26TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

March 2026

PROCEEDINGS BOOKLET

Unleashing

THE POWER OF THE Creative INDUSTRIES

A CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NAMIBIA

Bank of Namibia

www.bon.com.na

Edited by the Research and Financial Sector Development Department

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Published by
The Research and Financial Sector Development Department of the Bank of Namibia
PO Box 2882
Windhoek
Namibia

Table of Content

1. Preface 4
2. Welcoming Remarks - Dr. Johannes !Gawaxab, Governor of the Bank of Namibia 6
3. Keynote address - Dr. Sanet Steenkamp, Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth Arts, and Culture 9
4. Overview Paper: Unleashing the Power of the Creative Industries: A Catalyst for Economic Development in Namibia 13
5. The Value of Arts and Culture 28
6. Business Models and Access to Finance for Catalysing Namibia's Creative Industry..... 31
7. Technology and the Creative Economy: Why this is no longer a side conversation 35
8. 8. Key Policy Issues Emanating from the Symposium..... 38
9. Closing Remarks – Ms. Leonie Dunn, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Namibia 48

01

Preface

01. Preface

The Bank of Namibia held its 26th Annual Symposium on 13 November 2025 at Mercure Hotel in Windhoek, under the theme: Unleashing the Power of the Creative Industries: A Catalyst for Economic Development in Namibia. Preceded by a scene-setting Public Lecture[1], the symposium aimed to explore this contemporary economic sector, recognising its significant potential to boost economic growth and employment. The event attracted creatives across various sub-sectors in the country, policymakers, key stakeholders as well as three invited industry experts from select African countries with a proven track-record of contributing immensely to cultural and creative industries. For the first time, the symposium also provided a platform for 15 exhibitors to showcase their work to participants and industry leaders.

The Bank of Namibia selected the 2025 symposium theme to align with the country's Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6)'s goal of doubling the creative industries' contribution to economic growth by 2030. The theme aimed to directly engage the Namibian creative industries players and leverage on the experiences of regional expertise, to understand prevailing challenges and explore available opportunities for the industries. Furthermore, with Namibia's large youth population facing high unemployment, the 2025 symposium aimed to revitalise youth employment opportunities through the creative industries given that the youth are a major participant in these industries.

The theme aimed to directly engage the Namibian creative industries players and leverage on the experiences of regional expertise

Specifically, the overview paper and discussions at the symposium were centred around three sub-themes, namely: The Value of Arts and Culture, Technology and the Creative Industries, Business Models and Access to Finance, and driven by the following key guiding prompts:

- What are the primary economic contributions of creative industries, and what are their untapped potentials?
- How does the creative industry contribute to cultural preservation, promotion, and social development?
- What empowerment frameworks are required to enable informal-sector creatives to successfully integrate the richness of cultural and traditional assets into the mainstream economy?
- What key institutional arrangements are necessary to support the growth of the creative economy?
- What needs to be done to ensure Namibian creative entrepreneurs' work is legally protected, even outside Namibian borders?
- Given the unpredictability of business performance in creative industries, what innovative financing models can banks offer to support the growth of the sectors?
- Which sector of the creative industries has the highest potential to contribute to growth and employment opportunities?
- How can the creative industries and related sub-sectors be effectively accounted for in national economic statistics?
- What is the export potential of the creative industry, especially in film production?
- What lessons can be learned from countries with successful creative sectors?

The Value of Arts and Culture, Technology and the Creative Industrie

These issues, among others were addressed through presentations delivered by international speakers from the creative industries sector

These issues, among others were addressed through presentations delivered by international speakers from the creative industries sector and panel discussions that were primarily made up of local participants. The discussions were centred around three sub-themes, namely, (i) The Value of Arts and Culture, (ii) Technology and the Creative Industries, as well as (iii) Business Models and Access to Finance. This booklet is a compilation of all discussions and presentations delivered at the symposium, including a summary of the key policy issues emanating from the symposium and associated recommendations.

[1]The Public lecture was held at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) on 12 November 2025.

02

Welcoming Remarks – Dr. Johannes !Gawaxab, Governor of the Bank of Namibia

2. Welcoming Remarks -

Dr. Johannes !Gawaxab, Governor of the Bank of Namibia

Hon. Sanet Steenkamp, Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth Arts, and Culture
Hon. Dino Ballotti, Deputy Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth Arts, and Culture,
Cabinet Ministers present,
Mr. Ebson Uanguta, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Namibia,
Ms. Leonie Dunn, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Namibia,
Members of the Management Committee of the Bank of Namibia
Entrepreneurs, innovators, and professionals from the creative industry,
Speakers and panellists,
Invited guests,
Members of the media,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning,

I am delighted to welcome you all to this timely symposium, where we unite to explore the transformative power of the creative industries in Namibia. As we gather here today, let us recognise that Namibia's greatest wealth lies not in its mines, oil, gas, or sea, but in its people—specifically, in the vibrant and dynamic realm of our creatives.

We meet at a time when Namibia's labour market continues to face considerable strain. Employment growth has been sluggish, and consumer spending - particularly household credit - remains subdued. Recognising that the economy requires continued policy support, the Bank of Namibia reduced the repurchase rate by 25 basis points to aid the recovery. Inflation remains well-contained, and the medium-term outlook is broadly favourable, even as the global economy, led by the United States Federal Reserve, shows signs of resilience. Yet, income inequality persists, and affordability pressures are deepening as too many Namibians remain without work

Secondly, we meet at a time when the Bank of Namibia is deliberately amplifying the Government's efforts to lead the country toward shared prosperity. In this regard, it is worth noting that agriculture has been identified as both a priority sector and a strategic economic enabler - a focus that guided the Bank's 2024 Annual Symposium, whose recommendations have since been submitted to Government for consideration. More recently, through our participation in the Namibia Public-Private Forum, we contributed to the national dialogue on translating vision into tangible action to generate decent jobs for Namibians. In our interventions, we underscored the importance of safeguarding macroeconomic stability as the foundation for sustainable growth, while highlighting the need to invest in public and digital infrastructure, address the informal housing challenge to restore dignity, and mobilise innovative financing to advance national development and support emerging sectors.

In that same spirit, we convene today for the Bank of Namibia's 26th Annual Symposium, held under the theme "Unleashing the Power of the Creative Industry" to confront a central question: How can Namibia harness the creative sector as a driver of economic transformation? This question challenges us to shift our perspective - to see creativity not merely as culture or entertainment, but as an economic frontier capable of unlocking innovation, deepening diversification, and, most importantly, creating jobs and restoring dignity.

Creativity in a Changing Economy

The Namibian creative landscape is active and diverse. It includes musicians, designers, filmmakers, writers, digital creators, visual artists, craftspeople, and cultural entrepreneurs in every region. These individuals and enterprises shape how we see ourselves and how the world sees us. They tell our national story. They are instrumental in promoting inclusion, generating employment, and driving innovation. They demonstrate that culture is not just soft power - it is economic power.

Currently, Namibia's creative sector contributes 1.5% to the national economy, but our aspiration is to enhance that contribution to 3% over the next five years. The importance of nurturing our creative ecosystem cannot be overstated - it lies at the intersection of economic growth and job creation. Imagine a Namibia where every young person is educated, empowered, employed, and engaged in meaningful work. That is the vision we all share; a future filled with opportunity and potential.

However, we must confront the challenges that have hindered our progress. Our creatives are not lacking in talent; they are stifled by the absence of financing, faced with disorganisation within the sector, and limited by a dearth of opportunities. To catalyse growth and innovation, we must leverage technology to scale our reach to a global audience. Through social media and other tools, creatives can monetise their talents, skills, and knowledge whether through brand deals, digital products, subscription services or even merchandise. As we know, innovation compounds; it fosters the development of new ideas and solutions, while technology enables us to share them with the world.

National leadership - A decisive mandate

I am heartened by the commitment of the Namibian Government to prioritise the creative industries as a crucial driver of economic growth and job creation. This recognition is a testament to the valuable role that creativity plays in our society.

At the recently concluded Namibia Public-Private Forum, Her Excellency, the President of the Republic of Namibia, outlined a national vision of creating 500,000 jobs over the next five years. A remarkable and ambitious vision - necessary for a youthful country whose greatest hunger is not only for opportunity, but for platforms to contribute meaningfully to the nation's future. Among the administration's seven national priority areas, Sports and the Creative Industries have been singled out as strategic pillars of Namibia's development journey. This is not symbolic. It is deliberate. It reflects a conviction that sports, arts, culture, design, music, film, and creative entrepreneurship are not frivolous pursuits - but building blocks for a Namibia that stands on its own feet.

I want to assure you today that the Bank of Namibia has heard this call, and we have committed to walk in alignment. We understand that in order to unlock jobs, we cannot only rely on the old engines of growth. We must invest in new sectors, new skills, and new ways of working.

The role of the Bank of Namibia: enabling new engines of growth

As the central bank, our mandate is to maintain macroeconomic stability, strengthen confidence in the financial system, and ensure that financial infrastructure supports innovation and enterprise across all sectors. In support of creative entrepreneurship, the Bank of Namibia is advancing a series of initiatives designed to strengthen innovation, inclusion, and opportunity across the economy.

Starting with the Instant Payment Platform (IPP):
set to go live in 2026, this system will provide real-time, low-cost, and interoperable digital payments nationwide, empowering creatives, freelancers, and small enterprises through faster, more affordable transactions and improved access to finance.

Starting with the Instant Payment Platform (IPP):
Complementing this is the Bank of Namibia's recently launched Fintech Youth Programme, which equips young Namibians with the technical and entrepreneurial skills required to thrive in the digital economy through mentorship, incubation, financing and regulatory support.

Through the Namibia Regulators Forum, established by the Bank in partnership with key institutions, we are fostering a regulatory culture that is proportionate, innovation-friendly, and responsive to the evolving needs of sectors such as the creative economy.

Equally, our STEAM Bootcamp continues to build a future-ready workforce by training over 720 learners across all 14 regions in robotics, automation, coding, and 3D printing - empowering young people, especially in rural communities, to participate meaningfully in emerging industries.

Above all, collaboration remains central to our approach. We will continue working alongside Government, financial institutions, academia, and creative communities to cultivate an environment where ideas are nurtured, enterprise flourishes, and Namibia's creative potential becomes a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable growth.

Call to action

As we conclude, I wish to leave us with a collective call to action - one that transforms today's dialogue into tomorrow's outcomes.

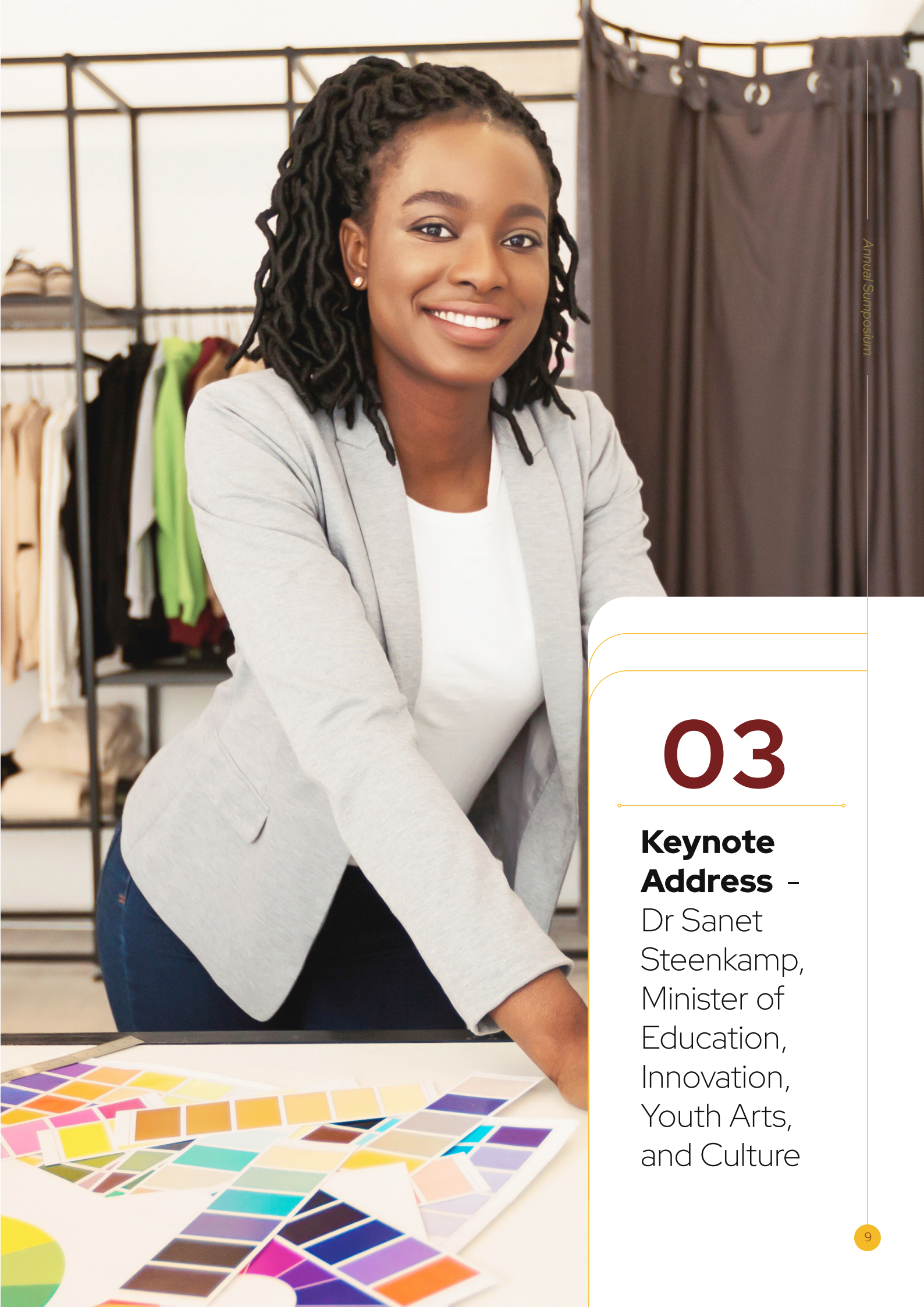
First, let this symposium mark the beginning of a concerted effort toward developing a national policy framework for the creative industries. The discussions and insights shared here today must translate into concrete recommendations that inform a coherent policy architecture - one that recognises the sector's economic importance and sets the foundation for its sustainable growth.

Second, we need better organisation and coordination, both within Government and across the creative community itself. Let us move toward an overarching coordinating body - a single, representative voice for the creative sector. I urge creatives to embrace collaboration, form alliances, and establish a unified platform - perhaps a Creatives Namibia movement - that brings together all disciplines and strengthens the sector's collective influence.

Third, we must confront the issue of financing head-on. I call upon Government, corporates, and pension funds to consider establishing a dedicated fund for creatives - one that provides consistent, structured access to finance for this vital sector. We can no longer afford to cite a lack of funding as a permanent constraint. Let us take proactive steps to convert that challenge into opportunity, ensuring that talent is not stifled by circumstance.

If we match the energy of our creatives with institutional resolve, their imagination with enabling policy, and their ambition with investment, then this sector will become a meaningful contributor to job creation, diversification, and national prosperity.

The future is open. The opportunity is here. Let us step into it boldly - together.
I thank you.



03

Keynote Address - Dr Sanet Steenkamp, Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth Arts, and Culture

3. Keynote address -

Dr. Sanet Steenkamp, Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth Arts, and Culture

Hon. Dino Ballotti, Deputy Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth Arts, and Culture,
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Members of the Management Committee of the Bank of Namibia
Entrepreneurs, innovators, and professionals from the creative industry,
Speakers and panelists,
Invited guests,
Members of the media,
Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning,

The ability of nations to grow and thrive is no longer defined solely by what lies beneath their soil, but by what rises from within their people. The countries shaping the future are those that cultivate ideas, harness creativity, and turn culture into capital. In the modern global economy, resilience and competitiveness are driven not by one form of innovation, but by the combination of technological progress and creative ingenuity.

Today, more Namibians than ever are turning their creativity into real economic opportunities, and the Government stands ready to support the initiatives that transform imagination into sustainable livelihoods. Our challenge and our opportunity are to open new pathways for growth that reflect our identity and respond to our realities. This means looking inward, drawing from our own talent, and designing solutions that are as ambitious as they are authentic. If we are to accelerate economic diversification, we must do so with purpose, creativity, and confidence in the value of our own story. We must no longer ask if Namibia is ready for the creative economy, we must declare that the creative economy is ready for Namibia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since Independence, Namibia has made commendable strides in building a stable democracy, managing its economy responsibly, and maintaining a reputation for good governance. Yet, like many nations with resource endowments, our growth has long been shaped by a narrow base: mining, fisheries, and agriculture. These sectors have delivered on growing the economy, but they have not delivered sufficient jobs, particularly for our young people. They have generated value, but not inclusion. And because they rely on volatile global markets, they have left the economy vulnerable to external shocks. It is no longer enough to be rich in resources; we must become architects of relevance in a world that rewards creativity as much as natural endowments.

That is why we are here today. To explore charting a more diversified and resilient path, one that does not replace our existing strengths but rather complements and expands upon them. One that elevates our creative industries from the margins to the mainstream economic strategy. We need a creative ecosystem that accommodates a wide range of actors. A sector that is viable and offers decent working conditions, decent remuneration and growth opportunities. Our goal is not to shift the foundations of our economy, but to widen the doors of opportunity to every Namibian. Our future as a country should not be defined solely by the endowment of natural resources and commodities, but by the vibrant cultural expressions, ingenuity and creative outputs of our people. The creative industry can be a lever of transformation that can bring a new impetus and thereby create much needed jobs for our youth.

Defining the cultures and creative sector

Ladies and gentlemen,

If Namibia is to embrace this path of creative industry, there must be clarity and conviction in our mind. For the purpose of today's discussion, allow me to draw on the vocabulary of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), whose work encompasses this sector. They define the creative sector as the cycle of creation, production, and distribution of goods and services that use creativity and intellectual capital as their primary inputs. In other words, it includes, amongst many enabling factors, film, television, music, performing arts, fashion, design, crafts, architecture, gaming, advertising, publishing and digital content.

We need to recognise that at its core, the sector is an ecosystem that links culture, commerce, and technology. It is a value chain that spans from the creator, who imagines, to the producer, who makes, to the distributor, who sells. Globally, creative industries are already among the fastest-growing sectors of the world economy. They are not only drivers of cultural expression but also powerful engines of innovation, trade, and employment. In accordance with UNCTAD's Creative Economy Outlook Report for 2024, the global creative economy generates annual revenues of about US$2.3 trillion and contributes 3.1 percent to Gross Domestic Product globally. Additionally, UNESCO estimates that the cultural and creative industries account for 6.2% of global employment. With our demography predominantly tilted towards a younger generation, combined with the rapid adoption of technologies, I have no doubt that the creative industries are poised to grow in leaps and bounds with the appropriate support and safeguards, and my government is determined to create that enabling environment for the sector to thrive.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As a Government, given the importance of the sector, we have already taken deliberate steps to position the creative sector as one of the main pillars in our 6th National Development Plan. Under the Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6), the creative economy has been elevated as a national priority, not only for its economic potential, but for its role in cultural preservation and youth employment. The Government has committed funding, including N$50 million, toward national arts and creative initiatives. We continue to collaborate with partners, such as UNESCO, to enhance copyright protection, local content frameworks, and institutional support. I am reliable informed that through entities like the Namibia Film Commission and the National Arts Council, local productions have received funding, capacity-building, and international exposure. I believe these efforts would enable Namibia to attract major global film projects and expand domestic skill sets.

Yet these actions are not the end, they are the beginning. Recognised as one of our national priority sectors, the cultural and creative economy holds immense potential to drive inclusive growth, innovation, and long-term sustainability. It currently contributes 1.5 percent to GDP, and our ambition is to double this to 3 percent over the next five years.

I am aware that these investments, while promising, are not without challenges. As highlighted during the recently concluded Namibia Public-Private Forum (NAMPPF), the creative sector still faces structural barriers that limit its full potential. A dedicated Taskforce on Sport, Culture, Creative and Tourism outlined these challenges clearly, including:

- Fragmented policies across offices, ministries, and agencies
- Lengthy licensing and permitting processes
- Labour regulations unsuited to project-based creative work
- Limited access to finance and export platforms
- Monetisation challenges
- Weak protection of intellectual property and artist rights

Their message was clear: if we fix the ecosystem, the sector will take care of jobs. I need to re-emphasise let us work together as public and private sector to bring about the necessary changes that are required. This is not just an economic strategy; it is a generational responsibility.

Countries that have done this well

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we consider the task before us, we must not reinvent the wheel, there are good examples in other jurisdictions that can be emulated. Other countries have walked this path; turning bold ideas into real economic impact. Their experiences offer valuable lessons as we shape our own creative economy.

- Let's look at our sister country, South Africa: by investing in film, television, and music, it has attracted major global productions to platforms like Netflix, Hulu, Apple TV, Showmax, and DStv - creating thousands of jobs and transferring skills from international to local creatives.
- Similarly, Nigeria has developed Nollywood into the continent's second-largest employer after the agricultural sector and the world's second-largest film industry by volume, after India. Valued in the billions, Nollywood has become a global force which has not only created jobs but also exported Nigeria's national culture, identity and soft power.
- Qatar, which has a comparable population, has also done it - using culture and sport as deliberate tools for economic diversification. Long-term investment transformed sport into a national industry, culminating in the 2022 FIFA World Cup as a strategic outcome, not an accident.

Opportunities specific to Namibia

The global examples we have seen offer more than inspiration; they offer a mirror to what is possible when vision is matched with investment. Namibia holds similar promise. We are a nation rich in culture, driven by a youthful and tech-savvy population, and poised to turn creativity into a meaningful economic pillar. The foundations are in place: under the Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6), the creative sector has been identified as a priority for both economic diversification and youth empowerment. I appeal to us all as Namibians – both in public and private sector to do our bit and to turn this momentum into tangible outcomes that unlock opportunities across the creative value chain.

Given the concerning numbers in youth unemployment, the Government has successfully launched the National Youth Development Fund. This fund aims to provide financial support to young Namibians, including those in the creative industries, with a total allocation of N$257 million. Progress on the fund has been made, as applications from interested parties have been submitted and shortlisted across several constituencies in the country. In parallel with this effort, additional initiatives are being advanced to strengthen the foundation of the creative economy.

The Namibian Investment Promotion Development Board is currently overseeing the vision for a "Film and Creative City" for Namibia. This will help create an ecosystem for the creative industries through a well-structured investment strategy and value chain, creating more stable jobs. These efforts are not just theoretical; we have already seen how Namibia's creative potential translates into tangible impact in the real world.

To fully harness the economic promise of Namibia's creative industries, it is essential that we strengthen the foundational enablers that support their growth. Key among these is the development of robust digital public infrastructure; systems that empower creatives to produce, store, share, and monetise their work with confidence. Such platforms not only amplify local talent but also ensure that creators are fairly recognised and compensated for their contributions. Equally important is the expansion of inclusive, secure, and cost-effective payment solutions that facilitate seamless transactions both domestically and internationally. By advancing these enablers, we lay the groundwork for a thriving creative ecosystem where innovation is nurtured, cultural expression is safeguarded, and economic value is equitably realised. This is how we move from being a country that consumes culture to one that exports it with pride.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As a country, we have already demonstrated our creative and commercial potential on the global stage. Major international films, such as Mad Max: Fury Road, The Mummy, and Flight of the Phoenix, were filmed right here in Namibia, showcasing our unique landscapes and logistical capabilities. These films garnered global attention for Namibia, yielding tangible economic benefits. It boosted local businesses and spurred tourism, as fans from around the world travelled to experience the setting of these movies. Each of these productions proved that Namibia is more than just a scenic backdrop; we are a capable, compelling, and competitive destination for global creative investment.

Namibia has increasingly positioned itself as a destination of choice for prominent global figures, including Lewis Hamilton, Roger Federer, Gabrielle Union, and Will Smith. Notably, Angelina Jolie chose to welcome her child in Namibia and has maintained close ties with the country through her continued support for conservation efforts. These visits go beyond tourism; they raise Namibia's profile on the world stage, inspire global audiences to engage with our culture and landscapes, and foster enduring relationships rooted in shared values. The impact extends across our economy from hospitality and transport to local crafts and services. This is the power of cultural diplomacy and creative influence, and Namibia is increasingly recognised as a compelling and credible presence in the global arena.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This is the power of the creative value chain, where one global output stimulates activity across multiple sectors. With the right policy framework, we can replicate such success stories across film, fashion, music, design, and digital media. That is why I am here today - not only to speak, but to listen. This symposium must produce a set of actionable, issue-based policy recommendations that are informed by data, aligned with the national agenda, and focused on results. The cultures and creative sector can move us from dependence to diversification, from consumption to creation, and from survival to self-expression. The time has come to stop asking "what do we have?" and start asking "what can we imagine?"

Namibia's youth stand at the centre of this transformation. Our young people are bold, digitally fluent, and culturally rooted. It is time for them to move from being consumers of global content to producers of uniquely Namibian stories, products, and ideas. I call upon our youth to embrace opportunities in film, fashion, music, gaming, design, and digital media. Collaborate. Innovate. Build. Your creativity is not a hobby; it is an economic force. The nation is ready to support your talent through various platforms, policies, and partnerships.

04

Overview Paper:

Unleashing the Power of the Creative Industries: A Catalyst for Economic Development in Namibia

4. Overview Paper: Unleashing the Power of the Creative Industries: A Catalyst for Economic Development in Namibia

Authored By:
Ms. Sevelia Nakalemo
Ms. Nelago Aluvilu
Ms. Abigail Nainda

Presented by:
Deputy Governor Ebson Uanguta

1. Introduction

The importance of the creative industries on growth and development is increasingly gaining recognition at a global level. The creative industries comprise of various subsector[2] , broadly referred to as the cultural and creative industries, as per the United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s framework for cultural statistics (UNESCO,2009). The framework defines culture as a set of values, expressions and heritages of a society. In addition, cultural and creative industries, reflect the combination of ingenuity and cultural values to produce tradable goods and services. Further, culture has also been incorporated in the United Nations Agenda 2023 for sustainable development with objectives to safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage (UN, 2015).

Increasingly, the creative industries are being recognized as a significant contributor to economic growth and employment creation through innovation and new products. According to the United Nations, taken together, creativity, culture, economics, and technology have the potential to generate income, create jobs, and increase exports while promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity, and human development. As a result, the emerging creative economy can be utilised to promote development. Data from the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), indicate that the creative industries contributed between 0.5 percent and 7.3 percent to GDP and employed between 0.5 percent to 12.5 percent of the workforce, across different countries globally over the past ten years (UNCTAD, 2024). Also, the Namibia Statistics Agency data shows that the Namibian creative industries contributed 1.6 percent to GDP, on average, over the last 10 years.

In this context, this paper aims to assess the status of the Namibian Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) and explore possible policy interventions to support the growth of these industries. The Namibian creative industries comprise a diverse array of media, entertainment, design, technology, publishing, advertising, marketing, cultural and artistic forms, reflecting the essence of a society and preserving cultural heritage. The paper analyses the current Namibian creative industries landscape by identifying prevailing challenges and opportunities with the view to determine possible policy measures to support and improve the outcomes and contribution of the creative sectors to economic growth and social development.

In assessing the status of the Namibian creative industries, the paper adopts a qualitative methodological approach. This is centred around secondary research and primary data collected through mini questionnaires to allow for a comprehensive descriptive understanding of the sub-sectors within the industries. Following the introduction in Section 1, Section 2 will present an overview of the Namibian creative industries, while Section 3 covers their contributions to growth and employment in Namibia, Furthermore, Section 4 and 5 explore the challenges to and opportunities for the industries, respectively. Lastly, Section 6 provides a few lessons from other countries while Section 7 concludes and provides key policy recommendations necessary to drive growth and long-term sustainability.

[2]A break-down of this is presented in a box article in the Appendix

2. Overview of Cultural and Creative Industries in Namibia

The Namibian cultural and creative industries encompass a wide range of artistic forms such as media, advertising, entertainment, culture and arts, among others[3]. This section provides an overview of certain sub-industries that were selected based on the role they play in the economy, while acknowledging the contributions of the remaining sub-industries to the economy.

2.1 Crafts and Visual Arts

Craft is one of the very few sub-sectors that have been long-standing in the Namibian creative industries, strongly representing the Namibian demography as defined by the diverse traditions of its ethnic groups. Craftmanship plays a significant role beyond the expression of artistic visions into tangible products as it serves as a source of livelihood, for many people, especially those in the informal settlements and rural areas, particularly women. Craftwork is mostly comprised of products originating and drawn from traditional patterns, historical tales and personal ideas. The Himba beadwork and the San ostrich-eggshell jewellery are amongst the many popular craftwork souvenirs produced in Namibia[4]. As such, craft serves as a cultural embroidery, reflecting the essence of cultural heritage and showcase national pride.

Visual and contemporary arts include ancient works attributed to the San people, textile weaving, printmaking, painting, drawings and sculpture. Contemporary art involves using textures, shapes and colours to express and address various social subjects such as social equity, individuality and in the past, it was mostly linked to colonial issues. Currently, Namibia hosts an estimated 130 000 contemporary artists[5] . With the expansion of digital platforms and globalization, Namibian sculptors and artists have been gaining international recognition, including through platforms such as the African Women in Arts Awards.

2.2 Fashion and Graphic Design

The Namibian fashion industries consist of a vibrant mix of cultural heritage and the creative talent of designers. The fashion industry includes the design, manufacturing, marketing and sale of clothes and footwear, with a primary focus on private consumers. Furthermore, creatives in the fashion industries are leveraging digital platforms to market their products to wider markets. Given the increasing demand for local fashion design services for various occasions, the Namibian fashion industry has potential for further growth.

Graphic design involves digital and print designing as well as motion graphics and brand imaging to communicate relevant messages to identified audiences. Graphic design in Namibia has moderately advanced from being print dominated to tech and digitally driven given the increase in internet access and usage. According to the Communication Regulation Authority of Namibia (CRAN), 4G internet coverage reached 88.4 percent countrywide at the end of 2024 (CRAN,2024). As such, graphic design has potential to further expand given the increasing need for branding, marketing, and digital content creation.

2.3 Sports

A category of the creative industries, the Namibian sports industries has had a strong run as certain athletes and teams have attained success on the global stage. A few notable achievements, include the consistent qualification of the national rugby team for the World Cup. The 'Brave Warriors' also managed to reach the round of 16 in the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations, while a few athletes secured spots in world-class competitions. Moreover, the national netball team 'Desert Jewels won the 2025 United Arab Emirates Netball

Cup in Dubai. At the 2025 Indoor World Cup, Namibia's men's hockey team finished eighth while the women's hockey team finished sixth overall. Earlier on, the country's men and women's hockey team both finished as the top two nations at the 2024 Indoor Africa Cup, where the men's team won the tournament and the women's team placed as runner-up. This highlights talents within the Namibian youth that, if well nurtured, can contribute to the growth of the creative industries.

Albeit less popular, cricket has been recognised as one of fast-growing and successful sporting codes in Namibia. Historically, cricket has been more prominent in Windhoek, but several programs are currently expanding the game to other regions with a focus on youth[6]. It has a record of achievements, with the country expected to co-host the 2027 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup alongside South Africa and Zimbabwe for the first time in its history. This has been enabled by the sport's development and progress in the country, including the construction of the FNB Namibia Cricket Ground in Windhoek[7]. With sufficient investment, including training, in fast-growing sports like cricket, more growth opportunities would be available to the Namibian Youth.

The Government, through the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture (MEIYSAC) is actively prioritizing the promotion and development of sports. The 2025/26 national budget has allocated an estimated N$1.3 billion towards sports, youth, and national service with around N$450 million directed towards the development of sports, talent, and infrastructure. This indicates that the country is prioritising efforts towards the development and accessibility of sports infrastructure in most parts of the country which will eventually encourage the hosting of home matches for the national teams. Such effort is represented through the N$200 million allocated for the construction of six Confederation of African Football (CAF) Category 2 stadiums and seven CAF Category 3 stadiums. Six of the stadiums are planned to be built in Otjiwarongo, Omuthiya, Katima Mulilo, Mariental, Nkurenkuru and Gobabis[8].

[3]https://www.creativeindustryguide.com/home
[4]As such, https://namibiatoday.com/namibias-traditional-crafts-and-their-role-in-tourism/
[5]https://www.mexicohistorico.com/paginas/contemporary-art-movements-in-namibia-c3d13d5c.html
[6]https://cricketnamibia.com/about-us/
[7]https://cricketnamibia.com/stadium/
[8] https://www.namibian.com.na/steenkamp-hails-46-boost-in-youth-sport-budget/

Beyond direct funding, the Government also mobilises partnerships with private sector entities and international organizations to support creative industries. Bank Windhoek entered a partnership with MEIYSAC, as the title sponsor of the four-year running Bank Windhoek under 21 (U21) Soccer Tournament to help discover talent amongst participating players. Recently, the U.S Embassy along with MEIYSAC cohosted a "Youth Sandbox on Sports and Economic Benefits" dialogue, where various sport professionals, educators and policy makers emphasized the need for sports facilities that are accessible and fair, increased cooperation between the government and private sector, and policies that promote innovation and investment in youth-led sports initiatives[9]. Another collaborative initiative is the Namibian Annual Sports Awards which has been running for the past years and recognizes sport professionals for their contribution to the sports industries.

2.4 Music and Performing Arts

Music is the most evolving industry within the Namibian cultural and creative industries, comprised of performing arts, traditional music and contemporary music. Performing arts is made up of ballet, poetry and music concerts or festivals and is anchored by the National Theatre of Namibia where talent and skills are displayed through live performances. Meanwhile reggae, jazz, house, kwaito and hip-hop make up what is referred to as modern music or contemporary music. Traditionally, music is highly defined by Namibia's distinct ethnicity[10].

The country's music industry has witnessed significant transformation over the past two decades, including the fusion of modern genres into traditional music. As widely acknowledged, music transcends borders, connects communities, and celebrates cultural diversity. In pursuit of widening their reach and increasing earnings, creators in the music industries make use of digital platforms like YouTube, Spotify, iTunes and Apple Music to distribute their songs, by selling the products such as albums or Compact Discs. These diversified platforms have helped pave way for local artists, songwriters, and producers to the attention of locals and global viewers.

As the primary institution mandated to protect the rights of music creatives, the Namibia Society of Composers and Authors of Music (NASCAM) collect royalties for the registered work of its members[11]. The existing arrangement is for 30 percent of total royalties collected to remain with the institution, while the remaining 70 percent is to be distributed to its members (composers, lyricists, publishers, and recording artists). NASCAM reported royalties' distribution of N$1.6 million and N$1.9 million for 2022

and 2023, respectively, an improvement from an average of N1.0 million observed in the preceding three years. Royalties are based on how frequent artists' work plays on platforms such as radio and television. Table 1 below shows that royalties distributions between 2019 and 2023 were shared in almost equal proportions between local and international artists. This highlights the presence of international entertainment work in the Namibian market, closely competing with local music creatives.

[9]https://na.usembassy.gov/youth-sandbox-highlights-economic-potential-of-sports-in-namibia/#:~:text=Throughout%20the%20evening%2C%20panelists%20highlighted, in%20youth%2Ddriven%20spor ts%20ventures.
[10]https://www.namibiansun.com/columns/authentic-namibian-sounds-keep-it-real2024-09-13
[11]NASCAM only collects royalties for the registered videos, songs and equipment such as jukeboxes for music creatives

Table 1: NASCAM Royalties Distribution

Year	Total	Local artists	International artists
2019	1,079,391	62%	38%
2020	1,071,673	51%	49%
2021	987,473	54%	46%
2022	1,623,705	54%	46%
2023	1,891,575	47%	53%
Average		**53%**	**47%**

Source: NASCAM

2.5 Film

The film industry is one of the fast-evolving sectors of the creative industries in Namibia with potential to significantly contribute to economic growth due to its multiplier effect. The industry cuts across many areas of the creative industries and other sectors in the economy and stimulates businesses in other sectors such as hospitality and marketing while also contributing to cultural tourism promotion and social wellbeing in general. According to the Namibia Creative Industries Institute, the average feature film in Namibia spends approximately N$100,000 a day when in production, while an average TV commercial may spend up to N$150,000 in 2 days, and a photography shoot is able to generate 50,000 from it.

The Namibian film industry has seen several accomplishments over the recent years, attracting international players. At the same time, local films transcend across borders and receive admirable recognition. Africa Magic Viewer's Choice Awards has nominated some of the country's local films over the last few years, including "Hairareb" a drama film, which won as Best Movie in Southern Africa in 2022. For the 2025 awards several films received nominations for potential, such as "Skeleton Coast" for eight categories, "Walvis Tale" and "Lukas" for Best Indigenous Language Film, with "Walvis Tales" scoring an addition nomination for Best Documentary[12].

From international producer's perspective, Namibia stands out as one of the top five African nations for movie production due to its attractive and diverse landscape. In 2021 alone, Namibia hosted about 89 foreign films worth N$74 million, despite the detrimental effects of COVID-19[13]. As provided by the Namibia Film Commission (NFC), international film producers are dominantly from countries like the United Stated of America, Germany, the United Kingdom, and India. Popular international movies like Dune Part Two (2024) and Mad Max: Fury Road (2015) both have scenes shot in Namibia, specifically at Swakopmund, Skeleton Coast, Rossing Mountains, Blanky Flats, and Henties Bay[14]. This further demonstrates the industry's potential to contribute to growth and employment in the country.

In terms of governance, the NFC oversees film activities, develops local talent and helps to market Namibia as a desirable film location[15]. Recently, NFC placed a public call for its 2025/2026 film project funding cycle, a strategy that aims to identify fresh and untold local stories as well as emerging talent, with a focus on areas outside of the capital city Windhoek[16]. The funding by NFC is aimed at providing support towards the production of up to three films, three short web series and a mini documentary.

2.6 TV, Radio and Photography

Creative sectors such as television and radio have witnessed significant expansion over the last couple of years. Television (TV) and radio mostly serve as modes for transmitting information and entertainment. Radio listeners are mainly made up of rural residents while urban residents occupy majority of TV subscribers. Currently, the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) is the primary service provider in television and radio given its widespread connectivity across the country. NBC dominates with three TV channels, where NBC 1 serves as the main channel, while NBC 2 focuses on news, whereas NBC 3 primarily focuses on entertainment as well as current affairs18. NBC radio services are available in various languages, thereby creating diversified platforms for local creatives to showcase their work.

Photography also plays a vital role in the creative economy by placing Namibia on the global map. Photography largely functions as support services for other sectors such as films production. It is mainly used in marketing and continues to capture the country's landscapes and diverse culture promoting activities in the tourism sector while supporting artists' livelihoods. Namibian photographers mainly focus on landscape and astro sceneries (dunes, ancient rocks, mountains), wildlife, culture and documentary photography. Recent reports indicate that photographic safari took place in 39 out of 89 Namibian conservancies and thus a main source of income across 16 of these conservancies. The photography sector is broad and not only limited to commercial work or tourist attractions but also includes capturing events, at both corporate and individual levels.

2.7 Architecture

Architecture is one of the highly specialised sectors of the creative industries and is guided by a professional body. It is concerned with the creation of buildings structures and designs that shape cities and towns. It is also described to broadly play a role in the wellbeing of a society with its captivating aesthetics. It is architecture that add life to structures, embeds a story of the community or geographical landscape of an area and makes it attractive to tourists. Data from the Namibian Institute of Architects shows that the industry had a total of 91 professional practices in 2024, growing by an average of 4.0 percent since 2019. Also, there were a total of 115 registered professionals by the end of 2024, while on average 5 architects passed the Architects Professional Competency (APC) exams annually, between 2019 and 2024.

[12]https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fi9OSjThm7g
[13]https://neweralive.na/namibia-hosts-89-foreign-films-in-2021/
[14]https://emergefilmsolutions.com/country/namibia/#:~:text=Namibia%20has%20hosted%20productions%20such ,divided%20into%20the%20following%20regions%3A

[15] https://nfc.na/regulations#:~:text=We%20accomplish%20this%20by%20authorizing,environment%20for%20succ essful%20filming%20ventures.
[16]https://www.namibian.com.na/film-commission-launches-2025-call-to-finance-local-film-projects-2/ 18 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Namibian_Broadcasting_Corporation

Table 2: Namibia Institute of Architects membership

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Registered Architectural Firms	77	78	80	77	86	91
Architects in Training	50	53	41	51	60	51
Corporate Architects	121	115	121	124	126	115
Architects Competency exams (APC) Passed	7	6	5	5	5	6

Source: Namibian Institute of Architects

2.8 Training and talent development

With regards to education and training, there are several tertiary programmes available to the cultural and creatives. As the main institution established for the purpose of training and developing creators in the creative industries, the College of The Arts (COTA) offers programmes in fashion design, radio, television, new media design, and visual arts, including a one-year basic course for children aged five and above and has produce a total of 419 graduates since 2019. The University of Namibia (UNAM) also offers a few degrees in media, design, arts, theatre, and in heritage and conservation management. The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) has recently introduced a Department of Digital Arts and Animation, with a direct focus on scriptwriting, animation and filmmaking. Other training Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) and colleges include the Namibia Film School, National Training Authority and the COSDEF Arts and Craft Centre.

There are several funding opportunities and programmes available to students interested in pursuing careers in the cultural and creative industries. The Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) offers funding to credited courses provided by accredited institutions of higher learning at undergraduate levels and at TVET qualifications levels. Besides NSFAF, the National Arts Council of Namibia also plays a pivotal role in allocating bursaries and grants to those who want to pursue careers or professions in different priority areas[17]. To remain relevant and profitable to the creatives, it is important that the trainings and funding are directly aligned to the ever-evolving needs of the industries, especially in the digital space.

3. Contribution of the creative industries to growth and employment in Namibia

A country's creativity is its main economic capital, as it directly links to innovation, evolution of new ideas and improvement in product and service delivery (Kober, 2025). Kober further explains that this leads to increased economic productivity, with multiplier effects that incentivise individuals to undertake new ventures to transform communities. This section highlights how the Cultural and Creative Industries contributes to economic growth based on the available data.

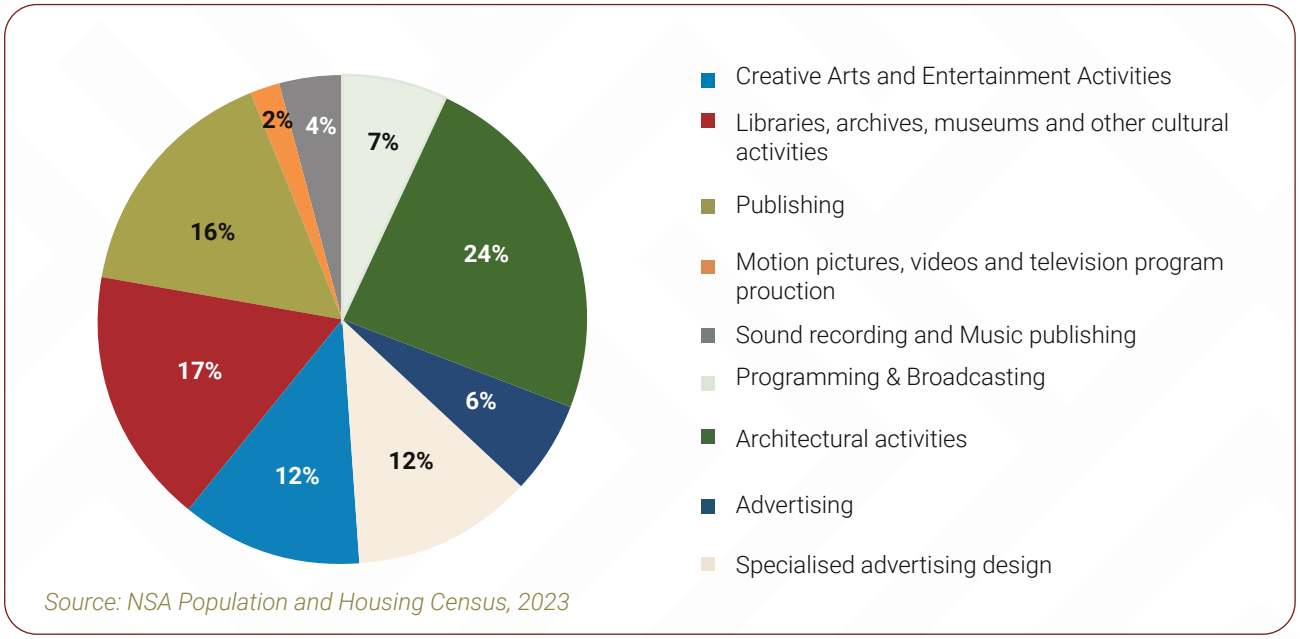
The Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA)'s 2023 Population and Housing Census (PHC) includes categories on employment in the craft and related trades[18]. The report shows that 63,812 workers were employed in the craft and related fields. Of this, 80 percent of the workers were male, and highly concentrated in the Khomas region.

Applying the UNESCO's 2009 cultural and creative industries Framework, the data shows that only about 6,300 people were employed in the cultural and creative industries, in 2023. This is out of a total employed population of 546,805, and given the broadness of the creative industry, it may be subject to potential gaps, in either data reporting or misclassifications in the local creative industries.

Additional data from the NSA shows that occupation in the creative industry is spread across many sectors. Figure 1, below depicts that a higher percentage of workers in creative occupations was employed in architectural activities in 2023, followed by the category of libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities. It is important to note the volatile and project-based nature of the creative industries such as film production where work is mostly available on a short-term basis. This may, therefore, suggest that the presented statistics may understate the actual number of workers in each sector.

[17]Graphic and game design, organology, cultural policy and management, jewellery making, curatorship in arts, culture and creative fields, digital or new media art, arts research, journalism and education (visual and performing arts)
[18]Creative Arts and Entertainment Activities, Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities, Publishing, Motion pictures, videos and television programme production, Sound recording and Music publishing, Programming & Broadcasting, Architectural activities, Advertising, Specialised advertising design

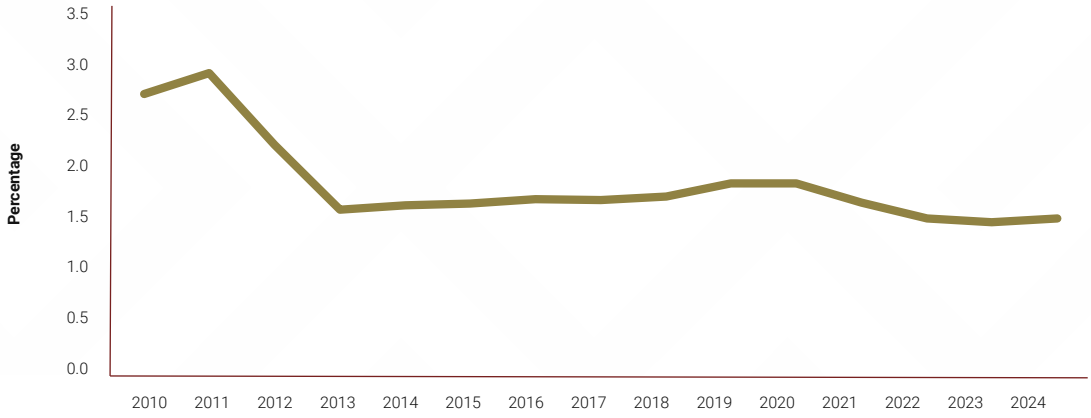
Figure 1: Creative occupation - 2023 Population and Housing Census



Source: NSA Population and Housing Census, 2023

In terms of contribution to GDP, the NSA National Accounts (NSA) includes data on the arts, entertainment and recreation sector. The NSA data shows that the sector's contribution to GDP has been volatile during the past decade, as shown in Figure 2, below. Nonetheless, the sector contributed 1.5 per cent to nominal GDP in both 2023 and 2024 (NSA,2024). Although some industries may have been left out, this indicates that there's potential and room for the sectors to expand beyond current levels especially under prevailing policy priorities at a national level to support and promote entrepreneurship in cultural and creative industries.

Figure 2: Arts, entertainment and recreation sectors' contribution to GDP

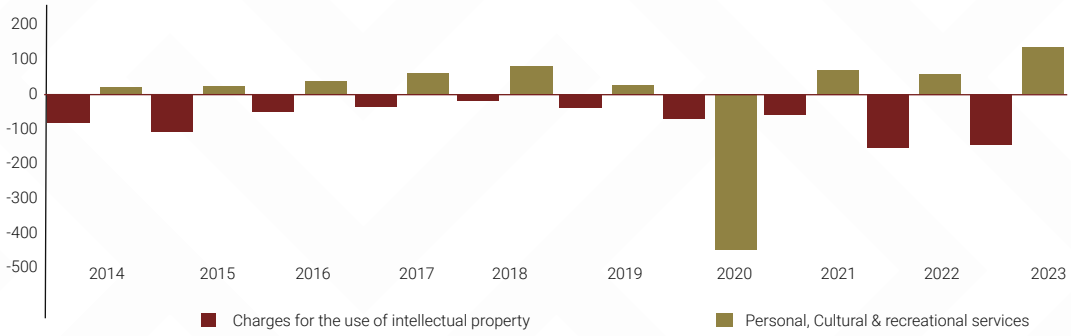


Source: NSA National Accounts (2024)

The creative economy is captured under the personal, cultural, and recreational services and charges for the use of intellectual property in the Bank of Namibia Balance of Payments (BoP) data[19]. As depicted in Figure 3, below, net trade in personal cultural and recreational services Namibia averaged at an outflow of about N$1.7 billion between 2014 and 2023, with significant outflows in 2020 where the use of online audio services increased during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns[20]. On the other hand, trade for charges for the use of intellectual property which includes proprietary rights and rights for research and development mostly records outflows, averaging at N$57.1 billion between 2014 and 2023.

[19]The BoP follows the IMF' BMP6 Standards
[20]This includes the hosting of online meetings (teams/zoom etc)

Figure 3. Trade in Cultural and creatives services net



Source: Nank of Namibia

The economic impact of the creative industries is potentially underestimated due to data limitations and lack of standardized methodological framework for measuring their contribution. This is especially prevalent in developing countries, where creatives activity is significantly concentrated in the informal sector and largely characterised by data inadequacies, and weak or non-existent regulatory frameworks (Afreximbank,2024). The broadness and interlinkages of activity in the creative sectors and the fact that they overlap with other sectors are some of the reasons for the underrepresentation of the sectors impact on the economy.

4. Challenges for Cultural and Creative industries in Namibia

The Namibian creative industries are faced with various challenges, which hampers their success and contribution to growth. This section aims to explore challenges facing the creative industries in Namibia, primarily based on the results obtained from the mini survey.

Behind thriving creative industries in other countries are strong funding mechanisms; however, the Namibia creative industries are confronted with insufficient funding opportunities. According to Afreximbank, (2024), African Governments initiatives to support the development, promotion and funding of Cultural and Creative Industries remains at an infant stage. Although there are initiatives provided by institutions such as the National Arts Council, grants[22] and others, the Namibian Creative industries attribute the lack of growth to underinvestment to non-existent investment in the industries. This is mainly because such resources remain insufficient to fully support the financing needs of the growing number of creatives. Most creative projects in Namibia appear to be self-funded, as they are unable to get credit scores required by financial institutions. This is described as an unsustainable way of financing that easily leads to failure.

The subject of intellectual property right is a critical challenge for the creative entrepreneurs in Namibia. With the new technological developments that makes reproduction and distribution of copyrightable works easily accessible, the industries face significant copyright challenges. While some policies exist, their implementation and enforcement of intellectual property protection legal instruments are cited to remain slow and less aligned to the trends in the creative industries. The Copyright and Related Rights Protection Bill 2024, currently in draft form, is expected to support and protect intellectual property assets, making it critical for driving economic growth and cultural preservation in the country. Nonetheless, its success remains rooted in efficient implementation and enforceability when it is finally promulgated.

Not only are there gaps in the regulatory environment, but some creatives may not be aware of their rights. As such, awareness and claiming one's intellectual property becomes a complex and costly process. This has even been made difficult by the advent of digital technology, where creatives work is visible and equally vulnerable, leaving some Namibian creatives' digital work in the hands of external parties without any rewards accruing to them. In the absence of Namibian legal frameworks that allows for the claiming of their work from unauthorised users, the growth of the Namibian creative industries remain stifled.

While technology helps make creatives output more efficient, digital transformation of creative industries also poses risks and challenges regarding the use of artificial intelligence. Generally, these challenges relate to the quality and reliability of content produced using artificial intelligence, whereby it prioritises data patterns to the detriment of other factors to increase the commercial objectives of its promoters. This has raised key concerns about how digitalisation can reduce cultural diversity and lead to cultural bias, while presenting regulatory challenges especially on consumer protection (UNCTAD,2024).

[21]These services comprise of performing arts, visual arts, heritage services, recreational services and other personal services.
[22]https://artscouncilnam.org/funding/

The creative industries are also characterised by weak value chain linkages, as industries often operate in isolations, with limited collaboration between different sectors. This disintegration makes it difficult to scale up production and reach a wider market. This has also been observed in the corporate institutions' preferences for importing creative services from other countries instead of hiring and supporting local creative entrepreneurs. The absence of a comprehensive national strategy for the creative industries and minimal understanding of the creative industries value chain limits coordinated support and long-term planning. However, the results of the mini survey undertaken revealed that UNESCO is currently supporting MEIYSAC to develop a Cultural and Creative Industries Strategy.

High input costs and lack of incentives to attract adequate international investment is hindering the growth of the industry. This mostly affects the film and graphic designs industries where large equipment is required in the production process. Equipment and other materials used in large film production in Namibia are reported to be mostly imported as they are not available in the country, an opportunity that could be seized locally. To grow the film industry, some countries offer incentives in the form of tax rebates for international film production, this is identified as non-existent in Namibian and a challenge to the growth of the industry. Should the country fill this gap it is posed to significantly increase the growth of the creative industries and contribute to employment given the multiplier effect of the film sector.

With the significant advancement of technology and digital platforms, creative entrepreneurs need to consistently acquire appropriate skills to remain relevant and grow their business. Namibian creatives need to be technologically and digital savvy to be able to apply the skills and keep up with global trends to grow their business. Despite the level of education attained, data shows that more effort needs to be exerted on the provision of internet connectivity and training on basic digital skills to empower the youth, especially talented creatives and enable them to showcase their work on global digital platforms.

Data availability is a critical input in the formulation of appropriate policies. Lack of data is a major challenge in the cultural and creative industries, especially in developing economies (UNCTAD, 2022). UNCTAD further explains that countries face several issues in measuring services due to lack of the appropriate statistical infrastructure. This is also evident in the data available in the Namibian market where data gaps and classification issues are observed. This makes it difficult to quantify the industry actual economic contribution and highlights a need for improved processes in data capturing and management for the country.

Namibian creatives struggle to build stable earnings prospects due to payment restrictions and regulatory barriers. Some streaming platforms such as YouTube do not monetise views for certain countries[23], Namibia is specifically excluded from the list of countries where YouTube monetise views, thereby limiting the income potential for Namibian creatives. Also, PayPal[24] does not, currently, have an active payout function for Namibia, which means Namibians can receive funds via the platform, but are not able to cash it out. The prevailing restrictions in the payment space disadvantages Namibian creatives, especially content creatives, limiting them from building stable earnings.

Creative entrepreneurs, especially outside urban areas have limited access to services and infrastructure and that limits their growth. Most creative spaces and facilities such as innovation hubs, museums, theatres and educational institutions like the College of Arts are only available in urban areas, making it difficult for these creatives to participate in exhibiting their work and/or to pursue studies in cultural and creative fields. Another issue at hand for creatives in the rural areas is the limited digital connection and reliable technology, which make them less attractive to outside investments, confines their market access and therefore opportunities to grow.

[23]https://www.namibian.com.na/namibian-creatives-struggle-to-make-money-online/
[24]https://www.namibian.com.na/namibians-to-keep-waiting-for-paypal-payout/

5.Opportunities for the Namibian cultural and creative industries

Despite its relatively small size and the challenges that the Namibian creative industries are faced with, there are still opportunities that would make a great impact on the Namibian economy. Namibia is a youthful nation, a valuable resource, with high potential to transform and drive growth in the creative industries. With a young population, the country is entering a potential window of demographic advantage (NDP6, 2025). The country has a relatively young population, with 34.1 percent in the youth category (15-35 years), (NSA,2024). This is an advantage in terms of labour force but also implies that the country will continue to face an increased demand for economic opportunities. As such, concerted effort, as explored below, and as confirmed by the mini survey results, is needed to support and grow the creative industries where many young people are active.

Given the current high level of unemployment in the country, the creative industries are seen as a beacon of hope for the youth. Youth unemployment rate was recorded at 36.9 percent in 2024, increasing from the previous level of 33.4 percent published in 2018, (NSA,2025). The cultural and creative industries do not only present a hobby for the creatives but serves as an avenue for new employment and income generating opportunities. As such, the creative youth would strive to pursue entrepreneurship in the industries especially that creative work is driven by intrinsic qualities and passion. Through appropriate training, mentorship programmes, and community initiatives, the creative industries can become a strong driver of empowerment and social development.

Under the Human Development and Community Resilience pillar, the NDP6 strives to preserve and support the cultural and creative industries. The Plan targets heritage and culture sector as well as the arts and creative industries and aims to unlock community wealth through heritage tourism by establishing a national heritage Endowment Fund and promoting cultural heritage cites at local levels, among others. The plan further aspires to develop integrated infrastructure to enhance capacity in the creative industries. This will be attained through enhanced capacity in the creative industries, the strengthening of funding models and the improvement of intellectual property rights and market access.

The Havard Growth Lab Report, (2022-2024) identified key growth challenges to the Namibian economy[25]. One of these is the limited diversification of the economy and the overly reliance on resource sectors such as mining. The Report highlights the need for the country to explore other sectors and diversify the economy. The country has since incorporated economic diversification initiatives into the NDP6, which includes a priority focus on harnessing the creative industries and exploring opportunities to support and enhance its contribution to economic growth and employment.

[25]https://growthlab.hks.harvard.edu/publication/a-growth-diagnostic-of-namibia/

In its effort to support the Youth, who are the majority players in the creative industries, the Government has established a National Youth Development Fund. The Fund is one of the strategies for the Government to address the current high youth unemployment rate in the country. The Fund has been established to be extended to youth enterprises in agriculture & agro-processing, green & eco-friendly projects, manufacturing & value addition, as well as other sectors, including the creatives industries at interest rates of 2 to 4 percent. With an initial allocation of N$257 million the Fund's implementing agencies have been identified as the Agricultural Bank of Namibia (Agribank), the Development Bank of Namibia (DBN) and the Environmental Investment Fund (EIF)[26].

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to play a major role in advancing the development of Namibia's creative industries. AI-powered tools can use automation to blend audio, harmonies, create melodies, and drum patterns tailored for a given genre, allowing artists to have home studios and to produce more music in a shorter period. Through the systematic preservation and digital storage of vintage or deteriorated pictures and creative works, AI would help to preserve cultural heritage as this will make it more readily available for study and public exhibitions. In visual and arts design, inputting text-based commands enables AI to generate images and designs that can be used for initial sketches or provide various design options. Artificial intelligence can also help analyse screenplays, automate subtitles, edit videos, forecast audience interest and create special effects for filmmakers and videographers.

Namibia has unique and breathtaking landscape, with a combination of savanna land, mountainous areas, sand dunes and the desert that meets the ocean. The country also has two UNESCO[27] recognised world heritage sites, the Twyfelfontein and the Namib Sand Sea and a total of eight others on the waiting list. This gives Namibia a comparative advantage in tourist attraction, an opportunity to grow the tourism industries. As such, the creative industries can leverage Namibia's rich cultural heritage and artistic talent that integrates local art, music and storytelling to enhance tourism and boost earnings and employment in such industries. In addition to tourism, the country's landscape has strong potential to attract investment in the film and television industries, which, given the right support, equally has higher potential for growth and employment creation.

Also, the cultural and creative industries are receiving increasing interest from global funders. The Afreximbank launched a $1 billion African Film Fund as part of its Creative Africa Nexus program in 2025[27] which aims to develop creative and cultural industries in Africa. Also, as part of its commitment to the cultural and creative industries, the Africa Development Bank (AfDB) launched a Fashionomics programme to support enterprises in the fashion and textile industries in Africa worth a total of $14.9 million over a period of 7 years, (AfDB, 2024). This presents an opportunity for Africa, including Namibia to develop the creative economy.

6. Lessons from other countries: South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya

6.1 South Africa

In accordance with (UNCTAD,2024), the South African creative and cultural industries contributed R161 billion to GDP, representing about 3.0 percent of total GDP. In South Africa, audio-visual, design, media and creative sub-industries are the major industries. South Africa's creative industries accounted for 4.1 percent of the workforce in 2019 alone (UNCTAD,2024). As the South African Government actively promotes talent development as well as using an entrepreneurial approach to manage specific cultural and creative industries, below are a few lessons that Namibia can benchmark on to improve the country's CCIs.

South Africa (SA) prioritizes skills development in the creative industries through education and training. The country has a network of schools, academies and colleges to help produce skilled creative professionals. The South African Film Academy places focus on human capital development by educating students and providing them with a 12-month paid internship through relevant employing partners[28]. The School of Audio Engineering Institute[29] also provides courses in games, film, animation and audio. These institutions produce skilled personnel for every phase of the value chain, ranging from set designers and cinematographers to sound engineers and set directors. The South African National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) provides financial assistance to aspiring creatives from low-income backgrounds, mostly those who want to study at public institutions[30]. Namibian may need to consider distributing studies funding opportunities evenly across TVET and other qualifications to enhance specialization in different arrears of the creative industries.

The country's sports management prioritizes sports infrastructure development and operates on business principles. It emphasizes the importance of sports marketing, managing sports facilities and seizing opportunities in the hosting of sport events. This strategy enabled the country to co-host the 2003 Cricket World Cup as well as being the official host of the 2015 FIFA World Cup. The SA government has defined governing structures for sports entities such as the South African Sports Commission. Such structures generally operate on a business approach and sources funding for investments in sports activities, and to be held liable for sports performance outcomes. With the current commitment to improve and build sports infrastructure highlighted in Section 2.3, above, lessons for Namibia would be on the management of such facilities once constructed.

[26]Technical - MOF - Portal Ariel
[27]https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/

[28]https://safilmacademy.org/
[29]https://www.thenextpages.com/sae-institute-south-africa/
[30]https://gauteng.net/nsfas/nsfas-funded-courses-fields-of-study-are-covered/#:~:text=Creative%20fields%20like%20Art%20and%20Design%20are%20also,Photography.%20Performin g%20Arts%3A%20Theatre%20Arts%2C%20Dance%2C%20and%20Music.

South Africa offers a Foreign Film and Television Production and Post-Production Incentive[31]. The incentive is designed to attract foreign film and television productions and post-production work to promote employment creation. The rebates are based on qualifying criteria and consist of a 25 percent refund on qualifying production expenditure spent locally, which should not exceed ZAR25 million. Also, for expenditure on post-production, foreign production firms may qualify for 25 % rebate on qualifying expenditure. By attracting foreign production, the incentives enhance growth through local procurement and also promote the country's film television industry. On the contrary, Namibia does not offer any incentives in this area.

6.2 Nigeria

According to M'Hammdi & Jaidi, (2021), Nigeria's film industry well-known as "Nollywood" is the second largest movie industries in the world, after India. It is further stated that the country's music industry produces about US$150 million annually. In terms of employment, the Nigerian creative industries contributed 6 percent to total employment in 2019, employing a total of 3.2 million people (UNCADT,2024). However, Nigerian creative industries still face challenges for which the country established and put in place relevant policies to combat these issues.

Through comprehensive policies and legal frameworks and dedicated government entities, Nigeria committed to ensure that it protects the Intellectual Property of local creatives. Nigeria has an institution that is solely responsible for the protection of intellectual property, the Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC). Three primary laws protect the intellectual property of the country's creatives, in Nigeria: The Copyright Act of 2022[32], the Trademark Act of 2004, and the Patents and Designs Act of 2004. The Copyright Act is an automatic protection where creative work is guaranteed protection regardless of whether the artist has registered the work or not. However, registration with the NCC is essential as it serves as crucial proof of ownership in case of a dispute. The country established the Trademark Act to protect brand identification of an artist or creative firm, where the owner gains exclusive rights to the mark upon registration with the Trademark Registry. Lastly, the Patents and Designs Act protects ornamental features of a creative product to prevent other creatives from reproducing it.

With intentions of protecting the local fashion industries, Nigeria enforces tariffs along with quotas on imported products. The Government imposes high tariffs to stimulate consumers to buy local textiles and finished garments, and to discourage these imports. Currently, tariffs on imported textiles and apparel remain between 20 to 35 percent[33]. Nigeria spends around U$6 billion on the importation of finished garments and textiles. At various times, Nigeria had placed bans on the importation of specific textiles and finished goods, and recently the country's Federal Government proposed the introduction of a U$4 billion annual clothing import Bill[34], which aims to place limits on the clothing imports. Although the bill is still in talks, this move signifies the Government's commitment to significantly reduce garment imports.

[31]https://www.thedtic.gov.za/financial-and-non-financial-support/incentives/film-incentive/foreign-film-andtelevision-production-and-post-production-incentive-foreign-film/
[32] This act provides protection for musical, literary, visual artistic and audiovisual works.
[33]https://www.zhengbackpack.com/nigeria-import-tax/
[34]https://kohantextilejournal.com/nigeria-targets-4-billion-garment-import-bill-bold-textile-revivalplan/#:~:text=In%20a%20strategic%20move%20to%20revive%20Nigeria%E2%80%99s%20struggling,to%20the%20 Cotton%2C%20Textile%20and%20Garment%20%28CTG%29%20sector.

6.3 Kenya

Strengthened by a strong collaborative structure, Kenya is transforming its creative industries by employing digital innovation tools, among other strategies. Creative industries in Kenya have adopted to digital marketing, advertising and streaming platforms, making way into the global market. Below are two major lessons that Namibia can draw from Kenya, with a focus on digital monetizing and data capturing inclusion for the creative industries.

Kenya introduced a mobile money service known as M-Pesa[35] to help built a simple financial infrastructure that is inclusive and accessible. Along with other sectors of the economy, this service is also used in creative industries, where fashion designers, tailors, musicians, filmmakers and event organizers sell their products through e-commerce platforms and receive instant payments from anywhere in the country, which enables direct payments from fans or audiences, cutting traditional intermediaries and digitizing the entire creative industries value chain. Out of Kenya's total population of about 57.5 million, there are about 45 million[36] M-Pesa users with over 70 million users worldwide, indicating the number of people that have trust in this mobile money service. Namibia's ongoing efforts to introduce an instant payment platform, spearheaded by the Bank of Namibia, present an opportunity for the country to emulate the Kenyan example

Kenya introduced a model for measuring the economic contributions of its creative industries, using satellite accounts. The country has thus far published its Film Industries Satellite Account (FISA)[37] which used to measure the contributions of Kenya's film industries. This is a collaborative effort between the German Society for International Cooperations (GIZ) and Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). FISA captures key data such as revenue, job types, gross capital formation, employment figures and contribution to GDP. Data is collected through desktop research, industries reports, interviews, surveys as primary source, and digital platforms to acquire a wider range of data. Setting up a similar programme (satellite account) would address the current lack of data and ensure proper measurement of the industry's contribution to the Namibian economy.

6.4 Ghana

Another exceptional example Namibia stands to leverage on is from the Central Bank of Ghana. The Bank of Ghana has put in place regulatory infrastructure that guide and acknowledges Intellectual Property as a movable asset Bank of Ghana, (2023). The Bank established a collateral Registry, under the Borrowers and Lenders Act,2020, which, among others, permits the use and recognition of Intellectual Property, such as copy rights and patent a secured assets worthy to be used for collateral purposes. This implies that creative entrepreneurs can present their Intellectual Property to banking institutions to apply for loan. The initiative has been recognised as an impactful support for the creative businesses in Ghana considering that assets holdings among the creative entrepreneurs are primarily in intangible resources. Considering that lack of funding opportunities is cited to be one of the major challenges hindering the growth of creative businesses in Namibia, it would be advisable for the relevant institutions to give this initiative a consideration.

[35]M-Pesa is a mobile phone-based money service that allows users to transfer money, make payments and acquire micro loans even if the users do not have a bank account.
[36]https://techweez.com/2025/07/01/kenya-goes-cashless-mobile-money-subscriptions-soar-to-45-million/
[37]https://kenyafilmcommission.go.ke/news/kfc-launches-the-first-ever-film-industry-satellite-account/

7. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

The Namibian creative industries are increasingly being recognized as a significant contributor to economic growth and employment opportunities. This paper aimed to assess the status of Namibian creative industries, exploring possible challenges it faces and opportunities available to the industries. The Namibian creative industries encompass a wide range of artistic forms such as visual arts, music, performing arts, film, advertising, architecture, fashion design, the digitalised sector of graphic design, and others smaller sectors with cultural and artistic traits such as literature.

The paper highlights that cultural and creative industries do in fact contribute to GDP and employment in Namibia. This has also been confirmed with lessons from the countries reviewed, where such as been observed, especially when the industries are offered targeted support. However, challenges especially data-related were encountered in trying to fully explore the degree of the industries' contribution to the economy. It's important to note that this places a strain on performance evaluation and progress tracking of the creative industries, thereby limiting the recommendation of appropriate support needed by the individual industries.

The paper also notes that certain industries in the creative space have higher potentials to drive growth and employment creation in Namibia. The film production industry, for example, is considered to have a higher multiplier effect as it cuts across other sectors. It stimulates businesses in other industries such as hospitality and tourism, beauty and cultural areas for costumes and others. Therefore, if efficiently incorporated in the mainstream developmental efforts and receive the necessary support, it will enhance economic activity and generate earnings for Namibians especially the youth who are the active players in the industries.

Several challenges persist in the creative industries, hindering the rate at which these industries can grow and eventually maximise their full potential. The industries are characterised with weak regulatory requirements that often fail to protect the creatives' work against illegal copying and distribution and faces high equipment costs, among others. While the Namibian creative industries grapple with limited access to funding opportunities, they also suffer from applicable skills gaps to effectively run their businesses in the digital world.

Amidst these issues, the Namibian creative industries hold potentials that if explored would make a great impact on the Namibian economy. This is especially true, given that the youth make up a large segment of the industries' active players. As such, a close focus on the opportunities highlighted in this paper would contribute to the National aspiration of reducing youth unemployment in Namibia. Thus, the following section provides policy recommendations to the current identified issues within the creative industries.

In addition, Namibia can improve by learning from the experiences of other countries that have thriving creative industries. These revolve around efforts to develop and properly maintain of sports infrastructure, considering that they can be used to bring extra earnings into the country by hosting international and regional sports competitions. Acknowledging the Copy rights and Related Rights Protection Bill that's currently underway[38], Namibia can leverage on other nation's approaches to growing the film industry, as well as on the effective implementation, alignment and enforcement of relevant laws to protect the work of creatives. Moreover, the adoption of appropriate data models for measuring the economic contribution of the creative industries as employed by other countries Statistics Agencies is another point for consideration for Namibia especially given the current aspirations to grow the industries.

[38]According to BIPA, the Bill was before the Cabinet Committee on Legislation.

7.2 Policy Recommendations

Given the above conclusion, the note recommends the following strategies with the view to grow and enhance the contribution of the cultural and creative industries to growth and employment in Namibia.

Key Pillars	Action Required	Responsible Authority/Agency
I. Industries empowerment and market access	a) To achieve a contribution of 3 per cent to the GDP, the Government, together with stakeholders need to implement initiatives that are targeted to develop and grow the creative industries. The film production industry appears to have higher growth potential. Therefore, concerted efforts should be targeted towards these sectors. This may include the introduction of rebates on international film productions to attract foreign investment as well as government subsidies towards the purchasing of production equipment. b) In order to increase demand for creative products and services, there is a need to stimulate public interest through initiatives such as national or regional Creative Fairs. Also, the country needs to support creatives in increasing access to regional and international markets through special efforts and trade agreements and cultural exchange programmes. This will require proactive efforts by the responsible Ministries to identify such opportunities.	Various players: Including the Ministry of Finance, the Namibia Competition Commission,
II. Funding	a) The Government is advised to introduce initiatives to encourage the private sector to provide funding to the creative industries, in their individual capacities, complementing their corporate-social responsibility. The Government is also encouraged to mobilise Funding from the private sector, including the global funders to grow the National Youth Fund and enhance support to the creative industries. b) Financial institutions led by the Ministry of Finance should opportunities to allow for the use of Intellectual Property in credit provision to the creative industry.	Ministry of Finance and Industry players
III. Training and mentorship	a) The public sector and private sector need to collaborate through structures such as the Namibia Public-Private Forum in providing mentorship programmes to capacitate and empower passionate creative entrepreneurs including those in rural areas to be able to grow their business. Also, wider expansion and incorporation of sports training in schools especially the best performing sport codes will help identify talent and contribute to the performance of the sports industry.	Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture and various players/IT Sectors
IV. Data availability	a) There is a need to improve data coverage and classification and the adoption of frameworks applicable to the creative industries. The challenges on data availability and access makes it difficult to quantify their economic contribution and advocate for supportive policies. The upcoming national accounts (SNA) rebasing exercise needs to render appropriate measurement of the industries, including adopting the Satellite Accounts approach, where applicable	National Statistics Agency, Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture

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05

The Value of Arts and Culture

5. The Value of Arts and Culture

A Presentation delivered by Ms. Avril Joffe: UNESCO Chair in Cultural Entrepreneurship and Policy, University of the Witwatersrand.

Ms. Joffe set the tone by explaining that across Africa, arts and culture should be understood not merely as an expression of identity but as an engine for inclusive growth, employment, and social cohesion. The presentation highlighted what the creative and cultural economy (CCE) is, why it matters, and the practical policy connections Namibia can make to unlock its full value. They explained that the African CCE advance economic growth, social inclusion, and human development, noting that it rests on education systems, business-support services, enabling legislation and policy, and appropriate institutional arrangements.

5.1 Key Characteristics of Today's African Creative Economy

The creative economy across Africa is vibrant, culturally diverse, and multi-talented in all five regions, yet it remains under-supported in policy terms. The presentation underscored that informality is widespread and growing, that many countries lack complete value chains in cultural sectors, and that this has implications for regional integration and cross-border collaboration. They further argued that education systems often under-emphasise artistic disciplines, culture, indigenous knowledge, and their related socio-economic impacts. As a result, much of the support only comes from civil societies and non-governmental organisations.

Culture and creativity is currently as Africa's 'new gold,' as data indicate that they generate interlinked economic, social, personal, and institutional value. Economically, they said culture and creativity create jobs and growth supported by instruments such as seed capital, equity, soft loans, and subsidised lending. Socially, they stressed that culture strengthens identity, nation-building, learning outcomes, inclusion, and resilience. At an individual level, creative practice builds self-esteem, confidence, and critical engagement, often supported by philanthropy. Institutionally, culture can improve national image, among others. Cultural activities, however, mainly survive on grants, corporate social investment, and international cooperation, which signifies a need for stable, long-term public funding frameworks.

5.2 From Culture cycle to Culture value network

The speaker described the need to shift from a linear 'culture cycle' to a broader 'culture value network.' In their view, value is created across creation, production, distribution mechanisms, and audience reception. They cautioned that persistent cross-cutting constraints, including, weak articulation with education, limited business capability, fragmented organisation, insufficient regulation, and inadequate clustering of activities continue to hinder growth. They added that the advancement in digital technologies and platforms requires policymakers to map value flows and intentionally build strategies necessary to scale the sector.

5.3 Anchoring Policy in African and Global Frameworks

Importantly, policies should be anchored on established frameworks. [39]The presentation stressed that frameworks legitimise culture as a development driver and offer tools for advocacy, collaboration, market analysis, and institution-building aligned to African priorities. Ms. Joffe explained that culture does not only function as a driver of development but also produces intrinsic benefits that reinforce social cohesion and trust in institutions. She further described the industry structure as both knowledge-intensive and labour-intensive, with a high share of micro-enterprises in which proprietors often act simultaneously as producers, agents, distributors, marketers, and retailers. Value chains are complex and fast-evolving due to digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence, which means funding remains one of the most significant needs.

[39] These include the African Charter for Cultural Renaissance; the AU Plan of Action for Cultural and Creative Industries; UNESCO's 2003 and 2005 Conventions and the Recommendation on the Status of the Artist; Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

The presenter argued that arts and culture support democratisation, reflect historical and social contexts, and that it is a transformative power that reinforces independence, sovereignty, and identity. They further explained that culture advances individual well-being and fulfilment while building tolerance and peaceful coexistence, stability, and security.

5.4 The future of Arts and Culture

Looking forward, the speaker maintained that a robust African creative economy could yield societal stability. Stressing that in to meet youth expectations, the sector would need to generate new opportunities and articulate a shared vision that builds trust, connecting the value of culture to tangible economic opportunities. They recommended placing culture and CCIs at the centre of development to create opportunities that address urgent needs, particularly for young people.

Suggested policy priorities included enabling creative, cultural, and intellectual work; producing cultural goods for local markets; ensuring fair revenues and modern IP protection; developing homegrown regulation adapted to African realities; and investing in technical and digital skills. The presenter called for coordinated action across education and training systems (formal and informal, basic to tertiary), all levels of government, nongovernmental and intermediary organisations, the private sector (including legal and IP services), and international and domestic development agencies such as cultural institutes and multilateral organisations.

Mapping out skills pathways through evidence-led policies, grounded in regular data updates is a critical step towards quantifying the existing skills gap. That said, results shows that access to technology is not adequate if practical barriers such as lack of financial inclusion are not fully addressed[40]. As such, a key recommendation included multi-year investments, hybrid learning models, life-skills foundations, networked opportunities, and partnership-based approaches to ensure the industry's continuous growth, and sustainability.

5.5 Key Recommendations

- Formally recognise the creative economy in national policy: Integrate CCI objectives across education, trade/industry, finance, and social development, guided by AU and UNESCO frameworks.
- Strengthen foundational enablers: Embed arts and indigenous knowledge into curricula; expand business-support services for creatives; and improve institutional arrangements to reduce informality.
- Invest in digital infrastructure and capabilities: Support platform participation, modern IP protection, inclusive and secure digital payments, and data-driven decision-making for creators and consumers.
- Build an evidence base: Establish regular data collection (including satellite accounts) and foresight studies on skills, jobs, and market trends to inform policy and investment.
- Reduce practical finance barriers: Design payment-access solutions that do not rely solely on cards/formal accounts; link creatives to micro-finance, soft loans, and blended instruments.

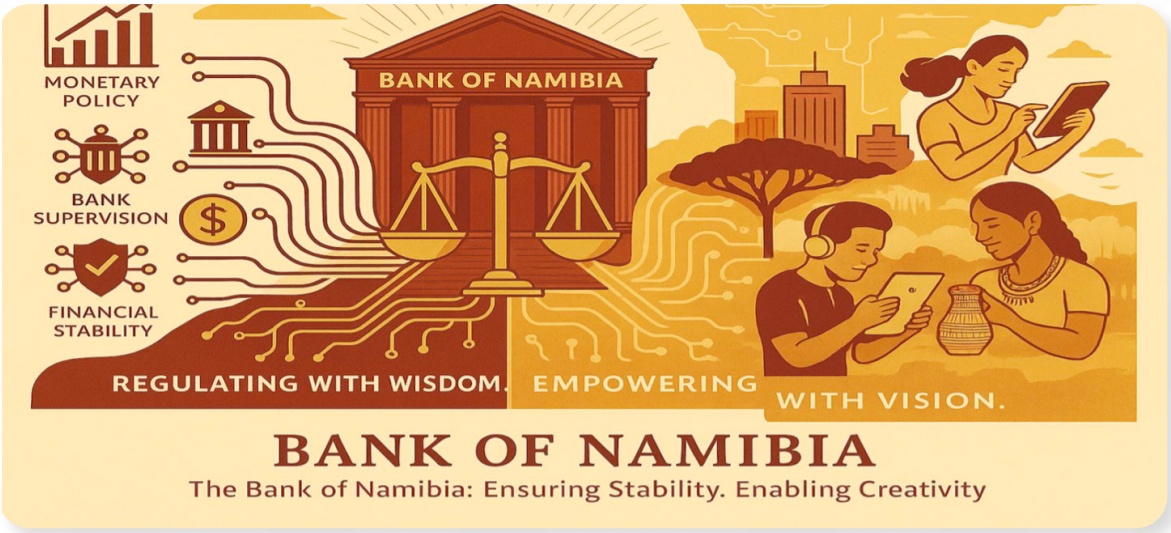
[40]E.g. requiring bank cards or formal accounts continue to exclude creatives from digital commerce.

06

Business Models and Access to Finance for Catalysing Namibia's Creative Industry

6. Business Models and Access to Finance for Catalysing Namibia's Creative Industry

Presentation by Ms. Njoki Muhoho: Culture Architect. Film Maker. Management Consultant[41]



6.1 Human capital, imagination and the economic case for creative finance

A key emphasis introduced by the presentation related to the fact that the greatest asset for any organisation, and a country is its human capital. More precisely, it is human imagination: the ability to conceive, create, interpret, and transform ideas into value. She emphasised that creativity should be treated as a primary arena of economic engagement, drawing on people's stories, skills, innovation, and cultural expression to convert thoughts into intellectual property, identity into exports and culture into tradeable assets, across film, music, design, fashion, gaming, animation, and digital content.

Despite this logic, the presenter explained that creative industries have historically struggled to be recognised as bankable and investable sectors. For decades, financiers have viewed creativity as informal, high-risk, or consumption-oriented, rather than as a legitimate engine of growth. This perception gap has constrained access to credit, limited scale, and kept much of the sector operating below its economic potential.

They expounded that to be human is, in effect, to be a creative. Every individual holds the capacity to convert thought into value through storytelling, design, innovation, performance, or digital creation. When financial systems fail to recognise this, they do not merely exclude a sector; they underutilise national potential. The challenge is not a lack of value, but a mismatch between traditional financial models and creative business realities. Creative enterprises are typically asset-light, driven by intellectual property rather than physical collateral, and characterised by irregular yet scalable revenue streams which is often generated through multiple, small, cross-border transactions.

Unlocking the creative economy therefore requires a deliberate shift, they underscored. This starts from viewing creativity as art to recognising it as industry, and from treating imagination as intangible to structuring it as financeable capital. The end goal is to create appropriate business models and essential access-to-finance mechanisms, not as subsidies, but as enabling architecture that allows imagination to be transformed into sustainable commercial assets and national economic growth.

Furthermore, the presenter highlighted that sustainable growth of Namibia's creative economy depends not on ad hoc project funding, but on fit-for-purpose financial instruments. Creative enterprises operate differently from traditional sectors, and financial systems must evolve accordingly. Drawing on African market experience and international best practice, the present lists several models that offer strategic pathways for unlocking finance while preserving financial stability and prudent risk management. They are as follows:

[41]The presentation was fully delivered at the Annual Symposium Public Lecture, on 12 November at The Namibia University of Science and Technology

6.2 Strategic pathways for unlocking finance

Creative Credit Guarantee Facilities:

Creative enterprises are often perceived as high-risk due to limited physical collateral and uneven cash flows. A Creative Credit Guarantee Facility addresses this by sharing lending risk between financial institutions and public or development partners. By reducing collateral pressure and improving loan terms, credit guarantees encourage banks to lend to creative MSMEs within a structured, regulated framework rather than on a discretionary basis.

Blended Finance Funds for Creative Industries:

Blended finance combines public, development, and private capital to de-risk investment into creative sectors. Concessional funding absorbs early-stage risk, enabling commercial capital to scale viable enterprises under clear governance and performance standards. This approach mobilises private investment while maintaining market discipline and alignment with national diversification objectives.

Intellectual Property–Backed Financing Models:

Creative businesses generate value primarily through intellectual property—scripts, music catalogues, formats, designs, and digital content. IP-backed financing allows contracts, royalties, licences, and distribution agreements to function as collateral proxies, enabling future revenues to be monetised. This modernises credit assessment frameworks for economies increasingly driven by intangible assets.

Revenue-Based Financing:

Revenue-based financing aligns repayments directly to business performance rather than fixed schedules. This flexibility reduces default risk, accommodates project-based and seasonal income, and reflects the cash-flow realities of creative enterprises. RBF preserves ownership while supporting growth and financial sustainability.

Cross-Border Digital Settlement Platforms:

Creative revenues are increasingly earned through small, frequent payments across borders via streaming, gaming, digital art, licensing, and online platforms. Effective settlement systems must support low-value, high-volume transactions with speed, interoperability, and regulatory clarity. Without this infrastructure, creative income remains fragmented, informal, and economically undercounted.

Creative Bonds and Cultural Investment Notes:

Creative bonds enable institutional and retail investors to invest in pooled creative assets backed by diversified revenue streams. These instruments mobilise long-term capital, channel domestic savings into productive cultural assets, and position creativity as a legitimate investment class within capital markets.

Financial Inclusion and Micro-Credit Models:

Many creatives, particularly youth and women, operate informally or semi-formally. Targeted inclusion models—such as tiered KYC frameworks, mobile and agent banking, and integrated financial literacy—expand access to finance while strengthening responsible credit use. Inclusion in the creative economy is both an economic and social imperative.

6.2 Strategic pathways for unlocking finance

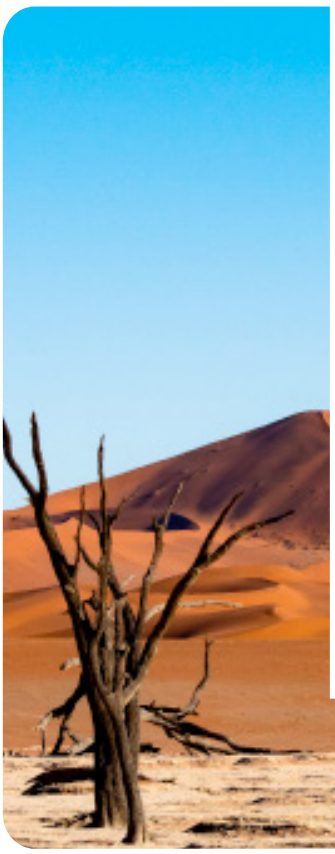
Creative Leasing and Equipment Finance:

Access to professional equipment remains a significant barrier to entry. Leasing and equipment finance models reduce upfront capital requirements, lower balance-sheet risk, and improve productivity and quality standards. These mechanisms support sector professionalisation without overburdening creative enterprises.

Creative Venture Capital and Angel Co-Investment Platforms:

High-growth creative enterprises, particularly in digital content, gaming, animation, and technology-driven storytelling, require equity rather than debt. Co-investment platforms crowd in private angel capital, reduce early-stage risk, and support scalable, export-oriented ventures, anchoring long-term innovation and growth.

She further clarified that these business and finance models do not replace prudent banking or monetary discipline. Rather, they extend financial architecture to reflect the realities of modern, IP-driven economies. The role of financial authorities is not to fund creativity, but to enable systems that allow creative capital to flow safely, efficiently and inclusively. Therefore, the activation of these business models does not require the Bank of Namibia to extend beyond its statutory mandate. It calls for the focused application of its existing responsibilities to an emerging growth sector of national significance.



6.3 Key Recommendations

Recognise the creative economy in national finance policy:
Formally acknowledge creative sectors as bankable within SME portfolios; update supervisory guidance so IP and digital revenues are treated as legitimate economic activity.

Operationalise a Creative Credit Guarantee Facility:
Share lending risk between banks and public/DFI partners to ease collateral requirements and improve terms for creative MSMEs.

Establish blended finance and revenue-aligned instruments:
Establish blended funds that absorb early-stage risk and deploy Revenue-Based Financing to match project/seasonal cash flows without diluting ownership.

Modernise payments and cross-border settlement:
Enable low-value, high-volume, cross-border digital payments for streaming, gaming, licensing and micro-sales through interoperable, inclusive national systems.

Develop IP-backed lending standards and data:
Create appraisal guidelines where contracts, licences and royalties serve as collateral proxies; build sector data to reduce information asymmetries for lenders.

07

Technology and the Creative Economy: Why this is no longer a side conversation?

7. Technology and the Creative Economy: Why this is no longer a side conversation

Presentation by: Ms. Ojoma Ochai; Managing Director of Co-Creation Hub (CcHUB) Africa

Over a long period of time, the arts and culture, and creative industries, and the creative economy as have been referred to interchangeably. Nevertheless, there are distinct difference, and the specific distinction matters, not academically, but economically, politically, and developmentally.

7.1 Understanding the terms

Arts and culture sit at the core. They are the deepest expression of who we are: our stories, languages, rituals, music, visual expression, and collective memory. This is where meaning is created. Creative industries emerge when these expressions are organised, produced, and distributed at scale, through film, television, music, fashion, design, publishing, gaming, and more. The creative economy is the broader system in which creativity intersects with technology, finance, education, trade, and policy to generate jobs, exports, innovation, and national value. Understanding this progression matters because many countries emphasise "supporting the arts" without investing in the systems needed to turn creativity into sustainable livelihoods or measurable economic returns.

Globally, creative industries are neither fringe nor symbolic sectors. They are thoughtful contributors to economic performance. In the United Kingdom, they contribute over £124 billion annually, almost 6 percent of GDP. In South Africa, the sector contributes close to 3 percent, and in Nigeria, film alone contributes more than 2 percent of GDP. Put differently: the creative output of a single country can rival, or exceed, the entire GDP of another. This is not an argument about potential. It is an argument about scale that already exists elsewhere and remains underdeveloped across much of the African continent.

7.2 The foundations of a technology enabled creative economy

What has changed most dramatically in the last decade is not creativity itself, but the infrastructure through which it moves. The digital economy and the creative economy have effectively merged. The internet today is not powered by spreadsheets or databases, but by content, by creativity. The overwhelming majority of online activity is driven by entertainment, education, communication, and social interaction, all of which rely on creative output. Platforms like YouTube, Netflix, Spotify, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and others do not simply host creativity; they derive their economic value from it. Without creative content, these platforms lose traffic, relevance, data, and monetisation power, without creative content, digital platforms have no value.

As a result, distribution, discovery, and monetisation are now digital by default. Musicians stream instead of pressing CDs. Filmmakers distribute online rather than through physical media. Designers sell globally through platforms rather than only in local markets. Creative enterprises are no longer only informal or analogue in nature; they are digital SMEs built on the same infrastructure as fintech and e-commerce companies. Global institutions, including the OECD and World Bank research now explicitly recognises this structural convergence between content, networks, and digital services. The implication is clear: policy frameworks that treat the creative economy as separate from digital transformation are already obsolete.

Technology does not simply sit at the end of the creative value chain; it shapes every stage of it. Starting from ideation to production, from distribution to monetisation and feedback, digital tools amplify reach, reduce costs, and unlock global markets. A craft producer using CAD software and e-commerce platforms is participating in the same global value chains as a filmmaker leveraging AI-assisted editing or a content creator monetising through platform analytics. The value chain is continuous, data-driven, and increasingly borderless.

7.3 A roadmap to scale Namibia's creative economy; leveraging Technology

In the case of Namibia, the starting point is recognising that talent is not the constraint, the enabling environment is. The question, then, is not whether countries such as Namibia or others across Africa have creative talent. That question has been answered repeatedly. The real question is whether the foundations exist for a technology-enabled creative economy to function at scale.

Those foundations for a technology-enabled creative economy are not abstract.

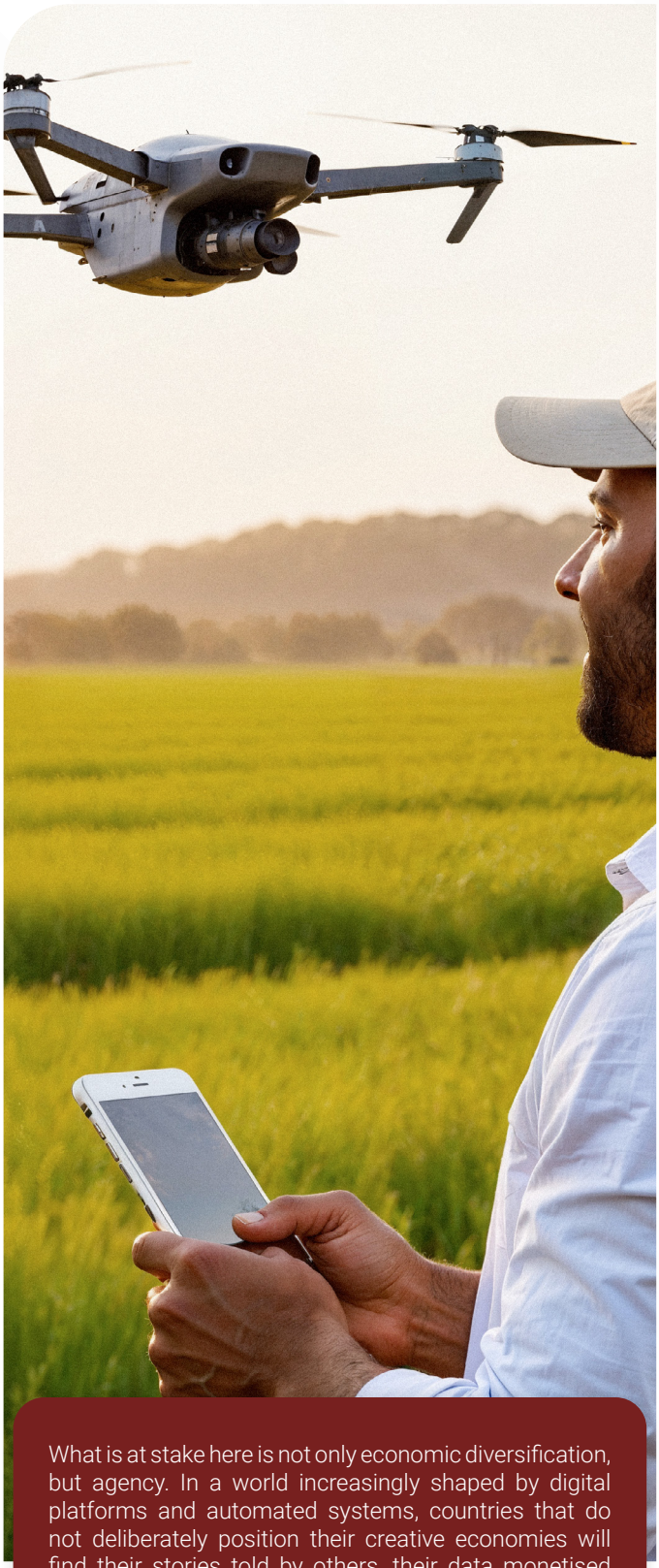
They are concrete and measurable. The foundational pillars required for a technology enabled creative economy include:

- Affordable, high-speed connectivity everywhere, not just in capital cities. Data access priced at a low enough cost for creators and audiences alike.
- Cloud infrastructure and local hosting that enable faster creation and streaming.
- Payment systems that allow creators to earn safely and seamlessly across borders.
- Intellectual property systems that are fair, digitised, and trackable, so royalties reach their owners.
- Market access - platforms and pathways that connect local creators to global demand.

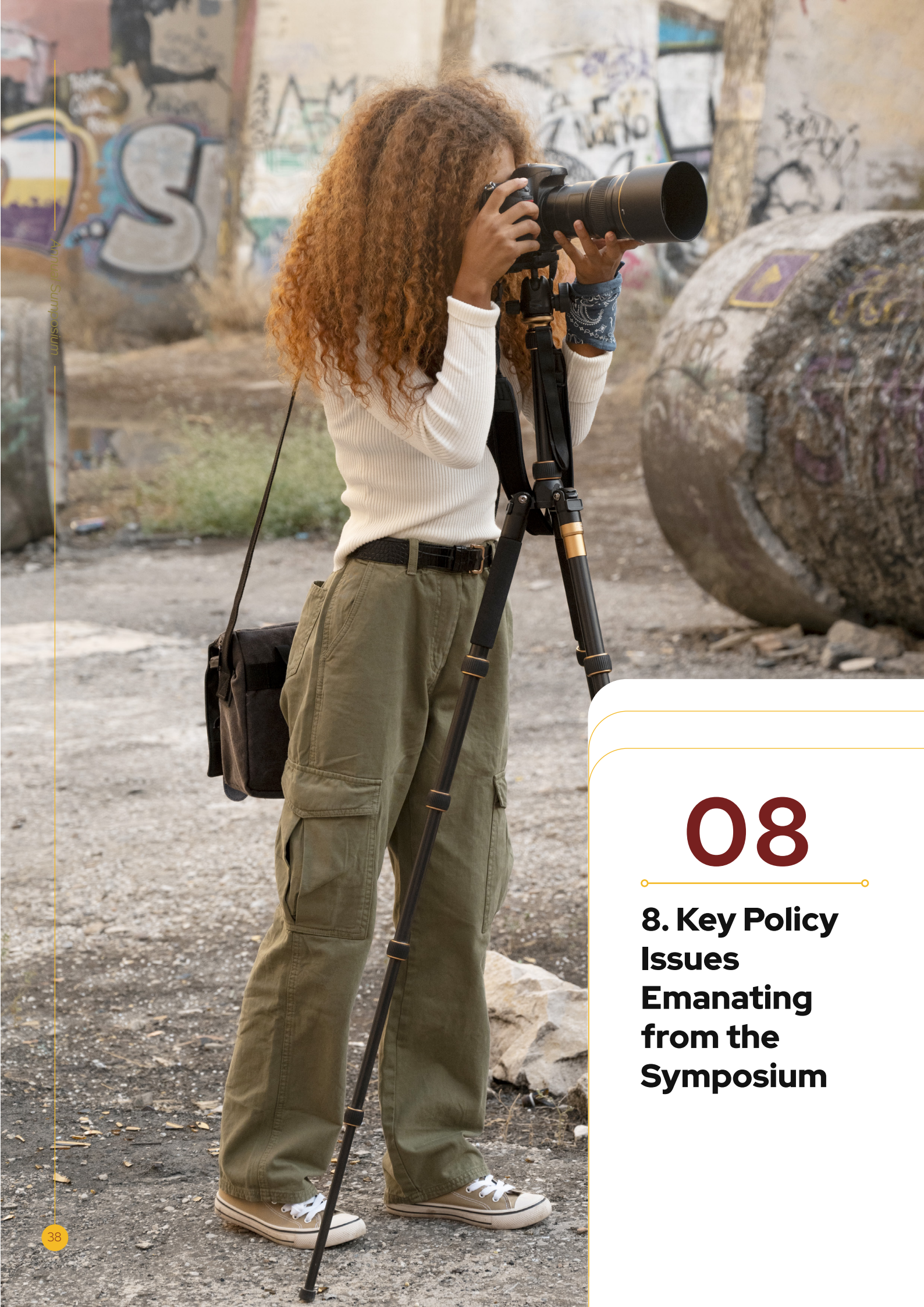
When any one of the above pillars are weak, the entire system tends to underperform. Talent leaks. Informality persists. Value is extracted elsewhere. Building a competitive creative economy, therefore, requires intentional sequencing.

7.4 Key recommendations

- Expand connectivity and close last-mile gaps.
- Enable cloud use by allowing grants and public funding to support digital tools, not just physical assets.
- Modernise IP systems and integrate into global royalty networks.
- Launch export accelerators that help creators sell beyond national borders. Invest in shared public–private creative labs with studios, equipment, and production infrastructure.
- Upskill creators for AI-driven production, including ethics and localisation.
- Measure the sector accurately through satellite accounts and national branding that position creative output as a serious export category, not an afterthought.



What is at stake here is not only economic diversification, but agency. In a world increasingly shaped by digital platforms and automated systems, countries that do not deliberately position their creative economies will find their stories told by others, their data monetised elsewhere, and their talent absorbed into value chains they do not control. Technology has already redrawn the map. The remaining choice is whether to follow passively or to design deliberately for scale, equity, and long-term value creation.



08

8. Key Policy Issues Emanating from the Symposium

8. Key Policy Issues Emanating from the Symposium

The overview paper and discussions held at the Symposium underscored policy issues within Namibia's cultural and creative industries. As summarised below these include both challenges facing and opportunities available to the industries.

1.1 Challenges for Cultural and Creative industries in Namibia

i) High input costs

Creatives are faced with high costs of acquiring and hiring equipment, human skills and logistics that they need for production of their goods and services. This mostly affects the film and graphic designs industries where large equipment is required in the production process. Equipment and other materials used in large film production in Namibia are reported to be mostly imported as they are not available in the country, an opportunity that could be seized locally. To grow the film industry, some countries offer incentives in the form of tax rebates for international film production, this is identified as non-existent in Namibian and a challenge to the growth of the industry.

Equipment and other materials used in large film production in Namibia are reported to be mostly imported as they are not available in the country, an opportunity that could be seized locally.

ii) Limited access to credit facilities and inadequate funding opportunities

The critical issue of limited funding was thoroughly explored. Although there are some initiatives provided by a few institutions in Namibia, resources remain insufficient to fully support the financing needs of the growing number of creatives. This is compounded by a lack of access to formal credit facilities, as banking institutions often classify the creative sector as high-risk due to its innate revenue unpredictability and collateral requirements. As such, most creative projects in Namibia are self-funded, as owners are unable to obtain financing from financial institutions. The issue with collateral is that because creative entrepreneurs do not have a fixed income, they are unlikely to acquire assets such as houses that meet the formal definition of collateral.

Resources remain insufficient to fully support the financing needs of the growing number of creatives.

When it comes to financing, both creatives and the financial institutions emphasis the need for understanding the creative industries and financing requirements respectively. Creatives urged banking institutions and regulators to deepen their understanding of creative industry businesses with a view of developing tailored financial products and schemes that address the specific needs of the creative industries. Similarly, creative entrepreneurs were urged to proactively understand finance principles and how to effectively leverage on the available opportunities to grow their businesses. However, it is also with reduced financing regulatory requirements that this issue can be eased down.

iii) Payment restrictions and regulatory barriers

Namibian creative industries are faced with an established, yet narrowed payments system, including payments across borders. Due to payment restrictions, weak regulatory reforms and high fees charged, creatives struggle to build stable earnings prospects and earn little of what they are subjected to. Examples of these included restrictions by PayPal for an active payout function for Namibia where creatives receive payments on streaming platforms like YouTube but are unable to withdraw these via cash. The prevailing limitations in the payment space disadvantages Namibian creatives, especially given their low business scale.

[2]A break-down of this is presented in a box article in the Appendix

iv) Limited access to infrastructure, technology and digital connection

Most creative spaces and facilities such as innovation hubs, museums, studios, theatres and educational institutions are mostly available in urban areas. Many regions lack dedicated facilities such as theatres, while existing community venues are currently aging or insufficiently equipped to meet the needs of the creatives such as music and media production. Also, the educational institutions are mostly available in major urban areas like Windhoek which restrains many creatives from pursuing their studies at institutions like the College of the Arts and the Namibia Film School. Moreover, creatives in the rural areas face limited digital connection and reliable technology, which make them less attractive to outside investments, confines their market access and therefore opportunities to grow.

v) Inadequate Intellectual Property (IP) frameworks

Technological advancements within the creative industries make reproduction and distribution of copyrightable work easily accessible. It has become much easier to share and make use of pirated digital creative work pieces, primarily because of the developments in technology. And because most creatives distribute their products via social media and various online streaming platforms, they are never too safe. Some legal frameworks have been established, but they are cited as fragmented and insufficiently enforced to protect creatives' assets. These frameworks remain outdated as they do not speak to the trends in the digital environment.

vi) Weak value chains

The creative industries are characterised by feeble linkages, as industries often operate in isolations, with limited collaboration between different sectors. This disintegration makes restrains creatives from maximizing their resources to scale up production and reach a wider market, especially in the domestic market. For instance, when creatives want to make garments for fashion, film production, festivals and etc, they are mostly having to source the materials or at times, the finished garments from other countries. This is mainly due to limited infrastructure, skills gap, poor market access and informality of the sector. The absence of a comprehensive national strategy for the creative industries and minimal understanding of the creative industries value chain limits coordinated support and long-term planning.

vii) Misclassification and unavailability of data

Data availability is a critical input in the formulation of appropriate policies. Namibia's creative industries are characterised by data gaps and possible misclassification that make it difficult to quantify the industries' actual economic contribution. Based on data acquired from relevant institutions, economic activities in the creative industries are grouped together with services such as telecommunication, scientific research and computer programming. Thus, the Symposium stressed the need to invest in appropriate data capturing and classification systems to enable appropriate policy recommendations.

viii) Lack of skills development

Namibian creatives need to be technologically and digital savvy to be able to apply the skills and keep up with global trends to grow their business. In addition to the provision of internet connectivity, more on basic digital skills training to empower the creatives to enable them to showcase their work on global digital platforms. Moreover, there is a need to empower creatives in business acumen including the management of their finances and general financial literacy. Notwithstanding the above, the discussions also revealed that the public, especially financial institutions need to acquire a thorough understanding of the creative industries business frameworks from all sectors to help them better craft targeted products for the industries.

ix) Fragmented institutional frameworks

Despite the emerging shift, the Namibian creative economy traditionally experience lack of cohesive national support necessary to enhance its contribution to economic growth. This has been attributed to factors such as the lack of appreciation of creative work by the public, lack of coordination among industry institutions, as well as the absence of a dedicated governing industry body. Currently, oversight is fragmented across multiple institutions, with Arts and Culture under the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Arts Sports and Culture, while other sectors such as film production appears fall under the Ministry of Information Communication. This institutional vacuum leads to a lack of coordinated and less efforts dedicated support to the creatives. As such, many creatives are left unaware of their professional rights and no direction on who to turn to for assistance especially in an event of intellectual property disputes.

x) Lack of representation at national platforms

The discussions highlighted that the creative economy remains marginalized from key national decision-making platforms. This leads to top-down decisions and policies that are less considerate of their views and expertise. This systemic exclusion is compounded by a lack of public respect for creative labour with consumers frequently failing to recognise and treat these services as professional livelihoods rather than hobbies.

xi) Fragmented legal landscape

The national policy landscape for the creative industries remains hardly harmonised. Existing Intellectual Property legal instruments are described as outdated and suffers from inefficient implementation that fails to address creative needs. While the ongoing review of the Copyright and Related Rights Protection Bill is a critical step, its prolonged timeline suggests a significant need for alignment ahead. Post-finalization, extensive efforts will be required to synchronize existing policies and ensure that the industries are adequately protected especially in the digital age.

xii) Rigid education system

The current education system does not fully integrate creativity and human ingenuity. Most educational activities are restricted to traditional arts, with no structure to uplift and support natural talent outside the school curriculum. The education curriculum needs to evolve to provide early specialised pathways for those who demonstrate exceptional natural talent in technical or design skills, especially if they do not excel in traditional academic settings.

1.2 Opportunities for the Namibian cultural and creative industries

The event also highlighted the opportunities within the industries that can be explored to grow and increase their contributions to growth. Despite its relatively small size and the challenges that the Namibian creative industries are faced with, there are opportunities that would make a great impact on the Namibian economy.

i. Creative Tourism and Sports

Namibia has attractive landscapes with a combination of savanna land, mountainous areas, sand dunes and the desert that meets the ocean and the UNESCO recognised world heritage sites. With this, the creative industries can leverage Namibia's rich cultural heritage and artistic talent that integrates local art, music and storytelling to enhance tourism and boost earnings and employment in such industries. Moreover, sports as a subsector of the creative industries, if effectively nurtured, has potential to positively contribute to social values in the country as it unites the nation especially the Youth.

ii. Market access and expansion

As the creative economy take increasingly receives interest from a global from, Namibia can leverage cultural diplomacy[42] to grow its creative industries. It is imperative that Namibia develops robust export strategies specifically tailored to high-potential sectors such as film and music. By leveraging trade instruments and participating in regional platforms like Creative Connect Africa (CCA), the Government can facilitate global market entry and ensure Namibian creative services are integrated into international value chains.

iii. Potential funding opportunities

The cultural and creative industries are receiving increasing interest from global funders. Several financial institutions including the Afreximbank, the Africa Development Bank (AfDB) have initiated programs aimed to develop and grow the cultural and creative industries on the African continent. Namibia together with other African countries can leverage on these opportunities, exploring the financing models that are practical to individual country cases and facilitate the support to their creative industries.

iv. Technology

The advancement in technology, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to play a major role in advancing the development of Namibia's creative industries. AI-powered tools can be used to improve efficiency, enhance quality and products delivery in any industry. As such, smart use of AI and other digital tools in the creative industries can greatly improve processes and connect Namibian creatives to external markets, enabling them to grow their businesses.

[42]Cultural diplomacy is a unique player in international relations and stands out by its emphasis on soft power and people-to-people connections. It fosters understanding and cooperation between nations by exchanging cultural elements such as art, music, language, and traditions. This distinct approach sets it apart from traditional diplomacy, which focuses on political and economic negotiations.
https://www.diplomacy.edu/topics/cultural-diplomacy/

2. POLICY RECOMMENADTIONS

The creative industries are described as a frontier that transforms imagination into income. The industries thrive on, sound regulation, efficient and inclusive national payment systems, as well as the promotion of financial inclusion and literacy. Amidst challenges, the Namibian creative industries hold potentials that if explored would make a great impact on the Namibian economy. In this regard, the following section provides policy recommendations to the current identified issues within the creative industries

2.1 General policy recommendations

To achieve the NDP6's goal of a 3 percent of the creative industries contribution to GDP, the country needs to implement initiatives that are targeted towards sectors that cuts across other sectors with a higher multiplier effect.

a. Funding

Develop tailored financial products and additional funding schemes that address the needs of the creative industries. Consider expenditure rebates to attract foreign direct investments and develop equipment leasing financing towards in key sectors such as film production. Implement applicable innovative targeted financing models, such as creative credit guarantee facility, Intellectual property -backed financing model, creative bonds or cultural Investment notes and micro-credit models. Financial institutions, led by the Ministry of Finance should exploit opportunities to allow for the use of Intellectual Property in credit provision to the creative business.

b. Intellectual Property protection

Strengthen Legal Frameworks that protect creatives' Intellectual property rights. Modernise Intellectual Property (IP) systems to digitise rights and facilitate the joining of royalty networks to collect, track, and distribute royalty payments to the original owners of intellectual property. While the ongoing review of the Copyright and Related Rights Protection Bill is a critical step, extensive efforts, post its finalisation, should be exerted on synchronising existing policies and ensure that the industries are adequately protected especially in the digital age.

c. Market access and expansion

To grow the local market and encourage the marketing of the products externally, the country needs to stimulate public interest through various initiatives such as national or regional Creative Fairs. Moreover, Namibia needs to develop robust export strategies specifically tailored to high-potential sectors such as film and music through special efforts on trade agreements and forums such as the Creative Connect Africa (CCA). This will enable Namibian creatives to expand and penetrate new international markets which will strengthen the national brand identity on the global stage and increase for Namibian creative services.

d. Data availability and classification

Data availability is a critical input in the formulation of appropriate policies. Lack of data makes it difficult to quantify the industry actual economic contribution and highlights a need for improved processes in data capturing and management for the country. There is a need to improve data coverage and classification including the adoption of frameworks applicable to the creative industries. Frameworks such as Satellite Accounts employed in other countries will help to quantify the industries' contribution to economic growth. Industries measurement and data availability will also contribute to the branding of the Sector and unlock opportunities for export markets.

e. Capacity building and mentorships

Empower creative entrepreneurs including those in rural areas to be able to grow their business. Education systems need to sufficiently include artistic disciplines, culture and indigenous knowledge, this calls for increased investment in education from lower to university levels as well as the adoption of technology in relevant sectors to help them keep up with global trends and increase their social and economic impact. Also, creatives need to be fully aware of their rights and be able to defend and protect their Intellectual Property and therefore might require training of Intellectual Property in addition to other areas.

To achieve the NDP6's goal of a

3 Percent

of the creative industries contribution to GDP

Financial institutions, led by the Ministry of Finance should exploit opportunities to allow for the use of Intellectual Property in credit provision to the creative business.

2.2 Specific recommendations

Key Pillars	Action Required	Responsible Authority/Agency
1. Funding	a. The financial industry should explore innovative targeted financing models, such as creative credit guarantee facility, intellectual property -backed financing model, creative bonds or cultural investment notes and micro-credit models, leveraging on other countries experiences. b. Provide supervisory guidance to encourage banks to serve creatives by officially recognising them as eligible borrowers. This will include the recognition of intellectual property as collateral worthy assets, borrowing from the experiences of countries that have implemented similar strategies, such as Ghana. c. To further catalyse creative industries, regulators need to employ strategic regulatory interventions, including changing certain regulations, to create an environment where commercial banks feel comfortable lending to creative businesses. The interventions should also serve as incentives for commercial banks to extend credit to the creative sector with confidence.	Banking institutions; spearheaded by the Bank of Namibia.
2. Payments	a. Seamless payments platforms for creatives to receive local and international payments, particularly for content creators, to allow for digital and cross-border payments	Bank of Namibia and the Ministry of Information and Communication, Communication Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN)
3. Data availability and classification	a. Strengthen data collection and reclassification in line with country specific consideration and international standards. b. Further research is needed to help banks and the public understand the value of creative industries. This will also help transition public perception of industries from just art or cultural pursuit to that of a fundamental economic enabler and contributor. c. Render appropriate measurement of the industries, including the adoption of the creative industries Satellite Accounts approach in the National accounts.	Bank of Namibia and National Statistics Agency Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture (MEIYSAC) and Academic Institutions National Statistics Agency (NSA)

09

Closing Remarks – Ms. Leonie Dunn, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Namibia

9. Closing Remarks –

Ms. Leonie Dunn, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Namibia

Director of Ceremonies.
Hon. Dr. Sanet Steenkamp, Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture,
Hon. Dino Ballotti, Deputy Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture
Former Minister of Mines and Energy and of course our former Governor of the Bank of Namibia, Mr. Tom Alweendo,
Executive Directors of Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies; Dr. Johannes !Gawaxab - Governor of the Bank of Namibia;
Board Members of the Bank of Namibia;
Distinguished Speakers;
Distinguished Local and International Panelists,
Creatives in the Economy;
Members of the Media;
All invited guests
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon!

It is both a privilege and a profound pleasure to extend the Vote of Thanks at the conclusion of this year's Annual Symposium. Today, we have witnessed a remarkable convergence of minds at an occasion that has reaffirmed our shared conviction that creativity should no longer only be considered, in our imagination, an expression of identity, but a source of enterprise, dignity and progress.

The discussions held here, and indeed during last evening's Public Lecture, have illuminated a singular truth: that the creative economy represents a wellspring of opportunity for Namibia. Yet, like any great promise, it demands structure, coordination, and collective will. We have heard of the challenges — of limited financing, fragmented support systems, and barriers to formalisation. But we have also heard of possibilities, of how the right ecosystem can transform talent into trade, and inspiration into industry. If nurtured with care and foresight, the creative sector can become a cornerstone of Namibia's development — one that creates jobs, fosters inclusion, and redefines how we measure prosperity.

On behalf of the Bank of Namibia, allow me to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have contributed to the success of this Symposium. To our keynote speakers, panellists, and moderators, your insights have been both thought-provoking and inspiring. Thank you for reminding us that creativity, when nurtured and supported, becomes a force for national renewal.

- To Honourable Steenkamp, Honourable Ballotti and the Government representatives present — we are deeply grateful for your leadership and the continued partnership between policy, finance and innovation.
- To our colleagues across academia, the private sector, and civil society — thank you for enriching these discussions with your expertise and your optimism.
- And to the creative community — the artists, designers, filmmakers, writers, musicians, and entrepreneurs who breathe color and vitality into our national identity — thank you for your stories and active participation.

Going forward, we all have our work cut out for us, and this includes all stakeholders, to meet the sector where it is and to elevate it through deliberate, coordinated support. By fully understanding the creative industries at its roots and build an enabling ecosystem that supports the transition from informal to formal enterprise, Namibia will surely unlock the full potential of the industry.

There are several takeaways, particularly from the three panel discussions: with a call to action around the necessary skills required (a reflection on the current curriculum), derisking the creative industries, digital technologies and business models as well as closing the data gaps to ensure we have evidenced-based interventions. We have taken note of the call from the industry, and the Bank of Namibia will put together all these practical interventions and compile a booklet for tabling with relevant stakeholders, including the creative industries.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we close and leave this Symposium, do not just carry a stack of business cards, or a notebook full of notes taken from today. Rather, carry a renewed commitment to the prosperity of the Namibian creative industries, a deeper appreciation for the authenticity of the work produced by creatives as well as a shared responsibility towards building a well-structured ecosystem for this industry.

On behalf of the Bank of Namibia, thank you for joining us, for believing in the transformative power of the creative economy and for sharing in this vision of a more inclusive and prosperous Namibia. Enjoy the refreshments we've prepared for you, have a great day ahead, and may your creative story continue to be prosperous, successful and powerful.

Be bold. Be authentic. Be creative!

Thank you!