

# **Developing Creative Cities**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Culture and creativity have been promoted as the panacea to reversing urban decline in the knowledge age. The posited benefits of becoming a 'creative city' cut across many aspects of policy and evidence suggests that unlocking the creative potential may well improve the prospects for successful urban regeneration. Such activity may be cultivated to attract economic gain (in the form of investment, developing the creative industry sector, business start up locations, tourism spend and knowledge workers) and also social cohesion (strengthening identity, civic pride and accommodating cultural diversity). There are some caveats to this approach: the benefits may be overstated and are often hard to measure. There is evidence that unintended consequences of policy in this area can include gentrification, a loss of distinctiveness and pricing out the creative sector pioneers. This paper presents an overview of UK activity, drawing on the approaches undertaken in three main categories of creative industries, public art and events programming.

**Key Words:** creative cities, creative industries, public art, events programming