

creative
england

Production

Services

Delivery Plan

Spring 2019



LOTTERY FUNDED

Contents

Introduction	3
Context	4
Background	7
Consultation outcomes	9
Changing landscape & partner relationships	10
Delivery partners	11
British Film Commission	11
Film offices	12
Local authorities	13
Building film and TV ecosystems	14
Accessing local information	15
Data capture	16
Charging for service provision	17
Strategic plan for refined delivery model	18
A refined delivery model	18
Implementation action plan	19
Key delivery milestones	21
Annex	
A: The consultation process	22
B: Creative England's film office definition & quality standards framework	23

Introduction

The UK is one of the best places in the world to make film and TV. We enjoy a long and proud history of screen based story-telling and a world leading, globally successful industry today.

As with all industries, behind the entertaining, educating and enriching content — or end product — is a complex web of interdependent commissioners, producers and suppliers. But in a sector driven by transient, time limited projects, populated by microbusinesses and staffed by a freelance workforce, those supply chains need to be actively maintained. Markets need to be opened up, networks connected and talent championed. Moreover, we need to make sure the opportunities the screen industries create can benefit talented people and communities right across the country. That's why the BFI supports a service which actively brings all the individual elements together, enabling great film and TV to be produced across the UK.

But in the face of global competition, to ensure our screen industries can operate as effectively as possible, we need to make sure that service is fit for purpose. So the BFI commissioned Creative England to review current delivery and to produce:

“A strategic plan for a refined delivery model for production services across England, working with partners in regions and aligning with other national partners including the BFC and the national screen agencies.”

This report explains that review, sets out its findings and outlines a strategic plan for the future of production services for England, outside of London.

We look forward to working closely with our delivery partners, and industry, to make sure England's production services infrastructure continues to enable our screen sector to thrive.

Caroline Norbury MBE
Chief Executive Officer,
Creative England



Context

The value of the UK screen production sector

As we leave the European Union, two issues find unanimous support. We must remain a magnet for international investment and we must retain our open, welcoming reputation to the world.

To quote the Chancellor *“Global Britain’ is not just a strategy for Britain’s economic future. It’s a statement about what kind of people we are and about the economy and the society we are seeking to build.”*

Few other sectors deliver against those two ambitions more successfully, or project global Britain more powerfully, than film. It’s a great strength for the UK, both economically and culturally.

As the Creative Industries Sector Deal highlighted, inward investment in the UK sector remains strong. Investment in film has grown by 92% over the last five years and high-end TV by 162%. Production spend has reached a record high. BFI figures show in 2018, spend on film production and high-end television in the UK reached £3.1bn, the second highest spend on record. Spend on inward investment production in the UK reached £1.92bn for film and £795m on high-end television, an increase of 4% for this area of television production on 2017. The UK production sector spent £1.92bn on productions in the UK. As the BFI’s recent Screen Business report showed, production supported by the UK screen sector tax reliefs reached a record total of £3.16 billion in 2016. That success shows no sign of abating. As the Sector Deal went on to predict:

“It is feasible that in the period to 2025 our revenues could nearly double to approximately £4bn a year”

“From Star Wars to The Crown, the UK is a creative powerhouse for developing many award-winning films and shows enjoyed by millions globally. We have world-class studios, a talented workforce and highly competitive tax reliefs...investment in our screen industries is booming” – Margot James, Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries.

The sector’s success has also stimulated significant, long term, private sector infrastructure investment to meet the demand for production capacity in the UK. The Pinewood Studios Group has been granted outline planning permission for £500m expansion of Shepperton Studios in Surrey whilst Warner Bros. Studios in Leavesden are investing £240m in Hertfordshire. In Liverpool, Twickenham Studios are working with Capital and Centric and the Liverpool Film Office to invest £35m transforming an iconic but currently derelict building - that was the HQ of Littlewoods Pools - into a new film complex.

In this way, the screen sector directly supports one of the key pillars of the industrial strategy – Place. It spreads substantial inward investment, bringing prosperity to communities across the UK. It draws upon our national heritage and cultural assets and feeds the visitor economy. Research commissioned by Creative England & Visit England in 2015 by Olsberg-SPI suggested international screen tourism was worth between £100 - £140 million across England in 2014.

It also serves to strengthen our commercial partnerships with the screen sector across Europe. The UK’s pulling power helps give Europe a competitive edge over other international production destinations attracting global productions that then springboard into wider Europe. In 2017 eight of the inward investment feature films based in the UK also filmed in other EU states.

So, supporting the effective operation of a successful, sustainable screen industry across the UK has never been more beneficial.

A globally competitive market

Yet despite this success, the sector cannot rest on its laurels. In a globally competitive market it must continue to excel in order to retain it’s lead.

Sir Peter Bazalgette set out the challenge in his 2017 independent review of the creative industries: *“Last year the US state of Georgia set a new record by spending \$606 million on its incentive programme – the largest amount spent by any jurisdiction in the US or Europe on a film tax relief programme in a single year. China is becoming increasingly active in international film production, and Canada has seen great success in attracting visual effects work through offering double tax reliefs, i.e. at both provincial and federal levels.*

However, it is not just our tax reliefs that attract business: in film and TV our world-class production facilities and crews make the UK a highly attractive destination...

...businesses in these industries are highly mobile and there is fierce international competition for their work. Government and industry need to come together to support a long-term package of proposals rooted in innovation, investment and skills to ensure that the UK remains the most innovative, exciting and accessible place to develop new material for screen.”

The need for production services

To support Sir Peter Bazalgette’s review, consultants BCG examined the ways in which governments around the world are supporting the economic growth of their creative industries. As part of that analysis, BCG produced the following model:



Five key levers to boost the film and TV industry

Source: BCG analysis



Give artists and SMEs business and technical skills to monetize talent



Attract global studios and production houses to build content in local market



Set up one-stop shops to fast-track permits and provide open data



Support the studio and production infrastructure and services of local small businesses



Incentivise studios and production houses to develop and retain IP locally

As this model illustrates, supporting the studio and production infrastructure is a vital component in the success of the UK film and TV industry. It contributes to each of the supply and market efficiency levers, and in doing so helps spread the value of fiscal incentives across the UK. Creative England is the national coordinator for England's regions for this infrastructure development and support.

The UK's generous tax credits, diverse locations, world-class studios, ground-breaking VFX and post production and award-winning talent and crew all rely on connectors and trouble-shooters to ensure the screen sector thrives.

Whether that's helping location managers to access the right location to achieve the director's vision; identifying alternative space when traditional studios are at capacity; knowing what local crew is available; or working with local government to gain the right permissions – Production Services provide the contacts, expertise, continuity and hands on hard work to keep the show on the road.

Time to recalibrate

The huge success of film and TV production over recent years has brought with it a very dramatic increase in demand for this service. Regional and local structures are changing to reflect greater devolution. At the same time public spending is under severe pressure and all public sector budgets have been significantly reduced. In this context we must ensure that the service is fit for purpose. We need a recalibrated delivery model which makes the most effective use of public resources and targets them where they can add greatest value, while at the same time delivering a seamless service to industry so that the UK remains a filming destination of choice for globally mobile productions.

About this Report

Mapping and Consultation

In its five-year plan, BFI2022, the BFI set out its international strategy and within that, its aim to make sure *'inward investment remains a huge success story for the UK economy'*. It committed to: *'Commission a review of screen production services, leading to a new UK-wide strategy which makes the most of the UK's infrastructure and makes it as easy as possible to attract (inward investment) productions.'*

In Spring 2018, the BFI asked Creative England to develop a strategic plan for refined delivery in England. In developing that refined delivery plan, we built on existing work that mapped current provision and added to that feedback from delivery partners and industry following extensive consultation.

In building that refined delivery plan, we sought to capture demand side issues and to incorporate the industry perspective. We wanted to test industry's view of current provision and to understand the areas that industry felt needed improvement. A key measure of the efficacy of the current production infrastructure must be the degree to which it delivers a service valued by industry.

The consultation ran over summer 2018 and included one-to-one interviews and roundtables with industry and with delivery partners. More information on the consultation is in Annex A.

The current model

The current ecosystem for location and production support can be described as a three tier model.

Tier 1: The British Film Commission with a UK-wide mandate to attract and support international feature film and television production.

Tier 2: The five screen agencies (Creative England, Screen Scotland, Northern Ireland Screen, Wales Screen and Film London) each with a wide remit to develop and promote the screen industries within their jurisdiction.

Tier 3: 71 local film offices of various types across the UK. These film offices include both operating divisions within local authorities and arms-length entities operating as film offices under contract to a local authority. Cardiff has the only local film office in Wales, whereas Northern Ireland has none. In Scotland, 27 of 32 local authorities now have either a local or a regional film office.

There is no formal definition of a film office and interpretations vary. Creative England's definition of a film office is detailed in Annex A.



Consultation Outcomes

Headline feedback: Industry

The overall feedback from industry on current production services provision was 'more of the same please'. On the whole, location managers were very familiar with the production services landscape, but other posts, such as producers, production execs and heads of production, said they would like more information on what expertise is available to them in England's regions.

The consultation went back to first principles and revisited industry's core requirements when filming on location outside of the capital, to make sure their requirements remained at the heart of production services delivery. Core requirements were:

- One point of contact to access all expertise
- Accurate knowledge of what is and what isn't possible
- Clearer processes
- Named contact person
- Speed of response
- Up-to-date location database with unified point of access
- Crew database with new entrant section for trainees, to help address widespread crew shortages
- Troubleshooting
- Quality standards for film office services
- Advocacy with local authorities to improve film friendliness
- Access to local contacts and local knowledge

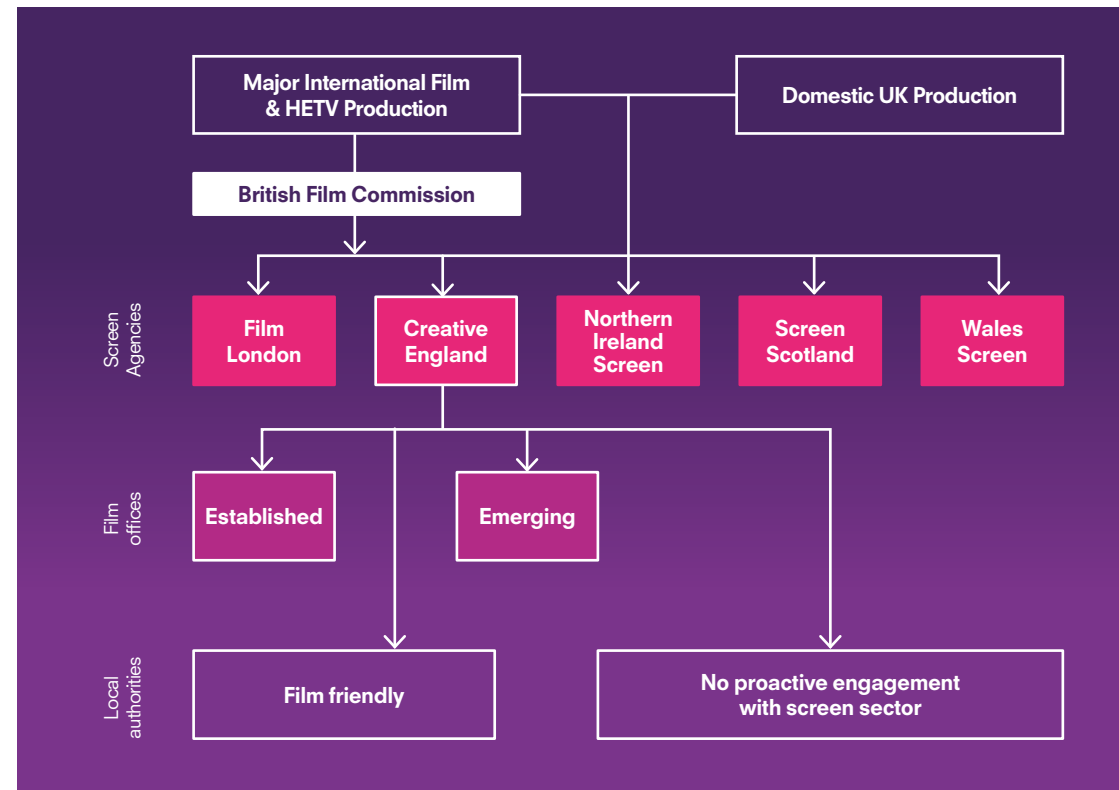
Without exception, all industry consultees expressed both an ever-growing appetite to film outside the capital and the desire for a seamless service.

Headline feedback: Delivery partners

Delivery partners: the British Film Commission, film offices and local authorities were also consulted. The core issues for each partner were:

- The British Film Commission would like England's regions to be fully resourced with the expertise needed to successfully facilitate productions.
- Film offices would value Creative England's support to gain greater exposure and help in making the case to local decision makers about the benefits of a thriving screen sector.
- Local authorities would value more advice and support from Creative England to strengthen their internal capacity and improve their responsiveness to filming requests.

Overview of location services ecosystem



This report sets out the response from industry and stakeholder consultation on the current provision of support to both domestic and international production. It outlines the key challenges and sets out how industry can be better supported when making film and television productions in England's regions. It also sets out key action points agreed in

response to the needs identified. Finally, it outlines a new strategic plan for a refined delivery model setting out clearly agreed definitions around what constitutes a film office; roles and responsibilities; quality standards; advocacy and marketing plans and a process to ensure better future data collection and analysis.

Challenges and Actions

The review process has identified a shared view that there is scope for improvement in a number of key areas. These areas are set out below, along with actions identified to address them.

Changing Landscape & Partner Relationships

Challenge

Creative England provides a baseline service across England’s regions, for areas outside film office provision or where film offices do not meet minimum service standards. This baseline service is challenging to deliver as Creative England liaises with over 250 separate local authorities (in comparison to just 32 in Scotland, 22 in Wales and 11 in Northern Ireland) each with differing processes and approaches to dealing with filming requests. Creative England needs to understand each local authority’s approach in detail in order to provide industry with the advice they need on what is and what is not possible from a filming perspective. With such a large number of local authority partners and limited resources, Creative England’s role is by necessity limited. Yet the signposting and advice service, coupled with hands-on resource in production hot spots, is recognised and valued by both industry and local authorities.

Demand to shoot in England’s regions continues to grow. Cities and regions are increasingly keen to promote themselves as a filming destination, recognising the economic impact and wider benefits film and TV productions can bring. A growing number of film offices are therefore being established. Since 2017, Screen Manchester, Film:New Forest, Thurrock film office, Oxfordshire film office and Screen Yorkshire’s film office have opened. Other local authorities are currently putting business cases together.

There is an interconnected web of organisations involved in supporting the film and TV production sector across England and industry is looking for a seamless service to meet their needs. To achieve this all the organisations involved in supporting production need to work together effectively. In the past, that hasn’t always been the case. A lack of clarity over remit and responsibilities has added to the complexity. Additionally, a lack of awareness or understanding

across industry as to the production support expertise available can exacerbate confusion further. This consultation has highlighted that industry expects a level of service when an organisation calls itself a film office. As a production services sector, we need to make sure those expectations are met.

Action

Creative England, with its delivery partners, will develop new *Remit and Responsibilities* guidelines. Clarifying the roles, responsibilities and expectations of each partner is central to ensuring these key relationships function effectively.

In the developing production services landscape, with an increasing number of partners operating across the country, the role of a strategic agency such as Creative England to give a national overview, share common approaches and best practice, and help hold the ring for industry with competing regions, is more important than ever. The combination of expert knowledge on the ground and an impartial national overview is increasingly sought out and valued by industry.

For its part, Creative England will give greater emphasis to advocacy, strategic delivery, coordination of provision and sharing resource and expertise to support partners in their delivery. Creative England will also continue to troubleshoot across England, outside London, where an independent perspective, or broader experience, can help overcome challenges.

Delivery Partner: British Film Commission

Challenge

With its UK-wide mandate to attract and support inward investment, the British Film Commission directly liaises with the five screen agencies — Creative England, Screen Scotland, Northern Ireland Screen, Wales Screen and Film London — to deliver on the ground facilitation. Additionally, the British Film Commission has relationships with film offices that have a specific offer for large inward productions including appropriate studio space or production funding.

The British Film Commission co-ordinates early stage, national feasibility enquiries with the screen agencies to prepare the strongest possible location suggestions, a vital part of attracting inward investment to the UK. Creative England and film office partners work hard to present the strongest possible ‘England offer’, but there are resource challenges. Film offices put a significant amount of time and resource into pulling together the information to answer this type of enquiry, yet in areas of low production activity they rarely convert into filming and the feedback they receive is often limited.

The British Film Commission’s active promotion of the UK is highly successful in attracting inward investment production. Their inbound and outbound familiarisation visits and missions are hugely beneficial. One single gateway provided through the British Film Commission for international production is one of the UK’s great strengths. The British Film Commission requests contributions from each of the nations towards familiarisation visits and bespoke recces.

The British Film Commission is the first point of contact for inward investment productions and must feel confident that on-the-ground delivery partners are able to meet high delivery standards to ensure the UK remains first for inward investment production. With the emergence of new film offices and differing levels of service between established film offices, there is a need to formalise quality standards.

Action

The British Film Commission has to work on a highly confidential basis with international production decision makers, and in some cases are asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement. Therefore, the level of information sharing across screen agencies is at times limited. However, the British Film Commission recognises how important feedback is to delivery partners and now provide quarterly updates to Creative England for dissemination to film office partners.

All delivery partners must work to similar quality standards to ensure a consistent level of service for industry. The British Film Commission have worked with Creative England to agree a minimum *Quality Standards Framework* for film offices. Creative England will work with partners to help make sure those standards are met and will step in to plug the gap where these are falling short. Creative England will work with established film offices to produce a *Good Practice Guide* to support the development of new and emerging film offices.

All partners agreed, once roles and responsibilities have been defined, it would be of real value to promote information to industry about available services and functions and the organisations that deliver them. For example, it was felt that Creative England’s service is known and valued by location managers, but more could be done to raise awareness among heads of production. Creative England will work with partners to develop a marketing strategy to raise awareness and deliver information to industry around the expertise available in England’s regions. Creative England will aim to provide stronger PR support to film office partners under a new marketing strategy ‘Filming in England’ to raise awareness across industry of the wealth of facilities and expertise available across England.





Delivery Partner: Film Offices

Challenge

In the past, there has been an acknowledged lack of communication and collaboration between Creative England and some of England’s film offices. This is an issue Creative England is committed to resolving. One of the immediate benefits of this review has been the open, cooperative and enthusiastic response from partners within film offices.

As film offices share a common title, there is an expectation across industry of a consistent service. However, as they are all independent organisations that have evolved locally, there is no set criteria or common delivery standards. Industry consultees were very keen to see a common film office definition and for a standardised service to help end the current inconsistency and ensure a more uniform service for industry.

With local authority budgets under enormous pressure, film offices are under ever increasing pressure to justify their funding and demonstrate a return on investment.

Action

Creative England will draft and agree a renewed standard *Film Office Partnership Agreement* which will provide explicit criteria on what constitutes a film office and set out expectations of delivery and quality standards. The agreement will recognise the important roles that Creative England and film

offices each provide in delivering services to the film and TV industry and will form the basis of a collaborative working relationship including regular information exchange.

The agreement will include Creative England’s *Service Level Framework* and *Film Office Definition* in addition to *Film Office Quality Standards Framework* which sets out the minimum service standards expected from film office partners.

Creative England will work with members of England’s film offices: UK (FO:UK) (the body for publicly-funded film offices and agencies across the UK) and use FO:UK as the forum to share information. Creative England will agree a *Memorandum of Understanding* with FO:UK to ensure communication is transparent and effective. To support the development of new film offices – Creative England will support FO:UK in creating *Good Practice Guidance* for new film offices, to support them in setting up their service and to encourage consistently high quality delivery for industry. It will also work with film office partners to scope a formal film office Accreditation Scheme in England, to underpin consistent service delivery and give industry a recognisable badge of quality.

Creative England will work closely with the BFI to help make the case for the value of film office provision in terms of regional investment. Using its strong local networks, Creative England will support local authorities and film offices to make the case for production support in their areas.

Delivery Partner: Local Authorities

Challenge

Creative England provides a baseline service across England’s regions, outside film office provision, and works with over 250 local authorities in England to help make sure they can effectively and efficiently respond to filming enquiries. The pressure on public funds means this resource is spread across a wide geography. Nonetheless the signposting and advice service, coupled with hands on resource in production hot spots, is recognised and valued by industry and local authorities alike.

Industry respondents wanted Creative England to strengthen its supporting role with local authorities, enabling them to strengthen their ability to help production. For example, productions expect to liaise directly with local authorities for permissions, but many find they have to navigate County Council, District or Borough Council and even Town or Parish Council. Although local government structures are unlikely to change, the process could be made more efficient and easy to navigate.

Action

Creative England will work to provide greater advice and support to local authorities, helping them to deliver a better industry facing service. Creative England will establish a new local authority partnership and hold an annual local authority Filming Summit, bringing together filming partners within all local authorities across England who are the first point of contact for filming enquiries in their jurisdiction. The event will provide local authorities with the tools, advice and guidance they need to effectively facilitate filming in their area. The annual summit will be an important forum to share information and best practice, to provide training, and identify areas for further collaboration and development.

Creative England will develop a suite of advice and guidance for local authority teams dealing with production requests. This will include:

Work to research fees for licensing and permissions across local authorities in England with a view to drawing up national guidance to encourage a more consistent approach to charging

Toolkits

Supporting local authorities who wish to become a film office and developing a formal accreditation process for film offices

Exploring the provision of potential training modules for local authorities

Creative England will also continue to offer our hands-on support where it can add the most value, whether that’s through troubleshooting or mediation, or strategic advice that combines a national overview with local knowledge.

Building Film and TV Ecosystems

Challenge

One of the issues negatively impacting on the number of productions able to film in England is access to appropriately skilled freelance crew. This was a common issue raised by industry. The BFI and ScreenSkills have a clear plan in place to address the screen sector's skills needs — this is not the role of production services. But the production services teams do have an important role to play in working with local authorities, growth hubs and LEPs, providing the evidence and advocacy to champion the importance of wider screen cluster development.

As the model on page 5 shows, to effectively support industry we need to grow sustainable screen clusters.

- Giving artists and SMEs the business and technical skills to monetise talent
- Support the studio and production infrastructure and services of local small businesses

Action

In key regions where both domestic and inward investment activity is high, Creative England is working with industry and local partners to help build capacity within the local screen sector. Delivery is currently underway in Greater Manchester and Hertfordshire, both busy production hubs. We are growing, connecting and upskilling the screen sector talent within a cluster to drive economic growth, to meet the needs of industry and to develop a supporting ecosystem of SME service providers.

This capacity development is essential if areas are to capitalise on the inward investment the screen sector brings, to grow prosperous communities and build sustainable screen-based businesses outside London.

Creative England will continue to develop relationships with local authorities, LEPs and growth hubs to advocate for, and identify opportunities to, deliver more capacity building programmes in screen clusters of sufficient scale.

Case Study: ProConnect

ProConnect, funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), is a programme of support for small creative companies working in or aspiring to work in the film and TV industry, running across Greater Manchester and Hertfordshire. Comprising of a series of workshops, one-to-one meetings and networking opportunities, ProConnect provides the expertise, support and contacts to break into and succeed in the film and television industry. To date, we have nearly 500 beneficiaries across both programmes who have accessed specialist support and advice on topics such as essential finance, running a creative company, and pitching & presenting across film, gaming and tech.



Accessing Local Information

Challenge

Accessing accurate local information quickly, is a fundamental requirement for industry. Whether that is finding the right local crew, or accessing up to date location information without having to search through a number of regional databases.

A common locations platform is most useful at the feasibility stage of international productions, before a UK location manager has been hired. These feasibility enquiries are key in promoting England to international producers, giving them confidence that we have the locations to achieve their vision. However, Creative England's location database in its current form is not fit for purpose.

In addition, industry respondents also agreed guidance on filming in a region, such as notice periods for road closures, or recommendations of local suppliers would be really helpful.

Action

The creation of one uniform platform would be prohibitively expensive and in practice may be unworkable as its usefulness would ultimately depend on it being updated locally. However, there is still scope for significant improvement.

Many of the film offices in England use MovieSite, a bespoke system also used by Creative England. The MovieSite platform allows the locations featured by individual film offices to be mirrored on the national database managed by Creative England. The film office Partnership Agreement and separate Reciprocal Licence Agreement will ensure that film office locations are brought together with Creative England's database with good image quality, providing a unified point of access for industry while also enabling film offices to update their own location information.

A growing number of local authorities wish to proactively promote locations in their areas. All partners are keen to ensure that public money is not spent duplicating location databases across the country and to make sure industry still have a single point of access. Creative England is therefore working with Openbrolly, the software provider of MovieSite, to identify low-cost solutions for local authorities which would give them the key benefits of their own location search and promotion through Creative England's website. This addresses industry's requirement for one point of access through Creative England's database giving a national overview of locations in England, rather than having to search hundreds of unconnected websites on a local authority level.

In addition to location information, Creative England's database includes information on crewing, with a 'new entrant' section allowing productions access to trainees while giving young talent the invaluable opportunity for work experience. Industry consultation showed this is a key requirement with crew shortages across the country. Creative England will seek to develop further and improve access to the National Crew & Facilities database, working with ScreenSkills to promote use of the database and to share training and development opportunities.

Data Capture

Challenge

Capturing robust data on the level and value of productions in the UK is essential. It's vital in measuring the efficacy of our tax breaks, in understanding the size, spread and health of the sector and in ensuring all partners are delivering the right support. But we also need to make sure the data collected is accurate, consistent, and genuinely useful.

Creative England and film office partners, provide production data to the BFI's Research and Statistics Unit (RSU) on a quarterly basis. This forms a key source of data for reporting UK production spend. In return, the RSU also pass details to Creative England from their own production tracking which enables them to validate and check that our data coverage is comprehensive. This data sharing arrangement is of benefit to both organisations.

Obtaining data from productions is time intensive and can risk double counting. However, through our consultation, industry have committed to working with Creative England to improve access to industry data.

Action

Creative England will work in partnership with the BFI's Research and Statistics Unit to review the data that is currently collected and how it is used. Through our consultation, industry respondents recognised the importance of accurate data and agreed to explore options for sharing their own data. Creative England will establish a working group to explore these issues in more detail.

In partnership with the BFI, the Heads of Production Group, Production Guild members and film offices, Creative England will produce a new template for production data capture, which is standardised, simple and useful. Creative England will agree shared parameters on data capture with film offices which will be written into our standard Film Office Partnership Agreement. Creative England will also work to make sure that all partners can make use of the data collectively captured.

Finally the methodology currently used by Creative England and the film offices to calculate economic spend of filming on location will be re-evaluated, building on the work of the BFI's recent screen business report.



Charging For Service Provision

Challenge

The BFC and Screen Agencies do not charge for their support in helping a production to locate or film on location in the UK. However, in some cases Local Authorities and Film Offices do charge productions to cover use of services, location fees and/or their staff time when putting in place the practical steps needed to facilitate that filming.

In some London boroughs, the provision of services is outsourced to private providers, who level commercial charges to industry. This model is starting to spread outside London.

The buoyant state of inward production suggests the market could bear an increase in costs charged and private provision may appear a viable and very attractive alternative to a service supported through public funding.

However, our consultation suggests that any increase in charges may have two significant drawbacks. Firstly, higher costs tend to crowd out domestic production, which has a negative impact on the long-term health of our domestic screen sector. In addition, cost inflation in areas with less demand and more obvious competition than London is acting as a deterrent to location managers. Industry respondents reported anecdotally that where provision has been outsourced to private providers, it is driving up costs and driving away productions.

In a highly competitive global market, inflated costs could make the UK uncompetitive and drive international productions to alternative global destinations.

Action

Industry feedback suggests that any fees associated with helping a production to locate in the UK would act as a very clear deterrent. In fact, location managers working on big budget studio features felt that, because of the very substantial inward investment they brought to the UK, production support should be a given. Our global competitors do not charge and so any introduction of charges would negatively affect the UK offer.

However, industry did recognise a distinction between charges related to attracting a production and charges to facilitate a production's filming. Productions do recognise the need to pay the time of local authority staff in securing permissions, enabling parking etc. Creative England will, as part of its work to support local authorities, provide guidance on charging areas and fee levels to help ensure consistency and transparency for industry and a level playing field across local authorities.

Strategic Plan for a Refined Delivery Model

There is no “one size fits all” service model for Production Services delivery. Yet industry’s overriding ask is for a smooth, seamless service.

The UK is experiencing unprecedented demand for filming. At the same time the delivery landscape is changing and an increasing number of partners are operating across the country.

It is therefore essential that Creative England’s Production Services team, working very closely with all their delivery partners, make the most effective use of public resources, deploying them where they can add greatest value, while at the same time making sure industry receives a seamless service to help ensure that the UK remains a world-class destination of choice for film and television production.

The new refined, delivery model is set out in this section.

A Refined Delivery Model

Advocacy

With an increasing number of partners operating across the country, having a strategic agency such as Creative England to give a national overview, share common approaches and best practice and help hold the ring for industry with competing regions is more important than ever. The combination of expert knowledge on the ground and an impartial national overview is increasingly in demand by industry.

Enabler for Production Support Ecosystem

Creative England will give greater emphasis to its role as a source of resource and expertise, supporting partners in their delivery. Creative England will work collaboratively with film office partners under the guidelines laid out in our Film Office Partnership Agreement to meet the needs of industry.

Direct delivery where it’s needed most

Creative England will continue to provide “boots-on-the-ground” production support to film and high end TV productions in areas of high industry demand, outside film office jurisdiction. The production services team will therefore have a presence in the South East, North West and South West. Outside these key production hotspots, Creative England will give greater emphasis to advocacy, coordination and supporting partners in their delivery. Creative England will continue to troubleshoot across England, outside London, where a trusted and independent perspective, or broader experience, can help overcome challenges.

Implementation Action Plan

To support the refined delivery model, Creative England will work with partners to deliver a series of actions. Those actions have been set out through the report and are summarised below.

Advocate

- Creative England will develop a new *Filming in England* marketing strategy to raise the profile of the England’s regions to both the domestic and inward investment film and television industry. This will aim to raise awareness within industry of the wealth of facilities and expertise available across England. Creative England and England’s film offices have already launched this joint marketing initiative at FOCUS, the international industry trade show in London in December 2018.
- Creative England will establish a Filming in England Partnership that brings together all the key organisations involved in production across England to share best practice identify challenges, find solutions and promote common quality standards. The partnership will meet biannually, invited members will include the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, BFI, BFC, film offices, local authorities, the Police, highways, MoD, Network Rail, Forestry Commission, national trust, English Heritage and others. Creative England will work with Film London to ensure best practice established by their successful London Filming Partnership (LFP) can be followed, where appropriate.
- Creative England will work with the BFI, BFC and others to help strengthen the case for the economic importance of a thriving regional production sector to local decision makers.
- Creative England will establish a data working group, bringing together partners including the BFI, BFC, film offices, Production Guild and the Motion Picture Association, who all have an interest in ensuring the sector captures consistent, reliable data in the most efficient way, to report on the economic impact of filming on location in England, outside London.
- Creative England will continue to advocate for, and work to deliver, opportunities to improve the capacity and scale of the screen sector in clusters outside London. Through programmes like ProConnect and Creative Enterprise, Creative England will work to build and grow more sustainable screen-based businesses outside London.

Enabler

- To ensure clarity on the remit and responsibilities of all English delivery partners - the British Film Commission, Creative England, film offices and local authorities – Creative England will develop and agree new *Remit and Responsibility Agreements*.
- To ensure effective and consistent local level service delivery for industry, Creative England, in partnership with the British Film Commission, will establish a new *Quality Standards Framework for film offices* that will form part of the film office Partnership Agreements.
- To support the development of new film offices – Creative England will support FO:UK in creating a set of Good Practice Guidance for new film offices, to support them in setting up their service and to encourage consistently high quality delivery for industry.
- Creative England will work with film office partners in England to scope a formal *Film Office Accreditation Scheme* in England, to underpin consistent service delivery and give industry a recognisable badge of quality.
- Creative England and FO:UK have signed a *Memorandum of Understanding* to underline Creative England’s commitment to effective and transparent communication with partners. With the establishment of an increasing number of film offices, FO:UK provides a valuable forum through which Creative England can share information with and support partners in their delivery.

creative
england

Filming in England Summit

Funded by
LOTTERY
FUNDED  BFI

- Creative England will develop a suite of advice and guidance for local authority teams dealing with filming requests. This will include scoping the feasibility of developing national guidance on fee structures for licensing and permissions to support a more consistent approach across local authority areas.
- Creative England will host an annual Local Authority Filming summit to give local authorities the tools, advice and guidance they need to effectively facilitate filming in their area. The Summit will provide a forum to share information and best practice, to provide training and to identify areas for further development and collaboration to ensure that England remains a film friendly destination.

Direct Delivery

- Creative England will continue to provide and further develop the *Crew & Facilities Database* to make sure it remains a valuable tool for productions crewing in England. Creative England will also continue to provide a bespoke crewing service for all production types, opening up opportunities for the diverse wealth of freelance screen talent and service providers working across England, outside London.
- Creative England will develop *Reciprocal Licence Agreements* with film office partners enabling locations in their region to feature on the central Locations Database, while also enabling individual film offices to manage and update information locally.
- The core requirement of productions planning to film in the English regions is speedy access to accurate local information, enabling them to plan their shoots effectively. To help meet that need, Creative England will produce ‘first port of call’ guides for each region, giving productions key information and signposting them to sources of help and expertise.

- Creative England will explore the feasibility of developing a centre of excellence for film friendly local authorities by providing film friendly training modules for local authority staff.
- Creative England will work with ScreenSkills to actively share training and development opportunities for new entrants and established professionals. Creative England will also work with ScreenSkills to promote use of the crew and facilities database.

These guides will include:

- Key locations and unique attributes of a region
 - Studio and build space infrastructure
 - Named person within each council for permissions
 - Guidance on processes within each council
 - Accurate knowledge of what is and what isn't possible
 - Local suppliers based upon actual production experience
 - Notice period for road closures and traffic management
 - Any local incentives to attract production e.g. hotel chains with industry rates
- In areas with a film office, industry will be signposted to their expert support.

Key Delivery Milestones

Advocate

Filming in England Marketing Strategy

Launched with film office Partners at FOCUS Winter 2018

Filming in England section of Creative England website launch Spring 2019

Filming in England Partnership

First meeting Winter 2019

Data Working Group

First meeting Summer 2019

Enabler

Remit and Responsibilities

Agreed with film office Partners Winter 2018

Agreed with BFC Spring 2019

Agreed with local authorities Autumn 2019

Film office Quality Standards Framework

Autumn 2018

Good practice guidance for new film offices

Support to film office Partners in their development throughout 2019/20

Film office Accreditation Scheme

Feasibility scoping Autumn 2019

Film office Training Module

Feasibility scoping Autumn 2019

Local authority Summit

Spring 2019

Direct Delivery

Database licensing agreed with film offices

Spring 2019

Development of Crew and Facilities database

Autumn 2020

Local Information Guides complete

Winter 2020



Annex

Annex A: The Consultation Process

Through May to September 2018, Creative England conducted a widespread consultation across both sectoral service providers, industry end-users and with our key BFI funded delivery partner, the British Film Commission.

Delivery Partners: British Film Commission and film offices

We had one-to-one discussions with many film offices across England and we attended FO:UK meetings to keep film office partners well-informed on the review progress.

We held a partner roundtable which was attended by the British Film Commission, film office representatives, the BFI, the Production Guild of Great Britain, the Motion Picture Association and The Bottle Yard Studios to review the consultation findings and proposed outputs to form a strategic plan for a refined delivery model.

Industry

We undertook one-to-one consultations with well-informed supervising location managers, location managers & executive producers, with extensive experience across domestic and inward investment feature films and HETV dramas which were spread across the north and south of the country.

We held an industry roundtable with the Production Guild of Great Britain at Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden which was attended by location managers and heads of production, again with extensive experience across domestic and inward investment feature films and HETV dramas which were spread across the north and south of the country.

Annex B: Creative England’s Film Office Definition and Quality Standards Framework

Definition:

Organisations that sit within, or have the formal backing of, local authorities to deliver a production support and facilitation service to the film and broadcast industries. These are defined as having at least one dedicated member of staff, the majority of whose job is to deliver a filming liaison and facilitation services in the film office jurisdiction.

Quality Standards Framework:

The quality standards framework below sets out the minimum service standards expected of a film office partner to ensure the effective delivery of a filming liaison and facilitation service to the film and broadcast industries on a local level, based on the aspiration of both partners that the UK be first for world-class film and television production by promoting and maintaining a film-friendly environment through the provision of an outstanding service to industry.

Locations

- Maintain and regularly update location database ✓
- Ensure high level of quality of location imagery ✓
- Display a thorough representation of locations on Creative England’s national locations database ✓

Filming Facilitation

- Ensure an effective and timely response to all filming enquiries in the film office area ✓
- Maintain effective partnerships with all necessary and relevant agencies in the film office jurisdiction ✓
- Work in partnership with Creative England and the British Film Commission to successfully negotiate any industry troubleshooting requirements in the film office area ✓

Production Enquiries

- Respond to all national enquiries within prescribed deadline, typically a minimum of five working days, including if it is a nil response ✓
- Ensure any location suggestions from film office jurisdiction are on brief and in principle available for filming and as represented ✓
- Present location suggestions to Creative England in a single URL link with division of categories where appropriate ✓

