

BAM 2026
CONFERENCE



Cultural and Creative Industries Track

Track Chairs:

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Summary:

Thriving Together: Impact, Innovation, and Inclusion in the Cultural and Creative Industries

The conference theme for BAM 2026 "Thriving Together: Impact, Innovation, and Inclusion in Business and Management" is particularly apposite for the Cultural and Creative Industries [CCIs]. The main conference theme emphasises the importance of individuals and institutions working together to make a positive impact on society, drive innovation, and promote inclusivity. The theme recognises that in order to thrive, we must prioritise the wellbeing and success of all members of our community, regardless of their background or identity.

CCIs are widely touted as an engine of economic growth, contributing 3.1% of global GDP and 6.2% of all employment (UNESCO, 2022). They address some of the world's most pressing challenges through accelerating digital transformation, promoting gender equality and social inclusion, overcoming colonial continuities and inspiring and educating students (GIZ, 2024). The Global CCIs sector is also at the forefront of the movement to a more sustainable global economy. In Europe, culture is seen as a core catalyst for a just transition to greener energy, holding "the power to create inclusive communities, and communicate messages, narratives and meanings to them" (Voices of Culture, 2023).

In terms of impact and ethics, considerations around representation and fair practices are becoming increasingly central to discussions about the sector's global role. Impact in the CCI now extends beyond traditional economic measures and encompasses questions of equitable creative ecosystems and long-term sustainability of creative practices. This is especially important in the UK, where justifying the importance of cultural and creative industries has become increasingly urgent amidst the decimation of fields such as humanities. This is evident also when compared to countries such as Italy where cultural heritage remains a national priority. Ultimately, embedding ethical reflection into research, policy, and practice enables the sector not only to justify its significance but also to model inclusive, responsible, and socially attuned forms of cultural production.

Moreover, the main conference theme highlights the critical role that innovation plays in shaping the future and this is exceptionally true of the CCIs. The debate surrounding the rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) and whether it is a threat or opportunity for the CCIs rages on and many other technologies impact the sector positively and negatively. As the CCIs are recognised to have an impact on growing societal challenges, it is essential that our research and practice can demonstrate real-world

impact and contribute to the development of sustainable solutions, particularly at a time when public-funding for the arts is squeezed.

Inclusion is another critical pillar of the thriving together paradigm. Many working in the CCIs embrace inclusion as a core value and practice, which is sometimes framed in terms of a 'good work' discourse (Policy and Evidence Centre, 2023). However, global conflicts and tensions can unintentionally (or intentionally) exclude certain groups. Moreover, collaboration is a common theme of creative work, although power relations play their part in the way public funding is distributed, with grassroots organisations often feeling excluded from decision making. Creative workers often operate on a freelance basis with precarious conditions and lower wages than their employed counterparts, and the UK government is looking to appoint a Freelance Champion for the Creative Industries. That person will have a huge to-do-list including examining evidence from a recent report from The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre ([Who Stays Who leaves?](#)) have shown that the impact of working conditions in the sector do not play out equally.

The CCIs track is an inclusive space, and we encourage submission of a range of philosophical, methodological and theoretical approaches to the track. We especially encourage submissions from early career researchers and those returning to research after a break. Conference delegates will join a supportive international community of academics, policy makers and practitioners that work together providing constructive criticism and pointing at fruitful areas of further research.

The main conference themes encourage us to explore the following non exhaustive open issues as they relate to CCIs (broadly defined):

- *Inclusive leadership and organisational culture*
- *Inclusive innovation and addressing the challenges brought by AI and digitisation*
- *Future of work and employee wellbeing*
- *Sustainable business models and social impact*
- *Maximising impact through academic-industry collaborations.*

The growing body of literature on the CCIs responds to the challenges inherent in the sector and the increasing importance of these industries in multiple domains. The heterogeneity of these industries is reflected in the interdisciplinary of this track, that brings together research belonging to different fields such as entrepreneurship, management studies, gender studies, cultural policy and social psychology. It explores the challenges faced in the CCIs to maximise the impact of research and build a research community across the arts, humanities and social sciences.

We are open to any papers relevant to the main conference theme (as covered above) and more broadly encourage papers relating to the following topics:

- (Environmental) Sustainability in cultural and creative industries
- The sustainability of the creative freelance ecosystem
- New technological paradigms in the creative industries
- Creative clusters and networks within the creative economy
- Creative industries entrepreneurship
- Solidarity within and across creative occupations
- Discourses of value in and beyond creative industries policy making
- Power, privilege and class in the contemporary creative industries
- Challenging discourses of resilience in the creative industries
- Critical analyses of creative work and workers
- Equality, access and diversity in creative occupations
- Novel sociological approaches to conceptualising the creative industries
- The role of cultural and creative enterprises in placemaking
- Rural creative enterprises
- Business support for creative enterprises

- Artisan and craft entrepreneurship
- Creative practitioner identities
- Studies of specific sub-sectors of the Creative Industries

Beyond the track, we encourage you to engage with the Creative and Cultural Industries Special Interest Group which will provide you with opportunities to develop your networks by linking you with global CCI scholars. Each year we host collaborative events with other BAM SIGs and with fraternal bodies. This year we held an [in-person symposium on the intersection of AI and creativity in London in April 2025](#), in collaboration with the Innovation SIG.