



Creative Enterprise Zones

This briefing informs members about the Mayor of London's Creative Enterprise Zone initiative, which aims to boost jobs and affordable workspace for artists and creatives in designated areas across London. This briefing also includes an invitation to the upcoming Creative Enterprise Zone conference on 9 March 2020.

Overview

Creative Enterprise Zones (CEZs), a new initiative, are designated areas of London where artists and creative businesses can find permanent affordable workspace. In these zones, creative businesses are supported to start-up and grow, and local people can learn creative sector skills and find new jobs.

In December 2018, six boroughs were awarded a share of £11 million of funding to become the UK's first Creative Enterprise Zones.

Background

London's creative industries contribute £52 billion per year to the UK economy and provide one in six jobs across the city. In the UK, the sector is growing twice as fast as the economy average and creative jobs are the jobs of the future – with 87 per cent at low risk of automation. Artists and creatives play an important part in creating good growth by bringing new opportunities to an area and attracting new development.

Artists seek out affordable areas in the city, which then helps these areas to grow and become more desirable. But artists often find themselves priced out by the very success they have helped create. Creative Enterprise Zones aim to protect the creative sector in the capital, increase affordable spaces for artists and entrepreneurs, and boost job and training opportunities for local people.

The six winning zones were chosen due to their commitment to creating local jobs and increasing affordable workspace. Each Zone has its' own distinctive character and focus.

These are:

- Croydon: Croydon Creatives - develop itself as a 'music city' and encourage young people into creative careers.

- Hounslow: Great West Creatives - strengthen networks, engage multi-national local businesses, to work closer with local creative and digital companies to boost opportunities.
- Lambeth: Brixton - create affordable workspace for the next generation of creative talent.
- Lewisham: SHAPES Lewisham (Deptford and New Cross) - retain graduate talent to grow its creative economy and increase affordable space.
- Tower Hamlets and Hackney: Hackney Wick and Fish Island - protect one of the world's most recognisable artistic hubs and increase training and access for local people.

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Analysis

Collectively, the zones are expected to leverage more than £30 million of investment, create more than 3,500 new jobs and support more than 1,000 local people into education, training and job opportunities. The zones will also deliver up to 40,000 square meters of new affordable workspace for creative businesses and entrepreneurs, with the long-term creation of additional affordable space embedded into their planning process.

Each local authority with a designated CEZ is working with consortia of local creative businesses, artists, local community groups, developers, workspace providers, further and higher education institutions and other stakeholders. Through individual action plans the local authorities have demonstrated how their zones will deliver the following four pillars of the programme:

- **Space:** Creating permanent, affordable, creative workspace and live-work spaces at below market rents and ensuring no net loss of space.
- **Skills and Support:** Building entrepreneurial skills and offering business support to artists, start-ups, sole traders, micro-sized and small businesses, developing career pathways and opportunities for progression into the creative industries and supporting sectors.
- **Policy:** Producing Local Plans with pro-culture policies in planning, housing, business development, technology and infrastructure, and supportive business rates policies.
- **Consortia and Community:** Embedding creative production in communities, creating socially-inclusive places and strong links with education providers.

Case Study: Brixton Creative Enterprise Zone, Borough of Lambeth

Brixton is renowned for its extraordinary character, rich diversity and cultural heritage. It has significant potential for creative industry growth, but is challenged by an undersupply of workspace and rising prices putting this distinct character and creative community at risk. As one of the most deprived wards in England, it also has high levels of inequality.

Plans for Brixton Creative Enterprise Zone include:

- Opening one of London's largest affordable workspaces with International House in Brixton and developing unused spaces in Brixton Rec into creative workspace.
- The Elevate initiative, supported as one of the Mayor's Cultural Impact Awards part of London Borough of Culture, will support 500 young people living in the CEZ by raising the visibility of cultural and creative careers and education pathways.

- Local young people from disadvantaged backgrounds will be involved in steering the Creative Enterprise Zone programme and supported to develop new skills through a Young Creatives Board.
- Embedding affordable workspace into the borough's planning process.

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Case Study: Hackney Wick and Fish Island, Boroughs of Hackney, Tower Hamlets and London Legacy Development Corporation

Hackney Wick and Fish Island is one of London's most exciting creative communities, with around 250 artist studios and 400 creative businesses. While the former industrial spaces provided affordable studio space for artists and makers, one of the challenges for the area is to protect affordable workspace and ensure that its benefits are felt by local businesses.

Inclusion is at the centre of the Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone through the development and delivery of projects that protect and enhance the creative ecosystem and widen community access.

Plans for the Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone include:

- Protecting one of the most significant and recognisable creative quarters in the world by ensuring that planning powers help develop a pipeline of affordable workspace in the area.
- Working with the borough employment services to help local people develop skills and provide training opportunities and internships in the cultural, creative, digital and tech sectors.
- Developing a Good Growth service for CEZ employers which will offer easy access to apprenticeships, internships and tailored business support as part of a commitment to inclusive growth.
- Strengthening connections with the development of East Bank on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, to create a powerhouse of culture, education, innovation and growth.
- Boosting capacity among grassroots organisations and building inclusive networks with strategic stakeholders to ensure long-term local ownership of the Zone.

You can find out more about the rest of London's CEZs in the links section at the end of this document.

Representatives from each of the zones come together on a quarterly basis for a Creative Enterprise Zones Exchange Forum to track delivery, share experience and knowledge and undertake research to identify best practice.

On 9 March 2020, the Exchange Forum is opening up to a wider audience for the Creative Enterprise Zone 2020 Conference. Attendees will include policy makers, creative agencies, artists and creative businesses, local authorities, community organisations and local leaders, developers and cultural organisations.

Councillors from London boroughs are all welcome. Please register your attendance using the link at the end of this document.

Commentary

The CEZ initiative has the potential to genuinely protect and grow the cultural sector within the designated zones. The initiative also helps to put these places on the map and celebrate the importance of arts and culture to local communities.

As well as being central to the capital's economic success, the creative industries play a vital placemaking role in London's boroughs, helping to shape the identity of local communities. But rising costs pose a threat to the continued success of the arts and cultural sector, with the danger that artists and creative enterprises will be priced out of the capital and the affordable spaces they depend on will disappear.

The Creative Enterprise Zones programme aims to address this threat. Boroughs across London are already doing outstanding work in helping to develop cultural activity in their area. CEZs should develop good practice around protecting affordable workspace using planning powers; supporting residents to access jobs in the expanding cultural and creative sectors and providing support to specific business clusters.

The six CEZs that have been designated so far all reflect the unique characteristics of each place. They are all excellent examples of boroughs working in partnership with a range of organisations in order to develop the local cultural offer and shape the identity of that place. We hope that the Mayor of London extends the programme in the future to enable the creation of more CEZs.

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Links:

[Mayor announces London's first ever Creative Enterprise Zones](#)

[Creative Enterprise Zones Conference 09 March](#)

This member briefing has been circulated to:

Portfolio holders and those members who requested policy briefings in the following categories: Culture