

PROMOTING DIVERSITY WITHIN THE CREATIVE AND DIGITAL INDUSTRIES IN THE SOUTH LONDON INNOVATION CORRIDOR



A RESEARCH REPORT

January 2020 | Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

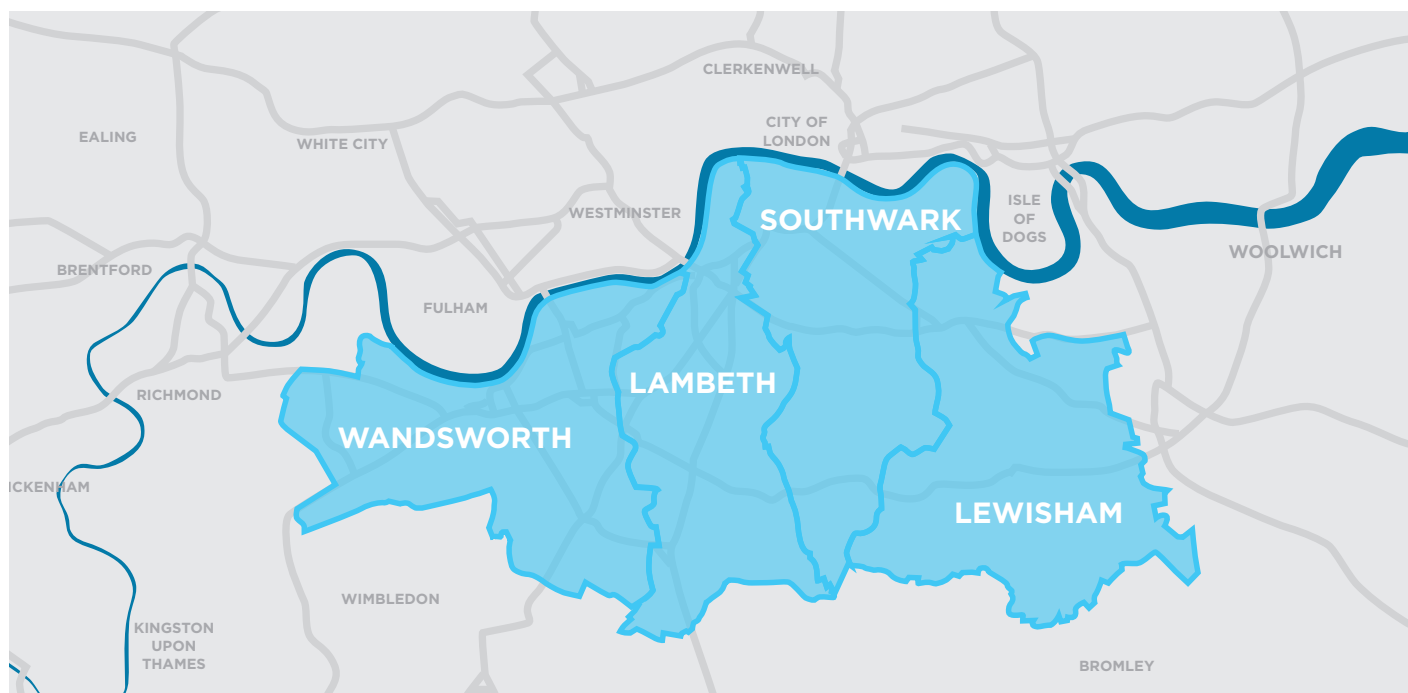
The South London Innovative Corridor (SLIC) partnership commissioned Cross River Partnership and Roseveare Projects to provide an overview of the current landscape, organisations, projects and funding at the forefront of tackling the lack of diversity within the Creative and Digital Industries (CDI), then answer two questions:

How can the SLIC Talent Development Fund pot of £1m be used most effectively within the next 2 years?

How should the SLIC partnership approach commissioning talent development activity?

The SLIC partnership comprises the four central London boroughs south of the River Thames: the London Boroughs of Wandsworth, Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham.

The South London Innovation Corridor is a cross-borough collaboration between the four participating boroughs to catalyse inclusive CDI growth. This CDI sector workforce diversity project sits within that overall initiative with a target of providing 525 talent development opportunities including pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, work experience opportunities and in-work progression.



METHODOLOGY

Over a five-week period from 12th November to 18th December 2019, the research team carried out a rapid evidence review covering 69 documents, together with 16 face-to-face interviews and 11 phone interviews. Results were gathered into tabular form, provided in full in two separate appendices. Each table provides details of interventions made to address underrepresentation, together with website addresses so that the SLIC boroughs can follow up with all relevant organisations as part of their next steps / commissioning process.

We would like to thank all of those who participated so willingly in the research.

For the purposes of this research the Creative Industries sector has been defined as “those industries, which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent” (DCMS). They are divided into these sub-sectors: IT Software and Games, Film and TV, Advertising, Publishing, Music Arts and Culture, Design and Fashion, Architecture, and Crafts. A digital tech business is one which provides a “digital technical service/ product as its primary revenue” (NESTA).

HEADLINE FINDINGS

In a sector characterised by a large number of micro-businesses and extensive use of specialist freelancers, our research found a widespread stated willingness to act on underrepresentation. At the same time, we found a clear disjuncture between the formal skills and training offered, and what companies need.

This is in part driven by the rapid nature of technological change in the sector and the tendency for digital and creative skills to become 'joined at the hip'. Amongst London-based businesses this has led to the emergence - independently and in different

sub-sectors - of shorter, less formal on-the-job training programmes to supply skills needs.

This pattern has been reflected in the growth of an 'ecosystem' of independent, specialist providers working in London in the more generic 'creative' training and paid work-placement space, many with a central emphasis on diversity and inclusion.

Our recommendations for the most effective use of the SLIC talent development funding focus on this last finding.



FULL REPORT CONTENT

In the full report accompanying this Executive Summary, we introduce the evidence gathering process and a 'Theory of Change' that draws attention to the timescales of the anticipated outcomes for recommended interventions.

Chapter 1 - An overview of organisational responses to underrepresentation in the sector, including a case study of the sub-sector of Advertising.

Chapter 2 - Local landscape.

Chapters 3 and 4 - Regional and National landscapes.

Chapter 5 - Funding Interventions to achieve the SLIC Talent Development strand objectives.

Chapter 6 - SLIC Commissioning Framework.

On the basis of all of the research and assessment undertaken, we recommend a SLIC commissioning framework that adheres to the following principles:

- Interventions to be proportionate to sub-sector employment and GVA levels.
- If in doubt, choose innovative solutions. Encourage delivery agencies and employers to be creative and bold in providing direct work-related skills.
- Outcomes to be framed around employer-led skills and training needs clearly articulated at a local/individual business level.
- Opportunities to piggy back on a range of existing programmes with similar objectives, particularly where these projects delivery timeframe ends in the next year to 18 months.
- Challenge employers to deliver against charter and policy commitments + other formal agendas (e.g. Companies Act 2006, section 172).
- Be aligned and consistent with the [Central London Forward Skills Strategy](#).
- All interventions to introduce a Lifelong Learning Account (LLA) for each participant where possible, designed to encourage further learning over time. (NOTE: Participants benefiting from the SLIC 'trial' must not have amounts deducted from any future LLA.)
- All interventions to be designed for continuous funding through a) the £3bn National Skills Fund which is to be introduced from 2022, and b) London's £300m devolved Adult Education Budget.



Adhering to these principles, on the basis of the evidence collected a preferred commissioning route is recommended as follows:

- The core of the programme be the delivery of paid internships and tailored pre-employment training of schemes with a minimum of 12 weeks duration;
- The programme be closely allied to the LB Southwark paid internship programme agreed in July 2019, to provide guidance and benchmarking;
- The principal means of delivery be through a group of smaller providers that have emerged over the past 5-10 years in response to the objectives originally identified in the SLIC bid. (These companies are employer-facing and flexible. We believe in an environment in which the formal skills and training routes are so often at odds with business needs, these qualities are vital. They are also well placed to make use of existing programmes and industry contacts.)
- Providers are contracted to deliver a minimum core group of outputs, together with a call to devise and cost new and innovative trial programmes with match funding.

The full research report provides two tailored commissioning tools to further support the SLIC framework: a provider tender questionnaire, and a Service Provider Template.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

The research culminated in a series of 28 detailed and SMART recommendations, which are fleshed out and translated in the full report.

The 28 recommendations are:

Business and Stakeholder engagement, Organisational Profile.

- 1** The SLIC project formally engage with the Creative Industries PEC to ensure access to the most recent research available, and to open the possibility of co-commissioning. The SLIC project could assist the PEC in its delivery of the UK Sector Skills Monitor and Policy Review Diversity Series.
- 2** The SLIC project make formal contact with the organisations listed in the diversity overview of the full report, explaining the purpose of the intended interventions, inviting them to promote the project to their membership, especially members within the SLIC area, and contribute to a 'how to diversify your workforce' event for CDI businesses in the SLIC area in summer 2020.
- 3** The four boroughs develop a cross-borough matrix of skills interventions, using Southwark Skills Partnership template to avoid duplication, and ensure accurate sign posting for participants.
- 4** The SLIC project engage with the DTI, PEC, CIF, Creative Job Studio and sub-sector representative bodies to devise and promote high quality advice, guidance and information sessions in freelance tenure, specifically aimed at underrepresented groups.
- 5** The SLIC project commission from the framework providers benchmarked, time-sensitive diversity targets that relate to the demographic profile of the combined SLIC population in conjunction with the National Theatre, Tate Modern, South Bank Centre, Albany Empire and Battersea Power Station, Penguin Random House and Apple UK.
- 6** As the Mayor's Tech Talent Programme is very closely aligned to the SLIC project objectives, we recommend the SLIC project make formal contact with the scheme.
- 7** The SLIC project engage with Creative and Digital Industry businesses of all sizes, collectively, in high profile, visible ways, to generate momentum, activity, passion and legacy around diversifying the workforce, to the benefit of all.
- 8** The SLIC project sets up a kitemark or charter of its own for Creative and Digital Industry businesses to apply for, based on good practice in workforce access, training, support and progression. This will also strengthen the SLIC 'brand' and message.
- 9** The SLIC project officers engage with senior strategic officers within their own Local Authorities e.g. Chief Executives, to pro-actively reach out early to global CDI companies that are due to open sites in the SLIC area.
- 10** A 'market warming' element to the overall SLIC programme launch could be planned for some time in early 2020.



Schools and outreach

11 Commissioning an information, advice & guidance (IAG) programme delivered across the four boroughs by the ELEVATE team in conjunction with the Creative Industries Federation (CIF) team responsible for the Discover! Create Careers programme, and a CDI employer in the SLIC area demonstrating active engagement.

12 The SLIC project engage with the Creative Society to establish routes and opportunities for a minimum of 30 SLIC residents to participate in Creative Job Studio events and activities.

13 The SLIC project engage with the winners of the NESTA/Dept for Education CareerTech Challenge Fund to explore commissioning specific adaptations of the winning innovations for use by residents in the SLIC area.

14 The SLIC project engage with La Retraite RC Girls School in Clapham, and Women in Games, to explore options for partnering with the school and the DfE to facilitate the roll-out of Digital T-levels in schools in Lambeth Lewisham, Southwark and Wandsworth from September 2021, targeted at a cohort of 100 pupils (25 per borough), 75% female, 50% BAME and 25% recipients of free school meals.

15 The SLIC project engage with the DfE to facilitate piloting the second wave of T-Levels in creative and digital subjects in schools in the SLIC area.

Employability, pre-apprenticeships, pre-traineeships, work placements and internships

16 The SLIC project commission from the framework providers the organisation of 345 paid internships across the four boroughs. We recommend the successful delivery partners be asked to shadow the Southwark paid internship scheme to develop mutual learning, sharing of best practice and unit cost benchmarking.

17 The SLIC project engage immediately with Penguin Random House, Apple and other large CDI employers in the SLIC area to mentor and share best practice.

18 The SLIC project commission modular training schemes from the framework providers already offering similar schemes.

19 Commissioning 20 STEP-style 12-month Training Interventions from one of the framework providers to include match funding.

20 Engaging with FE institutions across the SLIC area including Thames College and others, to lobby for the inclusion of CDI related entry level information for City and Guilds employability courses including pre-training and pre-apprenticeships.

Traineeships and apprenticeships

21 The SLIC project immediately engage with the LSBU, Women in Games, Tech Nation, Black Tech and others to facilitate and/or sponsor 20 women on newly approved Digital Route Apprenticeships.

22 The SLIC project engage with the selected provider of the modular TV and Film Apprenticeships to consider promotion of 5 SLIC residents for the scheme, and explore a bespoke version aimed at underrepresented groups in the SLIC area.

23 The SLIC project organise a visit to the Fashion Technology Centre in Haringey, preferably with Councillors, and consider the possibility of facilitating a new branch of the academy in the SLIC area.

In work progression

24 The SLIC project commission from the framework providers pilot, tailored 'in-work-progression' training modules, using flexible, self-directed, digitally-enabled learning.

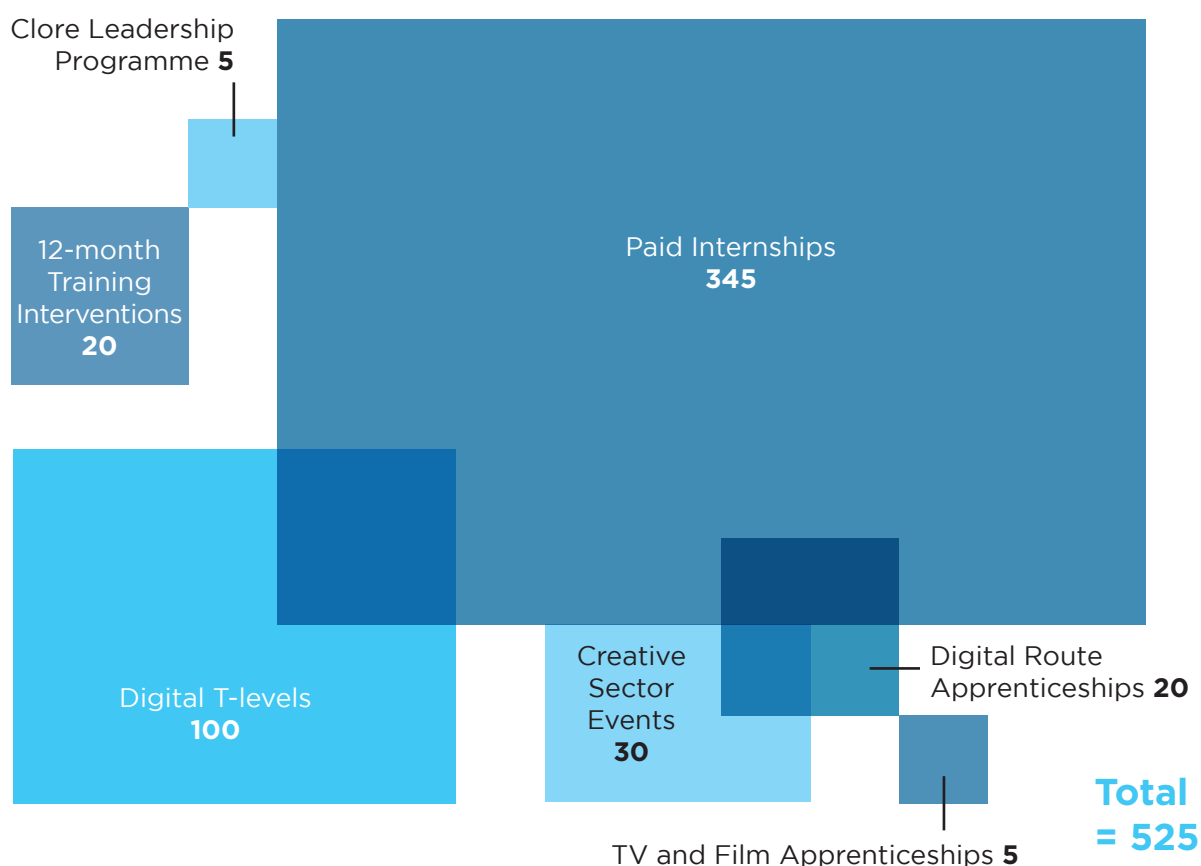
25 Sponsoring 5 managers working in businesses in the SLIC area to take part in the Clore Leadership Programme.

26 Engaging with Goldsmith's University Institute of Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship (ICCE) the CIF and other employers to facilitate sponsorship and acceleration of SLIC area residents onto ICCE undergraduate degree courses.

27 Engaging with Goldsmith's University Institute of Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship (ICCE), LSBU, The Royal College of the Arts, the CIF and other CDI employers to facilitate the development of Apprenticeship Degrees, self-directed digitally enabled executive diplomas (Levels 5 to 7), and other HE offers with a series of cohorts made up of students resident in the SLIC area who have been on a salary level 'plateau' of £33-35k for more than 3 years.

28 In conjunction with the Creative Industries PEC, develop and/or sponsor MAs and PhDs covering research topics concerned with the practice of improving diversity and inclusion in the Creative and Diversity Industries across the business, research, academic and policy communities.

Commissioning summary



By implementing the above Recommendations with existing CDI sector employers and agencies over the next two years, the SLIC boroughs will be giving their residents fantastic opportunities to access and progress within an exciting industry that has special potential to flourish in post-Brexit Britain.

Cross River Partnership and Roseveare Projects.

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