Chief Executive Foreword

Caroline Norbury MBE

Creative England Chief Executive

I am proud to share with you Creative England’s Annual Report which highlights the impact of our work and the many creative projects we have supported throughout the year.

Creative England was established to combat the challenge that whilst talent might be everywhere, opportunity is not. This overview of the year sets out how our company has realised that objective - supporting creative people and creative businesses and connecting them to the money, the markets and the networks that help them thrive.

Over the past year we have supported over 90 creative businesses, worked with 274 filmmakers and invested nearly £10m into the creative sector. The ambition and breadth of this task means that’s through our feature film programme for new filmmakers – iFeatures – where location and place is at the heart of what we do – whether we’re working with the National Lottery funding, through the BFI. This enables us to bring the best creative talent to the fore and tell stories that reflect England in all its diversity, creating content that is both creative and commercial – and what better reason to invest in the industry?

We want to thank our board of non-executive directors, ably led by our Chairman John Newbigin OBE, who generously give us their time, expertise and wisdom.

We believe our country is filled with some of the most creative, innovative and inventive people and businesses in the world and we know they are scattered all over this green and pleasant land. We have tried to capture as much as we can to give you a picture of that richness and ingenuity, the creativity that makes this tiny country a world-leading creative powerhouse.

The ambition and breadth of this task means it would be impossible to deliver without having strong relationships with other organisations, both public and private sector. Since its conception, Creative England has had the support of government, most noticeably through the use of the Regional Growth Fund to make investments which, crucially, can then be leveraged to attract further private sector investment.

Chairperson Foreword

John Newbigin

At the end of its sixth year, Creative England is long out of its ‘start-up’ phase and, like any successful creative business, is now ‘scaling-up’; scaling up an already remarkable story of success in developing new film talent; scaling up its reputation as a shrewd investor and mentor for creative businesses; scaling up its role as a leading player in developing and implementing policies that grow the creative sector and contribute to the significance of ‘place’ as a touchstone of government strategy; and scaling up its reach and ambition by building partnerships with major brands and commercial investors.

Continuing austerity in the public finances, coupled with a dense fog of uncertainty around Brexit, has made this an extremely challenging year for us - just as it has for many of the companies, local authorities and other public agencies with whom we work. But these hard times have vindicated the company’s strategic aim of moving away from reliance on public funding and towards a self-sustaining model of investment, loans and services. And our growing engagement with a wider spread of businesses in the tech sector has provided gratifying evidence that it’s at the point of collaboration between creative talent and innovative technology that really exciting things happen.

Creative England continues to prove that commercial acumen and public purpose need not be at odds – many of the businesses and projects with which we have worked during the last year have brought social and cultural benefit to communities as well as generating jobs, growth and profits. New talent has been encouraged to shine, new businesses built, new ideas brought to fruition, ignored voices heard.

It’s been my great privilege to have chaired Creative England through the first chapter of its life and to see it grow as an organisation that practices the values it preaches – innovation, ambition, social purpose and tight financial management. That achievement is thanks to a great team, brilliantly led by Caroline Norbury and supported by a Board whose commitment, experience and generosity continues to be exceptional.
It was a busy year for Creative England and the talent we supported – here is our rundown of the main successes.

2016

April
Rachel Tunnard, director of Adult Life Skills, wins Nora Ephron Prize at Tribeca Film Festival
Digital Healthcare Fund launches in Yorkshire & Humberside
Formisimo launches Nudgr app to help brands boost conversion rates
iShorts+ Funny Girls at LOCO Film Festival
The Floow awarded 2016 Queen’s Award for Enterprise

May
Announcement of Creative England-supported feature, Dawn of the Dark Fox, the first film directed by an individual with autism
Chanya Button wins LOCO Discovery Award for first feature Burn Burn Burn
Launch of our partnership with Cheshire East to create a £200,000 investment fund for medium-sized businesses within the area
We select our 2016 filmmakers for the third iteration of iShorts

June
Creative England launches two new programmes to provide dedicated support to producers at Cannes Film Festival
Notes on Blindness, The Confession and Paa Jo and the Lion premiere at Sheffield Doc/Fest
We launch ‘First Bourne’ accelerator in partnership with Silicon South in Dorset

July
We celebrate Northern creativity at CELive: Northern Lights at The Lowry in Salford
Launch of ProConnect programme in the Greater Manchester region
Announcement of new partnership with Kamarama to champion and support the best small creative and digital businesses across the UK
We take our supported producers to Galway Film Fleadh and give them direct experience of international markets, co-productions, the perfect pitch and closing a deal

August
Launch of joint report with Nesta – The Geography of Creativity
Landmrk, supported by Creative England, was selected for the Unilever Foundry 50
We unveil our iFeatures top 12, which we hand-selected from hundreds of applications from promising filmmakers across England
We re-open applications for our Greenshoots programme in partnership with Microsoft
Lockwood Publishing opens a brand-new studio in Brighton

September
We take several games companies to EGX and sponsor the investment summit on games investment in the UK
Premiere of ITV’s Victoria, which we worked extensively on
Prolific user Wyl Menmuir is nominated for the Man Booker Prize
Production companies, freelancers & SMEs connect at our Crew Night in Bristol in partnership with Screen Wales
Adtech start-up Avocarrot is acquired by Glispa Global Group for $20M
Lady Macbeth and The Levelling have their world premieres at Toronto International Film Festival
The Girl with All the Gifts opens for theatrical release in UK cinemas
October

Creative England and Film Office partners publish a report on the 87 feature films and 98 TV dramas shot on location in England outside London this year. We generated £102m of inward investment.

GamesLab Leeds programme launches for game developers in the Leeds City Region.

We launch our brand-new website, revamped to make it even easier to navigate.

17 BIFA nominations for Creative England-supported films, including Notes on Blindness, The Levelling, Adult Life Skills and The Confession.

Cupris Health is a finalist in the Mobile Ecosystem Forum awards in the Mhealth category.

Twine launches new campaign for Remembrance Day, with a World War II veteran using VR to return to the scene of battle.

November

‘England is Creative’ launches - shining a light and celebrating the talented individuals and companies we have worked with across the years.

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December

Applications open for Barclays Eagle Lab Flight.

Four GamesLab Leeds companies are offered the opportunity to go to GDC Expo in San Francisco.

We announce our co-investment into Tate Britain’s Great British Walks in partnership with Sky Arts and 7 Wonder.

December

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Launch of iAMDigital fund in partnership with Nominet Trust.

We launch the Filming Partnership Toolkit, our one-stop shop for ensuring an optimal environment for productions based in the English regions.

Snaptivity secures long-term contract with Edgbaston Cricket Ground.

Lady Macbeth, The Levelling and Spaceship screen at the BFI London Film Festival.

Cate Blanchett presents Hope Dickson Leach with £50k IWC Filmmaker Bursary Award at London Film Festival.

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See more information on the Annual Report.
Creative England’s mission is to unlock the creative power of our country to drive national prosperity.

We do this by investing and supporting creative ideas, businesses and the talented people behind them.

We help individuals and businesses achieve their full creative and commercial potential. Moreover, we identify future opportunities to grow the economy and generate jobs.

Everything we do is underpinned by our commitment to six core values:

Joining the dots and making it happen
Being brave and taking risks
Bringing imagination to life
Thinking differently and blazing a trail
Fostering the best
Making it personal

Our investment programmes help creative entrepreneurs and businesses that struggle to raise money elsewhere. But unlike most traditional financiers, our investment comes with help to develop business skills and encourage the scale-up that is desperately needed in a sector dominated by under-capitalised micro-businesses.

Our programmes with filmmakers, writers and creative practitioners reflect stories and communities from every corner of England – and do it with commercial as well as creative ambition. Our expert help and guidance to film and TV productions helps ensure the UK’s moving image industry is able to find the best crew and locations across the country.

Our wide range of partnerships mobilise public and private resources, funnelling them into companies that are helping to secure England’s future prosperity by developing cutting edge technologies, immersive content, inspiring film and thrilling video games.

“The creative industries generate £87bn and employ almost 2 million people, making them the fastest growing sector of our economy and one in which UK talent is genuinely world-class. We need to keep it that way, not just for commercial reasons but because these are businesses that bring energy and pride to communities; they say something about our culture and our values. They make a difference.

Now in its sixth year, Creative England continues to innovate and grow.

We believe that life isn’t binary – you can be creative AND commercial and for many businesses their companies are about MORE than profit. Our approach to loan recoupment, for example, means that rather than threatening companies if they are struggling with their repayment schedules, we advise and support them – resulting in recoupment rates that commercial banks tell us they can only dream of.

“Without the funding our firm would almost certainly be much smaller, with less of a worldwide market presence. The loans from Creative England allowed us to dream bigger and grow further and faster.”

– The Floow

“I connect with talent in the regions – exciting new storytellers with diverse ideas and distinct voices and without Creative England’s support, I simply wouldn’t be able to connect with them.”

– Jennifer Monks
We work proactively to find people who have talent but not the money, connections or even the recognition of their own potential. Just as importantly we celebrate talent, by raising the profile of people and businesses that aren’t getting the recognition they deserve.

2017 was the third year of our CE50 awards programme – identifying 50 creative companies that we think are beginning to fly and make a difference. Alongside the CE50 we nominate 10 Future Leaders – entrepreneurs and creative practitioners who, in our view, have the flair and ability to build substantial future-facing companies. By partnering with national print media these two award programmes increase profile and provide an invaluable calling card for some of tomorrow’s big-name entrepreneurs, helping them raise finance and open doors to new markets.

I wanted to say a special thank you for allowing Unrival, and me specifically to be part of it. It was nerve racking initially, but I did enjoy myself and the opportunity to meet some great people on the day.

— Hue Painter, COO, Unrival

shortFLIX is exactly what we need right now, as an industry and as a society – fresh voices and fresh stories that open up the conversation about who we are

— Riz Ahmed (Actor, filmmaker)
Rachel Tunnard’s debut Emotional Fusebox was nominated for Best Short Film by BIFA and BAFTA. Creative England invested in and developed her first feature-length film, Adult Life Skills, which won the Nora Ephron prize at Tribeca and was screened at Cannes. The director and writer then won on to win the BIFA for Debut Screenwriter.

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Case Study:
Filmmaker Rachel Tunnard
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England is Creative

“England is Creative” shone a light on some of the country’s brightest creative and tech talent through engaging online story-telling. We asked some of the high-profile talent we had helped to ‘give something back’ by fronting the campaign, and clips from the campaign were viewed 5 million times – growing our online reach by 87%.

Through England is Creative, we also discovered that we had given practical meaning to the idea of a ‘creative community’.
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£157,000
 invested

13
 new games made
by Leeds companies
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There’s an infrastructure dedicated to supporting, nurturing and - let’s not beat around the bush - financing creative people so they can realise their vision and fulfil their potential.
– Simon Bird
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There are so many stories to be told and it doesn’t matter what class you are or where you’re from, if there’s a universality at the heart of them, they’ll translate.
– Sharon Horgan
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Supporting Rising Talent
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GamesLab Leeds

2016 saw the launch of GamesLab Leeds, a programme of funding and support for games developers and digital companies in the Leeds City Region. As well as financial support, the companies have received one-on-one mentoring, business guidance and been able to collaborate with universities.
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iWrite

In our quest to find new voices and new writers, we formed partnerships with five leading regional theatres in the country and devised iWrite – a pioneering programme for young playwrights, helping them develop the craft skills and industry knowledge they need to be able to work in film and TV as well as for the stage. 15 new scripts were produced and three commissioned as short films – one of them, Real Gods Require Blood, by (written by Tom Benn, directed by Moin Hussain) was the only British short film selected for the 2017 Cannes Film Festival Critics’ Week.
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We invest in digital tech businesses too, believing that when creative ideas meet cutting-edge technology, they spark off each other to create new products and ideas.

As well as helping those starting out, it’s equally important to help small creative businesses to scale up - introducing them to new markets, improving their business skills and staff development, and helping them raise the right kind of capital for growth and sustainability.

We encourage businesses to think more ambitiously, whether it’s exploring overseas markets or looking at unmet demand closer to home - for example, by bringing together creative practitioners to generate social innovation.

We make a little go a long way. Where a typical venture capital fund may make a couple of investments a year, in 2016/17 we invested in more than 50 businesses.

Between 2013-17 Creative England invested £18m of the government’s Regional Growth Fund, largely as loans or equity, creating a mechanism that will keep that public money working again and again, for years to come. In addition, by monitoring the performance of more than 300 companies on a quarterly basis, we provide business advice and a bespoke repayment schedule that means we are now recouping almost 95% of the loans we make and helping small businesses improve their financial management and business planning.

Investing and Growing Innovative Creative Businesses

Our investment and support programmes work across all the digital content platforms – film, television, games and VR.

Barclays EagleLab Flight

This year we teamed-up with Barclays Eagle Labs to create and deliver the Barclays Eagle Lab Flight accelerator - Where Creativity Meets Technology. The programme brought together thought leaders and visionary creative practitioners to share their expertise, experience and ideas. It offered high-growth small businesses working in creative and tech up to £25k of investment. This was then backed up with a three-month residency in Brighton, where each received expert guidance from a wide range of coaches, mentors and guest speakers.

After the programme, the companies were then given the opportunity to pitch for follow-up investment from Creative England.

ProConnect

ProConnect is an exciting programme of support for small creative companies working in the film and TV industry, running across Greater Manchester and Hertfordshire.

Following the success of Greater Manchester ProConnect, in which we helped 138 companies, in 2017 we launched Hertfordshire ProConnect, based at Elstree Studios.
Making the Films That Others Don’t

Just as we look for talent in every region of England, we also look for stories that reflect lives and communities that are often overlooked when it comes to bigger budget films or mainstream television series.

The last five years has enabled us to uncover great stories and unexpected talent from regions and communities in almost every part of England. There have been the city centre locations of Birmingham (One Mile Away) and the rural farming communities in Yorkshire and Somerset (God’s Own Country and The Levelling). They’ve told stories of boxers in the West Midlands (Jawbone), middle-aged couples in Norwich (45 Years), confused adolescents in Yorkshire (Adult Life Skills) and stock-car racing kids in Norfolk (The Goob) - not to mention a dysfunctional psychopath in the North East (Lady Macbeth).

We aim to nurture sustainable film and TV businesses too, by working with teams of writers, directors & producers to build partnerships with international distributors and production companies.

The Creative England Production Fund

Using National Lottery funds from the BFI, the Creative England Production Fund supports feature films of all genres, focusing on stories from the English regions.

Highlights from the last year included God’s Own Country, which premiered at Sundance Film Festival and Berlin International Film Festival, and Notes on Blindness, a documentary about a man losing his sight, which used VR technology to offer audiences a powerful and original insight into the impact of blindness.

iFeatures

Creative England’s flagship film initiative, iFeatures, develops and produces films in partnership with the BFI, BBC Films and Creative Skillset. Each round develops a slate of 12 projects pitched by teams of writer, producer and director working together. It then goes on to provide core production funding of £350K, sometimes topped up by the other partner sponsors, to three of the productions. The quality of the development process means that even projects that have failed to make it to the final three often find production finance from other sources.

Case Study:

In 2016 iFeatures films Lady Macbeth and The Levelling both had their world premiere at Toronto Film Festival and UK premiere at the BFI London Film Festival. Each won critical acclaim at festivals around the world and saw commercial success in more than a dozen countries. In addition, Hope Dickson-Leach (writer and director of The Levelling) won the inaugural IWC Shaffhausen Bursary at the 2016 BFI London Film Festival.
Producer Hothouse, is an intensive professional development programme which gives new producers a six-month placement with an established production company and aims to grow the pool of regional producers based outside London.

We are incredibly grateful to the companies participating in this programme, which includes Sheffield’s Warp Films, producers of Dead Man’s Shoes and This is England; Scott Free Productions, of Before I Go To Sleep; Altitude Entertainment; 42; Number 9 Films; Pulse Films; Trademark Films and Vertigo Films.

Our Creative Producer Initiative aims to help emerging producers by strengthening their creative film skills and learning more about developing for other formats and platforms.

The ten producers selected for the programme in 2016/17 have subsequently combined forces to establish a pioneering Producers Collective, a talent hub working across the length and breadth of the country.

Growing New Producers

Producers are the lifeblood of our industry – they are the ones often taking the financial risk on projects and at the back of the queue for getting paid.

This challenge is even harder if they are based outside London, so Creative England has worked on a number of initiatives this year to solve it.

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Adult Life Skills
Director: Rachel Tunnard
Writer: Rachel Tunnard
Producer: Michael Berliner, Sean Wheelan

God's Own Country
Director: Francis Lee
Writer: Francis Lee
Producer: Jack Tarling, Manon Ardisson

Jawbone
Director: Thomas Napper
Writer: Johnny Harris
Producer: Michael Elliott, Johnny Harris

Notes on Blindness
Director: Peter Middleton, James Spinney
Writer: Peter Middleton, James Spinney
Producer: 104 Films

Lady Macbeth
Director: William Oldroyd
Writer: Alice Birch
Producer: Fodhla Cronin O’Reilly

Spaceship
Director: Alex Taylor
Writer: Alex Taylor
Producer: Olivier Kaempfer, Nicola Bowen

The Girl with All the Gifts
Director: Hope Dickson Leach
Writer: Hope Dickson Leach
Producer: Rachel Robey

The Levelling
Director: Alex Taylor
Writer: Alex Taylor
Producer: Olivier Kaempfer, Nicola Bowen
For every pound we invest in creative businesses, we leverage at least another pound of matching investment from other sources. We leverage even greater value by brokering business partnerships that massively extend the reach and impact of what we could do on our own.

We bring together private and public sector, new talent and established names, local and national, micro-business with global corporate. Central to this approach has been the development of ‘Big Guy/Little Guy’ approach, where we’ve brought together the business skills, market intelligence and financial muscle of major companies with the creative ingenuity and agility of creative micro-businesses.

Amongst our corporate partners in these programmes are Sony, Microsoft, Disney, the NHS, Barclays and Unilever.

The UK game industry is already at the forefront of both technical and creative excellence with British studios creating some of the most popular titles in the world. This year, Creative England has helped the next generation of games developers take advantage of this growing market by investing in indie games and supporting new companies through programmes such as GamesLab Leeds and Greenshoots.

Greenshoots

Greenshoots is one of our ongoing partnership programmes with Microsoft. Companies have gained invaluable support and guidance directly from Microsoft, alongside investment into new games from Creative England.

Barclays’ Eagle Lab Flight

With the growth of online banking and the consequent closure of many high street branches, we initiated a partnership with Barclays, offering 3-month residencies and £25k investment to product-led, innovative businesses.

With a successful pilot completed in Brighton, it was clear that it was not just the creative business that benefitted. Barclays hope to gain new customers and new insight into the fast-moving world of the digital creative economy - and there’s one less boarded-up shopfront in the high street.

Tate Britain’s Great British Walks

Tate Britain’s Great British Walks is a television series, created in partnership with Tate and Sky Arts. It presents epic travelogues through British art in the company of personalities such as Danny Baker, Simon Callow, Miriam Margolyes, Michael Sten and Richard E. Grant as they journey through parts of England’s landscape that inspired their favourite paintings. Produced by Birmingham-based 7 Wonder, this is part of our partnership with Sky Arts; championing television production from the English regions.
Championing the Creative Industries

We work with local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to foster better and more productive relationships between creative businesses and their local communities. We help them to improve the offer they can make to incoming film and TV productions, emphasising the extent to which such relationships can bring place-making benefits as well as an obvious economic boost.

We emphasise the way in which the creative community can help solve some of the most pressing social problems of the day, and are active members of the government’s Creative Industries Council - ensuring the voice of the ‘little guys’ is heard at the highest level.

The Geography of Creativity

This year, we worked with the innovation and research agency Nesta to jointly produce an overview of the regional diversity of the creative industries. Nesta used the latest data and official definitions to map the creative industries in the UK and demonstrate their economic significance across the country, in turn informing policies to strengthen them further.

Summary of findings:
- The creative industries are becoming more important in local economies across the UK.
- We identified 47 creative clusters across the UK.
- The UK’s geography of creativity isn’t only about ‘hip creative cities’.
- Creative communities in different parts of the country are working together across cluster and administrative boundaries.
- The geography of the UK creative industries is an interconnected system.

North West
- 6.7% of all jobs in the North West are in the creative industries.
- Five of the UK’s creative clusters are in the North West.
- Warrington and Wigan form one of the key ‘creative conurbations’ that are driving the UK creative economy, alongside the more obvious towns and cities. 7,128 people in Warrington and Wigan work in the creative industries, making it the fourth largest cluster in the North of England.
- Manchester is the creative cluster with the third highest number of creative businesses in the UK, and has 62,972 people in creative jobs. 29% of those are employed in Film, TV and Radio.

North East
- 5.4% of all jobs in the North East are in the creative industries.
- Newcastle is the third largest cluster in the North of England, 20,070 people work in the creative industries in Newcastle and 10% of those work in TV, Film and Radio.

Yorkshire and the Humber
- 6% of all jobs in Yorkshire and the Humber are in the creative industries.
- Leeds is the second largest cluster in the North of England.

South West
- 8.3% of all jobs in the South West are in the creative industries.
- Six of the UK’s 47 creative clusters are in the South West.
- 7.4% of people employed in Penzance work in the creative industries.
- 11.2% and 12.9% of businesses in Bristol and Bath respectively are in the creative industries, and 44% of those are in software and digital.

London and the South East
- 10.2% of all jobs in the South East are in the creative industries.
- 16.2% of Brighton businesses are in the creative industries, which translates to 11% of jobs and employs 18,056 people.

Reading is the fourth largest creative cluster in the UK, with 11% of jobs in the creative industries. 78% of those jobs are in software and digital.

East Midlands
- 6.9% of all jobs in the East Midlands are in the creative industries.
- 7.7% of businesses in Northampton are in the creative industries, 17% of those businesses are in TV, Film and Radio.

West Midlands
- 6.8% of all jobs in the West Midlands are in the creative industries.
- 9.6% of businesses in Leamington Spa are in the creative industries and 49% of those businesses are in software and digital.

East of England
- 7.7% of all jobs in the East of England are in the creative industries.
- 8.9% of businesses in Chelmsford are in the creative industries.
The crewing service has been widely used during 2015/16 and as such has seen 6,055 crewing days recorded across 198 productions, a 32% increase on 2014/15 (when there were 150 productions). TV drama accounts for the bulk of the service at 57% (3,438 crewing days) and closely behind is feature film with 23% (1,370 crewing days).

Creative England acts as a one-stop shop offering practical support for productions filming outside the capital. Depending on the production’s needs, this can range from location finding services to getting the right crew members or helping to navigate the processes for film permits.

This year we have continued to develop close partnerships with film offices representing cities and counties across England, using their expertise and local knowledge to give producers a seamless experience. The importance of these partnerships can’t be overstated, and together we have supported productions such as Victoria, Ackley Bridge, Peaky Blinders and Rogue One: A Star Wars Story.

This year we also joined forces with local authorities in Greater Manchester and Hertfordshire to deliver ProConnect, a programme helping small creative businesses break into the TV and film industry.

 Shoot Days in the Regions

Shoot days in the English regions has increased by 11% with 8,853 shoot days being recorded in 2015/16. Feature films form 12% (1,053 shoot days) with TV dramas making up 45% (3,999.25 shoot days).

6,055 crewing days

We don’t just invest in other people’s talent – we do the same at home with a programme of professional development and career progression for our own staff. Team surveys, systematic appraisals, pay reviews that benchmark our pay structure against comparable businesses all contribute to a highly motivated and committed workforce.

We set high standards of environmental responsibility for our own staff and for those we work with – last year’s iFeatures productions all agreed they would monitor their environmental impact with a view to being carbon neutral.

We set ourselves targets for investment in projects led by women, by talent from the BAME communities and work to ensure that people with disabilities can contribute their skills and tell their stories.
Supporting the Innovators

**104 Films**
104 Films has built a world reputation for its work in developing disabled film makers. Recent films include Notes on Blindness which premiered at Sundance 2016 and was released to acclaim by Curzon in the UK. The film has won many awards including the BIFA for Best Documentary. The company also produced Unrest - a feature film by Jen Brea telling of her battle to understand M.E., which premiered in competition at Sundance 2017.

**Evidential**
Evidential is fast becoming the leading authority in Electronic Presentation of Evidence (EPE). Using bespoke software solutions and tailored graphics, that present cases professionally, it is already proven to save millions of pounds of taxpayers’ money whilst also improving the Criminal Judicial System.

Evidential has provided acclaimed solutions for many of the UK’s high-profile trials and is proud to have won international contracts with the United Nations, the International Criminal Courts and the European Commission. Evidential is an essential resource when communicating big data and complex evidence in court and is integral to the creation of the Digital Courtroom.

**Hammerhead VR**
Hammerhead is a leading virtual reality and immersive content studio. Founded in 2014, the multi-award-winning team is recognised as one of the UK’s pioneering pure-play VR studios, with a reputation for creating premium games, films and experiences. ABE VR, their first VR experience to be certified by the British Board of Film Classification. The studio has also produced acclaimed projects for companies including Jaguar, HSBC, Royal Navy, WW, IBM, and Lexus. In early 2017 Hammerhead launched its latest consumer title, the survival horror game Syren, for PlayStation VR, SteamVR and Oculus.

**Strange Thoughts**
Strange Thoughts is an innovations company that tells brand stories using emerging technology. Founded in Bristol in 2013 with the intention of disrupting the traditional agency model, the company uses a creative process called Radical Collaboration to rapidly prototype ideas, products and campaigns for global brands.

Working with a vast pool of multidisciplinary experts from around the world, Strange Thoughts delivers unusual responses to client challenges for a list including Reebok, Pokerstars, Heineken and CarX. Strange Thoughts delivers joyful technology to engage and excite consumers. Recent campaigns include harvesting clouds to brew beer, mind-controlled robotics, translating pet-collars and a drone destruction derby. The company is led by serial entrepreneur Seth Jackson and has been fuelled by investment from Creative England.

**VooFoo**
VooFoo Studios Ltd. is an independent video games development studio, founded in 2007 by a small team of experienced industry professionals. Utilising its own proprietary cutting-edge technology, VooFoo’s first game, critically acclaimed Hustle Kings, was released for PlayStation 3 in 2009, reaching the top of the PSN charts and earning VooFoo two nominations at the Develop Awards.

Building on this early success, VooFoo has gone on to develop Hustle Kings on PlayStation Vita, Backgammon Blitz and the acclaimed ‘Pure’ series of games – Pure Chess, Pure Pool and Pure Hold’em - all of which have further established a reputation for developing visually stunning, commercially successful games. VooFoo’s first self-published game, Mantis Burn Racing, is available now on PlayStation 4, Xbox One and Steam (for Windows PC).
Investments Overview FY 16-17

Nearly £10m has been invested at year end 2016/17.

As part of RGF programme 78 Digital and Games Companies received £6.9m investment.

The RGF programme has leveraged £32m in private sector funding and has created and safeguarded 1,300 jobs.

86 film companies and projects received direct investment of £3m

In March, we invested £254k in three regional productions.

*Creative England Statistics - also including data kindly provided from Council run Film Offices covering Kent, Bath, Bristol, Liverpool and Northern Film & Media

Investments Overview FY 16-17

Income

2017 £ 8,208,619
2016 £ 8,628,834

Direct Expenses

2017 £ (6,262,291)
2016 £ (7,245,596)

GROSS SURPLUS

2017 £ 1,926,328
2016 £ 1,383,238

Operating costs

2017 £ (1,892,156)
2016 £ (1,725,990)

OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)

2017 £ 34,172
2016 £ (342,752)
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<th>Amount (£)</th>
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Your support helps us grow, develop and shape the creative industries

Creative England’s activity is supported by a variety of partners including the National Lottery, the BFI, the Regional Growth Fund and the European Regional Development Fund. In addition, we would like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their generous support in 2016–2017

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