# Culture & Commerce Taskforce A Year of Fuelling Creative Renewal

Impact, achievements, lessons and legacy

Final Report October 2021



Culture & Commerce Taskforce

## Contents

| Foreword, the Lord Mayor of the City of London |
|--|
| From the Taskforce                             |
| Executive Summary                              |
| The Taskforce's recommended projects           |
| Achievements                                   |
| Lessons learned                                |
| Legacy and next steps                          |
| About the Culture &<br>Commerce Taskforce      |
| Acknowledgements                               |

2 2 3

6

9 12

15

16

18



Now, more than ever, our cities and communities need us to work together to breathe new life into familiar spaces in order to ensure London's creative energy and competitive strengths remain qualities that make it the best city in the world to live, learn, work and invest.

THE RT HON THE LORD MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LONDON ALDERMAN WILLIAM RUSSELL



## Foreword

The Lord Mayor of the City of London



The pandemic affected every single part of our lives and it was clear to me that we needed to work together to bring our cities back to life. This teamwork was at the very heart of the Culture & Commerce Taskforce.

I am immensely proud of the work we have all undertaken in the last year to bring these sectors closer together, By piloting many new initiatives which are supporting London, the organisations involved have helped accelerate recovery and deliver benefits for both sectors.

However, our behaviours, our working patterns and our economy have all undergone huge changes – continuing to significantly impact our urban centres. Now, more than ever, our cities and communities need us to work together to breathe new life into familiar spaces in order to ensure London's creative energy and competitive strengths remain qualities that make it the best city in the world to live, learn, work and invest. The work of the Taskforce has shown that together we can bring about a far stronger recovery for our people and places than we can alone. So, I hope the work of my Taskforce will continue to be a call to arms.

That call to the cultural sector is to test how working closer with businesses can give you access to new spaces, commissioning opportunities and skills development for your staff.

For the commercial sector it is to explore how the cultural sector can enhance your business; whether it's through creative experiences that encourage your staff back to the office and inspire them to think differently, or by transforming spaces across cities into the vibrant destinations where clients and investors want to do business.

I believe that it is up to all of us to drive this and when we all work together to take advantage of these opportunities – we will truly fuel London's creative renewal.

THE RT HON THE LORD MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LONDON ALDERMAN WILLIAM RUSSELL

## From the Taskforce



RUTH DUSTON OBE OC, MANAGING DIRECTOR, PRIMERA CORPORATION LTD



As members of the Culture & Commerce Taskforce, we've found it hugely useful to have a forum to come together beyond sector silos to help accelerate London's recovery at this challenging time. The wide-ranging partnerships that have put into practice the recommendations we made in **Fuelling Creative Renewal have** shown that when the creative. business and civic sectors work together, we can achieve something far more powerful for our cities than we can alone. We all have a responsibility to continue to be ambassadors for this joined-up approach to recovery and bring what we can to the table. whether that's skills, ideas, resources or investment. By doing this we can ensure that London remains one of the world's most vibrant and attractive cities."



SIR NICHOLAS KENYON MANAGING DIRECTOR, BARBICAN (to September 2021)



The Taskforce is delighted to share this report -it's been a great experience to interact with other sectors over the past year to reinforce the fact that culture and commerce are not two separate worlds but depend vitally on each other. Thanks to the Lord Mayor's initiative, we've learned that working outside your own sector to find the common ground and mutual benefit needs an open mind and the flexibility to take risks, but brings huge rewards. In particular, the connected nature of our spaces, both the buildings and the activity in them, brings us together with fresh ideas as to how culture and commerce together can be at the heart of recovery. We hope this report provides a stimulus and some ideas for those looking at how urban ecologies can link up to create a future for our cities."

## **Executive Summary**

This report celebrates a year of collaboration between cultural and commercial sectors that has stimulated economic recovery and shown that by working together we can have a stronger impact.

"The Taskforce has shown that together we can bring about a far stronger recovery for our people and places than we can alone. When the creative, commercial and civic sectors all work together to share their resources and expertise – we will truly fuel London's creative renewal."

THE RT HON THE LORD MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LONDON ALDERMAN WILLIAM RUSSELL



This activity has built a foundation for a long-lasting shift in collaborative working between the sectors, establishing

# 60 organisations

creating new partnerships and committing new investment.

The Culture & Commerce Taskforce brought together industry leaders who championed projects that unite business and the creative industries for **mutual positive benefit**.

After having set out a blueprint for how Culture & Commerce could work together earlier in 2021 - **new, innovative models** have now been tried, tested and shown to work.





Over the last year, City of London Corporation and Culture Mile delivered with partners:

## £623,000

worth of collaborative, cross-sector projects within the Square Mile and beyond.

## £157,000

in-kind commitments that put into practice the recommendations in the Taskforce's report Fuelling Creative Renewal.





6,000

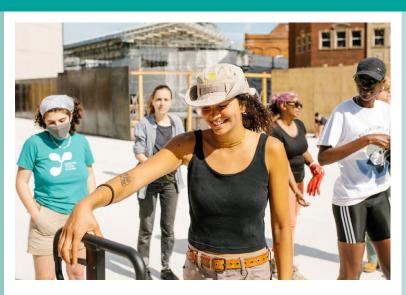
#### Executive Summary continued

Commercial partners benefitted from **increased profile** and the **increased attractiveness and vitality** of their sites making them welcoming to all and **drawing people** into the area. They were better able to **upskill** their workforce and meet employee needs for an inspiring working environment.



Creative partners secured new employment opportunities and new spaces to work, developing their skills and providing platforms for new activity to reach new audiences.





This is only the beginning; it has become clear that the success of our cities is dependent on this work continuing and growing, and requires **ALL parts** of urban ecologies to play a role, contributing expertise, resources and investment.





Mutually beneficial collaboration will **continue beyond** the conclusion of the Culture & Commerce Taskforce through connections that have been embedded and partnerships that have been made over the past 12 months, fuelled by a strong desire from both sectors to do more.



The Taskforce has put in place the foundations for cultural, commercial and civic organisations to adopt and adapt these ideas elsewhere, establishing a **knowledge bank** of resources, freely available to others, as a way to share insights, good practice and recommended ways of working to areas wanting to adopt similar approaches.

#### Executive Summary continued

Taskforce in numbers



## Taskforce recommended projects

In their *Fuelling Creative Renewal* report (published February 2021), the Taskforce made three key recommendations:

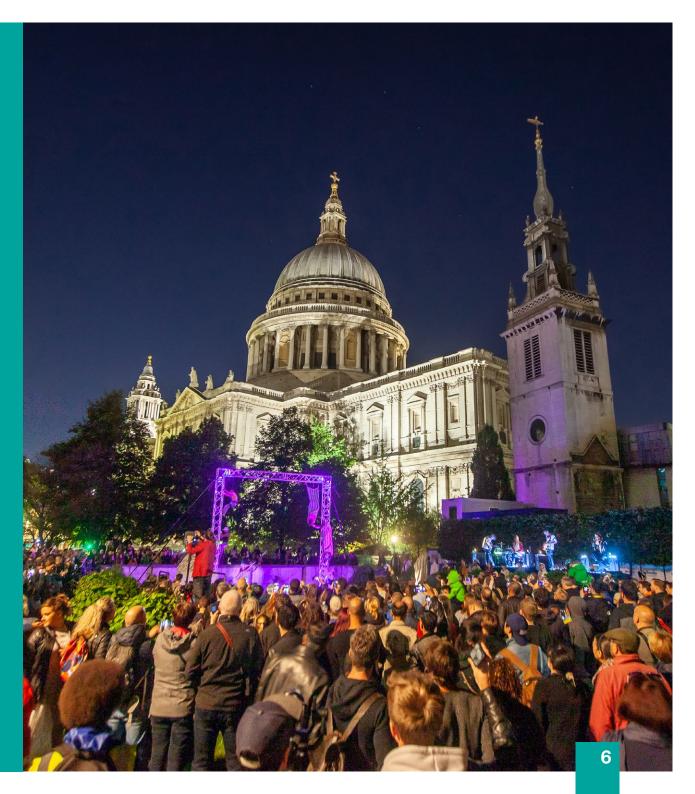
Enable **Creative Activation**, bringing London alive through creativity

2 Facilitate **Culture & Commerce Exchange**, building skills and knowledge sharing between culture and commerce

Develop **Creative Enterprise Hubs**, providing space for cross-sector innovation

These have been put into practice through **ten projects**; five led or co-led by the City of London Corporation, with a further five delivered by a range of partners and providers supported by the Culture & Commerce Taskforce Project Team.

3



#### Taskforce recommended projects continued

#### The five City Corporation projects were:



#### Enhancing the City

Six schemes co-designed by cultural and commercial sectors to fill commercial spaces with curated creative activity, with the aim of showcasing London's vibrancy and attracting people back into London's Central Activities Zone.

## 2

#### **Creatives for London**

An in-depth look at five City Corporation urban renewal projects which employed creatives with the aim of promoting best-practice and encouraging more commissioners across sectors to do the same.



#### **Creative Exchange**

A wide-ranging skills and knowledge sharing programme that scoped, developed, signposted and offered two-way skills development and knowledge sharing opportunities between the creative and commercial sectors.

## 4

#### **Creative Skills**

A week-long workshop with a cohort of young people who had chosen creative subjects at GCSEs or A-Levels. The project aimed to highlight barriers and develop peer-informed solutions that address low numbers of young people opting for arts subjects at GCSE and A level, especially young people from backgrounds underrepresented in the creative industries.

## 5

#### **Create in the City**

An exploration of how creative workspace and creative enterprise hubs can be established through a range of interventions involving the cultural, civic and commercial sectors. The workstream spanned small-scale experimental initiatives, a large exemplar project and longerterm work by the City Corporation to deliver changes in planning policy.









#### Taskforce recommended projects continued

#### The five partner-led projects were:



#### Celebrating London's Creative Offer

A series of major events and activations that harnessed culture's ability to attract people into areas which have suffered from low footfall. Taskforce member organisations led several high-profile campaigns such as the Mayor of London's *Let's Do London* programme and the Central London Alliance's prominent #LondonLoveAffair campaign. The City Corporation supported both financially and has delivered a comprehensive cultural programme across the City.

## 2

#### Createch

An exploration into the City's potential to become a 'digital test bed' for the creative sector – building a fit-forpurpose environment for creatives to grow and test new technologydependent products, experiences and services. Tech London Advocates facilitated discussions with the City Corporation and NDT Broadgate on the potential for 56 infrastructure.

## 3

#### Creative Digital Acceleration Programme

A skills and capacity building programme taking a wholeorganisational approach in which creatives learn digital skills from commercial sector "experts". Digital Boost has set up a pilot programme with the Charterhouse to test a whole-organisation approach.

## 4

#### International Creative Collaboration Programme A project to scope a programme of

international exchanges bringing together culture and commerce to reimagine the trade visit.

## 5

#### Creative Freelancer Network

A project dedicated to giving creative freelancers a voice to create a better working environment for themselves. The Mayor of London's *Creative Freelancers: Shaping London's Recovery* Programme has been established, addressing this proposal.









## **Achievements**

Over the space of a year, the Taskforce championed activity to test new innovative models that revived the cultural sector and brought people back to the City.

#### **1,300** people have been brought into the city through initiatives such as Gaia's Garden.

Projects responded to the Taskforce's call to renew the creative sector in new ways with **artist-led programmes** that increased the creative activity taking place, strengthened the vitality of the area and **attracted diverse communities**. Initiatives such as Gaia's Garden, have already brought in 1,300 people to the City, predominantly from underrepresented communities, to access some of the programming hosted within the site.

The Taskforce has **activated new partnerships** and created a community of people from multiple sectors who are committed to breaking down silos as a way to accelerate London's recovery from the pandemic.

Enhancing the City: Gaia's Garden

A partnership between creative studio Play Nice and property developer Dominvs Group establishing a community-built public garden offering free workshops and events to Londoners looking to learn more about sustainability.

> Read more in the digital case study

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For example, under the new *City Vistas* programme, more than 20 organisations with expertise spanning art curation, property management and public realm development **co-designed** a new model for exhibiting art in the City. The project has successfully demonstrated a collaborative style of working between culture and commerce, ensuring **mutual benefit** for the partners is firmly embedded from the start.

## **£780k** worth of cash and in-kind support secured for Taskforce activities

**Significant investment,** in-kind support, resource and expertise has been leveraged from across the commercial, creative and civic sectors over the 6-month planning and piloting period to deliver, enhance and explore new activity.

Taskforce activity has demonstrated the **varied and valuable contributions** that organisations can bring to these partnerships; from skills, to physical assets (such as space or artwork), to promotional opportunities and direct financial investment.

New **employment opportunities** for creatives have been generated, as well as **significant media profile** for many of the partnerships. It has demonstrated a willingness to commit resources where there is strong mutual benefit to be gained.



#### **Enhancing the City:** City Vistas

A scheme to repurpose office foyers, retail units and vacant spaces as exhibition spaces – filling them with creative content to showcase London's vibrancy and attract visitors and workers back to the City.



#### Achievements continued

#### **Create in the City** NDT Broadgate

A year-long partnership between New Diorama Theatre and British Land supported by the City Corporation, creating a 20,000 sq ft rehearsal complex, offering free space to independent artists.



in the digital case study

# 66

We looked at Broadgate particularly because of the work the City were doing with their Culture & Commerce Taskforce... We could see the potential to work together to create a testbed to see how culture and commerce could work together for mutual benefit to accelerate London's recovery... It wouldn't have been possible without the partnership of the City Corporation.

ANNA DEVLET HEAD OF SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, BRITISH LAND

the area as a welcoming and inclusive creative district, something that the action. For example, the new artist partnership between New Diorama Theatre and British Land) was accessible space. Already 42% of work is being led by Black, Asian and space is run by artists who identify as working class and 23% of work in the space is being led by disabled or deaf artists.

## 20,000 sq ft of free creative space created

#### Achievements continued

#### Creative Exchange Programme Co-mentoring pilot

Creatives and business entrepreneurs working together as both mentor and mentee to share their expertise, perspective and process with each other, whilst learning, exploring and expanding as partners of equal value.

oring and equal value.

See more in the digital case study

## "

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We still really enjoy working with individual artists and will continue to do so. Furthermore, after working with Culture Mile, we also feel more equipped and inspired to approach larger organisations for more ambitious collaborations; exciting times ahead!"

MARIANNE VAN GILS NICOLAOU CULT VISION

#### Silos between culture and commerce have

been broken down in many ways. Not only have perceptions changed about the respective sectors but there is greater recognition of the value of partnerships. The Culture Mile x Company of Entrepreneurs *Co-Mentoring* pilot, for example paired artists and creatives with business entrepreneurs for a series of co-mentoring sessions. The impact was wide ranging, changing the business mindset of many of the creatives and unlocking creativity in the business 'practice' of the entrepreneurs. This resulted in an increase in revenue of over £50,000 for one entrepreneur, the publication of a children's book for another and recognition by several creatives of

the value not only of their creative practice, but also their creative thinking. All pairs will continue their mentoring relationships beyond the official end of this programme.

These achievements are not just short-term, the Taskforce has laid the foundations for a **permanent shift in closer, collaborative working.** Experience of working on projects has **capacity-built** many organisations and inspired a new-found confidence in what can be achieved through new cultural, commercial and civic collaboration.

The work of the Taskforce has **generated an interest and desire to share learning** and practice with others taking a placebased approach to recovery.

## "

We want to establish the arts and culture in the North East at the heart of helping our communities and business sector recover, that's why we got in touch with the Culture & Commerce Taskforce to see how we can learn from their approach so it has impact here. We look forward to staying in touch and sharing experiences."

TONY KING SAGE GATESHEAD

## **Lessons learned**

These projects have also demonstrated that working in this way offers significant added value, but it is not without challenges and there have been many lessons learned along the way.

Our cities are inter-connected so **recovery requires cross-sector collaboration**. The combination of cultural, commerce and civic sectors within partnerships has shown that together, we can achieve something **more impactful, holistic** and richer than sectors can alone.

The Taskforce activity has identified the areas where partners are **most energised** to work together, demonstrating that the proposed projects are **viable** and can contribute towards **accelerating recovery**. There is benefit in **starting small and scaling** as more direct interventions, like Cult Vision and BE Offices, can be quicker to implement. Large-scale projects offer ambitious outcomes but with multiple partners, they bring the **complexity** of funding arrangements, managing numerous stakeholders and navigating a variety of priorities which takes time and resource to get right.

Some form of **brokerage** is helpful to bridge the gaps between partners, to translate sectoral language or overcome perception barriers. For example, in the case of the University of the Arts London Takeover project, this valuable role was undertaken by a Business Improvement District and a Business Partnership.



#### **Enhancing the City:** UAL Takeover

Cheapside Business Alliance and EC Partnership worked with University of the Arts London to enable this year's Theatre Graduate Showcase to 'take over' 30 commercial sites.

**Read more** in the digital case study

#### Create in the City: BE Offices

Serviced office providers BE Offices provided Culture Mile with a workspace hub to meet and exchange ideas between organisations for 4 months.

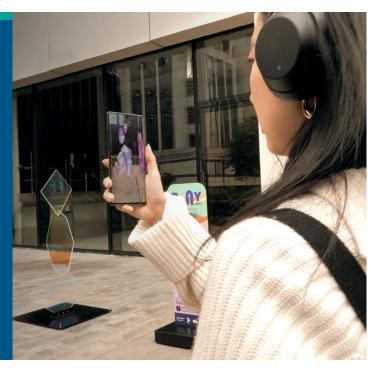


Read more in the digital case study

#### Lessons learned continued

#### **Enhancing the City** HARMONY at London Wall Place

Brookfield Properties and Culture Mile co-commissioned Guildhall School of Music & Drama to create a series of augmented reality artworks and compositions to be featured in an immersive experience at London Wall Place.





There is a real appetite for **local creative content** that is not only right for a space but reflects the place in which it was made, especially if it supports local and emerging artists and/or students. This is illustrated by HARMONY at London Wall Place.

The pandemic saw a major increase in the use of digital engagement throughout the creative sector and the Taskforce noted that digital upskilling and acceleration was needed across cultural organisations to progress and sustain this. Taskforce activity found that even when free digital training is available, it is **not widely taken up**. Awareness is often lacking, which is coupled with some **scepticism** of skills being transferred and learnt from the commercial sector. The Taskforce has worked with Digital Boost to raise the profile and accessibility of their free mentoring offer through **targeted communications** to creative and cultural professionals, as well as testing a model of holistic support for a cultural organisation as a whole.



#### **Creative Exchange Programme:** Digital Boost

Digital Boost is a community of digital professionals from organisations such as Google, Bloomberg and Vodafone, who want to help small businesses and charities upskill and grow. Free digital upskilling and one-to-one mentoring sessions are available for creatives and culture professionals, both individually and as organisations.



Read more in the digital case study

**Free sessions** can be booked here

#### Lessons learned continued

Valuable results can be achieved by turning conventional models on their head. For example, the Creative Skills project took a student-led approach to a 5-day workshop and with support from Deloitte's creative agency ACNE, produced a creative campaign which will be used to influence their peer group, careers advice and recruitment.

In the Creatives for London programme, the inclusion of creatives in urban renewal project teams was shown to bring about quite ground-breaking shifts in practice, as well as strengthening community activation. This is useful to note in light of the urban renewal programmes taking place across cities as a result of the pandemic.

It is clear that whilst there is broad recognition that creativity has a valuable role to play in our cities' recovery, unlocking the investment required to deliver these collaborative initiatives (both financial and through organisational capacity) can still be a challenge. Many of these projects have been undertaken on small budgets and project managers found it extremely challenging to secure the necessary investment needed to maximise their potential. Despite the shared goal of fuelling London's creative renewal. the case needs to continue to be made in order to secure the necessary investment.



#### **Creative skills project**

A week-long workshop with young people to develop peer-informed solutions that address low numbers of young people opting for arts subjects at GCSE and A level.

Ð, Read more in the digital case study



## **Creatives for London**

An in-depth look at five City Corporation urban renewal projects employing creatives and the value created.



#### **Asphalt Arts initiative**

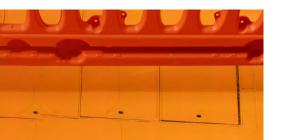
A visual intervention on roadways, pedestrian spaces and vertical infrastructures to use art and community engagement to improve street safety and revitalise public space.



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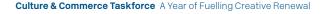
NATASHA HANCKEL-SPICE CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION

Read more in the digital case study





Culture & Commerce Taskforce A Year of Fuelling Creative Renewal



Advice from project and partnership managers involved in Taskforce projects and similar approaches.

#### Culture, commerce and civic collaborations: Good practice recommendations

### Much of this work will be embedded into the core work

of the partners and taken forward through specific projects that partner organisations will continue beyond this point.

for example; NDT Broadgate continues to grow and develop a blueprint for a collaboration, the City Vistas programme will shortly establish an exhibition site in 2 retail units in Smithfield and further funding has been secured enabling the Creative Exchange programme to continue, beginning with a series of **co-design workshops** convening professionals from the creative and commercial sectors throughout Autumn 2021.

This is only the beginning; it has become clear that the success of our cities is dependent on this work continuing and growing and requires ALL parts of urban ecologies to play a role.

Drawing on the achievements and learning over the past year. the Taskforce has established a digital **knowledge bank** as a way to share insights, good practice and recommended ways of working with places wanting to adopt similar approaches. The aim is to grow these resources with further examples of cultural and commercial collaboration across the country.

The Taskforce had an ambitious remit to fulfil in just a year before its completion in October 2021. It has now put in place the foundations for cultural. commercial and civic organisations to **adopt and** adapt these ideas across the City. London and the rest of the country in order to truly fuel a creative renewal.

## Legacy and next steps

London and the City's recovery from the pandemic requires the whole ecology to come together - to pool their assets, resources, expertise and investment. It is only by doing this that we can have the strongest impact on the recovery of our interconnected urban ecologies. The Taskforce has demonstrated what is possible.

#### Read more in our digital knowledge bank

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## About the Culture & Commerce Taskforce



October 2020 saw the first convening of the Culture & Commerce Taskforce, a collection of leading figures from across the capital to address the huge challenges faced by the creative and commercial sectors in the City, and London more widely in the wake of the global pandemic.

The creative sector has been disproportionately affected, unemployment levels are rising and the City's attractiveness as a place to work and do business is at risk. London's world-leading creative sector helps secure its position as one of the best international cities in which to live, work, visit and invest. The creative sector has enormous potential to play a critical role in London's recovery. The Taskforce launched the Fuelling Creative Renewal report in February 2021 recommending three ways that culture, commerce and the civic sector could work together to accelerate London's recovery:

Enable **Creative Activation**, bringing London alive through creativity

2 Facilitate **Culture & Commerce Exchange**, building skills and knowledge sharing between culture and commerce

3 Develop **Creative Enterprise Hubs**, providing space for cross-sector innovation

Since the report was launched, representatives from each of the sectors have been working together, testing ways in which these ideas can be put into practice.

The work of the Taskforce and similar approaches has demonstrated that these ways of working are viable, bring mutual benefit, and create more far-reaching impact than sectors can achieve alone.

This report summarises the achievements, learning and legacy from that work and provides links to more detailed case studies and helpful tools and guides. 66

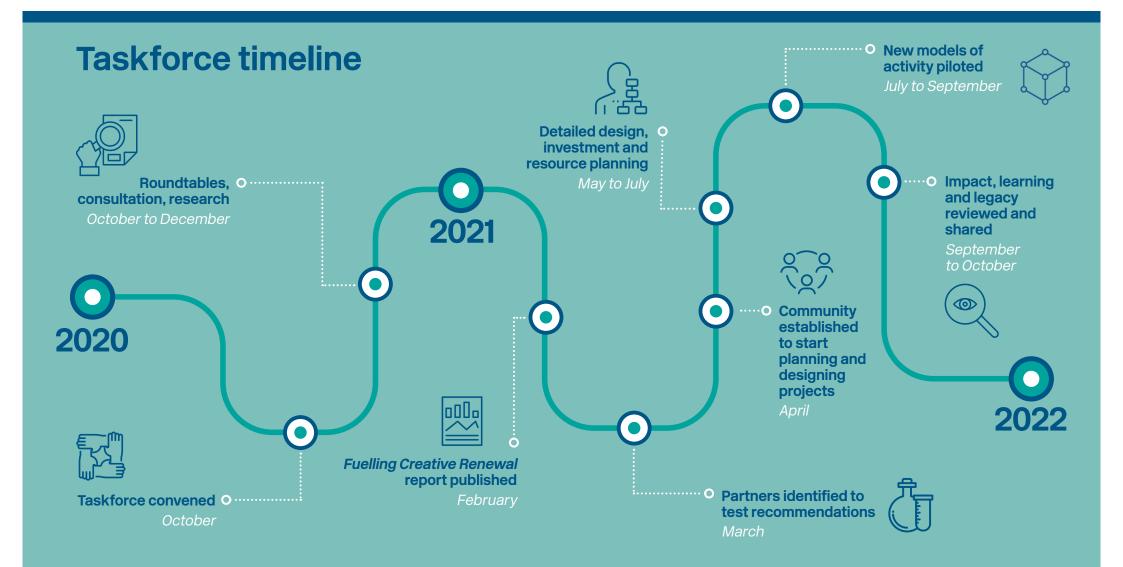
Our vision is for culture and commerce to work together to ensure London's creative energy and competitive strengths retain its position as the best city in the world in which to live, work, learn and invest."

FUELLING CREATIVE RENEWAL REPORT OF THE CULTURE & COMMERCE TASKFORCE, FEBRUARY 2021



For more information read our Report

#### About the Culture & Commerce Taskforce continued



## **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to everyone who has supported and worked on Culture and Commerce Taskforce activity, in particular:















10















- Alderman William Russell. 1 The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor, Chair
- 2 Maria Adebowale-Schwarte Foundation for Future London
- 3 Charles Armstrong, The Trampery
- 4 Muniya Barua, London First
- 5 Ruth Duston OBE, OC Primera Corporation Ltd
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EC Partnership Escape Velocity Ferha Farooqui Foundation for Future London Fuel Goldsmiths, University of London HagenHinderdael Hannah Starkey Helical Illuminated River Innovation Warehouse Jess Nash Kit Finnie Leeds 2023-International Culture Festival Legal & General Linklaters LLP Lloyds Banking Group London Chamber of Commerce London Design Festival London First London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE London & Partners London Symphony Orchestra Lord Neil Mendoza Mayor of London Museum of London Music in Offices New Diorama Theatre New London Architecture New Platform Art Nicola Perikhanyan Patrick Bullock

Patricia Hewitt Pickersgill Consultancy and Planning Ltd (PCP) Play Nice Poetic Impact Primera Group Publica gLegal Queen Mary University of London Regent's University London Scribble & Smudge Sculpture in the City Seven Hills Shubbak - London Festival of Contemporary Arab Culture Somerset House Soofiva So You Wanna Be In TV? Steve O'Smotherly Studio Make Believe Tech London Advocates The Charterhouse The Mayor's Fund for London The Pappyshow The Trampery Two Rivers Associates University of Chicago, Booth School of Business University of the Arts, London Vibe Called Tech Viatec Associates Xacam & Ina Ciel **Yvonne** Courtney 64 Million Artists

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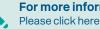
The report was developed by the Culture & Commerce Taskforce which is chaired and convened by:

- Lord Mayor of the City of London
- City of London Corporation
- Culture Mile

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For more information





Culture & Commerce Taskforce