



## **Project to Map the Cultural Industries In Barbados**

### ***Category II Deliverables***

*Activity #4: Policy Review*  
*Activity #5: Cluster Development*  
*Activity #6: Quick Wins*

### ***Interim Report***

***June 30, 2017***

## Defining the Creative and Cultural Industries

### ***Definitions: what we're talking about***

This interim report focuses on the definition of the creative and cultural industries, the policy and legislative environment in Barbados, advice on cluster development, and 'early wins'. It will contribute to a larger piece of work that will form a final report of the sector mapping exercise we have been undertaking.

Early in the benchmarking exercise, it became clear that in Barbados there are some basic misunderstandings at the policy level of what constitutes the creative and cultural industries, and even to a surprising extent, what constitutes 'Bajan' culture. Because the benchmarking report is attached as an appendix to the final report, the full analysis is not included here. Still, it is important that the basics – what activities make up the creative and cultural sector – are understood.

This is important because definitions matter. They are one of the key methods by which people make sense of the world. Definitions matter especially in government, to politicians and even more to those who call themselves policy experts. Definitions underpin the frameworks by which all governments operate, and on which strategies and agendas are built.

From that organisational point of view, it is natural to define what the creative and cultural industries are, and then define those activities that go into the overall group.

In the last 30 years, much work has been done globally to make these definitions clear. Today, in most places, the definition is fairly consistent. With very little deviation from this now-established 'global norm', Barbados got there early ... back in 2002, through its National Task Force on Cultural Industries, which noted at the time<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Policy Paper to Inform the Propelling of Barbados' Creative Economy: a Cultural Industries Development Strategy - The National Task Force on Cultural Industries, 2002

*The development of the Cultural Industries is a key component of the Creative Economy. Cultural Industries are defined as 'industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'. These cultural industries directly or indirectly produce cultural products and services, which cut across multiple economic sectors giving rise to exceptional value and wealth.*

This is an entirely reasonable definition ... and Barbados did not rest there. Activities making up the creative and cultural sector were then defined in the 2007 publication *A National Policy for Cultural Industries In Barbados*<sup>2</sup>, which indicates:

#### *Categories of Cultural Industries*

Within the Barbadian context, cultural industries are categorized as the following:

- *Arts and Culture: Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Literary Arts, Photography, Craft, Libraries, Museums, Galleries, Archives, Heritage Sites, Festivals and Arts supporting Enterprises;*
- *Design: Advertising, Architecture, Web and software, Graphics, Industrial Design, Fashion, Communications, Interior and Environmental;*
- *Media: Broadcast [including Radio, Television and Cable], Digital Media [including Software and Computer Services], Film and Video, Recorded Music and Publishing.*

Again, this list is both an entirely reasonable definition and the same as the one adopted generally across the world.

Note, however, the bullet point divisions, which are in the original document. They represent a move to further define activities, dividing them into creative and cultural 'subsectors'. While this might seem a reasonable and innocuous move, it's one that requires a nuanced approach born of deep understanding of how the creative and cultural sector works in everything from developing strategy to day-to-day support for the sector. Yet, this deep understanding was lacking on the implementation side, and led to some elementary mistakes the Barbados sector is struggling to overcome today.

Nevertheless, if we reorganise this list without altering the constituent parts, liberating it from its constraints, the creative and cultural activities considered in this report are:

- *Arts and Culture*
- *Performing Arts*
- *Visual Arts*
- *Literary Arts*
- *Photography*
- *Craft*
- *Libraries, Museums, Galleries and Archives*
- *Heritage Sites*

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<sup>2</sup> A National Policy for Cultural Industries In Barbados - Prime Minister's Office, Cultural Policy and Research Section - April 2007



of approaches to the same *'industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'*. This is only one of an almost endless variety of word clouds possible: it is used to make one point in particular, and not to suggest any prioritisation of activity, whether by word size or position. The point is this: creative and cultural businesses and practitioners work best when *there are no false barriers* – intellectual, practical or physical - put in place. Why? Because it allows cross-fertilisation, hybridisation, cooperation, collaboration and innovation.

Attempts to silo activities produce narrow thinking, bunker mentalities and stagnation<sup>3</sup>.

Free the thinking, and rewards will follow.

### **Language: how we talk about things**

The term *'creative industries'* was first used in a policy context in 1997 by the United Kingdom's Labour government. Since then, it has spread across the world and gained – to a large extent – a common definition, which has been covered above.

The truth is while governments, support agencies and policymakers are comfortable using terms such as the *'creative industries'*, *'creative and cultural sector'*, and *'creatives'*, these are not terms the people working within the sectors, industries, and disciplines contained in them use, or even are comfortable with. An artist working for eight hours a day on large canvasses does not think of himself as a *'creative practitioner'*. And a filmmaker struggling to raise finance does not automatically think of herself as part of the *'creative industries'*.

The terms are convenient and powerful *'legal fictions'*: things that help to get things moving, policies defined and resources allocated. And nothing more.

But this has two critical implications. First, when using these terms governments, support agencies and policymakers should never forget what they're really dealing with: a vibrant, hugely diverse area of life in which few, if any, recognise the appellations. Second, those people within the creative area need to understand that for governments, support agencies and policymakers, the *'legal fiction'* of the creative and cultural industries is vital.

A little common understanding will go a long way. If Barbados is to build its creative and cultural industries, it needs buy-in from lots of different people, and it sometimes helps to learn, and then speak, the various languages they use.

## National Policy and Regulatory Framework

We were asked as part of this exercise to investigate the national policy and regulatory frameworks, and make comments as to whether these were fit for purpose.

### **National Policy**

Our finding in this area is that, very largely, there's nothing wrong with the **words** on the page, but there are two serious flaws. The first – contained within the policy framework itself - may have brought about some of the dysfunction apparent in day-to-day practices and approaches adopted by government and its agencies.

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<sup>3</sup> We'll be dealing with these issues later in the report

The second is that some of the best insights within the policy framework have simply not been acted upon – or not been acted upon effectively or with commitment.

We identified a number of key documents, stretching back more than 15 years.

*Policy Paper to Inform the Propelling of Barbados' Creative Economy: a Cultural Industries Development Strategy [2002]*

This document<sup>4</sup>, the first in the relevant time period<sup>5</sup>, sets out the definitions of the creative and cultural industries, and its importance to the country.

It states [emphases added]:

*The development of the Cultural Industries is a key component of the Creative Economy. Cultural Industries are defined as 'industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'.*

*These cultural industries directly or indirectly produce cultural products and services, which cut across multiple economic sectors giving rise to exceptional value and wealth.*

The same report also states [emphases added]:

*Globalisation, technology and competition are changing the global environment at so rapid a rate that it is now generally accepted that factors, which traditionally fostered economic growth, will in today's environment not automatically be definitive of success. Developed and developing countries alike are now placing emphasis on the "Creative or Cultural Industries" as a way of stimulating economic growth.*

*It is therefore not surprising that Barbados has embarked on the articulation of a policy framework aimed at nurturing and harnessing the creative talents of its people towards the development of a "Creative Economy". The Creative Economy will have at its epicentre the exploitation of the knowledge, imagination and passion of our citizenry with the objective of providing all individuals and by extension, Barbados, with a new competitive advantage within the global economy. It contemplates a fusion of the arts with business and technology as a catalyst for propelling the economic growth of our nation.*

And [emphases added]:

*Our vision must be to develop vibrant and sustainable cultural industries to propel the growth of Barbados' creative economy.*

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<sup>4</sup> Policy Paper to Inform the Propelling of Barbados' Creative Economy: a Cultural Industries Development Strategy - The National Task Force on Cultural Industries, 2002

<sup>5</sup> We consider anything older than 15 years to be, in effect, 'historical'

*The cultural industries not only generate economic value directly but also represent an economic enabler to help drive innovation and differentiate our products and services.*

In order to properly conceptualize a policy framework for the stimulation of cultural industries it is therefore imperative that an analysis of the current state of the culture sector be carried out as a precursor to any such policy formulation.

This document clearly articulates what the creative and cultural industries are, that they are hugely important to the country, and that the benefits of a strong and vibrant creative and cultural sector would undoubtedly produce multiplier effects across the overall Barbados eco-system. And – in world terms, quite presciently – it clearly articulates the notion of a ‘creative economy’ – an economy in which creativity, inventiveness and innovation reach far beyond the creative and cultural industries, and infuse the entire economy.

Barbados was ahead of the game.

#### *A National Policy for Cultural Industries In Barbados [2007]*

The strategy outlined in the 2002 document was further explored in 2007’s *A National Policy for Cultural Industries In Barbados*<sup>6</sup>. Again, this document clearly sets out a number of worthy goals [emphases added]:

We passionately desire that the Caribbean Person:

- will have an *informed respect for the cultural heritage*, for the beliefs, practices and persons of the past who have helped to create and maintain our sense of ourselves as a people;
- will nevertheless *value independent and critical thinking and be sufficiently analytical to question the beliefs and practices of past and present*;
- will *value the creative imagination in its various manifestations and nurture its development in all areas of life*.

The same document also emphasises the importance of:

- *A cultural transformation* that will reinforce Barbadian values and national identity
- *People at the heart of the development process*
- *The protection, preservation and enhancement of our physical infrastructure, environment and scarce resources*
- [Enhancing] Barbados’ prosperity and competitiveness in the world economy. This will require rapid and radical transformation in the way we carry out our productive activities. We must identify those areas of economic activity that are viable and competitive, and that can contribute to

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<sup>6</sup> A National Policy for Cultural Industries In Barbados - Prime Minister’s Office, Cultural Policy and Research Section - April 2007

sustainable growth, employment and overall prosperity for everyone. *Focusing on the export of services such as tourism and international business, while exploiting new ones such as culture and health, will all contribute to a more diversified and prosperous economy.*

And...

The challenge, therefore, is to *prepare ourselves for emerging global citizenry without losing the sense of being Barbadian*. Any appropriate definition of culture must recognize the fluidity and dynamism of an increasingly globalized and borderless world in which the concept of 'nation' is constantly being threatened.

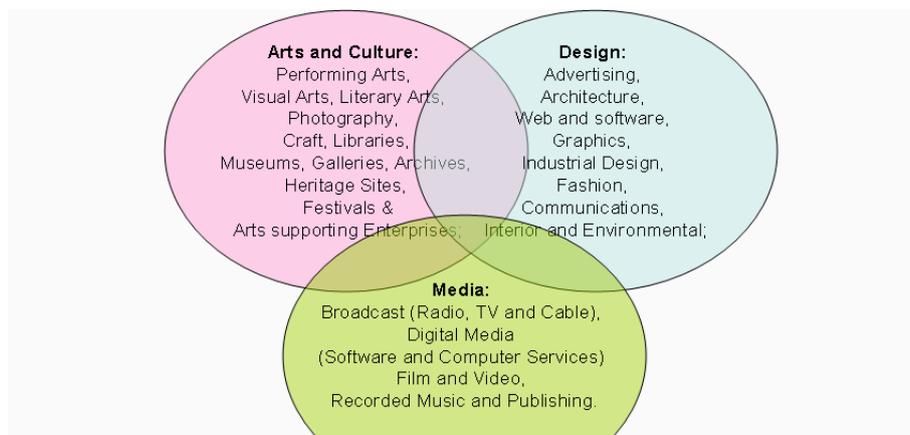
Again, this is all good and worthy. But what this document also does is divide the various creative and cultural sub-sectors into sub-groups. To quote:

### **Categories of Cultural Industries**

Within the Barbadian context, cultural industries are categorized as the following:

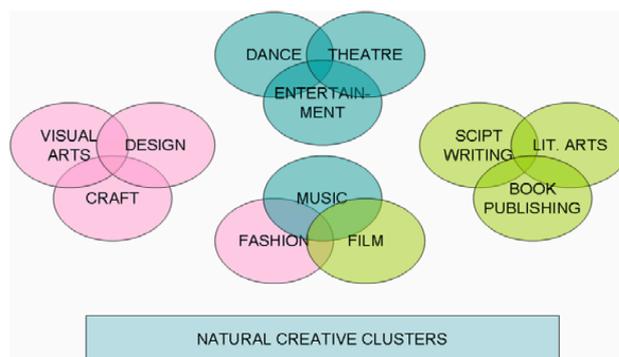
- Arts and Culture: Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Literary Arts, Photography, Craft, Libraries, Museums, Galleries, Archives, Heritage Sites, Festivals and Arts supporting Enterprises;
- Design: Advertising, Architecture, Web and software, Graphics, Industrial Design, Fashion, Communications, Interior and Environmental;
- Media: Broadcast [including Radio, Television and Cable], Digital Media [including Software and Computer Services], Film and Video, Recorded Music and Publishing.

This first level of cultural policy formulation stems logically from the primary definition of what constitutes the cultural industries. *Immediately there is evidence of sub-sectors and clusters as shown below and this will inform how all policy and programme intervention ought to be designed.*



And...

The figure above shows the Creative Clusters according to their definitions and these are then supported by a legislative framework, funding mechanisms, e-commerce and e-business platforms, national, regional and international festivals; and incentives to produce and export cultural goods and services. However, these clusters can be rearranged by interlocking projects and an example of such a re-arrangement is to be found within the various sub-sectors as seen below.



**Figure 2**

And therein is the first major policy mistake. We quote: *'Immediately there is evidence of sub-sectors and clusters... and this will inform how all policy and programme intervention ought to be designed'*. But the sub-sectors and clusters then described are nothing but – in real-world terms – fantasy.

Many organisations supporting the creative and cultural industries do divide their activities into a number of areas that make some kind of internal sense in the most general terms: Creative Scotland, for example, works along key streams called *The Arts*, *Screen*, and *Creative Industries* – with each of these having expertise in specific areas [such as literature, visual arts, music, etc.] led by Specialism Leads. But what these organisations never do is let the segregation fool them. And they often – as with Creative Scotland – explicitly acknowledge the vital necessity for crossover and cross-fertilisation. They know the creative and cultural industries are not easily segmented and they work best when there is a free flow of thought, energy and creativity, innovation and ideas, skills, knowledge and expertise.

And the lines that exist at organisations such as Creative Scotland allow for domain expertise, experience and skills to develop within the organisation and be applied for the benefit of the sector. Indeed, it is vital to note that Creative Scotland [like so many national organisations] is *one organisation for the country*<sup>7</sup>.

Why there was a decision to create these sub-groups is probably lost in the mists of time – and is probably best left there. But whether it was for policy convenience, or simply the

<sup>7</sup> England has two: the Arts Council England, and Creative England. While to many the situation is less than optimal, there are historical reasons for ACE's longevity, including the Royal Charter involved and a more recent geo-political reason for the creation of a separate Creative England in Manchester – but their remits are different and there is a high degree of cooperation]

urge of a bureaucrat to order and categorise something that defies, on a day-to-day basis, regimentation, or whether there was some other reason, it has caused problems.

A look at Figure 2 above from the same document<sup>8</sup> illustrates this flawed reasoning: four nicely divided areas, and never the twain shall meet. But script writing separated from film? Entertainment combined with dance and theatre, as if film or music simply do not factor? And the visual arts and design – which presumably includes all of the nation's theatre and book designers, are somehow grouped with crafts. These are not 'natural creative clusters'. They're unrecognisable to creative and cultural practitioners, and to anyone with the slightest understanding of the creative and cultural industries and how they work. They are false, badly conceptualised divides.

Only a non-creative – and one with no understanding of the true nature of the creative and cultural industries or the creative and cultural process - would have put up walls like these. Or – to be kind – maybe they put this structure in place knowing it was false but assuming the people who would take the policies forward and turn them into activity would sort out the issues inherent in the divisions. In the document's defence, it explicitly states things are fluid and 'these clusters can be rearranged'. It also highlights examples:

To see this at work one only has to look at the music industry and its vibrant sub-sector of music video production. This brings together a cluster of musicians, film-makers, engineers, graphics artists, dancers, actors, songwriters, producers, fashion designers, makeup artists and business managers.

Still, we fear that in the rush to categorise and refine, the damage is done. Creating a policy that states *these things are in groups, but the groups can be revised* fosters a different mindset than an approach that might have said *these things constitute a whole, work best when there is free-flow, and will self-organise as and when desirable*.

And the mindset is important. An instruction to *categorise first, reorganise later* assumes that the second command [reorganise later] is not overlooked in practice, and that there are people in post with the wherewithal, expertise, credibility and courage to turn this assumed free-flowing flexibility into a reality. But these are rare qualities anywhere.

These false divides in the categorisation of the creative and cultural industries in early policy statements might explain why there is a lack of coherence in government's frameworks for implementation today. It could also explain why things have been allowed to evolve to the point where some aspects of the creative and cultural industries are planted with the NCF and others with BCIDA, notwithstanding Government's assertion that this approach is exactly what creatives in the sector lobbied to have. Whatever the reason, best practice suggests this planting is flawed.<sup>9</sup> It doesn't just take areas of practice that should be sharing knowledge, new knowledge, resources and expertise on a day-by-day, as-they-breathe basis ... cooperating as easily as they draw those breaths ... and place them on opposite sides of a wall. *It puts them in entirely different buildings.*<sup>10</sup>

Still, there are other positives in the document, including:

### **Objectives and Principles of Barbadian Cultural Policy**

<sup>8</sup> A National Policy for Cultural Industries In Barbados - Prime Minister's Office, Cultural Policy and Research Section - April 2007

<sup>9</sup> See the benchmarking report that is an appendix to the final report

<sup>10</sup> More is said on this below in the section dealing with the legislation forming BCIDA

The main objectives and principles of a national cultural policy for Barbados are:

- to achieve national unity and refine identity, while recognizing cultural and ethnic diversity;
- to make culture an integral part of national development;
- to utilize the vehicles of culture to deepen the processes of Caribbean integration, development and civilization;
- to create a facilitating and enabling environment within government and the society at large for the development of the arts and culture;
- to strengthen the existing bonds between the public and private sectors until a durable and dynamic partnership is created and sustained;
- to encourage the full use and development of modern technologies in the development of the cultural industries;
- to create a dynamic economic sector that hinges upon the vibrancy and collective creativity driving the cultural industries;
- to foster an environment that will allow entrepreneurship and investment opportunities to flourish in support of the development of the cultural industries;
- to protect the cultural heritage of the country while respecting and encouraging the cultural initiatives of Barbadians;
- to encourage and facilitate the growth and public artistic expression of local groups and individuals, recognizing this as pivotal to cultural development and expansion;
- to attain a high level of cultural awareness among Barbadians;
- to attain high standards of aesthetic excellence [not excluding economic viability] for all cultural activities;
- to foster and, where possible, undertake exchanges between different communities in Barbados, as well as international exchanges between Barbados and other countries, in particular Barbados and the rest of the Caribbean;
- to ensure the continued growth of Barbados' culture – a culture which encompasses traditional, modern, African, European and other elements.

All of these are laudable and clearly expressed.

Therefore, we will not comment further at this point other than to say that independent readers may decide for themselves how these have been matched by delivery once measured against the findings contained in our final report.

A *National Policy for Cultural Industries In Barbados* is also clear on the role of government:

Government's role is:

- to establish policies and programmes for the development of the cultural industries to exist in a sustainable environment;
- to provide legislation to create a business-friendly environment to attract local and foreign interest and investment;
- to provide a regulating agency to outline the standards by which the cultural industries will follow;
- to initiate and encourage the participation of all stakeholders in the formulation of cultural policies;
- to monitor and facilitate all positive developments within the culture sector and ensure sustainability of the industry.

Again, we believe independent readers of our final report will be able to decide for themselves how aspiration has been matched by delivery.

The policy is also clear on the role of the private sector, regional and international agencies, which is:

- To collaborate with Government and the public sector in the creation of cultural policies and programmes, and the integration of culture into nation building;
- To market and promote the cultural industries both locally and in the regional and international markets;
- To monitor cultural policies and programmes to ensure that the cultural industries remain competitive and profitable.

Here, the key question is to what extent government and public sector organisations have embraced the private sector and allowed it to contribute to the 'creation of cultural policies and programmes, and the integration of culture into nation building'.

What we found is that government and its agencies consulted fairly widely with stakeholders in the build-up to creating the legislation governing BCIDA. Yet, we question the effectiveness of those engagements given the apparent lack of demonstrable development and tangible innovation in the sector. Certainly during our investigations, we found a high percentage of stakeholders who expressed the view that government's interventions have not been particularly meaningful or effective. What is more, key policymakers themselves confessed that there is clear confusion in actual implementation.

It could be that the commissioning of this report is a first if late-coming step in addressing the gaps. And while better late than never is a well-used mantra for a reason, the real acid test is whether the findings in this report, and particularly its recommendations, are wholeheartedly accepted and then acted upon with immediate effect.

At a more detailed level, the 2007 policy also recommends specific initiatives, including:

- **Restructuring of the National Cultural Foundation**, and within it,
- The establishment of a **Festivals and Events Bureau**

The structure suggested for the NCF is clearly a creative and cultural support and development agency model. In our opinion, the idea of a festival and events function within the NCF was both practical and potentially highly beneficial: no walls, no false planting.

- The **development of the museum sector**, including the National Art Gallery, a National Heroes Gallery, a Museum of Parliament, a Maritime Museum, a Slavery Museum, an Aviation Museum, a Cricket Museum and Hall of Fame, a Three W's Museum, a Military Museum, a Geology Interpretive Centre, a Museum of Music, as well as community museums throughout Barbados.

While this might seem in retrospect hugely – even overly – ambitious, it was firmly based on two key ideas that our work has identified as being extremely important to Barbados – and significantly lacking. One is the idea that through these initiatives, the Barbadian identity and culture could strengthen and flourish. And that they would be key ingredients in a culture-based visitor economy, the latter discussed at length in the benchmarking assessment that is an appendix to the final report.

#### *Barbados Medium-Term Growth And Development Strategy 2013-2020 [2013]*

This document<sup>11</sup> re-iterates many of the policy statements made in the earlier documents. Set against the impact of the world's biggest economic crisis in perhaps a century, it clearly states the role the creative and cultural industries could play [emphases added]:

*The current global economic crisis has created for Barbados one of its greatest challenges and it is therefore to culture, values and traditions, which the country must turn as it seeks to overcome the challenges. It is accepted that a well developed cultural sector has not only the ability to capture the expressions of people's imagination with its products and services, but that it also offers opportunities for the sustainable diversification of our economy, and has the potential to generate meaningful employment for individuals and to provide opportunities for earning significant foreign exchange. The cultural industries therefore, must be seen as a tool and vehicle for positive social and economic development.*

*Global statistics confirm the vast economic potential of the cultural and creative industries and also highlight the fact that despite the cultural richness of the "developing" countries, the "developed" countries have, over the years, been the major beneficiaries of the vast wealth generated by these industries. It is therefore important that Government takes immediate steps to change the traditional view of culture as a 'soft' sector and that it be included in mainstream economic activity and as such, treated as a dynamic catalyst in the development of the diversified economy.*

In regard to strategies for collaboration, the 2013 strategy states:

*...if the development of the culture sector is to be sustainable and effective, there must be an inter-sectoral approach to the exercise. Many government agencies must work closely with the Ministry*

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<sup>11</sup> Barbados Medium-Term Growth And Development Strategy 2013-2020, The Economic Affairs Division Ministry of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs - 2013

*responsible for Culture to ensure that the local infrastructure is adequate.*

And in regard to Culture and Education:

*The role of education is critical to the development of the creative imagination of our people, a creative imagination which is vital not only for artistic achievements, but for developing in our citizens the ability to solve problems and to be innovative in all areas of endeavour.*

*The Ministry of Education must ensure that the curricula made available to our young people adequately prepares them for involvement in the cultural and creative industries, and sensitises them to the new and non-traditional areas of employment. Education should be a tool of empowerment for the individual.*

And regarding Culture and Tourism:

*Greater collaboration between the Ministries of Culture and of Tourism will ensure that greater emphasis is placed on our culture and heritage in traditional tourism programmes, and that we capitalize on our cultural heritage in the marketing of Barbados overseas.*

*Particular emphasis should be placed on the recently inscribed World Heritage Property. Increased collaboration would also assist with the provision of high quality and varied cultural activities so that Barbados can be promoted as a tourist destination which is truly a "cultural centre" in the region.*

All of this is, again, clearly expressed and to be welcomed. But again, it is up to the reader to consider how far these things have been acted upon.

#### *The Cultural Industries Development Act, 2013-15*

The Cultural Industries Development Act, 2013-15, by virtue of which the Barbados Cultural Industries Development Authority or BCIDA is constituted, provides for:

- the establishment of a regulatory framework to facilitate and encourage the sustainable growth and development of cultural industries;
- funding for cultural projects; and
- duty-free concessions and income tax benefits in respect of cultural projects,

and for related matters.

Yet, a majority of creative and cultural industries' stakeholders clearly cannot properly articulate the difference in mandate between BCIDA and the NCF. At least one support agency executive made the case that *the NCF is responsible for **cultural** development while BCIDA is charged with **cultural industries'** development*. A neat divide when you're looking at words on a page, but how does this translate into effective implementation?

So, while legal opinion is divided as to whether the Act itself contains legislative flaws, we consider that in a practical sense – of converting policy into action - there are flaws in both its design and subsequent implementation.

During the course of our work, we have witnessed much evidence of this flawed approach in practice. For one thing, there is clear confusion of purpose between BCIDA and the NCF, and an inability to define what each is, and how each relates to other developmental agencies. These organisations and at least one other – the BDC – clearly are working across some of the same spaces, with no coordination, which leads, in effect, to rival initiatives being developed.

What we are seeing is a hypothetical collaborative spirit that in practice is anything but.

Based on survey findings, interviews, focus group and context group sessions, there is general agreement about this *both inside and outside the agencies*.

As another support agency executive put it, while BDC, BCIDA and NCF are supposed to complement each other, there is '*confusion over the roles*' each one has<sup>12</sup>, and while they're supposed to coordinate, and *despite* there being potentially beneficial overlaps [for example, in board memberships], '*the entities do not meet*'<sup>13</sup>.

It would appear, in this regard, that the false divides referred to in an earlier section of this report have resulted in some of the creative and cultural industries being planted with the NCF and others with BCIDA, as well as the NCF still offering aspects of development support – which is supposedly BCIDA's role – while also being responsible for the commercialisation of creative value in certain key industries like music and festivals.

The enduring point is that even the development agencies do not appear clear on their respective roles ... how much so the creative practitioner and the general public?

Barbados' creative and cultural policy, initially so well thought-out in many ways, developed at its heart a serious flaw, which interpretation and delivery have made worse.

Walls, planting – whatever the metaphor, the outcome is the same. Walls create barriers to growth, and flawed planting delivers stunted crops.

Furthermore, we are aware of substantial work carried out, with a report issued in 2012 that we must consider a 'trigger' for the legislation governing BCIDA. The work was technical assistance in regard to the creative and cultural industries, and was carried out by Andrew Senior<sup>14</sup> on behalf of the Ministry of Family, Culture, Sports and Youth. While the report – partly funded by the EU and UNESCO - *has not been forwarded to us by the Barbados Government* we have been able to establish that a key recommendation was the creation of an independent intermediary agency with a mission to provide support to creative businesses, from start up through entrepreneur-led growth.

The key word here is 'independent'. In all the work we have done [for this project and others], there is a common understanding that there needs to be an organisation dedicated to the development of the creative and cultural industries, and that for this organisation to be truly effective it must be independent, with political and non-expert control and interference kept to a minimum. In this sense the UK's NDPB [Non-Departmental Public Body] model is a good reference point.

But the effect of the Cultural Industries Development Act is the exact opposite. To quote just two clauses of many we could have cited:

### **Directions of Minister**

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<sup>12</sup> Meeting notes 662

<sup>13</sup> Meeting notes 011

<sup>14</sup> Director, Andrew Senior Associates, London, UK

The Minister may give the Authority directions of a general nature or specific nature in respect of the policy to be followed by the Authority in the performance of its functions under this Act, and the Authority shall comply with those directions

And:

**Application for approval of cultural project**

The Minister may, with the approval of the Cabinet, declare by order any cultural project that meets the requirement of this Act to be an approved cultural project for the purposes of this Act

Control is clearly at Ministerial level – and we can only assume this is at loggerheads with the aspirations and ambitions scoped out in the work that triggered the Act. We are aware that real-world arrangements can sometimes ‘correct the balance’ and produce a really productive environment, and in this regard there might have been potential with the appointment of a credible and effective CEO for the new agency: but some two years in, that role still lies unfilled. All the power lies with the Government, and in particular a specific Minister.

There are other aspects to the Act we believe are less than optimal. While it created a new agency, it neither dissolved existing agencies or mandates that covered the creative and cultural sector [such as the NCF or BDC’s business development mandate for the sector], nor did it consider the creation of a ‘festivals and events bureau’, as had been envisaged in earlier policy documents.

We hold these things to be flawed.

Best-in-class models accept that a single organisation covering the creative and cultural sector has the potential to deliver far better than multiple organisations operating on the same patch. It’s more efficient all-round, cost-savings can be made, there’s a knowledge and expertise dividend if the organisation has a learning culture, and it’s a ‘one stop shop’ for the people and businesses it is charged with supporting.

We have already noted that creating divisions – physical, statutory, practical – between the various aspects of the creative and cultural industries is wrong conceptually and in practice. Creating BCIDA next to the NCF, BDC and other organisations does exactly that.

The Act also sets out a series of financial and tax opportunities for entrepreneurs, creative and cultural businesses and investors. We consider these to be well intentioned: our full report will consider how effective these have been in creating a more dynamic environment for the creative and cultural industries.

The current state of Barbados’ policy and legislative framework for the creative and cultural industries and, by extension, the environment for genuine cluster development and realisation of quick wins is summed up by one submission from a legal expert on the creative and cultural industries<sup>15</sup>, now based in Barbados:

Insufficient attention has been given to ensuring cohesion among various governmental players, pieces of legislation, institutions and policy priorities. Of a truth, interconnectedness of the various instruments developed to promote and sustain culture cannot be fully appreciated by a scattergun approach to policy development.

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<sup>15</sup> Yvonne A.M. Brown, cultural and creative industries’ consultant and partner at Bryan | Brown, Attorneys at Law, Barbados

Regional and international trade objectives and initiatives to enhance growth and competitiveness do not appear to have been prime considerations in cultural industries goals as put forward by the [BCIDA] Act. There were insufficient provisions concerning importing components to build the Industry. Similarly, there should be some emphasis placed on Cultural Exportation if the industry is to be viable in the international marketplace.

There must be a mechanism within the Act itself, which provides for reporting and assessment. The Act itself could provide for periodic reports to Parliament, which would require the relevant Minister or institution to report on whether the Act is achieving or has created a trend toward meeting its purpose. Alternately, the requirement could be that another entity, such as a special committee to Parliament, reviews the legislation periodically to check the effectiveness and relevance of the law.

A final aspect of the Act speaks perhaps to a wider audience than the creative and cultural industries [emphasis added]:

### **Resignation of Director**

A Director... may resign *his* office by instrument in writing...

This would seem to suggest half of the Barbadian population should manage expectations in terms of professional development and career aspirations. ... Language does matter.

### *The National Cultural Foundation Act, CAP. 380B*

The National Cultural Foundation or NCF is a statutory organisation established by an Act of Parliament in 1983. According to its website, its mandate is "to oversee the cultural landscape of Barbados", and its mission is "to fuel the development of culture through training, research and *the creation of opportunities in cultural industries* [emphasis added]."

According to the legislation by which the NCF is governed, its functions are:

- to stimulate and facilitate the development of culture generally;
- to develop, maintain and manage theatres and other cultural facilities and equipment provided by Government;
- to organize cultural festivals; and
- to do anything necessary or desirable to assist persons interested in developing cultural expression.

This suggests, and the NCF's website states, that the organisation has two major roles: one is *developmental* in relation to culture, and the other is *commercial* in relation to cultural industries.

According to the website<sup>16</sup>:

In its developmental role, the Foundation uses culture as a tool for national development, fostering and supporting the various art forms and new cultural products. In its commercial role, the Foundation is

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.ncf.bb>

responsible for the promotion, production and hosting of cultural festivals and associated events.

A key part of this function now includes the responsibility for the staging and execution of major governmental and national events. In addition, as culture becomes more pivotal to national and international policy, the National Cultural Foundation continues to re-assess its responsibilities in light of all its functions.

And the NCF's objectives as stated on the website are:

- To provide opportunities for Barbadian artists/artistes to showcase their talents with the end result being an increased demand for local work
- To educate Barbadians concerning their heritage
- To offer Barbadians and visitors alike a high quality cultural product that informs, educates and entertains
- To equip our cultural workforce with technological skills and training to excel in their particular art forms
- To strengthen the local cultural product and in the process increase profits to the shareholders
- To create high quality products that will be competitive on the local, regional and international markets
- To maximize the role of the cultural sector in the tourism industry

Again, this points to clear confusion of purpose between BCIDA and the NCF, and an inability to define what each is and how each relates to other developmental agencies. To compound issues, upon the adoption of legislation to form BCIDA and specify its functions, there was no associated effort to amend the legislation governing the NCF as a means of introducing greater clarity with respect to the functioning of both organisations.

## Cluster development activity

We were also asked to identify creative and cultural subsectors that had enough activity and critical mass to justify focusing efforts on developing them further.

Again, what emerged during the online survey and focus group work would suggest no one should rush to do so – in fact any such urgency would likely be counterproductive.

The analysis we have made in regard to the online survey, focus group and one-on-one interview work, which will be a major part of the final report, strongly suggests there are serious fundamental issues surrounding any cluster development in Barbados that need to be fixed. Without these fixes, throwing resources at a perceived objective no matter how well intentioned would be ill advised at best, damaging at worst.

Some of the issues are touched on in this report (for example, mandate confusion between NCF and BCIDA). But there are others that compound the situation – and will emerge in the final report.

Therefore we do not recommend any action at this point.

However, we present here the sub-sectors we have identified as being the largest in the country, as an extract from the final report:

- Film, Video, 360 Media, Computer games, Software
- Visual art
- Advertising
- Music

Again, we stress the final report will look at the cluster make up in detail, including its strengths, and findings that emerge from anomalies in the data that mean support will need to be highly focused and nuanced. Until certain basics are resolved on the ground (again, for example the relationship between NCF and BCIDA), early action could be misdirected, ineffective and inefficient.

Our advice is to focus on the identified early wins that follow, and not on pre-emptive, under-informed subsector development work.

## Early actions [quick wins]

Part of the mandate of the consultant team is to identify a series of 'early wins' that might be actioned with immediate [or near immediate] effect – and this we were happy to accommodate.

However the unfolding of subsequent events especially in regard to the themes and findings emerging from our sector mapping work strongly suggest there is fundamental work that will need to be accomplished if the aspirations of both government and the creative and cultural sectors are to be achieved.

Therefore, while quick wins can have positive effects, there is heavy lifting to come. Much of the fundamental work without which the creative and cultural industries in Barbados will not fly *cannot be achieved quickly*. So, were it not for the initial agreement, we would not at this stage be suggesting 'early wins'. For the full picture to emerge and be understood, these need to be taken alongside mid- and longer-term recommendations, and acted upon as a whole.

With that caveat, these are the early actions we believe the government and agencies should take.

### A statement of intent and commitment – followed by immediate actions

**The government makes a very public and explicit statement of its commitment and determination to support the creative and cultural sector, which is immediately followed up by action and appropriate resource.**

This statement needs to be carefully crafted so that it is not – and will not be taken as – the standard promise. It needs to speak to the people who toil in the creative and cultural industries, it needs to contain an element of '*mea culpa*' whereby it acknowledges government's role in 'not getting it right at the start', it needs to contain timed genuine commitments, and an acknowledgement that the government expects to be held to account.

The actions with resource follow:

## A commitment to a single, independent creative and cultural agency

### **A commitment is made to form a single creative and cultural development agency.**

It is clear all stakeholders – including those calling for massive cuts to Government's deficit – acknowledge the current 'multiple agencies' state of affairs should not continue. This agency will replace the existing ones [which would be wound up]. And it should not be an aggregation or merger of existing agencies, programmes, or staff. It needs to start fresh.

What would be aggregated – and produce real efficiencies of scale – would be budgets.

And while its core funding will come from government, it will be independent of government control. The model for this kind of body is well-established elsewhere – for example the UK's Executive NDPBs [Non Departmental Public Body]<sup>17</sup>.

## A single, common strategy

### **A single, common creative and cultural industries' strategy is created, resourced and acted upon.**

This creative and cultural strategy should closely reflect the findings and recommendations of this report and other themes that may emerge.

This task may be devolved to the new independent agency [cited above], but this has disadvantages. Creating and staffing a new organisation will take time, and a strategy cannot wait. Therefore we recommend that – at the very least – a strategy is speedily put in place and acted upon by the entire creative and cultural industries' eco-system – including the government, support agencies, and the creative and cultural community.

## Agreement between political parties to keep continuity

### **Political parties put the creative and cultural agenda above day-to-day party politics, and pledge they will maintain continuity of the new strategy, commitment and resources.**

It's clear the growth of the creative and cultural sector is vital to the Barbados economy. It's also clear that while gains can be made over the short-term, the sector will only develop fully – and so deliver on its potential – over the mid- to long-term.

Therefore, the parties must agree that their commitment, resources and support will be for the long-term, and transcend their normal relationship so that whatever strategy is put in place does not become a party-political plaything.

## Bring the sector to the table – and give them teeth

### **The creative and cultural industries are invited to self-organise and create a Guidance Board, which informs, advises and directly influences policy, strategy, and operations – and holds government and the support agencies to account.**

This Guidance Board will need to be properly resourced, and will need to properly represent the entirety of the Bajan creative and cultural industries. Terms of service will need to be carefully worked out to ensure that it does not become institutionalised [the same people on it year after year], and does not fall foul of all the temptations that seem to be prevalent elsewhere.

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<sup>17</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-departmental\\_public\\_body](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-departmental_public_body)

But from what we have seen during our work, all this is entirely possible. There is great intellectual firepower, enthusiasm, altruism and leadership potential in the people with whom we engaged.

All they need is to be asked to the table.

## Initial action to re-position the creative and cultural industries

### **The government instigates early-stage work to plan and activate a major re-positioning exercise.**

There is much work to be done to re-position the creative and cultural industries as an important part of Barbados' overall cultural, economic and societal eco-system. The same is true in terms of entrepreneurship and the role of small business. And it is acknowledged that these things take time to get right and bear fruit. But early stage work on them can start straight away: much can be crowd-sourced from the creative and cultural sector itself – but it will also require resource and possibly external expertise to facilitate.

## Remove bureaucracy at the agencies

### **Immediately remove all unnecessary and obstructive bureaucracy at the agencies.**

The idea of having to prove, amongst other things, one's status as a creative and cultural practitioner in order to be eligible for certain aspects of development assistance is – from any vantage point but Barbados [and then only within the agencies] – frankly laughable. Everyone at any of the agencies should be capable of recognising what is, and isn't a creative and cultural practitioner – and if they're that non-expert, they shouldn't be employed. So why have the requirement?

And the reduction in bureaucracy should not start and finish with sign-up. Every aspect of the creative and cultural industries' system and its processes should be reviewed, and all unnecessary and obstructive bureaucracy cut. Ruthlessly. Without fear or favour.

This might need external support as in many ways we're talking about a complete culture change. But minimising bureaucracy will undoubtedly produce benefits all round: it will make it as easy for people to engage as possible, and so encourage people to get involved; and freeing agencies from pointless, needless bureaucracy will give their people a fabulous opportunity to do more productive things.

## Establish a 'Cultural Mavin' fund

### **A 'Cultural Mavin' fund is quickly established to acknowledge, reward, and stimulate voluntary, in-kind contributions to the development of the creative and cultural industries.**

Huge amounts of voluntary, in-kind effort go into education and training by existing, 'time-served' creative and cultural practitioners. Small amounts of 'nudge' money to acknowledge this contribution would make a big difference to these practitioners, who though accomplished and highly skilled are often suffering personal hardship.

The results could be significant all round: a boost in expert knowledge transfer; a highly cost-efficient yet massive boost to the education system; more engagement by creative practitioners in that system; and money in their pockets to make life a little easier, and for them to carry on their practice.

## Scrap business start-up costs

**The government will, with immediate effect, scrap all business start-up costs, and remove the 'inducement' to employ lawyers in the start-up process.**

These things are simply stopping people starting up and growing businesses effectively. It's just one of the things that prevents entrepreneurs and would-be entrepreneurs entering the regulatory and tax system. So it reduces, not increases, government income.

Doing this – making business start-up easy – is something that is taken for granted in countries where the *ease-of-business* rating is high. It's time for Barbados to catch up – and while much that needs to be done to create a higher ranking in the *ease-of-business* ranking will take time, this is something that can happen quickly – and there's nothing to stop this happening ... apart from fixed mindsets.

## Scrap import and export duties on materials, product and equipment

**The government will, with immediate effect, scrap all import and export duties on materials, product and equipment.**

Again, these things are simply stopping people working and earning – and so reduce tax income. And again, this is something that can happen quickly.

## Create a new capital artwork scheme

**The government should pass legislation that requires larger capital projects [including but not limited to hotels, offices, and infrastructure projects] to source all artworks locally – and then enforce it.**

It is acknowledged that there was legislation in the same vein in the past [which may or may not still be active]. But the overwhelming consensus is that it was flawed, and especially in practice.

The new initiative would cover not just new build, but refurbishments and renovations, and the resulting demand for local artworks will directly stimulate the sector [with a knock-on effect on government revenues]. Should artworks still be imported for such places, the initiative would impose import duty, with the resulting revenue stream going directly to the new creative and cultural agency to further support the sector.

Consideration needs to be made in regard to what constitutes a large capital project, and whether the exclusive home market is included in the definition – or if not, whether a 'half way' house arrangement is made.



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