is still emerging (UK Government, 2019). A telling example of this is that the Northern Ireland Executive have chosen to spend £29 million of the fund on arts, heritage and culture with the remaining £4 million being recouped by the Executive to replace an earlier release of £4 million additional spend for the sector (McHugh, 2020).<sup>8</sup>

7 Population data is based on the most recent Office of National Statistics figures, <<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/annualmidyearpopulationestimates/latest>> [accessed 27/07/2020].

8 This information was sourced in consultation with Dr Ali Fitzgibbon, Queens University Belfast.



What is most revealing is the differences in the ways these policies have been delivered across the four nations and where investment has been targeted. There is a marked contrast between England and its neighbours, both in *what* has been invested and in the *policy rhetoric* at governmental level. For example, Scotland and Northern Ireland have focused specifically on supporting individual artists, with an emphasis on serving different communities. The evidence for this lies in the detail of the funds and grants which have been made available.

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has concentrated its funding on individuals, including the only specifically dedicated fund for D/deaf & disabled artists and practitioners in the UK. Although the other arts councils of the UK have delivered funds to support D/deaf & disabled artists, Northern Ireland's fund is specifically tailored to the needs of this community. This was highlighted by the chairman of the Atypical University, Damien Coyle. Coyle stated that 'D/deaf and disabled artists will use their awards to explore new methods for engagement, make preparation for promoting their work when lockdown is eased or lifted, and will have time and resources to invest in their professional practice' (Coyle, 2020). Further to this, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland have three other funds dedicated to individual artists, creative practitioners, and freelancers. This highlights the subtle distinctiveness of Northern Ireland's cultural policy response to the crisis.

Scotland has adopted similar policies to Northern Ireland. In the initial stages of the UK-wide lockdown Creative Scotland announced a **Bridging Bursary** for individual freelancers that was specifically designed for individuals who did not qualify for the UK Government's Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (Creative Scotland, 2020). This policy decision provides emergent evidence of Creative Scotland's, and to an extent the Scottish Government's, recognition of the drawbacks of the policies set out by the UK Government (see subsection titled *Precarity for freelance artists and cultural workers*). Creative Scotland strongly advised 'individuals who are not in immediate need and who are seeking funds to sustain their creative development over a period of time to not submit a request to this fund' (Creative Scotland, 2020 p.4). In contrast, Arts Council England's **Emergency Fund for Individuals** did not specifically indicate this criteria. They recommended that practitioners 'carefully consider the criteria for this fund and what funding you require during the Covid-19 crisis' (Arts Council England, 2020). There is a clear difference in language here with Creative Scotland using dissuasive language to clearly define their fund. Further, there is no direct mention of the UK Government's Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme in Arts Council England's criteria.

Perhaps the most revealing difference between the approaches of the four nations is what has been deemed a priority by Westminster in the **Culture Recovery Fund**. The central aim of the fund was to 'help support the performing arts and theatres, museums, heritage, galleries, independent cinemas and live music venues through the impact of the coronavirus pandemic' (DCMS, 2020). Indeed, the entire amount of the £1.37 billion distributed through England's arm's-lengths cultural bodies was designated for organisational and venue recovery (DCMS, 2020).



This marks a clear difference between the respective governments of the UK, with Westminster focused on assisting cultural institutions and venues. This was epitomised in a statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, who stated that ‘[o]ur world-renowned galleries, museums, heritage sites, music venues and independent cinemas are not only critical to keeping our economy thriving, employing more than 700,000 people, they’re the lifeblood of British culture’ (Sunak, 2020). It should be noted at this point that Arts Council England offered individuals two main funds in response to the crisis, including the rolling National Lottery Project Grants (Arts Council England, 2020).<sup>9</sup> However, the vast majority of funding is still going to organisations, venues and institutions, with many freelance and self-employed cultural practitioners falling through the funding cracks.

Another trend is emerging in Scotland and Wales which takes its lead from their respective cultural strategies.<sup>10</sup> There are signs of further integration of culture into the socio-economic recovery of each country’s roadmaps. The Scottish Government’s has announced that it is considering a policy for a **national arts force** with the expressed aim of pairing up freelance artists and cultural workers within schools, care-homes and the community (Hill, 2020). This would of course benefit both the individuals involved and the sectors that artists will help support, as was highlighted by the Economic Advisory Group that tabled the policy in a [report](#) at the end of June. They suggested that:

[a]significant proportion of the workforce are either freelance or gig economy workers, who will struggle to find or maintain jobs in the post-crisis period [...]. The sector is inherently innovative and entrepreneurial, and can be integrated into recovery and development work right across the economy, with particular emphasis on health, education (including blended learning), tourism, leisure and overall wellbeing. (Advisory Group on Economic Recovery, 2020, pp.50-51).

However, the policy that encompasses these values is the **Culture Collective Programme** (Scottish Government, 2020). Although, details have not yet been published on the exact nature of this policy it will be funded from the £97 million that Scotland received from the UK Government. This programme appears to be designed to implement the recommendations made by the Economic Advisory Group’s report and aims to provide opportunities for freelance artists to work within communities.<sup>11</sup> These policies are echoed in the Scottish Government’s aim of embedding culture within national policy going forward. In a press release they stated that culture will play ‘a definitive role in the recovery of our wellbeing, and it must be an intrinsic element of how Scotland is represented at home and abroad’ (Hill, 2020).

9 This was accurate as of the 31<sup>st</sup> of July 2020.

10 The Scottish Culture Strategy <<https://www.gov.scot/publications/culture-strategy-scotland/>> and The Welsh Fusion Programme <https://gov.wales/fusion-programme-report-2018-2019> [accessed 28/07/2020].

11 There has been an update on this strategy: see <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-53950124>> [accessed 28/08/2020].





This is echoed by the Welsh Government's re-emphasis on the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015), which sees culture as a 'pillar' within every major project delivered regionally and nationally. Although it should be noted that this is not directly a COVID-19 related policy it has now been re-visited by the Arts Council of Wales as a potential roadmap for rebuilding the sector in a post-COVID world (Arts Council of Wales, 2020). The Act brought the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into law for the first time in any country. The interest in this legislation moving forward into a post-COVID-19 world is that it provides a legal duty for arm's-length and government bodies to 'sustainably meet specific Well-Being goals, among which is a goal to make Wales a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language and which encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and recreation' (Ó Conchúir, 2020). This is a strong indicator of the central role that arts and culture may play in the future of Wales.

## Online working and emerging organisational models

Following the closure of businesses and venues and the cancellation of festivals because of the UK-wide implementation of social distancing measures, many cultural practitioners and organisations have adapted and changed their activities. Evidence for this is broad and cannot be fully captured in this policy review. However, we will outline some trends and instances which characterise this shift. Firstly, there has been a concerted effort on a national scale throughout the UK to create digital cultural content for audiences to access whilst in lockdown. A prime example of this has been The BBC's **Culture in Quarantine** programme.

The programme was commissioned as part of a wider partnership with Arts Council England and designed to 'commission established artists of any discipline based in England to produce a series of new works in creative media - video, audio and interactive' (BBC Media Centre, 2020). To date the programme has made available to stream a back catalogue of work from performing arts organisations such as the Royal Shakespeare Company and Northern Ballet (BBC Media Centre, 2020). It has also produced new programmes and series such as **Museums in Quarantine**, which has seen national collections made virtual or new behind the scenes footage in COVID conditions (BBC Media Centre, 2020). There have been similar collaborations in Scotland between BBC Arts and BBC Scotland in partnership with National Theatre Scotland to support its **Scenes for Survival project**. The project worked with regional Scottish theatres to commission media content from great Scottish talent (National Theatre of Scotland, 2020). The BBC is also supporting Tinderbox Theatre's **Solo Art** project in Northern Ireland, which supplied a small fund for artists to make new work which would then be showcased online with 10 artists per week being selected (Tinderbox, 2020).

Alongside these national and regional collaborations there have been the enforced changes in working practices in the community for cultural practitioners such as visual artists, musicians, curators, actors and performers. This has affected not only employees within organisations and institutions but also freelancers and artist-led activity. An example of these new forms of practice and organisational structures is Glasgow's **Transmission Gallery**. Transmission is an artist-run space which 'works with artists in the production of exhibitions, events, exchanges, residencies and publications. It also shares various resources with its membership in order to facilitate activities outside of its own programming' (Transmission, 2020). Due to the COVID-19 restrictions their main site had to temporarily close.



However, Transmission set up a [new website](#) that acts as a response page to the pandemic and provides a platform for committee members to broadcast Transmissions ongoing activity. This activity has become diverse and non-site specific through commissioning new digital work from both its members and external collaborations. One such commission was *'FI Dem III (2020)'* – a new film which reflects the legacy of the Windrush generation (Transmission, 2020). The film was co-commissioned with the **Berwick Film and Media Festival** and **Spike Island Bristol** and was streamed live via YouTube.

A new form of art market has opened in response to the loss of income for freelance artists and makers. The [#artistsupportpledge](#) (ASP) was set up on 16 March 2020 by artist Matthew Burrows and utilises social media to support a global community. ASP functions via Instagram, enabling artists and makers to post images of their work using #artistsupportpledge, providing details of their works and price (up to £200 or equivalent). If people are interested in buying, they simply message the artist (Burrows, 2020). ASP not only supports artists, but also helps to fundraise for other sectors because '[e]very time an artist reaches £1,000 of sales, they pledge to buy £200 of work from other artist(s). Donations are encouraged to other concerns too, such as @\_hopsitalrooms @screen.south @samaratanscharity @s\_lawrencetrust @refugecharity @survivalinternational' (Burrows, 2020).

These shifts in working practices from home and remote working to new forms of business model and virtual content may well require different methods of support and cultural policy to be developed. More in-depth research into this area will be needed over the coming years in order to determine the impact of COVID-19 on the future of the sector.

## Prearity for freelance artists and cultural practitioners

According to DCMS (2020), the UK's cultural sector employs approximately 676,000 people with an estimated 332,000 freelance and self-employed workers. In May 2020, CVAN (Contemporary Visual Arts Network) conducted a survey to 'understand the position of the workforce dependent on freelance gig economy in the visual arts sector in the UK'. They investigated their response to emergency sector support measures announced by Arts Council England (ACE) and HM Treasury (CVAN, 2020, p.1). The survey was run in partnership with the Artists' Union England, a-n The Artists Information Company, Artquest, AxisWeb, Curator Space, DACS, Engage, and Guild. The survey of 1,038 practitioners, including artists, makers, technicians, fabricators, curators and consultants, found that 44% had permanently lost work since the announcement of lockdown restrictions. Further, 74% of respondents were not satisfied with the variety of support measures announced by the sector and 20% of people thought they were ineligible for support due to diversity of their employment and complex income sources (CVAN, 2020, p.3). Similar findings have also been reported through other UK-wide surveys including a-n's [member survey](#) (a-n, 2020). This survey suggested that **96% of the 4,000 members surveyed had lost income** because of the measures brought in by the UK Government (a-n, 2020).



In order to understand the key issues emerging from these surveys, it is important to outline the three main sources of support for freelance and self-employed workers across the UK.<sup>12</sup> Firstly, the UK Government implemented a furlough scheme throughout across the UK (HM Government, 2020).

The **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme** paid employers up to 80% of their employees' wages up to £2,500 per month from March 2020 to October 2020.<sup>13</sup> In July a 'flexible furlough' was announced whereby workers could return part-time whilst still being on the scheme (Lewis, 2020). Whilst this scheme is mainly able to support cultural workers in regular employment contracts, it does cover some workers on PAYE zero hours contracts and agency workers (ACAS, 2020).

Secondly, on 4 May 2020, the UK Government announced its **Self-employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)**. According to the Government the scheme is designed to assist self-employed workers in much the same way as employed workers. The Government stated that '[t]hose who are eligible will be able to claim a taxable grant worth 80% of their average trading profits up to a maximum of £7,500 (equivalent to three months' profits), paid in a single instalment' (UK Government, 2020).<sup>14</sup> Crucially, part of the eligibility criteria stated that applicants must 'earn at least half of their income through self-employment' (UK Government, 2020). Finally, as detailed previously in this review there are a series of grants available for individuals which are administered by the arm's-length arts bodies across the four nations.

What is becoming apparent from sector surveys is that there are complexities in the way individuals earn their income through different forms of employment. This complexity is not catered for by the policy measures brought in to assist freelance artists and cultural workers.<sup>15</sup> Artists' precarity has thus become even more acute during the crisis. Susan Jones (2020) states that 'the requirement of both schemes [Furlough and SEISS] for applicants to earn 50% of income from self-employment conflicts with the reality of artists' livelihoods and the 'portfolio' work patterns and 'mixed income' sources from self-employment and PAYE' (Jones, 2020). These findings are echoed in an article for [Queens Policy Engagement](#), where the authors characterise the activity of freelancers and self-employed artists and performers as follows:

work blends payroll and fee-based work, running often non-profit companies without taking salary or having employees, and in some instances, their activities might even fall under the radar of declared labour. Their payroll contracts are often too short or casualised to be eligible for the 80% or 70% wage subsidy schemes.  
(Fitzgibbon and Tsioulakis, 2020).

What seems to be emerging is that the eligibility criteria for both schemes fails to cover all or

- 12 This does not include local and regional funding that maybe available. Both the Furlough PAYE system and SEISS were rolled out across all four nations of the UK.
- 13 There have been changes to the scheme throughout this time and employers will be expected to pay more of their employees' wages from August 2020.
- 14 The scheme has been extended to encompass a second round in August which be worth 70% of their average monthly trading profits, paid out in a single instalment covering three months' worth of profits, and capped at £6,570 in total (UK Government, 2020).
- 15 For further detail on social security for artists, please see our companion policy review – Johnson, R. 2020. Research Digest: Social Security and the Status of the Artist. Leeds: Centre for Cultural Value.



even most cultural sector workers. It is at this point that the third source of support, through arts council grants, could bridge the gap. However, this situation is not as simple as it first appears.

In their report on the outcome of the **Emergency Response Funds**, Arts Council England announced that they had offered 7,484 grants for individuals through their emergency response funds (Arts Council England, 2020, p.8). Similarly, Creative Scotland reached 2,293 individuals with its bridging bursary for freelancers (Creative Scotland, 2020).<sup>16</sup> However, there is a revealing disparity between these emergency funds. The eligibility criteria for Arts Council England's emergency fund required that to be eligible, 'individual freelancers must generate more than 50% of their income through their freelance work' (Arts Council England, 2020). This stipulation excluded freelancer and self-employed cultural workers with the aforementioned complex 'portfolio' working patterns. In contrast, Creative Scotland's **Bridging Bursary** and **Screen Bridging Bursary** was open to any freelance or self-employed cultural practitioner, even if they had part-time contracts as part for their employment (Creative Scotland, 2020). Similarly, the Welsh arts council's **Arts Resilience Fund** and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's **Individuals Emergency Resilience Programme** did not require more than 50% of their income to be from their freelance work. This evidence further highlights the growing policy divide between the English approach and that of the other three nations.

## Continued precarity for cultural organisations

The impact of COVID-19 measures on cultural organisations across the four nations is still emerging. However, we wanted to outline a few key implications facing organisations because of governmental cultural policy on COVID-19. The most obvious factor has been the enforced closure of cultural venues brought about by lockdown measures, social distancing and restrictions on public movement. These have differed throughout the four nations, including traveling distances in Wales limited to 5 miles and divergences in the re-opening schedules in all four nations.<sup>17</sup> As a result of these measures many cultural organisations were forced to either close to the public, change their working methods and outputs (such as offering online content) and/or cancel/postpone events. On 23 March in a letter from the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee to the UK Government, Julian Knight MP stated that 'we're looking at an extremely urgent situation for people across a number of sectors affected by the coronavirus outbreak whether in our cultural organisations, charities, tourism or sport' (Knight, 2020). Over the following months all four national governments made funding available for organisations and the UK Government announced the furlough schemes.

However, what is beginning to emerge as restrictions are lifted across the UK are announcements of redundancies and potential closures across different subsectors of the culture sector. High profile examples of these have been **The Phantom of the Opera** show which has now permanently closed in the West End and the announcement of redundancies from venues including **Theatre Royal Plymouth** and **Newcastle Theatre Royal** (ITV News, 2020).

<sup>16</sup> To date both Arts Council of Wales and Arts Council of Northern Ireland have not released a comprehensive figure on individuals.

<sup>17</sup> See the non-economic policy sections earlier in the review.



There are more than 1,100 theatres in the UK, and it has been estimated that 70% of theatres and production companies risked closing permanently before the end of the year (Bird, 2020). Indeed there is now a steady stream of announcements from large organisations and institutions of imminent redundancies including from the **Southbank Centre** with the potential for 400 jobs and **Birmingham Repertory's** announcement of 40% staff reductions (Bakare, 2020).

This situation appears to be the same in Scotland with the announcement of redundancies due to closure of **The Traverse** theatre in Edinburgh (Riordan and Smith, 2020). In Wales it was announced that the **Millennium Centre** in Cardiff could be forced loose 250 jobs due to uncertainty around its re-opening (Thomas, 2020). In Northern Ireland the Head of the **MAC** theatre, Anne McReynolds stated that, 'every part of our sector is facing obliteration' (McReynolds, 2020). These are just a few examples amongst many with more announcements daily, including **Tate** and **NT**. These instances reveal a set of complex conditions and immediate implications that are impacting negatively and profoundly on the sector. Although the UK Government's summer budget update has provided the much-needed funds to help these high-profile venues, there is still uncertainty as to how far and widely these funds will stretch.

Central factors in all these cases is the uncertainty and lack of clarity about plans to re-open and the extent to which different cultural venues can survive on limited capacities. This was highlighted by the Chief Executive of **Birmingham Royal Ballet**, Caroline Miller, who stated: '[o]ur future is tied to the fate of our home theatres. If they fail or are left in the position of only being able to put on limited, likely the most commercial, shows like the big musicals, then we will feel that impact' (Haynes, 2020). This is the crux of the matter: without the extension of the government support schemes and further funding administered by arts councils, then venues and organisations that rely on working at high capacity may not be able to sustain themselves in the medium or long term with social distancing measures in place (Haynes, 2020). And even if they could, their programming would suffer greatly.

It has also proved challenging to target relief funding because of the nature of evidence required to evidence both need and future viability. For example, in an [article](#) for *Arts Professional* it was reported that National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) only received £33.1 million of the initial £90 million pot available from Arts Council England (Raymond and Hill, 2020). The fund was set up to support the 196 NPOs though any immediate financial threat because of the pandemic. However, of those organisations which applied for the scheme 95 were rejected. According to the article's source from Arts Council England this was because they did not adequately demonstrate an immediate short-term financial threat to their organisation.<sup>18</sup> This suggests that the implications of the pandemic are uneven; extensive future research will be required to begin to capture and evaluate their particular contexts.

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18 This has since been confirmed by Arts Council England see report < [https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download\\_file/Data\\_report\\_E\\_R\\_F\\_Individuals\\_Organisations\\_outside\\_National\\_Portfolio\\_o.pdf](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download_file/Data_report_E_R_F_Individuals_Organisations_outside_National_Portfolio_o.pdf)> [accessed 28/07/2020].



## Inequality within the cultural sector is further illuminated by Covid-19

Much of the emerging evidence on the immediate impacts of COVID-19 on cultural organisations has focused on venues that rely directly on audiences and box office income. Of course, these organisations only reflect part of the picture across the sector. There is a long discourse of inequality within the cultural sector in the UK (Hall, 1997; Bhabha, 2012). In 2015 a report on the state of cultural inequalities was launched by The Warwick Commission entitled *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth*. The report's key finding was that a coherent approach to access to cultural education, in all its forms, must be implemented throughout the UK (The Warwick Commission, 2015). Similarly, Arts Council England's **Creative Case for Diversity** policy was introduced to help tackle this issue and requires 'All National Portfolio Organisations [...] to show how they contribute to the Creative Case for Diversity through the work they produce, present and distribute, through their programming or collections, and by demonstrating how their work is accessible and relevant to their local communities' (Arts Council England, 2011). There is evidence that COVID-19 has further revealed systemic inequalities within culture and society in the UK. Emerging studies have demonstrated that the pandemic has had a disproportionate effect on Black, Asian and ethnically diverse groups in the UK and around the world. This was highlighted in the UK Government report *Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups*.

This report, along with the media coverage of the Black Lives Matter movements, has raised the profile of this systemic issue. As a result, Arts Council England published a list of grants it has allocated specifically to Black, Asian and diverse-led organisations and individuals. Arts Council England received 2,020 applications from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse applicants and made awards to 74.3% of applications totalling £13.1 million. This percentage success rate is marginally lower than LGBTQ, female and D/deaf and disabled applicants (Arts Council England, 2020). However, Arts Council England's focus on this issue is welcome as it is becoming evident that the pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities within society. Similarly, the Arts, Health and Wellbeing All Party Parliamentary Group has submitted a report focusing on arts and culture to the Doreen Lawrence Review into the impact of coronavirus on Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities (All Party Parliamentary Group Arts, Health and Wellbeing, 2020, p.2).

There is evidence from a University of Exeter study that these inequalities also have a gender bias. The study of 1,500 people found that the crisis 'has exacerbated gender inequality across most aspects of life, impacting on women's mental health, employment and wellbeing' (Oreffice and Quintana-Domeque, 2020, p.20).



One of the most concerning findings was related to employment. According to the figures ‘women were 96% more likely than men to have been made redundant because of the COVID-19 pandemic, with 8.6% of women reporting a job loss during lockdown compared with 4.4% of men’ (Ibid., p.5). The creative and cultural industries are not exempt from these inequalities as has been highlighted many times over the years and most recently by Mark Banks (2020), who stated that:

working-class, ethnic minority and women workers, already long-disadvantaged, will be less likely to either retain their current jobs or be available to undertake any remaining and future work. Indeed, the general fall-off in work will exacerbate hardship for all those social groups that have historically suffered from the most disadvantages.

In 2018 Eleonora Belfiore published an article *Whose cultural value? Representation, power and creative industries*. One of the major recommendations was to ‘[h]ave a focus on equality, social justice, inclusion, diversity and fair access to the means of cultural production, but go beyond a perfunctory celebration of difference that fails to lift itself above a tick-boxing exercise’ (Belfiore, 2018, p.394). Issues of access to culture and the social, economic and political barriers that exist within the culture sector are brought to light in Orian Brook, Dave O’Brien and Mark Taylor’s journal article *Inequality talk: How discourses by senior men reinforce exclusions from creative occupations*, where the authors state unequivocally that:

individual careers are still explained by gentlemanly tropes and the idea of luck, rather than by reference to structural inequalities. The distance between the discourse of career luck and ‘inequality talk’ helps to explain the persistence of exclusions from the workforce for those who are not white, middle class origin, men (Brook *et al*, 2019, p.1).

This rings true now more than ever because these inequalities and their relationship with COVID-19 within cultural policy needs further in-depth academic research in order to study the long-term effects within the cultural and creative industries.



## Summary

This policy review has revealed several important implications arising from the cultural policy and COVID-19 related measures implemented by all four UK nations' governments. The picture that it paints is uneven, complex and uncertain. There are clear differences emerging between the nations on funding priorities – with Scotland, Northern Ireland, and to an extent Wales, focusing on individual practitioners and culture's role in supporting other sectors in a more integrated way in the future, whilst much of England's relief funding supporting organisations and institutions and casting them as the 'crown jewels' of the country's heritage. Further, in depth longitudinal studies are needed to evaluate the provenance of these policy positions and fully trace their likely trajectories.

The sector reacted in different ways to the restrictions imposed at the end of March 2020. Online exhibitions, festivals and webinars sprung up coupled with a flurry of social media activity by professionals and audiences. Artist-led activity shifted to the virtual with new commissioning and programming utilising online spaces. This shift in communication and activity happened at many different levels from the national to the individual. A mapping of this activity could provide vital insights into futureproofing the sector and for tracing evolving cultural business models.

It has already become apparent that freelance and self-employed artists and cultural practitioners are facing specific challenges. Important questions are being raised over forms of short-termism in the light of potential future lockdowns and the imminent end of government support programmes.

There is also growing evidence of cultural workers who have fallen through the gaps in government support structures. Both these key issues will require extensive further research to understand their outcomes. However, solutions may be found in versions of the funds already made available by Creative Scotland, the Arts Council of Wales, and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Emerging from this research are questions on the future of certain organisational models such as theatres and performing arts centres that rely on high or full capacity to operate. These shifts in the sector may see different models emerging, such as the commissioning of virtual events, which could bring into question the types of funding available in future for cultural venues.

The pandemic has revealed several socio-political tensions, such as inequalities across race, disability, class and gender in the UK. The implications of these factors require careful and sensitive study in order to learn what needs to be changed and how this change can be meaningfully enacted.





## Glossary

The following definitions are intended to provide a workable guide to readers who are not specialist in this area rather than being conclusive definitions of terms.

<b>Artist-led:</b>	Typically, self-organised practice led by artists themselves. This type of activity is often self-funded and enacted in collaboration with others.
<b>Discourse</b>	Written or spoken communication or debate over time.
<b>Freelance worker (also known as contractors or sole traders):</b>	A type of worker who typically earns income by selling their services to clients on a per-task basis, through a series of temporary contracts. Freelancers can be self-employed or temporarily employed by an agency. Although definitions may vary between national contexts, see Gov UK's 'Employment Status' guide for an overview of different employment types.
<b>Horizontal policymaking</b>	A type of cultural policymaking that targets skills and innovation across sectors and is seen as less interventional by a government.
<b>Nexus</b>	A connection or series of connections linking two or more things.
<b>Selective policymaking</b>	Where governments create specific cultural policy for a specific sector and, or, sub-sector. This is tailored to the specific needs of a sector and is delivered directly.
<b>Self-employed:</b>	Those who are solely responsible for the business they work for. This includes management of financial risk, work schedule, clients, equipment, fees, payments and sales, and hiring others. For more information, please also see the Gov UK 'Employment Status' guide.
<b>Synthesise:</b>	Bringing together evidence from several sources to produce a summary.



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## Further reading

Policy briefing: UK-wide recovery plan for the creative industries <https://www.pec.ac.uk/policy-briefings/the-importance-of-a-uk-wide-recovery-plan-for-the-creative-industries>

Charities Speak report <https://www.pec.ac.uk/research-reports/charities-speak>

UK Creative and Cultural Sector Coronavirus Impact Study (not yet published results) <https://www.ccscoronaimpactstudy.co.uk>

The Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre <https://www.pec.ac.uk/news/how-can-the-creative-industries-come-together-to-share-how-covid-19-is-impacting-the-sector>





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