

Memorandum of Understanding between the BBC and Creative Wales

Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to set out the partnership agreement between Creative Wales and the BBC. It is the second MOU document between Creative Wales and the BBC, the first having been signed in 2021. To date, partnership arrangements supported by the agreement have delivered creative and audience impact UK-wide with titles such as *Steeltown Murders*, *Wolf* and *Lost Boys and Fairies*, all of which were delivered as part of BBC Cymru Wales and Creative Wales collaboration on the Year of Welsh Drama in 2023/24. It has also brought major economic benefits to Wales in terms of skills and employability. At the core of this partnership remains the common purpose by which Creative Wales and the BBC are united: 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 provides the framework for the long-term collaboration involving the BBC, Creative Wales, and potentially other relevant parties. Whilst the focus of this MOU continues to 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 and we remain open to exploring wider areas of joint working on developing the creative industries in the context of the BBC's Charter obligations.

In this renewed MOU we also set out a new, joint commitment to environmental sustainability and environmentally sustainable production. These actions will help us reduce carbon emissions in our productions, operations and behaviours.

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 iPlayer 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 shared 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 and iPlayer.

The BBC and Creative Wales will therefore work closely to align investment with the ambitions of this partnership agreement. 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;
- produces content which helps grow the creative ambition and economic scale of the Welsh television sector;
- 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. Continue to exceed 5% Network TV spend in Wales target to support economic growth ambitions of the production sector in Wales.**
 - 2. Diverse talent development and growth
 - 3. Growing the profile and portrayal of Wales
 - 4. Environmental sustainability (including through environmentally sustainable production)
- 1. Continuing to exceed the 5% Network TV spend in Wales target to support economic growth ambitions of the production sector in Wales.**
 - Our starting point is recognition of the fundamental importance of production activity in Wales. In achieving this objective, we will promote IP asset ownership, support 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 refresh the current range of Wales-produced returning series commissions on BBC television and BBC iPlayer. 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 continue to support sustainability and skills development through a focus on developing returning series, both from 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, ensuring that our support for such productions is clear in credits and as part of promotional content (in line with BBC credit guidelines).
 - We will seek to increase the use of music produced by Welsh artists.
 - We will explore and identify opportunities for joint working via collaborative in year and multi-year funded projects.
 - We will explore the potential for an annual event in Wales to bring together the Welsh independent production sector with BBC Commissioners.
- 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 BBC Writers and the Factual Fast-Track and Culture Connect Wales schemes, 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.

4. Environmental sustainability

- We commit to decarbonising our energy and operations;
- We will strive to develop and produce content in a clean and responsible way with a target of productions being 100% Albert certified and meeting the highest sustainable standards;
- We will use available levers to encourage environmentally sustainable practices across the sector, where appropriate.

Delivery commitments

The BBC commits to:

- Refresh the current range of Wales-produced returning series commissions on BBC television and BBC iPlayer. In addition, we would wish to strengthen the portrayal of Wales in line with the BBC's *Across the UK* commitments. We will maintain our commitment to programmes that portray Wales which appear on UK-wide channels within the term of this MOU;

- Support economic sustainability and skills development through a focus on developing returning series, both from 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 6 projects from Wales per year;
- Ensure BBC commissioners, including Network commissioners engage with Welsh based companies to communicate their ambition and programming needs, and actively develop relationships with production companies in Wales who have ideas or potential to deliver against them.
- Continue to invest in the BBC Writers 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;
- Endeavour 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 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.
- 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 renewed partnership agreement covers the period December 2025 to 31 December 2027, with a formal review at the end of the first 12 months.

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 and BBC iPlayer 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.

BBC Content is a division of the BBC which operates six channels across the UK, BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Three and BBC Four, CBBC and CBeebies via linear broadcast, as well as the BBC iPlayer service. It commissions content for those channels and services across Unscripted, Scripted, Children's and Sport.

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.

Creative Wales has an annual budget 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.

Signatories to this MOU



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Tim Davie
Director-General, BBC



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Jack Sargeant MS, Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership.