



Memorandum of Understanding between the BBC and Creative Wales

Purpose

The establishment of Creative Wales represents the beginning of a new chapter in the exciting story of the creative industries in Wales. Working together, coordinating activities and aiming towards achieving common objectives, the creative industries in Wales can be greater than the sum of its parts. Our shared purpose requires a coherent, collegiate approach to build on initiatives that are already underway and set a shared framework for new development.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to set out the partnership agreement between Creative Wales and the BBC. At its core is our shared vision of building a sustainable sector in Wales with the skills and resilience to survive and then thrive beyond the Covid-19 pandemic. Creative Wales and the BBC are united by a common purpose: supporting a vibrant, diverse, world class Welsh creative industries sector that excels in the production of a wide range of content. These projects reflect Wales back to itself but are also enjoyed by audiences elsewhere in the UK and internationally.

This Memorandum of Understanding is envisaged as the first stage in a long-term collaboration involving the BBC, Creative Wales, and potentially other relevant parties. Whilst its focus will be the Wales screen sector, it will also support opportunities to work in partnership on joint priorities related to the wider creative industries, such as the music sector. It marks a first step in developing a framework that will encompass wider areas of joint working on developing the creative industries in the context of the BBC's Charter obligations.

The MOU sets out how the two parties will work together on a strategic level to achieve added value from a range of funding sources: these include Creative Wales's own funds, investment already made by BBC Wales in television and from the BBC's ongoing commitment to invest at least 5% of network TV spend in Wales. These funds are also designed to complement private sector investments.

We recognise the lead role of Creative Wales in the governance and delivery of its own activities, functions and priorities, working with partners to benefit from their specific leadership roles. At the same time, this document also affirms that nothing in this partnership diminishes the BBC's Charter obligations, including its editorial and operational independence.

This document is in two parts.

The first part sets out the joint commitment of partners to deliver Creative Wales's joint vision and objectives.

The second part outlines the commitment of the respective partners to delivery of specific activities and outcomes.

Our vision

This Memorandum of Understanding seeks to build on the many successes and strengths of the creative sector in Wales. It commits to working jointly together to make Wales a creative powerhouse and to build a thriving economy.

At the heart of our vision is a commitment to working together in order to achieve closer and stronger collaborative working. Our focus will be on making sure that the Welsh pound goes further with investment and resources targeted towards those areas of greatest need, and potential return.

Our vision is not confined to economic delivery. We will also seek to achieve the maximum impact in cultural and social spheres, ensuring we communicate our activity and benefits to citizens and audiences.

Between now and the end of the current Charter period in 2027, the BBC has committed in its *Across the UK* strategy to recreate the BBC as a genuinely UK-wide organisation with a much stronger presence across the length and breadth of the country. This includes a significant and new commitment to portraying Wales to itself and on BBC Network television.

The BBC and Creative Wales will therefore work closely to align investment with the ambitions of this partnership agreement, whilst acknowledging there may be exceptions. We will, collectively and with other public, private and not-for profit sector bodies, represent, develop and promote the screen sector at home, across the UK and internationally.

We will work towards ensuring that the screen sector:

- supports sustainable creative enterprises and opportunities for employment with fair pay and working practices, and grows its contribution to Wales's social, cultural and economic success;
- contributes to the economic regeneration of Wales post Covid-19;
- achieves international success with Wales recognised as a centre of excellence and innovation for content development and production, talent, skilled craft and technical crews, infrastructure, facilities companies, exhibition and film education;
- promotes equality, diversity and inclusion, in front and behind the camera - developing, attracting and retaining diverse talent;
- delivers content which tells the stories, reflects the lives and landscape of the nation, as well as the languages and cultures, in a way that is compelling for audiences globally and generates pride locally;
- promotes sustainable development in the production sector, working toward a net zero commitment.

In order to further these objectives, we will coordinate our activities with other public sector partners and relevant stakeholders, including broadcasters and the independent TV and digital production sector and, where applicable, trade unions and other industry bodies.

We will ensure there is regular structured partnership working to support the delivery of this Memorandum of Understanding. This will include meeting formally on a quarterly basis to review progress and to agree shared and partner-specific actions.

Our shared ambitions

Our vision set out above is the bedrock for what we are seeking to achieve.

Central to this success will be the fulfilment of the following shared, practical ambitions:

- 1. Economic growth (through high quality, well-resourced productions)**
- 2. Diverse talent development and growth**
- 3. Growing the profile and portrayal of Wales**

1. Economic Growth

- Our starting point is recognition of the fundamental importance of local production. In achieving this objective, we will promote IP asset ownership and creative talent in the long-term development of a sustainable sector; whilst also being open to other creative partners where they can make a valuable contribution;
- We will co-invest in development and production, with a view to securing new high quality content in TV drama, scripted comedy and factual series for both BBC Wales and BBC Network output;
- We will maintain the current range of Wales-produced returning series commissions on BBC television and BBC iPlayer, which will drive sustainability and over time become regular, much-loved fixtures of the schedule. In addition, we will strengthen the portrayal of Wales in line with the BBC's Across the UK commitments;
- We will co-invest in piloting to test and strengthen ideas, where appropriate;
- We will support sustainability and skills development through a focus on developing returning series, both from indigenous Wales based companies and those non-Welsh companies who are committed to producing in Wales;
- We will seek to strengthen the reputation of Wales as a Centre of Excellence for High End TV production through investment by Creative Wales and the BBC in infrastructure and production skills.

2. Diverse talent growth in under-represented communities

- We will work towards developing a more diverse and inclusive production industry in its broadest sense both on and off screen – by encouraging a broader range of voices, stories and perspectives to be heard & include a more diverse workforce behind the scenes as well as on-screen;
- We will use the totality of BBC Wales' and BBC Network output developed in Wales to support new ideas, talent and formats;

- We will identify and support inclusive training initiatives and create professional development opportunities to meet areas of evidenced need. This area of activity will build on the success of existing schemes such as the Writers Room and the Factual Fast-Track scheme, delivered in tandem with S4C and Channel 4.

3. Growing the profile of Wales

- We commit to develop world-class content – particularly in television drama and factual – that tell the stories and reflect the lives of the nation representing Wales to itself, to audiences across the UK and globally;
- We aim to attract wider audiences to Welsh content by generating projects of greater ambition and commercial appeal;
- We will share data on our changing audiences and production landscape to better inform our investment decisions;
- We will boost investment into Wales by working with co-production producers, distributors and overseas broadcasters;
- We will agree a joint marketing and communications strategy and plan to support and deliver agreed objectives.

Delivery commitments

The BBC commits to:

- Maintain the current range of Wales-produced returning series commissions on BBC television and BBC iPlayer, which will drive sustainability and over time become regular, much-loved fixtures of the schedule. In addition, we would wish to strengthen the portrayal of Wales in line with the BBC's Across the UK commitments. We will commit to doubling the number of programmes that portray Wales which appear on UK-wide channels within the term of this MOU;
- Support sustainability and skills development through a focus on developing returning series, both from indigenous Wales based companies and those non-Welsh companies who are committed to producing in Wales.
- Invest in the development of scripted and unscripted ideas for BBC Wales and Network Television over the next two years; this may involve the co-funding of development and, given the nature of these genres, this may also involve some testing or piloting to achieve that over time;
- Deliver a minimum of 2 Network Drama series per year from Wales;
- Deliver a minimum of 1 Comedy series per year from Wales.
- Deliver a minimum of 3 Network Factual series from Wales per year (outside of Daytime);
- Ensure BBC Network commissioners engage with Welsh based companies to communicate their ambition and programming needs, and actively develop relationships with production companies who have ideas or potential to deliver against them.

- Continue to invest in the BBC Writers' Room and It's My Shout to develop local writing and behind the scenes and on-screen talent;
- Open up 100% of television content to competition in Wales by 2027, other than where it is not value for money to do so;
- Ensuring that the co-financed projects offer the maximum possible opportunities for Welsh talent and crew.

Creative Wales commits to:

- Support the ambitions of this MOU in the first financial year, by investing in content that meets these objectives.
- Identify resources from the Creative Wales budget to support a range of mutually agreed strategic initiatives or interventions. In 2021/22 this will include:
 - Financial support for the BBC Three/BBC Wales funding partnership;
 - Identify paid opportunities for other production partnerships, in-company support, talent attraction, talent shadowing, piloting, placements and professional development) to strengthen the long term-health of the Welsh screen sector. Identify resource to match-fund the BBC's commitment through this MOU to develop talent, skills and businesses in Wales – either through enhancing existing initiatives, or by developing and agreeing new, complementary ones.
 - Ensure funds are allocated on merit according to the value they contribute to the shared aims and ambitions and in a fair and transparent way.
 - Work with BBC and other partners to facilitate the discovery of and access to up and coming Welsh talent from across Wales. Work with BBC and BBC Cymru Wales to maximise the impact of development funding across the independent production sector in Wales.
 - Work closely with the Director of Nations and Regions and other UK Nations and Regions' representatives on areas of mutual interest;
 - Work in partnership with the BBC in line with the Welsh Government's commitment to social partnership and fair work.

Term and Review

This initial partnership agreement covers the period September 2021 to 31 March 2024, with a formal review at the end of the first 12 months. It is anticipated that it will be reviewed and revised as appropriate for renewal at the end of the second year for a further period.

The initiatives outlined in this partnership will be monitored and measured on a quarterly basis, with both parties exchanging information on current projects to identify and address any potential shortfalls within the Term.

Ongoing monitoring and review will be the responsibility of a convened group to include relevant representatives from BBC Wales, BBC Network Television and Creative Wales.

This is a Memorandum of Understanding and not intended to be legally binding. Both parties are committed to achieving the shared ambitions; however, there may be circumstances in which that is not possible.

Parties

BBC

The BBC is a public service broadcaster established under a Royal Charter. It is funded by the licence fee paid by UK households.

The mission of the BBC is to act in the public interest, serving all audiences through the provision of impartial, high-quality and distinctive output and services which inform, educate and entertain. Its vision is to be the most creative organisation in the world.

BBC Wales serves a population of 3.1m people, providing services to all of Wales's communities. Television services for audiences include BBC One Wales, BBC Two Wales, contributed programming for S4C and radio services are provided via BBC Radio Wales and BBC Radio Cymru; there is online provision at www.bbc.co.uk/Wales and bbc.co.uk/Cymru; and BBC Sesh offers BBC Wales content via social media.

BBC Content is a division of the BBC which operates four channels across the UK, BBC One, BBC Two and BBC Four via linear broadcast, and BBC 3 online, as well as the BBC iPlayer service. It commissions content for those channels and services across Drama, Comedy, Entertainment, Factual and Daytime.

Creative Wales

Creative Wales was launched in January 2020 to develop and grow the creative industries in Wales. Creative Wales is an internal Welsh Government body and derives its funding from Welsh Government.

The Creative Wales budget for the 21/22 financial year is £12,989,000 to support the creative industries including the screen sector in Wales, in addition to the support and resources of the partner agencies.

BBC Studios

BBC Studios launched as a wholly-owned commercial subsidiary in April 2017. Creative Wales acknowledges the intention that BBC Studios will operate on a similar basis to any other production company in the UK and agrees to deal with BBC Studios on the same terms. The BBC commits to openness and fairness with regards to the status of BBC Studios in relation to the wider market.

BBC Film

Although this partnership principally pertains to Television, we will continue to work together on film opportunities in Wales through BBC Film, including co-financing, to be agreed on a project by project basis. BBC Film will give particular consideration to first and second films from Wales-based writers and directors, produced by Wales-based companies, alongside support for established Welsh filmmakers.

Signatories to this MoU



.....

Tim Davie
Director-General, BBC

.....

Dawn Bowden MS
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip