



CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

A DYNAMIC
ENGINE FOR
GROWTH,
TALENT AND
INNOVATION

NORFOLK'S CREATIVE INDUSTRIES — A DYNAMIC ENGINE FOR GROWTH, TALENT AND INNOVATION

Norfolk's creative industries are among the county's most dynamic and fast-growing sectors.

Spanning design, branding, film and screen production, digital games, creative technology and literature, the region benefits from a distinctive ecosystem powered by leading institutions such as Norwich University of the Arts and the University of East Anglia (UEA).

This talent-rich environment supports hundreds of businesses, strong skills pipelines and innovative cross-sector applications that contribute to Norfolk's economic and cultural identity.



FOUR THEMES DEFINE NORFOLK'S CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

1. HIGH-PERFORMING CREATIVE CLUSTERS WITH NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Norfolk, particularly Norwich, hosts a **concentrated network of creative businesses** and freelancers across branding, design, film and TV, games and digital arts, such as Newfangled Games, creators of the award-winning game Paper Trail, who secured a licensing deal with Netflix Games.
- Branding and design represent a nationally significant cluster, with employment in Norwich growing 36% between 2018 and 2023 – **more than double the UK average**¹. High levels of self-employed consultants and specialist micro-businesses produce award-winning work, such as Pivotal, named one of the best digital marketing agencies in Europe in 2025.
- The county's games, film and immersive technology businesses are increasingly cross-pollinating, creating innovation in storytelling, education, wellbeing and virtual production.
- This convergence positions Norfolk as a **testbed for creative technology** with applications far beyond the creative industries themselves.



2. RAPID SUB-SECTOR GROWTH FIRING UP THE ECONOMY

- Creative employment in Norfolk and the wider region has **grown at nearly three times** the national average².
- Film and screen activity is accelerating, with more than **670 screen-sector** businesses and freelancers operating across the county³. Norfolk's screen industries attract national and international attention, delivering millions of pounds in spend and strengthening tourism.
- Norfolk's digital games sector is gaining visibility through **award-winning studios** and a supportive start-up ecosystem fostering routes to investment, public-funded grants and international exhibition opportunities for local games businesses. The county hosts one of England's largest public games events, Norwich Games Festival, attracting **8,000 visitors** per day.

670

SCREEN-SECTOR
BUSINESSES AND
FREELANCERS

36%

EMPLOYMENT
GROWTH
2018-2023

3. EDUCATION, TALENT AND R&D PIPELINES - A SKILLED COMMUNITY OF CREATIVES

- **Norwich University of the Arts**, named the inaugural **Arts University of the Year** by the Daily Mail, consistently ranks among the UK's top creative arts universities, offering globally recognised courses in games, film, animation and design. New facilities, such as the Immersive Visualisation and Simulation Lab and Sony Virtual Production Studio, position Norfolk as an aspirational centre for creative-tech innovation.
- The University of East Anglia's Creative Writing MA continues to produce internationally acclaimed writers, including **2014 Costa First Novel Award winner, Emma Healey**, author of Elizabeth is Missing, as well as winners of the Nobel Prize in Literature and the Booker Prize, reinforcing Norfolk's cultural reputation while contributing to the wider creative economy.
- Norfolk's creative ecosystem is stimulated by dynamic professional networks, strong community collaborations and partnerships between education and industry.

4. INNOVATION, INVESTMENT AND POWERED-UP GROWTH COMMUNITY OF CREATIVES

- Programmes such as Creative East and Create Growth have supported more than **80 creative businesses**, strengthening investment readiness and generating millions in raised capital.
- Affordable living costs, high quality of life and specialist creative infrastructure give the region a clear advantage in attracting and retaining talent.



WHAT THE CREATIVE SECTOR NEEDS NOW

1 UNLOCK INVESTMENT

Establish a regional creative growth fund that unlocks private investment and retains scaling companies in Norfolk. Introduce production funds, match-funding and targeted incentives to attract high-value film, TV and games projects, while expanding access to innovation grants and university-led R&D collaborations.

2 BUILD A NORWICH GAMES HUB

Provide financial and practical support to establish a centrally located Norwich Games Hub, enabling industry and education partners to maximise the impact of immersive and interactive technologies.

3 RETAIN TALENT AND STRENGTHEN SKILLS

Invest in technical, commercial and leadership development for mid-career creatives, alongside inclusive and neurodiverse employment pathways. Strengthen collaboration between education providers, employers and sector bodies to turn Norfolk's talent pipeline into sustained local growth.

4 RAISE NORFOLK'S PROFILE AND ENCOURAGE ADVOCACY

Work with government champions, alongside national and international creative influencers, to position Norfolk as a creative region with a growing record of attracting and returning on investment. Ensure the Norfolk creative sector is top of the list for national commissioners, funding bodies and global financiers.

Norfolk's creative industries combine cultural depth, a strong business community, world-class education and a fast-growing innovation ecosystem. With focused investment, the right infrastructure and greater national visibility, the county can become one of the UK's most competitive creative clusters, driving economic growth, attracting talent and electrifying the national creative economy.

Sources: 1. Brandland Phenomenon: Mapping and Growing a Cluster, 2. Creative East, 3. Olsberg.SPI, report into Norfolk screen sector

