

A Stage for the Nation



CAMPAIGN
FOR THE ARTS

The BBC's unique role
in UK arts and culture

**“Seeing the BBC not only as another media organisation
but as a cultural organisation, and part of our
social infrastructure, is crucial.”**

– Lord Tony Hall, BBC Director-General 2013-2020¹

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Cover artwork

Photograph by Guy Levy of
George Clarke and Alexis Warr
dancing the American Smooth to
‘Stargazing’ by Myles Smith, live on
Strictly Come Dancing, September 2025.

*In 2024, Myles Smith won the BBC
Introducing Artist of the Year award and
performed on the BBC Music Introducing
Stage at the Radio 1 Big Weekend, in his
hometown of Luton. The following year
he performed on the main stage and was
nominated for three BRIT Awards, winning
the Rising Star Award².*

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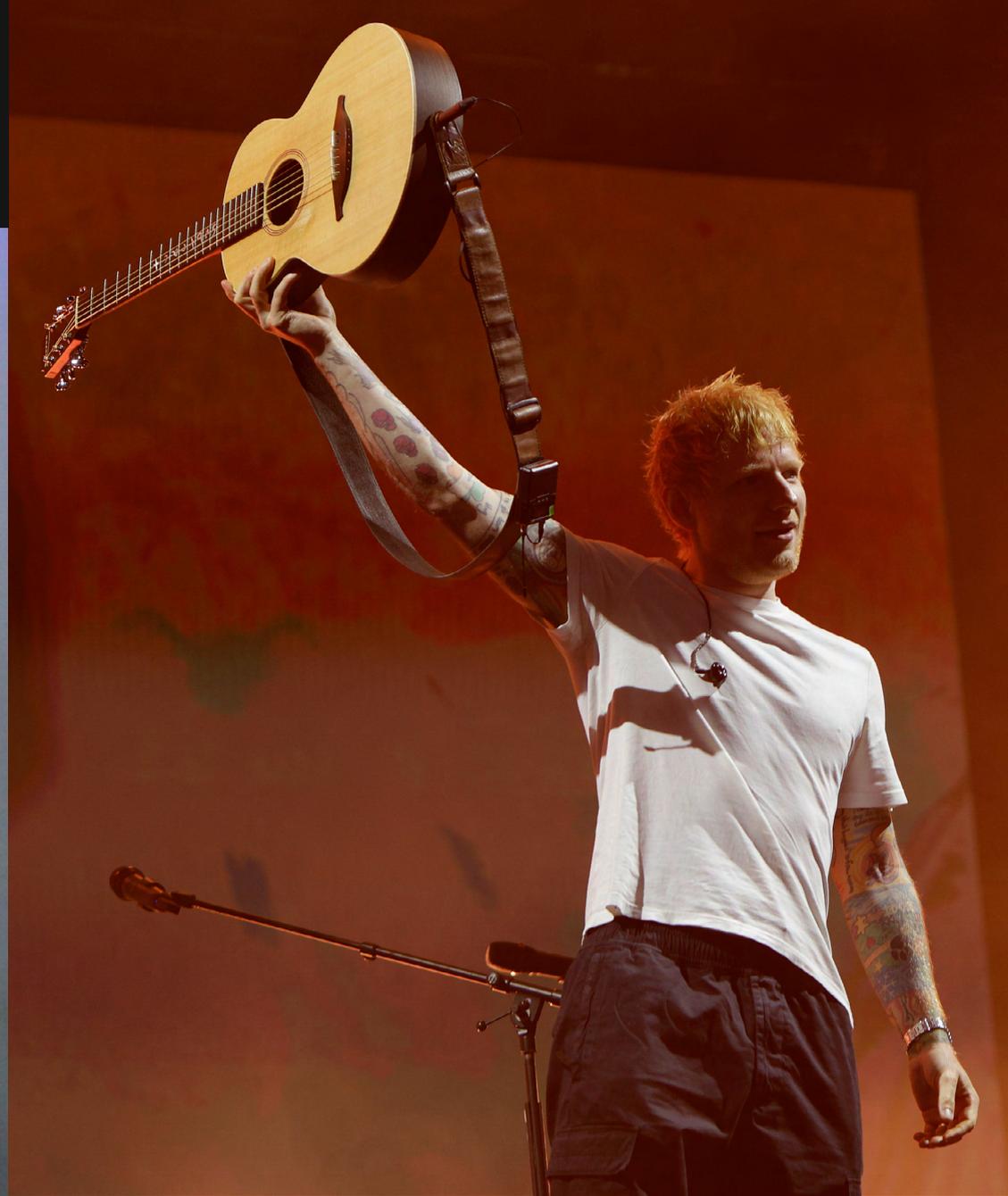
Key facts

- The BBC is the **UK's largest cultural organisation** by spend and reach.
- The BBC broadcasts close to **28,000 hours** of arts, classical music, and culture content annually to an average of **22 million UK adults** each week³.
- Audiences spend more time watching arts programmes on the BBC than all the other broadcasters and streamers combined⁴.
- The BBC is the **largest single investor in UK-made programmes**⁵. It invested £1.6 billion in original TV content in 2024–25, 61% outside London⁶.
- Without the BBC, arts and music content on Public Service Broadcasters would fall by **80%**, and new programmes by **90%**⁷.
- The BBC makes **over twice as many hours of original UK comedy** as all other broadcasters and streamers combined⁸.
- The BBC is the UK's **largest employer and commissioner of musicians**. It maintains five full-time **orchestras**, the UK's only full-time professional **chamber choir**, and employs more than 400 **contract musicians**⁹.
- There were around **2.5 billion plays on BBC Sounds** in 2024–25, with live and on-demand music contributing around **35%** (875 million plays)¹⁰.
- The BBC continues to function as a **national shared stage**, connecting large proportions of the UK population to live performances and to scripted drama and comedy: 23 million people watched the Glastonbury festival on the BBC in 2023¹¹. 21 million watched the Gavin & Stacey Christmas finale in 2024¹². 10.7 million watched the BBC Proms in 2025¹³.
- The BBC works with 120–150 writers every year through **writers' group schemes**¹⁴, selected from nearly 5,000 open call writing submissions¹⁵.
- Last year the BBC partnered with **163 organisations** working on arts projects and content¹⁶.
- The current licence fee that sustains the BBC costs a household **£3.35 per week** – less than an average takeaway coffee in the UK¹⁷.

Below: **Ed Sheeran, aged 20, performs at BBC Radio 1's Teen Awards 2011**

Earlier that year he performed his debut single on *Later... with Jools Holland* and was programmed on the BBC Introducing stage at Glastonbury.

© BBC Archive



Above: **Ed Sheeran, aged 34, performs at BBC Radio 1's Big Weekend 2025**

One of the world's most popular music artists, he has sold 200 million records¹⁸. He has described BBC Introducing as “hugely, hugely important”¹⁹.

Photographer: Jamie Simonds. © BBC Archive

Introduction

This report considers the BBC's unique role in UK arts and culture. It highlights how the BBC...

1. Nurtures creativity and launches new talent (p12)

The BBC's role in talent development and arts education.

2. Bolsters our creative ecosystem (p20)

The structural support the BBC provides to the UK's creative sector – through its own ensembles and festivals, its platforms and partnerships, and its UK-wide investment.

3. Creates and invests in new and distinctive work (p28)

The BBC's role as a producer and commissioner of 'market-shaping' work that is creative, high quality and distinctive.

4. Reflects and represents the UK's cultural diversity (p34)

The BBC's duty to represent the diversity of the UK's population and the distinctive cultures of its regions and nations.

5. Fosters a shared culture and sense of belonging (p40)

The BBC's role in social cohesion, helping to hold the nation together through shared moments, national conversations and daily companionship.

What does this mean for future funding of the BBC? (p46)

In the final section, we offer principles to protect and strengthen these five functions into the future.

“As the biggest arts broadcaster in the world and the biggest single investor in the UK's creative industries, the BBC matters so much. None of us can afford to lose the numerous benefits in education and culture it brings to everyone here and so many across the world. It is part of our heritage and promotes our standing in the world today. It deserves and needs to be properly funded and supported for future generations.”

- Sarah, CFTA supporter, Norfolk

The BBC and the arts

The BBC is not merely a broadcaster of the arts; it is a major funder and promoter, producer and commissioner, curator and collaborator, educator and talent incubator, national convener and global ambassador for British culture. It serves as an “anchor institution” for the UK's creative industries and for our shared cultural life²⁰.

This unique and highly valuable role is secured by:

- The BBC's **Royal Charter**, which enshrines its public purposes and a mission to “inform, educate and entertain” in which the arts have always had an essential part to play.
- **Universal public funding**, which allows the BBC to prioritise public value over commercial interests, and deliver programmes and services that are free at the point of use and accessible to all.

The government's review

For the first time in over a decade, the UK government is currently reviewing both of these elements: the Charter that establishes how and why the BBC exists, and the funding model that pays for it.

Even the Director-General has acknowledged that “the BBC is not perfect”²¹. This Charter Review is an opportunity to improve and strengthen the BBC – but it is also a moment of jeopardy, at which crucial aspects of the BBC's role could be overlooked, diluted or dismantled.

Ministers' actions or inactions at the end of the Review will have far-reaching consequences, not only for British broadcasting but for our whole society. As this report shows, the BBC plays a unique role in UK arts and culture. It is vital that this role is acknowledged, protected and strengthened for the future.

The focus of this report

The BBC offers a broad range of public-service media including television, radio, online and international services. Often, public discourse focuses on its significant role in news and current affairs. In this report, we are focusing only on the BBC's role in the arts and culture.

Throughout the report, we include testimony from just a few of the more than 44,000 Campaign for the Arts supporters who signed our 2022 petition, urging ministers to 'protect our BBC, for the arts and for everyone'.

The BBC is only one of the UK's public service broadcasters (PSBs) – the others being ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5, STV and S4C. By committing to serve the public benefit rather than purely commercial interests, all of our PSBs make a highly valuable contribution to the cultural and democratic life of the UK. This report focuses only on the BBC due to its unique funding and regulatory framework. Consequently, the government's current Charter Review applies only to the BBC.

What's at stake

This Charter Review is taking place in a dramatically different environment from the last one. In 2015, 20% of households subscribed to a streaming service; by 2025, that figure had risen to 68%²². Global tech giants have become increasingly dominant in content distribution markets, concentrating power and revenue. Social media platforms have come to dominate many people's daily media use, reshaping how content is discovered and consumed²³. At the same time, since 2010-11, net public funding for the BBC's UK services has fallen by around £2.7 billion (40%) in real terms²⁴. This has been driven by government-imposed freezes on the licence fee and the transfer of costs for the World Service, BBC Monitoring, S4C and local TV²⁵, but the number of paid-for TV licences has also been falling, with evasion and 'no licence needed' declarations rising²⁶.

This Charter Review will determine the BBC's future purposes, funding model, and ability to thrive in a rapidly shifting media landscape. Key questions include whether the licence fee should remain in its current form, how the BBC should adapt its services to reach audiences, and what obligations it should carry as a public service broadcaster. The Review could reshape everything from the BBC's governance and accountability structures to its investment in different types of content production, regional output, and digital innovation. Ultimately, the process will decide whether and how the BBC can continue to serve the public.

To make clear the importance of this moment, Professor Georgina Born OBE and Professor Justin Lewis introduce research commissioned by the British Academy by stating:

*"The BBC infrastructure, reputation and brand have been built, maintained and developed over 100 years; under current rules they could disappear in one parliamentary term."*²⁷

The government itself has said:

*"If the BBC's role at the foundation of our media sector is not protected and strengthened, then we risk losing the high quality UK content, talent and investment that has made the sector a global success and provides value for audiences right across the UK. We lose this at our peril."*²⁸

Why this matters

The BBC is such a normal part of daily life in the UK that it can easily be taken for granted. Research from studies in 2015²⁹ and 2021³⁰, which took away access to the BBC for 9 days, found that people often realise the value of the BBC only when they no longer have it. In both studies, around 70% of participants who initially said they would rather not pay for the BBC changed their minds after going without its services.

Across both studies, people highlighted the BBC's role in creating shared culture and supporting the social fabric of the UK, qualities they felt were essential and would be deeply missed if the BBC were no longer available. Both studies also found that people have a very strong appreciation of the BBC's cultural and heritage importance, and that this has become stronger over time.

Detractors of the BBC argue that it should be scaled back or treated as no different to purely commercial providers. Yet as we will outline in this report, the BBC plays a **unique and essential role in UK culture**, delivering major returns on public investment socially, economically and for Britain's place in the world.

"Music of all kinds, spoken word, news - local, national and international - comedy, drama, arts programming, children's programming and Bitesize, World Service - I'd happily pay more for the BBC's quality, originality, fairness, integrity. It's literally 'priceless'."

– Moyra, CFTA supporter, Belfast

1. The BBC nurtures creativity and launches new talent



The BBC is a cornerstone of the UK's arts and culture ecosystem, not only showcasing creativity but actively nurturing it.

Its public purposes and funding allow the BBC to prioritise creative potential over profit, investing in grassroots talent and long-term skills development free from the immediate pressure to deliver commercial returns.

Ultimately, this approach delivers major returns – to artists, to the creative economy, and to UK society.

The BBC acts as a career catalyst across all art forms, from music and comedy to screenwriting and film. It provides training, support and exposure to sustain the nation's creative pipeline. Its many talent development schemes help emerging artists to grow, innovate, find audiences, and sustain careers, contributing significantly to a richer cultural landscape for all.

This function is deeply valued by the public: in the 'Our BBC, Our Future' questionnaire, 85% of respondents agreed that "backing the best homegrown storytelling" is an important part of what the BBC should do³¹.

By providing accessible entry points into the arts from the early years - including through CBeebies, CBBC, Bitesize and nationwide participation schemes - the BBC provides free support for every child and young person to participate in culture and develop their creativity.

Whether this leads to a professional career or a lifelong connection to the arts that supports their wellbeing, the BBC provides an essential foundation.

"I highly value the BBC's contribution to the arts in the UK [...] Through BBC Introducing and Young Musician of the Year, Young Dancer of the Year etc many artists are given unique opportunities to be seen/heard by the public. I would not like this to be lost."

– Jennifer, CFTA supporter, Hampshire

Left: **Skye Newman, aged 22, wins BBC Radio 1's Sound of 2026 award**

In 2025 she featured on Radio 1's New Music Show and Future Artists, performed on Radio 1 Live Lounge and at Radio 1's Big Weekend in Liverpool. She was recognised for this award by a panel of leading figures assembled by the BBC, including Elton John, Dua Lipa, JADE, Olivia Dean, YUNGBLUD and Sam Smith³².

Photographer: James Watkins. © BBC Archive

Supporting and platforming new musicians

“I think shows like BBC Introducing are hugely, hugely important. That’s where I got my first radio play and support from. [...] And it’s very important that we understand that in all countries, talent comes from all over the country, not just from the capital cities. So it’s good to keep the infrastructures that are there to help kids be found.”³³

– Ed Sheeran

Over 300,000 artists and 1 million tracks have been registered on the **BBC Introducing** Uploader. Each week, local Introducing shows play 1,400 tracks discovered through the Uploader³⁴. They then make recommendations to the BBC’s national radio stations, giving artists the opportunity to reach millions.

Around 72,000 tracks from emerging UK artists supported by BBC Introducing are heard on the airwaves each year³⁵. Many go on to win major awards and achieve mainstream success. Ed Sheeran, Florence + the Machine, Lewis Capaldi, Raye, Sam Fender, Aitch, Olivia Dean, Myles Smith, Nia Archives and Tom Grennan all received BBC Introducing support at the start of their careers. The scheme has also expanded regional opportunities, giving emerging artists more chances to perform locally and access support³⁶.

Because of its public service ethos, the BBC engages with new and emerging artists in different ways to commercially-driven organisations. It **provides early-stage exposure in prominent broadcast slots** that commercial stations typically reserve for more established acts, and amplifies this support across a range of different radio, TV and online platforms. Nearly 50% of music played on Radio 2 and 6 Music is from UK artists, and nearly 25% from new artists³⁷.

A 2015 study found that the BBC **introduces new music significantly earlier than comparable commercial stations**. For example, George Ezra’s debut single ‘Did You Hear the Rain’ received BBC airplay 73 days ahead of commercial radio, while Sam Smith’s first number one hit ‘La La La’ was broadcast 25 days earlier. The percentage of radio plays of ‘La La La’ in daytime slots was 80-90% for the BBC, compared with around 60-70% for comparable commercial stations³⁸.

The BBC also **highlights new talent at high-profile events**, such as the Dream Prom that enabled trainees on the BBC’s Open Music scheme to devise an original creative performance³⁹, and the BBC Introducing stages at festivals such as Glastonbury, Reading and Leeds, South by Southwest (SXSW) and Latitude⁴⁰.

These are just some of the schemes that the BBC runs to support music in the UK...⁴¹

BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists Scheme

Two-year development opportunity for early-career artists. Has helped launch the international careers of many leading figures in classical and jazz music⁴², including Janine Jansen, Igor Levit, Alison Balsom and Shabaka Hutchings.

BBC Young Musician

The UK’s leading biennial competition for young classical performers⁴³. Established in 1978, it serves as a high-profile platform for exceptional talent aged 18 and under, often acting as the definitive starting point for a professional solo career. Winners have included Nicola Benedetti (Violin), Sheku Kanneh-Mason (Cello), Jennifer Pike (Violin), Ryan Wang (Piano).

BBC Young Jazz Musician

A biennial competition celebrating the UK’s most talented young jazz performers. Launched in 2014 as a sister event to the classical competition, it highlights improvisational skill and creative flair among artists aged 18 and under. The inaugural winner Alex Bone (Saxophone) is now a prominent producer and performer, but not only winners benefit: rising-star saxophonist Emma Rawicz and Mercury Prize-nominated pianist Fergus McCreadie were both finalists.

BBC Introducing

An online platform; 20 local BBC Radio shows; 3 National radio shows on BBC Wales, BBC Scotland and BBC Northern Ireland; and 6 key network shows across BBC Radio 1, Radio 1Xtra, Radio 2, 6Music, Radio 3 and Asian Network. Supports new musical talent across the UK onto the local and national stage⁴⁴.

BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician Award

Annual competition that shines a spotlight on the next generation of folk and traditional talent in Scotland⁴⁵. Established in 2001, it serves as a vital career catalyst for artists aged 18 to 27. Past winners include Ellie Beaton (Voice, 2025), Amy Laurenson (Piano, 2023), Eryn Rae (Fiddle, 2022), and Hannah Rarity (Voice, 2018).

BBC NI Young Musicians’ Platform

Biennial award scheme designed to support solo artists from Northern Ireland. Run in partnership with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland⁴⁶, it acts as a professional springboard for musicians across classical, jazz, traditional, and contemporary genres. Past winners include Conor Mallon (Uilleann Pipes), Rose Connolly (Singer-Songwriter), and Ed Dunlop (Jazz Drummer).

BBC Young Composer

National competition and development programme that champions original music-making among young people aged 12 to 18⁴⁷. Unlike performance-based contests, it focuses entirely on creative potential, welcoming entries in any style, from orchestral and choral to electronic, jazz, and pop. Past winners include Grace-Evangeline Mason (now a major Proms commission recipient) and Shiva Feshareki (who has since received an Ivor Novello Award for Innovation).

BBC Open Music

Training and development initiative designed to diversify the talent pool within the UK’s classical and orchestral music broadcasting sector⁴⁸. Launched by BBC Radio 3 and BBC Music, the programme targets creatives, musicians, and aspiring producers who might not have previously considered a career at the BBC. It includes paid traineeships, mentoring, and live broadcast exposure.

Finding and developing talent across artforms

In comedy, the BBC is felt to be the only commissioner in the UK working with new talent at a large scale⁴⁹. The BBC's **comedy talent initiatives** such as the BBC New Comedy Awards, BBC Comedy Collective, and BBC Radio Comedy Writers Bursary form an essential way in to the industry for new and emerging artists⁵⁰.

Importantly, the BBC **backs young comedy writers**. Lucia Keskin was only 23 years old when her successful sitcom, *Things You Should Have Done*, was commissioned by the BBC and produced by Roughcut TV in 2024⁵¹. Having left school at 16 without qualifications, Lucia had had online success, but this was her first full-scale production, primarily filmed in her native Thanet⁵².

“The BBC is the first call you make if you are trying to break new talent.”
– Ash Atalla, CEO, Roughcut TV

BBC Writers⁵³ (previously BBC Writersroom) provides advice, resources, and showcasing opportunities for new and established scriptwriters. It is distinctive for its long-term approach to talent development that includes training for grassroots talent and freelancers, with channels into commissioning. BBC Writers has also been actively supporting diversity and inclusion in the TV sector⁵⁴.

The BBC's **investment in training** far exceeds that of other broadcasters, and this has led some to argue that the BBC acts as an unofficial national training school for the creative industries⁵⁵. Its schemes and apprenticeships, and its partnerships with organisations such as the National Film and Television School and ScreenSkills, help fortify the talent pipeline and build a robust skills base for the whole creative sector, contributing to the sector's ability to innovate⁵⁶.

Through the **BBC Academy**, the BBC offers extensive training for its employees, partners, and crucially also freelancers⁵⁷. Freelancers make up 59% of the arts, culture and heritage workforce, but face precarity and a lack of development opportunities⁵⁸. By offering training that includes and supports freelancers, the BBC helps strengthen skills and resilience across the whole creative ecosystem, benefitting all the other organisations with which those freelancers work.

The BBC's investment in developing skills and knowledge **benefits individuals throughout their lives**, including by enhancing their career prospects and boosting their lifetime earnings potential⁵⁹.

Nurturing creativity from early years

The BBC's offer begins at birth. By providing accessible entry points into the arts from infancy, it plays a pivotal role in democratising cultural engagement and nurturing the next generation of artists.

Tiny Happy People is a language and communication initiative aimed at parents and caregivers of children aged 0–4. While its goal is to “halve the word gap” (the literacy divide between children from different socioeconomic backgrounds), it uses the arts, music, and creative play as primary tools to achieve this⁶⁰.

The BBC is the number 1 global commissioner of children's content⁶¹. Its dedicated **CBeebies** and **CBBC** services engage children directly as they grow. This content is not passive entertainment; it is underpinned by pedagogy and developed with experts in education and child development.

The CBeebies **Get Creative app** and its associated web content are specifically built to encourage independent, open-ended play, empowering children to lead their own artistic journey in the Visual Arts (Magic Paint), Music & Sound Design (Sound Doodles), Sculpture & Architecture (Block Builder), and Performance & Drama (Play Puppets)⁶².

The BBC also exposes children to varied artforms; for example the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra has produced **Musical Storyland** for CBeebies, a series of global stories told through classical music, which has been requested over thirteen million times on BBC iPlayer⁶³ and turned into free live concerts⁶⁴.

“The BBC is an invaluable resource for everyone. As a working parent it has been an absolute lifesaver. [...] Knowing that I could trust that when my children watched the children's BBC channels they were learning by osmosis and weren't being 'sold' useless toys through advertising was reassuring and has truly formed a huge part of their education. My 7 year old frequently gives me facts about nature, science and the environment that at a ratio of about 50-50 stems from either things she has learned from school or watched on the BBC. [...] If you defund it and cause it to be something only accessible by those who are able to pay ever increasing market rates we will be losing a hugely valuable cultural and educational resource, and you will only be exacerbating inequality country-wide. [...] Please ensure everyone has equal access to this public good.”

– Helen, CFTA supporter, Surrey

BBC Bitesize provides a vast, free, online resource bank to support children's learning, revision and homework, including in arts subjects. Bitesize guides are written by teachers and subject experts and are mapped to follow the curricula and exam board specifications in each part of the UK⁶⁵. 83% of under 16s who use Bitesize say that it helps them understand their studies more⁶⁶.

Through **Bitesize Careers**, the BBC partners with industry figures to showcase different roles, helping students visualise a viable professional future in the creative industries.

Within and beyond the classroom, the BBC spearheads initiatives that spark nationwide creativity. Since its inception, the BBC **500 Words** competition has inspired children aged 5-11 to write over a million short stories⁶⁷. The BBC **Young Writers' Award** is now in its twelfth year, and challenges 14-18 year-olds to submit stories of up to 1,000 words⁶⁸.

BBC **Ten Pieces** continues to open the world of classical music to millions of 7-14 year olds, provoking original creative responses across artforms⁶⁹. The recently-launched BBC **Get Singing** programme seeks to counter declines in collective singing after children leave primary school, offering digital resources and opportunities to participate in workshops, training/CPD and performances across the UK.

For young adults looking to develop their creative practice into a possible career, the BBC offers mentorship and unique platforms. The **Arts in Motion** series connects young mentees with high-profile figures, such as pianist Yuja Wang, sculptor Antony Gormley, and actor Brian Cox, to demystify the professional creative process⁷⁰. The **Words First** scheme supports 18- to 30-year-old spoken word artists, rappers, MCs, poets and performers to develop their work with established artists and take part in a recorded performance⁷¹. BBC **Introducing Arts**⁷² showcases films made by young people about the subjects that matter most to their generation⁷³. Specific commissions, such as **New Creatives** which funded 500 young artists' films, was described as "offering a unique platform for young, emerging artists to tell the stories they want to tell"⁷⁴.

"BBC arts programmes may be some people's only opportunity to enjoy cultural activities. We were able to give our daughter an insight into different forms of music when we would never have been able to afford to take her to live performances. She was given the opportunity to learn an instrument at school which opened up a whole new world."

– Maxine, CFTA supporter, Kent

Below: Olivia Colman reads *The Gruffalo's Child* by Julia Donaldson on CBeebies Bedtime Stories (2024)

The story has been viewed over half a million times on YouTube⁷⁵. More than 300 other Bedtime Stories are available on BBC iPlayer.

Photographer: Guy Levy. © BBC Archive



2. The BBC bolsters our creative ecosystem



The BBC provides unparalleled structural support to the UK's creative sector: maintaining its own ensembles and festivals, platforming and partnering with cultural organisations, and driving regional production.

In its Creative Industries Sector Plan, the UK Government has acknowledged the importance of our creative ecosystem: one in which artists, cultural organisations, institutions, broadcasters, and audiences all strengthen and depend on one another⁷⁶. The BBC is a vital part of this ecosystem.

As the nation's single largest employer and commissioner of professional musicians, a direct employer of over 21,500 staff, and a major commissioner of production companies and freelancers, the BBC sustains countless creative livelihoods, enabling creative skills to be developed, shared and applied.

The corporation supports a wide range of art forms and genres by lowering barriers to entry for new audiences, and by cultivating public interest and awareness. Through its dedicated performing groups and a diverse portfolio of festivals, from the Proms to the 6 Music Festival, the BBC democratises access to the arts for all.

Platforming and partnering with artists, cultural organisations and creative groups in all parts of the ecosystem, it amplifies and champions creative work and opportunities.

Through its extensive commitment to production outside London and its major production hubs across the country, the BBC generates economic activity well beyond its own output and ensures that the benefits of this growth are felt in communities across the UK.

“The ecosystem of British culture is dependent on so much of the BBC's work.”

– Adam, CFTA supporter, London

Left: Sheku Kanneh-Mason, aged 18, performs with Chineke! Orchestra at the 2017 BBC Proms, live from the Royal Albert Hall in London

He won BBC Young Musician the year before. Chineke!, in only its third year, became the youngest orchestra ever to perform at the Proms, and were heard by millions⁷⁷. Across the 2017 season, the Royal Albert Hall welcomed nearly 300,000 concert-goers⁷⁸.

Photographer: Mark Allan. © BBC Archive

Employing artists and creative professionals

The BBC **directly employs** over 21,500 staff, with a strategic focus on spreading creative jobs beyond London to the nations and regions of the UK⁷⁹. It is also the country's single largest employer and commissioner of professional musicians⁸⁰.

Beyond direct employment, the BBC's engagement with **freelancers** and **independent production companies** also follows its public service ethos. Unlike many commercial entities which demand full rights buyouts, the BBC operates under terms of trade that are more favourable to creators, allowing them to retain rights over their **intellectual property** and **long-term revenue** from it⁸¹.

This approach was key for Michaela Coel. She famously rejected a \$1 million offer from Netflix for *I May Destroy You* because they refused her IP rights, choosing the BBC instead for its offer of ownership and creative control⁸². For Coel, who has said it is "important that voices used to interruption get the experience of writing something without interference at least once"⁸³, this autonomy was vital. It allowed her to create a deeply personal, uncompromising work to huge acclaim.

The BBC's Performing Groups

The BBC's Performing Groups⁸⁴ tour widely, feature annually at the BBC Proms, and take part in the BBC's education initiatives (see section 1). Most concerts are broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Sounds, with free tickets frequently available.

BBC Symphony Orchestra & Chorus

Based in London. As Orchestra in Residence at the BBC Proms, anchors the First and Last Nights. Founded in 1930, it was the first permanent salaried orchestra in London.

BBC Singers

Britain's only full-time professional chamber choir.

BBC Philharmonic Orchestra

Based in Salford. Founded in 1922, the Philharmonic has played an essential part in shaping the Greater Manchester region into a hub for world-class talent in orchestral music.

BBC Concert Orchestra

Specialises in a repertoire spanning classical, pop, jazz, show music and film scores. Serves as the house orchestra for Friday Night is Music Night.

BBC National Orchestra & Chorus of Wales

Based in Cardiff. The only professional symphony orchestra in Wales.

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra

Based in Glasgow for over 90 years. A fearless champion of contemporary music.

"BBC orchestras are vital to the cultural health of the UK. We have so few orchestras compared to our European neighbours."

- Alan, CFTA supporter, Glasgow

Spotlighting art forms and opening them up to new audiences

The BBC supports arts forms and genres by **lowering barriers to entry** for new audiences, and by **cultivating the public interest and awareness** necessary for these art forms and genres to thrive.

This approach is epitomised by the BBC Proms, watched by 10.7 million people in 2025. While anchored at the Royal Albert Hall in London, the festival has evolved into a nationwide celebration, platforming live music in venues including the Nottingham Royal Concert Hall, Bristol Beacon, Cowdray Hall Aberdeen, Riverfront Newport, Ulster Hall Belfast, Glasshouse in Gateshead, and more⁸⁵.

As well as showcasing and attracting audiences to these venues, through the Proms the BBC showcases live classical music in general, opening up the genre to new audiences and increasing public awareness of it.

This has been a longstanding feature of the BBC since as early as the 1920s through programmes such as Music and the Ordinary Listener⁸⁶. Importantly, over time the BBC has moved away from *transmitting* culture one way to its audience, and instead has become more *reflective of* and *interactive with* the range of its audiences across the country⁸⁷. In this way, the BBC both helps audiences to engage with new and diverse art forms, and also helps those art forms to engage with new and diverse audiences.

The Proms illustrate this two-way approach to sharing classical music, supported by interactive traditions, digital engagement, and special programming⁸⁸. "CBeebies Proms" are specially designed to introduce children to concerts with active participatory elements, while "Relaxed Proms" foster an informal atmosphere that reduces anxiety for neurodiverse attendees and newcomers alike⁸⁹.

"The BBC not only entertains, it also educates. It provides access to top quality music, especially the Proms."

- Val, CFTA supporter, Hertfordshire

The BBC's festivals & events

BBC festivals and events play a vital role in democratising access to the arts. They are often in places or for purposes that are underserved by the market, with tickets at a fraction of the cost of comparable commercial events.

BBC Radio 1's Big Weekend

Showcases a mix of the world's biggest music stars and emerging artists – often in places that don't typically get massive international touring acts⁹⁰.

BBC Radio 2 in the Park

Brings together world-renowned pop and rock artists for a weekend of performances, in a different UK city each year⁹¹.

BBC Radio 6 Music Festival

Takes over independent, grassroots venues to celebrate alternative artists and support the UK's live music ecosystem⁹².

BBC Music Introducing LIVE

A multi-day discovery festival and networking event, held in different UK cities simultaneously, featuring masterclasses, industry panels, and live performances aimed at supporting and developing emerging talent⁹³.

BBC Proms

Widely considered the world's largest and most famous classical music festival. An eight-week summer season of daily concerts, held at the Royal Albert Hall in London and other venues across the UK⁹⁴.

BBC Contains Strong Language

The UK's biggest annual poetry and performance festival, dedicated to celebrating spoken word, new writing, and regional voices in a different host city each year⁹⁵.

BBC Comedy Festival

An annual multi-day industry gathering, held in a different host city each year, that brings together independent producers, emerging creators, and established talent to explore, develop, and celebrate British TV comedy⁹⁶.

Platforming and partnering with artists, cultural organisations and creative groups

The BBC amplifies creative work across the UK. By providing a **national stage for local talent** and offering **critical infrastructure to cultural organisations**, it acts as a bridge between grassroots creativity and mass audiences.

BBC radio takes standup comedy from small local venues and broadcasts it to a national audience, providing a wide platform for new talent as well as the venues themselves⁹⁷. During the COVID-19 lockdowns, the virtual **Lights Up**⁹⁸ festival shared theatre shows from venues such as the Bush Theatre, Leeds Playhouse and Opera North, Lyric Theatre Belfast, National Theatre of Scotland, Royal Shakespeare Company, and many others. The BBC provided its recording

and broadcast infrastructure and promoted productions on its far-reaching platforms⁹⁹ – not only ensuring artists and arts organisations could remain connected to audiences, but expanding their reach beyond the capacity limits of physical venues. This initiative exemplifies how the BBC can serve as a unique partner, bolstering the arts ecosystem even at a time of crisis.

Programmes such as *Front Row*, *This Cultural Life*, *The Arts Hour* and *In Tune* spotlight cultural activity and offer **critical engagement** with it. Presenters such as Cerys Matthews on Radio 6 Music regularly do **'shout-outs'** to venues where played artists are performing, and to grassroots cultural events. The BBC regularly organises **outside broadcasts** from such events, and from major festivals including the Hay Festival, Aldeburgh, Glastonbury, WOMAD, National Eisteddfod and the Edinburgh Festivals.

Wherever it operates, the BBC contributes to **local regeneration** by supporting local creativity, for example by commissioning public art as part of new BBC headquarters projects¹⁰⁰. The Create Yarmouth initiative brought the BBC Concert Orchestra to the greater Yarmouth area for a three-year residency, and included concerts, workshops, and activity in community and heritage sites¹⁰¹.

The BBC also creates important **'supply chain links'** into the commercial creative industries, meaning it provides opportunities for smaller organisations to feed into larger productions. This includes, for instance, working with theatre groups to develop content which later becomes radio or television programmes¹⁰².

The BBC has enabled, and continues to enable, countless initiatives to make the arts more accessible and available to all. **Art UK**, an online platform sharing one million artworks from the nation's public art collections, was created through a partnership between the BBC, the Public Catalogue Foundation and the nation's galleries¹⁰³. Not only can people view the paintings in high resolution online, they can easily find out their physical locations, promoting attendance at galleries¹⁰⁴.

The BBC actively highlights creativity through large-scale and locally-focused campaigns and partnerships, encouraging public participation in the arts across the UK. **Get Creative**¹⁰⁵ – a national campaign run jointly by the BBC, the Arts Councils, charities and grassroots movements – encouraged the public to try new creative activities and culminated in a major festival. Events on offer included circus skills workshops in Blackburn and a huge paint-by-numbers in Cumbria¹⁰⁶.

Creative Lives On Air¹⁰⁷, a partnership between the Creative Lives charity and the BBC's local radio stations, continues to spotlight local, voluntary, and amateur creative groups, promoting grassroots creativity across the country.

“Tens of thousands of jobs in the independent sector rely on commissions from the BBC. We work across the regions of the UK and over many years have built up the representation of people and stories from all walks of life. This content is in great demand worldwide.”

— Barbara, CFTA supporter, Leeds

Driving regional production & powering the creative industries

A strong arts and culture ecosystem underpins the UK’s creative industries, which are among the fastest-growing parts of the economy and now contribute over £125 billion a year: more than aerospace, life sciences, automotive, oil and gas combined¹⁰⁸. The BBC plays a pivotal role in this success. Its commissioning spend and regional investment fuel growth across the UK, supporting a diverse and geographically-spread creative economy.

Wherever it has a physical presence, the BBC helps create **clusters of creative businesses and jobs**, generating far wider economic activity than its own output alone^{109 110}. 50% of its economic impact occurs **outside London**¹¹¹, supporting regional clusters in Glasgow, Cardiff, Belfast, Salford, Bristol and Birmingham, alongside local bases from Lerwick to Truro and Londonderry/Derry to Bangor¹¹².

61% of the BBC’s network TV spend and 46% of its radio spend is in the Nations and English regions¹¹³. By contrast, US media tech giants’ TV production and commissioning are heavily clustered in London and the South East of England¹¹⁴.

The BBC is a **major client for, and supporter of, UK production companies**¹¹⁵. Its **Small Indie Fund** supports small independent companies financially and with mentorship and guidance¹¹⁶, with variants for radio and music¹¹⁷. It focuses especially on diverse-led companies and those based outside of London¹¹⁸.

More broadly, the BBC invests heavily in **Research and Development (R&D)** activities. As well as generating economic benefits, this generates knowledge and technological spillovers to the creative and digital sectors, leading to wider adoption of new innovations, productivity improvements, and broader societal gains like improved health and wellbeing¹¹⁹.

The BBC’s structural commitment is far-reaching. It helps make the entire creative sector more resilient, connected, and primed to create the new and distinctive work detailed in the next section.

Below: **Billie Piper, David Tennant and the production team of Doctor Who film at the Rhossili area on the Gower peninsula in Wales (2005)**

Doctor Who contributed over £134m in GVA to the Welsh economy between 2004 and 2021, and over a quarter of a billion to the UK as a whole¹²⁰.

Photographer: Mike Hogan. © BBC



3. The BBC creates and invests in new and distinctive work



The BBC enriches our culture through the original, impactful work that it creates and commissions.

It is by far the **largest single investor in UK content**. Were it not to exist, arts and music content on the Public Service Broadcasters would fall by 80%, and new programmes would fall by 90%¹²¹.

In 2024-25 the BBC **invested £3.1bn in public service content, commissioned over 500 independent TV and radio producers and supported nearly 300 companies** with paid development spend (of which 93% went to UK independent producers)¹²².

Unlike commercial competitors whose primary goal is profit or subscriber retention, the BBC's goal is to fulfil the mission and public purposes set out in its Royal Charter. In the current Charter, one of these is expressly **“to show the most creative, highest quality and distinctive output and services”**¹²³.

The quality of the BBC's output has been recognised consistently with **major awards**, such as the 18 BAFTA TV awards the BBC won in 2025, more than any other broadcaster or streamer¹²⁴. Drama *Mr Loverman*, adapted by Nathaniel Price from the novel by Bernardine Evaristo, was co-produced by the BBC and Fable Pictures and won two awards for acting. *Alma's Not Normal* was commissioned by the BBC and produced by Expectation Entertainment; it won Best Scripted Comedy. The BBC's 2024 coverage of Glastonbury, led by BBC producer Alison Howe, won the award for Best Live Event Coverage. This indicates the breadth of excellence in the BBC's arts and cultural offer.

In studies that took away BBC access for a range of people, most participants (even those who initially thought they wouldn't miss it) found they couldn't replace the BBC with other content and felt that what it offered was **unique**^{125 126}.

Left: **Daisy May Cooper and Charlie Cooper in *This Country* (2017)**

BBC Studios produced *This Country* despite a “horrendous” pilot stage which led to the show being dropped by other producers¹²⁷. It went on to win the BAFTA and RTS Best Scripted Comedy awards, and was requested over 52 million times on BBC iPlayer¹²⁸.

A licence to experiment

Free from the commercial imperative to chase subscribers or advertisers, the BBC can use its public funding to prioritise artistic daring and social relevance. To mark 100 years of the BBC in 2022, the British Film Institute (BFI) identified ‘100 BBC TV gamechangers’ that “have helped to shape social attitudes, remake genres and transform television itself”. While only one selection from any number of possible alternatives, it demonstrates the range, quality and impact of the BBC’s creative output over the past century¹²⁹.

It begins with early examples of the BBC giving a platform to **live performance**: from the dancers of Les Ballets Nègres (Europe’s first Black dance company) to the musicians and singers at the Proms in the 1940s. *Monitor* is included as a pioneering **arts magazine** series that set the bar for later programmes like *Omnibus*, *Imagine* and *Arena*. *Arena* is still produced by the BBC, with recent programmes on opera singer Maria Callas and ballet dancer Steven McRae¹³⁰.

Civilisation and *Ways of Seeing* are highlighted as landmark **authored arts documentary** series. In 2018, the BBC produced *Civilisations* – inspired by Kenneth Clark’s classic series but taking a more international and multi-authored view – and in 2025 a follow-up series, *Civilisations: Rise and Fall*¹³¹.

The BFI’s list acknowledges the BBC’s major contribution to **television drama**: from trailblazing new work such as *Cathy Come Home*, *Pennies from Heaven*, *I May Destroy You* and *Small Axe*, to acclaimed literary adaptations including *The Forsyte Saga*, *I, Claudius*, *The Buddha of Suburbia* and *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. Recent successes *Wolf Hall* (after Hilary Mantel) and *The Night Manager* (after John le Carré) continue this rich vein.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the BBC to British **comedy** over the last century. The BFI’s selection tracks the sitcom from *Hancock’s Half Hour* to *The Young Ones*, *Absolutely Fabulous* to *I’m Alan Partridge*, *The Royle Family* to *The Office* and beyond. *That Was the Week That Was* brought political satire to TV for the first time; *The Thick of It* reimagined it for the 21st century. Morecambe and Wise turned the Christmas special into a national ritual. The sketch comedy format was subverted by *Monty Python’s Flying Circus*; *Goodness Gracious Me* used it to subvert stereotypes of British Asian culture. **Since 2010, over 80% of the winners of the the BAFTA Award for Best Scripted Comedy have been produced or commissioned by the BBC**¹³², including recent hits *Alma’s Not Normal*, *Such Brave Girls* and *Motherland*.

“I oppose any attacks on the BBC and its funding because it produces a huge range of content that a commercial broadcaster would never deliver, for low cost and to high standards. Where, for instance, is the commercial mileage in *Something Special*, a lifeline for children with special needs and their carers/parents?”

– Christopher, CFTA supporter, Suffolk

Seeding new art and growing the market

Creative innovation begins with 'left-field' ideas that require early-stage, risk-taking investment. The private sector can be hesitant to provide this¹³³. As Iggy Pop has said: “*capital investment [...] never really leads, it always follows*”¹³⁴. This creates a persistent funding gap for artists trying to establish themselves with original and innovative work.

Public funding steps in to fill that gap. Acting as “seed money”, it sustains the cultural ecology and fosters new work – a role which some have compared to how patronage historically supported artists from Bach to Stravinsky¹³⁵. The BBC provides capital for **experimentation and prototyping** that the market often won’t¹³⁶. The commercial sector then benefits downstream, inheriting a pool of tested ideas and proven talent ready for further development.

This dynamic plays out across artforms. In comedy, writers consistently identify the BBC as one of the few places where new work is actively sought out and emerging talent nurtured¹³⁷. In music, artists like Ed Sheeran, The 1975, and Little Simz were risky, unknown propositions when BBC *Introducing* first showcased them¹³⁸, but **major commercial investment followed**.

BBC Film invests in around 15 feature films a year, focusing on emerging UK talent and culturally significant stories that may not otherwise get a foothold in the commercial market. Recent successes like *Aftersun* and *Rye Lane* join a back catalogue that includes *Billy Elliot*, *Philomena*, *Saving Mr Banks*, *The Lady In the Van*, *I, Daniel Blake*, *Fish Tank* and *The Power of the Dog*¹³⁹. Together, they show the BBC’s important role in launching celebrated British films and filmmakers.

By taking risks on new ideas and unproven talent, **the BBC “crowds in” new creative activity**¹⁴⁰ – encouraging a wider range of artists, formats, and voices to enter the industry, and opening pathways for new types of content to eventually become commercially successful. In this way it is “**market shaping**”: the BBC doesn’t simply respond to what is already popular, but actively helps to create and expand the market itself.

“Market forces would not cater for the wide range of cultural pleasures and public education the BBC is able to provide. Listening to a whole symphony (not just a single movement), accessing enlightening diverse cultural traditions in dance, drama and music, being open to the philosophical debates and all without the interruptions of advertising during the programme is something I’m willing to pay towards.”

– C W, CFTA supporter, West Yorkshire

Widening access and choice

The BBC doesn’t only deliver creative and high-quality programmes, but **genuine diversity** of content which audiences value and struggle to find elsewhere¹⁴¹.

The BBC is indisputably the backbone of **audio drama** in the United Kingdom, acting as the single largest commissioner and producer of the medium globally¹⁴². In an era when commercial pressures have largely driven audio drama from the private sector, the BBC’s public service mandate has kept the form alive, innovative, and widely available. *The Archers*, the world’s longest running audio drama series, attracts up to 4.7 million weekly listeners¹⁴³, making it the BBC’s most popular on-demand radio programme¹⁴⁴.

BBC audio drama productions are also a fertile training ground for writers, actors, producers and sound designers who later work on stage and screen. Benedict Cumberbatch was performing in the Radio 4 sitcom *Cabin Pressure* during his rise to fame in the TV series *Sherlock* (also produced by the BBC)¹⁴⁵. The scriptwriting careers of Caryl Churchill, Tom Stoppard, Lee Hall and Sally Wainwright were all launched by BBC radio drama productions, to name but a few¹⁴⁶. The continuing vibrancy of the form is celebrated each year at the BBC Audio Drama Awards.

BBC Radio is a significant producer and commissioner of original arts content across the board. From outside broadcasts of live performances on the BBC’s music stations to the *Front Row* arts magazine programme and *Artworks* documentaries strand on Radio 4, **the BBC helps millions of people to discover, experience and critically engage with art.**

“The BBC is the best value broadcaster, even just for the radio alone.”

– Mark, CFTA supporter, Shropshire

The BBC balances universality (content that appeals broadly to everyone), with diversity: catering to niche interests and representing the full range of people who make up the UK population¹⁴⁷.

Commercial pressures tend to push providers towards universality¹⁴⁸, favouring large, crowd-pleasing programmes designed to attract the biggest possible audiences. For advertising-supported channels and subscription-based streamers especially, this logic is hard to resist – but it comes at the cost of diversity, as more niche productions are rarely as commercially attractive.

The BBC plays an important role in offering a diverse range of distinctive content. This is not only the case in content production and commissioning, but in distribution too. A 2025 study by the University of Leeds and International Broadcasting Trust, delivered in partnership with the Campaign for the Arts, found that the BBC is showing a significantly bigger commitment to arts programmes on iPlayer than any other public service broadcaster on their comparable platforms¹⁴⁹. Only the BBC offered choices in a **wide variety of art forms** including ballet, opera, visual art and classical music. Its **arts programmes are more numerous, prominent and easily findable.**

The **BBC Archive** is also an important source of choice and challenge, and a vast trove of different arts and cultural content. It contains approximately 1 million hours of playable media, and features television, sound, written, and heritage content¹⁵⁰ (including the photos we have used in this report). As one user on Reddit writes:

*“The BBC Archive on the iPlayer is such a goldmine for me. I’ve just been enjoying watching *Angelou on Burns*, a 1990s documentary by the US poet Maya Angelou talking about her love of Robert Burns and touring Ayrshire where he was from. I followed up with an old *Arena* documentary about *Desert Island Discs*, and I’m currently watching a 1960s programme about *DIY*.”¹⁵¹*

This serves as a reminder of the BBC’s role as a cultural organisation with a rich history, alongside its current commissioning.

4. The BBC reflects & represents the UK's cultural diversity



Innovation and excellence does not exist in isolation; it is connected to and supported by the BBC's public service commitment to reflect the full richness of the UK's people, stories, and perspectives.

The ability to take creative risks, nurture new talent, and develop fresh formats is strengthened by having diverse voices both behind the scenes and on screen. As the BBC continues to innovate, it is essential that its ideas, programmes, and storytelling speak to, and come from, the whole of the UK.

The scale and breadth of the BBC's commissioning allow it to create **culturally relevant and distinctive content that reflects different communities** across the country¹⁵². It has formalised this commitment through clear diversity-spend requirements, and an approach that values both *landmark* portrayal (programmes that foreground diverse identities, such as *Dreaming Whilst Black*, *I Kissed a Boy* and *Big Zuu Goes to Mecca*) and *incidental* portrayal, where diversity is woven naturally into storytelling¹⁵³.

Achieving meaningful representation is a complex and ongoing process, and the success and sufficiency of the BBC's approaches is contested. Nevertheless, its structured, active commitment sets it apart in the sector.

"The BBC has been instrumental in enabling myself and many others of my generation from working class backgrounds to access arts, culture, education and quality programming and journalism that would otherwise have been denied to us. The BBC creates an equality in the UK that commercial broadcasting cannot achieve. The BBC charter places it as an essential and intrinsic part of the fabric of British life."

– Yvonne, CFTA supporter, Vale of Glamorgan

Left: Nish Kumar introduces *The Big Asian Stand Up*, at the City Varieties Music Hall in Leeds in 2018

The series showcased up-and-coming comedians and was part of 'The Big British Asian Summer', a season of programmes exploring what it means to be British and Asian.

Photographer: Vishal Sharma. © BBC Archive

Sharing and celebrating our differences

The BBC's commitment to diversity produces, at its best, programming that genuinely expands the audience's sense of British life and history¹⁵⁴. For example, Steve McQueen's anthology drama series *Small Axe* explored the lives, struggles and cultural vitality of West Indian communities in Britain from the 1960s to the 1980s, doing so through the lens of music, food, community spaces and identity. It brought a largely underrepresented chapter of British cultural history to a mainstream audience with great depth and humanity.

In other cases, culturally expansive arts programming can help represent the full creative diversity of Britain today: *BBC Young Dancer*, for example, has featured South Asian dance on an equal footing to other dance forms as an expression of modern British culture¹⁵⁵.

Bharatanatyam artist Adhya Shastry, who won the competition in 2022, reflected: "I now want to be more involved and immersed in the creative world – I feel like it's only just the beginning and there are endless possibilities and things I want to learn and do". Her win also gave prominence to her coach, Ananya Chatterjee, who teaches Indian classical dance in Reading, and who noted that "many young dancers will be really inspired to follow Adhya's trajectory and others, who haven't learnt the Indian style, can join us¹⁵⁶."

Audiences hold the BBC to a higher standard on diversity than other broadcasters precisely because of its public service role, expecting it to challenge stereotypes and promote social understanding in ways that commercial broadcasters are not obliged to do¹⁵⁷.

Regional representation is a particularly important dimension of this. Audiences want to see their local cultures, accents and identities reflected authentically, and BBC dramas and comedies are frequently cited as offering more nuanced portrayals than are available elsewhere¹⁵⁸. Positively received examples include *Hinterland* (the first BBC television drama with dialogue in both English and Welsh), *Sherwood* (with its historically-grounded depiction of the competing miners' unions in 1980s Nottinghamshire) and *Shetland* (with its representation of the Scottish archipelago).

"The BBC is one of the few remaining institutions that helps to retain the identity of our country, while at the same time keeping all the different regions of the UK's individual identity."

– Susan, CFTA supporter, London

BBC comedies where the joke is made from the inside are also valued by audiences, such as Northern Irish comedy panel series *The Blame Game* and Scottish sitcom *Rab C. Nesbitt*. Eight out of ten people think that British comedy reflects diverse people and cultures¹⁵⁹, and plays an important role in sharing life in the UK's different regions.

Viewers in Wales have particularly noted that the BBC **reflects their cultural identity better** than others, citing the high number of BBC productions filmed in Wales and the strong presence of Welsh presenters^{160 161}. The BBC production of *His Dark Materials*, which attracted HBO investment¹⁶², was majority-filmed in Wales¹⁶³, while *Doctor Who*, *Casualty*, *Keeping Faith*, and *Torchwood* have all featured strong Welsh representation. The 2024 *Gavin & Stacey* Christmas special – filmed in Barry, Vale of Glamorgan, and surrounding areas – was one of the most-watched scripted TV shows of this century.

Regional representation also carries tangible economic benefits. The crime drama *Shetland* has been shown to have a measurable impact on tourism, with a 2017 survey reporting that visitor numbers had risen by 13% and that tourists said that the programme had influenced their decision to travel. Similarly, the BBC's *Poldark* played a significant role in boosting tourism to Cornwall during its broadcast, drawing visitors who were inspired by the series' distinctive landscapes and cultural setting¹⁶⁴.

Opening pathways to creative careers

There are significant barriers to entering a career in the arts, resulting in fewer people from working class backgrounds being able to pursue creative careers¹⁶⁵. However, **a rich and vibrant arts and cultural ecosystem needs diverse people with different backgrounds and perspectives**. Diversity in the arts brings greater authenticity, new stories, and makes a broader range of audiences feel able to relate and engage¹⁶⁶.

Screenwriter Sally Wainwright, known for hit BBC shows such as *Gentleman Jack* and *Happy Valley*, has spoken about the barriers class and gender can pose for entering the TV industry, and she identifies confidence as a key need for working class people to enter the arts¹⁶⁷. She has said that "*talent needs people to show faith in it*", and that "*it's harder if you're a woman, and I think it's harder if you haven't been to a private school [...] When I started I was not confident... I had a lot of faith shown in me by people who mattered*"¹⁶⁸. Her first professional role as a writer was for BBC Radio 4 on *The Archers*.

We have already discussed, in section 1, the importance of the BBC for finding and developing new talent, creating a pathway into successful careers for artists from different backgrounds across the UK. This bolsters diversity in the sector for all kinds of creative roles, not only the major names.

For example, **BBC Asian Network Represents** is a flagship talent development initiative and broadcasting strand designed to discover and nurture the next generation of British Asian media talent. It serves as a professional sandbox where undiscovered presenters can showcase their personality and passion for British Asian arts, music, and lifestyle¹⁶⁹. Trainee presenters have the freedom to curate playlists that reflect the eclectic British Asian music scene – from Bhangra and Bollywood to Indo-Jazz and Desi Hip-Hop¹⁷⁰.

BBC Film’s Associate Producer Programme is funding the placement of emerging producers on their productions, with particular emphasis on supporting those from under-represented groups¹⁷¹.

The BBC plays a distinctive and influential role in advancing diversity within the UK’s cultural sector as an employer. While inequalities and underrepresentation remains, its workforce has historically included a higher proportion of staff from ethnic minority backgrounds than the wider creative industries¹⁷². Through previous initiatives like the Continuing Drama New Directors Scheme¹⁷³, and the current outreach and training work of the **BBC Academy**¹⁷⁴, the BBC has invested directly in widening access to production skills for underrepresented communities, helping build a more diverse pipeline of creators. External analyses, including work from the Sir Lenny Henry Centre for Media Diversity¹⁷⁵, underline the need for continued and increased action.

The BBC also plays an important role in providing stability¹⁷⁶, and transparent hiring practices, in a sector that otherwise has high precarity that disproportionately affects minoritised groups¹⁷⁷. This is also crucial for **giving people from all backgrounds the confidence to pursue a creative career**.

Recent Ofcom¹⁷⁸ data shows the BBC outperforming major commercial broadcasters in senior-level representation across gender, disability and sexual orientation, and research links such staff diversity to improved representation in content¹⁷⁹. **By approaching on-screen and off-screen diversity as interconnected, the BBC occupies a distinctive holistic position in the industry**¹⁸⁰, but as the Green Paper on the Charter Review notes, the BBC has further work to do to support diversity in the industry in future¹⁸¹.

Promoting UK arts and culture around the world

“The BBC is one of our best internationally recognised treasures.”

– Samantha, CFTA supporter, Coventry

Many BBC productions are hugely popular internationally. *Doctor Who* has been one of the UK’s top export shows¹⁸², and *Sherlock*, *Peaky Blinders* and *Luther* are also highly successful across the globe¹⁸³.

BBC Studios is the largest UK exporter of content, generating £2.2bn of commercial income in 2024-25, with all profits invested back into public service content¹⁸⁴.

Scripted drama is the main British TV export, accounting for 43% of international sales across all distributors¹⁸⁵. By actively committing to reflecting the UK’s cultural diversity, from regional accents to varied life experiences, the BBC develops a programme offer that is richer and more authentic. It means the **BBC can export a multifaceted portrait of British culture onto the global stage**, better reflecting the contemporary nation and its people.

“People all around the world value and rely on the BBC for knowledge and access to the arts. It is such a valuable source of contact between British and other cultures. Why risk losing this when it requires so little funding in comparison to the rewards it reaps for us! Please keep what sparks joy!”

– Siobhán, CFTA supporter, London

5. The BBC fosters a shared culture and sense of belonging



The BBC helps to hold the nation together through shared moments, national conversations and daily companionship.

The Green Paper accompanying the public consultation on the Charter Review states: “At its best, the BBC supports our democracy, shapes our national story and brings communities together through shared civic spaces, moments and conversations”¹⁸⁶. We believe the BBC’s arts and cultural provision is at the core of how it achieves this.

Research that has taken the BBC away from people for a brief period, and then asked them what they missed when they got it back, found that access to the **BBC made people feel at home and part of the nation, connected to British culture**¹⁸⁷.

This is reflected in viewing statistics. On average, **adults in the UK spend more time watching BBC television and iPlayer than all subscription streaming services combined**¹⁸⁸, with nine in ten adults using the BBC¹⁸⁹. The average adult in the UK watches BBC services for more than two hours every day¹⁹⁰.

Comedy on the BBC creates important shared moments, with seven out of ten people saying they talk about comedy shows with their wider networks, and seven out of ten people also believing that **comedy provides a reflection on Britain today**. Over the last year, eight of the top ten episodes of scripted comedy watched in the UK were on the BBC¹⁹¹.

“We need more than ever a collective point where we can come together. The BBC stands for that and is vital. Our country would be a poor place without it.”

– Philippa, CFTA supporter, Hampshire

Left: **Mathew Horne, Joanna Page and the cast of Gavin & Stacey (2007)**

James Corden and Ruth Jones’ comedy-drama premiered on BBC Three before moving to BBC One. The finale, broadcast on Christmas Day 2024, brought 21 million people together. It was the most-watched scripted TV show in over two decades.

Photographer: Mike Hogan. © BBC Archive

Sharing special cultural moments

The BBC is also similarly valued for **creating shared experiences of nationally important moments of cultural and heritage significance**¹⁹², such as Remembrance Sunday, Royal occasions, and historic anniversaries. Research by Ofcom about the BBC has found that working class people “consider it the home for coverage of big, milestone events that bring the nation together”¹⁹³. People feel that without the BBC, they would be cut off from a wider national culture around these shared moments¹⁹⁴.

The BBC consistently dominates Christmas Day viewing; in 2025, nine out of ten of the most-watched programmes were on its channels, and in 2024, it was all ten¹⁹⁵. The *Gavin and Stacey* finale¹⁹⁶ had 12.3 million TV viewers at broadcast, and over 20 million in total¹⁹⁷. This makes it the largest Christmas Day audience for any show across any broadcaster in the UK for over a decade. In 2025, *The King’s Speech* was the most viewed Christmas Day broadcast. The *Strictly Come Dancing* Christmas Special was third, giving a prominent platform to dance¹⁹⁸.

These moments of collective shared engagement can be contrasted against the individual viewing options offered by streaming services which cater to segments of taste. The BBC’s audience reach – underpinned by the ease with which it can be accessed, free at the point of use – makes it unique in this ability to bring people together for shared experiences around key cultural moments.

Breaking down access barriers for audiences

The BBC plays a crucial role in **turning Glastonbury into a shared national moment**, with more than 23 million people watching the festival on television in 2023¹⁹⁹, an audience vastly larger than the 210,000 who can attend in person²⁰⁰.

An in-person ticket to the festival (£373.50 plus booking fee in 2025) far exceeds the average household’s yearly spend on live entertainment²⁰¹. It now costs well over half of what the typical UK consumer spends on all memorable summer experiences combined²⁰², and more than double the annual cost of the licence fee for a whole household.

By broadcasting the festival widely and freely, the BBC makes one of the country’s most iconic cultural events accessible to millions who would otherwise be unable to experience it, helping to sustain its status as a collective cultural

touchstone. It’s also worth noting that BBC Introducing also has a stage at Glastonbury, so it not only brings the biggest performances to the whole nation, but also showcases new talent.

The BBC’s own festivals are also low cost or free, **reducing access barriers to shared live arts experiences**. For example, BBC Radio 1 Big Weekend tickets cost less than £40²⁰³ a day, a stark contrast to the £301.24 weekend festival ticket average in 2025, even considering the diversity of festival offerings²⁰⁴. BBC festivals also feature events designed to widen audiences, such as the Proms programming with many free events for different audiences²⁰⁵. This demonstrates the BBC’s role in enabling wide access to shared cultural moments.

The BBC does not only represent diverse people, it also works to **make its content accessible for a diverse viewership**²⁰⁶. It is the **only broadcaster committed to subtitling all of its programme content** and was the **first to introduce live audio description**, with flagship shows such as *Strictly Come Dancing* now accessible to blind and visually impaired audiences at the moment of transmission. The BBC also provides dedicated commentary for major national events and offers extensive British Sign Language coverage, from government briefings to state occasions and major cultural moments like Glastonbury and Eurovision. On iPlayer, the vast majority of the catalogue is subtitled, and viewers can adjust subtitle size to suit their needs²⁰⁷. This commitment to ensuring that everyone can access and enjoy its content not only sets the BBC apart in technical accessibility, but also reinforces its wider public purpose of creating shared experiences that bring people across the UK together.

Creating national conversations

In studies that have taken away access to the BBC for 9 days, the people taking part consistently reported missing headline content such as Saturday night shows, and regular programmes with huge followings waiting for the latest narrative updates^{208 209}. For many people in these studies, this made them feel disconnected from the social dimension around these programmes, as they couldn’t take part in conversations about them across their networks, and they also felt it broke a continuity in their lives with programmes they would watch regularly. People felt the BBC was essential for **creating national conversations** around these forms of shared regular programmes²¹⁰.

“My bible, my open university, my companion, day and night, at home, on holiday and in the car. No other broadcaster comes near the BBC.”

– Lily, CFTA supporter, Warwickshire

The BBC is ‘social infrastructure’, serving common interests and improving social cohesion

In international research, it is well established that countries with stronger public service media provision have more democratic engagement among their citizens²¹¹. However, this is usually thought about in terms of the news, and providing citizens with access to robust and reliable information.

At the time of writing, we are seeing concerning signs of weakened social cohesion and fractures in society that threaten our democratic culture. The UK’s social fabric forms a critical dimension of democratic participation, which is as vital as the information landscape, and the BBC has just as critical a role to play in supporting it.

What is social infrastructure?

“Social infrastructure” is a term used to describe spaces (both physical and digital), as well as organisations and institutions, that **bring people together**, enabling the building of bonds and bridging of gaps between communities²¹². Common examples of social infrastructure include public libraries, parks and community gardens, sports facilities, venues to attend events, etc.

Social infrastructure is important for tackling inequalities, supporting community cohesion and wellbeing, and making people feel a sense of belonging and ownership of where they live. Some features of social infrastructure that make it effective include:

- **Openness of purpose** (i.e. different people might come to a park for a walk, to play a game, to sit on a bench and read a book)²¹³.
- **Connectivity** (people from different neighbourhoods and different backgrounds might all use the same park, and and feel connected by the shared experience)²¹⁴.
- **Accessibility** (a good park is designed with features that make it welcoming and useable by different kinds of people, such as benches, shaded areas, etc.)²¹⁵.
- **Ownership and belonging** (feeling like the park is a safe place that the people using it feel invested in and want to see flourish)²¹⁶.

Based on everything discussed here, we argue that **the BBC functions as essential social infrastructure** by fostering shared experiences, national conversations, and a sense of community across the UK.

“Something the BBC achieves, and is not always recognised or credited for, is to enable listeners and viewers to feel part of a cohesive society and this is invaluable.”

- Penny, CFTA supporter, London

The BBC as social infrastructure

The BBC’s programming and initiatives not only provide cultural consumption but also cultivate human and social capital, connecting audiences with each other, with talent, and with UK stories in ways that **build social cohesion**²¹⁷.

Like physical “common interest infrastructures”²¹⁸, the BBC brings people together around shared interests and cultural participation, without being limited to a single place or identity, and its independence from market pressures ensures it can serve these public purposes. By supporting local and national cultural creation, nurturing talent, and enabling participation in shared cultural life²¹⁹, the BBC operates as a foundational resource that underpins community, wellbeing, and civic connection.

If we think about comedy as an example, the BBC not only nurtures new talent with opportunities that would not exist without it, but the diverse humour that this results in allows communities across the country to be seen and connected.

“With comedy, especially with BBC comedy, it allows you to have an insight into pockets of the UK and its subcultures and communities.”²²⁰

- Dhanny Joshi, Managing Director, Big Deal Films

We believe that the arts play a special role in how this insight is delivered, in contrast to factual news about different communities, as artistic mediums such as comedy offer an empathetic and inside view of what life is like for people different from ourselves²²¹.

Just as physical social infrastructure provides the spaces and connections that allow communities to thrive, the BBC provides the cultural infrastructure that supports and sustains the UK’s arts and culture ecosystem. By linking creators, institutions, and audiences across every region, and ensuring that diverse cultural experiences remain accessible to all, the BBC acts as a vital network that keeps the ecosystem connected, resilient, and thriving.

What does this mean for future funding of the BBC?



How the BBC is funded is a critical issue, as this directly translates into what it can offer, how, and for whom.

Research which compared different countries has found that the more a country spends on public service media, the greater a return it sees in trust and support for these services by citizens²²². The researchers concluded that “*there is no question that the world’s most successful public media services are associated with a healthy democracy and national culture*”²²³.

Since 2010-11, net public funding for the BBC’s UK services has fallen by around £2.7 billion (40%) in real terms²²⁴. This has been driven by government-imposed freezes on the licence fee and the transfer of costs for the World Service, BBC Monitoring, S4C and local TV²²⁵, but the number of paid-for TV licences has also been falling, with evasion and ‘no licence needed’ declarations rising²²⁶.

It is essential that the Government reforms and secures the BBC’s funding for the future, so that the corporation’s unique role in UK arts and culture is protected and strengthened.

“I am deeply concerned that the BBC is under severe threat of underfunding. It is a greatly respected global broadcaster and an asset to the UK. The BBC produces diverse programmes of an exceptionally high standard & enables radio listeners and viewers the opportunity to enjoy superb concerts and plays, documentaries, films and sporting events which would otherwise be financially inaccessible. [...] The BBC offers a unique service at a very minimal cost and it is absolutely essential that we preserve it. Any further budget restrictions will have a really detrimental effect on the programmes the BBC can produce and will cause massive unemployment in the industry and a lack of opportunity for so many talented people seeking careers in broadcasting. Please do all you can to continue the funding of this incredible organisation, which is the envy of the world and an asset to the UK.”

– Tessa, CFTA supporter, Kent

Left: **Jacob Collier plays piano with Jools Holland on Later... (2025)**

Later... with Jools Holland has platformed thousands of contemporary music artists for over 30 years. Jacob Collier is the ambassador for Get Singing, the BBC’s biggest new music education initiative in over a decade.

Photographer: Michael Leckie. © BBC Studios

How the BBC is funded now

The BBC is currently primarily funded through the licence fee. The licence fee is a household charge paid by people who watch or stream live TV or use BBC iPlayer, and it provides the BBC with a relatively stable source of public funding. This funding allows the BBC to operate independently of commercial and political interests and to deliver universal services for audiences across the whole UK, free at the point of use.

Alongside the licence fee, the BBC generates commercial income through its wholly owned commercial arm, BBC Studios, which sells programmes and formats in the UK and internationally and operates channels and streaming services abroad²²⁷.

The DCMS Green Paper accompanying the public consultation on the BBC's Charter Review discusses options for changing how the BBC is funded. This includes ways of potentially altering how the licence fee works, as well as options for different revenue streams. The option for keeping the licence fee as it currently works is included. It also includes potential changes to how the licence fee is collected and enforced, to both improve payment rates, and also to avoid prosecutions of vulnerable people²²⁸.

The Green Paper floats options for introducing advertising, and possible subscription models, as ways of raising revenue for the BBC²²⁹. These are presented as “ambitious commercial options”. However, at the Campaign for the Arts we believe that **ambition should be thought about differently for the BBC**, as a bold restating of principles updated for the modern day, which can enable it to flourish as a cultural organisation for public benefit.

Principles for how the BBC should be funded

We believe that the choice of funding model for the BBC should reflect its role as an essential part of our social infrastructure, supporting the vast downstream benefits we all gain as a result of the BBC's role in our culture and society.

Thinking about the BBC as social infrastructure means treating it as we do other infrastructure, like train lines, public buildings, etc. which need maintenance and investment²³⁰. This includes investment in people, which as we have already discussed is a vital way in which the BBC acts infrastructurally for the arts ecosystem. The *social* dimension of social infrastructure also has implications for funding, asking us to treat things in the category as collectively held.

We have determined five principles which we believe should underpin the BBC's funding model for the future. Adhering to these principles is necessary to uphold both the quality and the sustainability of the BBC, ensuring it can continue to deliver for the public good.

The BBC's funding must be fit for **USAGE**...

The BBC should be...	So every member of society has...	So the funding needs to be...
A shared asset	An equal stake	U niversal
Diverse & generous in its offer	Riches	S ufficient
Free at the point of use	Open, unlimited access	A utomatic
Creatively independent	Choice & challenge	G uardrailed
Responsive to need	Fair treatment	E quitable

The USAGE principles can be used to evaluate potential funding options by how well they would enable the BBC to serve as social infrastructure.

1. The BBC should be **a shared asset** so every member of society has **an equal stake**, so the funding needs to be **universal**.

Thinking about the BBC as social infrastructure that supports an entire arts and cultural ecosystem, and which benefits all of us directly and indirectly, helps to show why its funding requires a contribution from everyone who is able.

While we may each choose whether or not we subscribe to various content providers which benefit us individually, contributing to the BBC is something we do to benefit everyone. One person in a study about the BBC said: *“I’d rather pay more knowing that people can use it, not necessarily just us.”*²³¹

This report shows how the BBC contributes to a rich creative ecosystem and shared culture, from which we all benefit and in which we all belong. It is neither possible nor desirable to opt out of this.

The **licence fee** was designed in the context of specific technology and viewing habits (i.e. television sets used to watch live broadcast)²³². At the time, it made the fee *effectively* **universal** as almost all households wanted a television, and to use it to watch programmes live.

But the BBC’s funding from the licence fee has been declining as more households say they do not use the BBC’s services, or evade payment²³³. This means the model is decreasingly **universal** (and **automatic**) – it only applies to people who watch live television or iPlayer, and who self-identify by actively completing the form and making the relevant payment. 94% of people are still using the BBC each month²³⁴.

Comparing the BBC with other kinds of social infrastructure, we might consider a public park: this is a shared asset from which the whole community benefits, whether by having a space to run or play sports, to walk a dog, to sit and read, to meet people, etc. It is **everyone’s right** to use the park, and no one gets preferential treatment or better or worse tiers of experience when they go there.

It is also **everyone’s responsibility** to contribute to the park’s upkeep via the tax system, although everyone will pay different amounts in recognition of their personal financial circumstances according to that system. The universality of the park’s funding (we cannot opt out even if we never visit), recognises that everyone in the area benefits from it being there, whether through cleaner air or better community wellbeing.

2. The BBC should be **diverse & generous in its offer** so every member of society has **riches**, so the funding needs to be **sufficient**.

Sections 1 and 2 shows how the BBC’s public-spirited generosity means that talented artists get backing, grassroots cultural activity gets spotlight, and audiences benefit from an abundance of art and artforms. Sections 3 and 4 discuss the ways in which the BBC enriches our cultural ecosystem and broadens the range of arts and cultural content to which we are exposed. Section 5 shows how the BBC welcomes all of us in to major events, and makes each of us feel at home on a daily basis.

The BBC does this with care and curation, producing not merely high volumes but high quality. These riches are made available for everyone to enjoy, and for each of us to explore.

The BBC is generous in how it does this, and needs robust funding to remain so. But the declines we are seeing in **licence fee** payment raise questions about the current model as a **sufficient** source of income for the BBC to sustain this function.

The Government has floated the idea of a **subscription** model for some, or even all, BBC content, as a way to ensure income remains **sufficient**. But research shows that if the BBC operated under a subscription model, even if partial, it would have a strong financial incentive to prioritise the preferences of those best able to pay. This would impact its offer, and fundamentally change the relationship between us and it²³⁵.

Common definitions of infrastructure often state it must be non-rivalrous²³⁶. For example, if someone goes for a hike in a national park, it does not prevent someone else from taking their dog for a walk there. We can all enjoy the beauty and (bio)diversity of the national park without competing with one another or diminishing it.

The BBC’s scale means it is large enough to offer (cultural) diversity and provide something for everyone, but this abundance requires **sufficient** funding.

3. The BBC should be **free at the point of use** so every member of society has **open, unlimited access**, so the funding needs to be **automatic**.

The Culture Secretary has said, “I believe the BBC, alongside the NHS, is one of the two most important institutions in our country”²³⁷.

In the UK we all benefit from access to healthcare, free at the point of use, without barriers or limits. This is only possible because it can be assumed that contributions are being made **automatically** (and **equitably**) to the system that provides this healthcare.

This is important because it prioritises needs being met, and because it helps build a connection between people and the institution that is relational and not transactional. It doesn’t matter how much you use it, but it matters to know that it will always be there when you need it.

We think the BBC’s cultural offer should feel like this. It may not necessarily be funded with the exact same system as the NHS (through **general taxation**), but the system should still be **automatic** enough to make the service open, unlimited, and free at the point of use. This has historically been possible via the **licence fee**.

In section 5, we discuss the importance of the BBC being for everyone, in creating openly available, shared cultural moments. In sections 1-3, we show how the BBC is there to provide generously for artists, cultural organisations and audiences. And in section 4, we discuss other ways in which the BBC reduces access barriers, for example by providing captioned and sign language interpreted content.

A **subscription** model would clearly introduce a barrier at the point of use. Moreover, the Green Paper suggests the Government is considering the option of **verification** for the BBC’s online services, such as requiring anyone using iPlayer to enter details from their TV licence. There are deep inequalities across the UK in digital skills and confidence with technology²³⁸, which raises questions around **equity**. But any system like this would introduce a barrier to **automatic** access, changing the experience for everyone.

To compare with other social infrastructure, we might consider a public library. When someone comes through the doors there is no need to prove they’ve paid, or show ID, or be granted admission. The library is open for all to freely use the resources; there is no special locked shelf which you have to pay more to open.

4. The BBC should be **creatively independent** so every member of society has **choice & challenge**, so the funding needs to be **guardrailed**.

The BBC’s creative range is discussed throughout this report. In section 1 we talk about the wide range of artists who gain prominence thanks to the BBC, meaning audiences get to experience their new voices and ideas. In section 2 we discuss how a broad spectrum of arts organisations are brought to different audiences, and in section 3 we discuss the breadth of artistic work this brings to us all. In section 4 we discuss how important different kinds of representation are within this offer.

All of this results in a vast range of choice in the BBC’s arts and cultural content, including material that will be surprising and outside of our usual tastes, providing important challenge and opportunity for discovery.

This is made possible through the BBC’s creative independence. If what the BBC creates and shares is limited either by political decisions, or by commercial pressures, it will narrow the choice we can experience, and reduce the potential for serendipity.

The Green Paper has raised the possibility of introducing **advertising** on the BBC. However, this would create pressures around editorial and commissioning choices, as advertisers will favour certain content over others. This is something we feel the BBC’s funding must be **guardrailed** to prevent.

This consideration has led some countries who previously had advertising in their public service media, such as Spain, to move away from it as it distorted editorial independence and created pressure on programming choices²³⁹.

Thinking of the public library as an example, it is clearly important users trust that librarians can make independent decisions, curating library purchases creatively, so that the collection remains broad and offers exposure to different kinds of materials. We would not find it acceptable if the books in a library had to cater to the tastes of the politicians in power, if the collection changed when the government changed, or if libraries only stocked books considered acceptable or appealing to brands or advertisers.

5. The BBC should be **responsive to need** so every citizen has **fair treatment**, so the funding needs to be **equitable**.

In section 4 of this report we focus on the BBC's responsibility to reflect and represent the UK's cultural diversity. Another way of thinking about this is to consider how the BBC can best serve people from all kinds of backgrounds, all across the country. This relies on the BBC treating all of its audience, and all the creative workers it employs, fairly.

For the BBC to be able to respond to the full diversity of needs of its audience, and live up to the high standards of fairness expected from it, it must be funded **equitably**.

Currently, thousands of people across the UK are charged each year with non-payment of their TV **licence fee**. TV Licensing applies a public interest test to every case to try and ensure vulnerable people are not prosecuted, but cases do proceed to court. Furthermore, factors including household composition and financial difficulty contribute to a gender disparity – in 2023, 75% of those prosecuted were women²⁴⁰. This has been cited by detractors of the BBC as part of an argument for abolishing the BBC's universal public funding altogether, but this would undermine the benefits that this funding brings, which are highlighted in this report.

A more **equitable** approach which considers people's ability to pay would help alleviate this criticism and uphold positive public perceptions of the BBC.

Other kinds of social infrastructure are supported by systems with concessions and exemptions built in. Railcards on the National Rail network provide discounts for 16-30 year olds, those aged 60+, families, couples, veterans and disabled people²⁴¹. The NHS is supported by income tax, which is applied progressively and only paid above a certain earnings threshold. If someone wants to go swimming at the leisure centre, they can generally see a price list that may have children's prices, senior rates or student discounts. Everyone needs to contribute, but an effort is clearly made to make the various systems be, and feel, **equitable**.

“The BBC and the NHS are the six letters that hold this country together. Both need proper funding and support.”

– James, CFTA supporter, Cambridge

In summary...

The BBC is unique not merely as a broadcaster, but as a cultural organisation that forms an indispensable part of life in the UK.

It acts as the nation's largest engine for creative vitality, consistently investing in new talent and ideas that shape our society and economy, and bolstering innovation across the creative ecosystem.

By funding original content, championing diverse perspectives on and off-screen, and supporting a geographically-spread creative economy, the BBC actively shapes and sustains the arts for the benefit of the entire country.

Its public service ethos ensures that it delivers not just universal entertainment, but also vital educational, niche, and challenging cultural content.

It creates a shared national experience that is, as one CFTA supporter noted, *“literally ‘priceless.’”*

Ensuring the BBC is properly funded, now and in the future, is essential to maintaining the creative success and cultural fabric of the whole United Kingdom.

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