

Dynamic Creative and Cultural sector key to East Midlands' economic growth

Research jointly commissioned by East Midlands Cultural Partners and East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) published today evidences the importance of the creative and cultural economy in the East Midlands.

The report produced by Experian “***Unlocking the potential of the creative and cultural sector***” shows the East Midlands has some of the world’s strongest creative and content industries which drive innovation and creativity in other sectors. It evidences that ***East Midlands creative & cultural businesses contributed nearly £3 billion of GVA to the region’s economy in 2009: nearly 5% of its total value.*** It also shows the growth of the creative industries has been at a faster pace in the East Midlands than the UK as a whole, with an increase of 10.4 per cent compared to 8 per cent for England*.

The report was commissioned to create a reliable and accurate economic bench mark for the sector to ensure its true value and vital contribution to the economy is fully evidenced. This report enables the sector to measure its economic performance alongside the better known roles creativity and culture play in enriching lives. The report also provides a clear view that it is in the creative and cultural sector that the East Midlands competitive advantage lies.

East Midlands Cultural Partners brings together the region’s key organisations in the field of culture and sport; Arts Council England, English Heritage, Museums Libraries Archives Council, Sport England and EM Media. The five agencies together work with Government Office for the East Midlands, East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) and local government to ensure the untapped potential of the sector is fully realised, particularly given the international resonance and reach of the region’s cultural activities and of the content produced by local creative businesses.

East Midlands Cultural Partners worked with a wider steering group including the East Midlands Creative and Cultural Economy Partnership (*emccep*) and the former East Midlands Cultural Observatory to commission the research.

“Sam Bestwick, Director of Engagement (East), MLA and Chair of East Midlands Cultural Partners comments: *“Although much anecdotal evidence pointed to the cultural and creative sector’s valuable economic contribution in the past this had been patchy. The sector’s tremendous cultural and social impact has been more consistently documented. The partners involved in the production of this report which we are delighted to publish today welcome this key piece of work which effectively and confidently articulates the sector’s proven economic contribution to the region’s and the UK’s economy.”*

“Unlocking the potential of the creative and cultural sector” states that 150,000 people in the East Midlands work in the creative and cultural sector (excluding freelancers) and this figure is set to grow: with the focus firmly on innovation, growing a low carbon economy and new markets in services and experiences targeted at an ageing population, the creative and cultural sector will be essential in stimulating the region’s economic growth.

The report demonstrates that ***sport, software, computer games & electronic publishing make up 40% of the sector in the region:*** the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will highlight the region’s expertise in sport and the computer games sector recently established its historical connection to the region with the naming of a key highway, by Derby City Council after one of its most famous virtual citizens Lara Croft.

Within a tough economic climate the report also highlights ***the role the creative and cultural sector has to play in driving growth in the upturn:*** cultural experiences such as enjoying the region’s museums and libraries, heritage sites and new internationally iconic centres such as Curve in Leicester and Nottingham Contemporary and digital media centres become increasingly attractive as visitor destinations. They also help develop cohesive communities providing a space to educate, engage and integrate. The report states the creative/cultural built and historic environment also plays a large role in attracting and retaining the local population.

Experian strongly recommend that ***developing the assets of the sector will enhance the region’s competitiveness: the visitor economy depends on the physical and cultural assets of the region’s cultural and creative sector.*** *“Unlocking the potential of the creative and cultural sector”* concludes that the sector is one of the most innovative and dynamic in the economy and there is a clear need for policymakers to implement a clear, strategic vision in order to best support its future development.

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For further information contact Sam Bestwick, Director of Engagement (East), Museum Libraries and Archives Council and Chair of East Midlands Cultural Agencies Group sam.bestwick@mla.gov.uk

Notes to editors

Italics denote quotes or key facts from the report

* the measure is in the increase of units designated as creative industries as highlighted within a report produced by *emda* (2009) *The East Midlands in 2009*.

The full report - ***Unlocking the potential of the creative and cultural sector; A Meta Review of the Evidence Base*** complements the work being carried out nationally by the CASE (Culture and Sport Evidence) research group. The full report can be downloaded here <http://www.emda.org.uk/tourism/docs/potential-Creative-Cultural-Sector.pdf>.

East Midlands Cultural Partners (EMCP)

EMCP is a partnership comprising the East Midlands Cultural Agencies Group; Arts Council England, English Heritage, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), Sport England, EM Media and representatives from Government Office for the East Midlands, East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) and Local Government. East Midlands Cultural Partners works through collaboration on areas of work and activity which prioritises culture promoting a coordinated approach to strengthening the cultural and creative sector and evidencing its value and contribution to the region's economy.

East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) is one of nine Regional Development Agencies in England, set up in 1999 to bring a regional focus to economic development.

Ten years on, independent evaluation shows *emda* has:

- Had a significant impact on the region's economy
- Generated economic benefits that substantially outweigh its overall costs
- Put back over £9 of economic output (or GVA) into the regional economy for every £1 it spends
- Produced more than £1 billion in economic benefits per year
- A wider impact on people, places and businesses in the East Midlands that cannot be captured by figures alone.

emda is committed to supporting the region through the current downturn and has put in place a range of measures to provide real help during these challenging times.

Over the long term, *emda*'s aim is to deliver the 2006 Regional Economic Strategy (RES) by working in partnership with public, private and voluntary organisations. The RES highlights the themes of productivity, sustainability and equality and sets out key priorities until 2020 to ensure the vision for 'a flourishing region' can be achieved.

For more details visit www.emda.org.uk

