

## **Creative Economy Policy**

Advancing the Arts as a Strategic Economic Sector in Africa and Emerging Markets

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### **Executive Summary**

The Creative Economy Policy Campaign conducted by Scholarly Art examined the economic and cultural potential of arts and creative industries in Africa, with case studies from Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa. The campaign explored how supportive policy frameworks, institutional backing, and funding mechanisms can stimulate innovation, generate employment, and strengthen national cultural identity.

### **Key Findings:**

The creative sector remains under-recognized in national economic planning, limiting institutional support and strategic investment.

Access to finance is often limited, with many creative entrepreneurs reporting difficulty securing formal funding.

Policy fragmentation across government agencies reduces coherence and effective support.

The sector's potential for cultural diplomacy and soft power remains underutilized, despite global interest.

### **Core Recommendations:**

- Establish formal National Creative Economy Strategies with measurable targets.
- Develop dedicated funding programs for creative entrepreneurs.
- Strengthen creative education and skills development.
- Invest in cultural infrastructure to expand opportunities and access.
- Promote cultural export and international collaboration.

## **Policy Impact Metrics:**

% of countries implementing national creative economy frameworks.

Number of artists accessing dedicated funding.

Growth in creative sector employment.

Increase in cultural exports.

Implementation of these recommendations will enable African governments to leverage the creative economy as a key driver of inclusive and sustainable development.

## **Abstract**

Africa's creative industries, including music, film, visual arts, performing arts, fashion, and digital media, have grown rapidly in recent years yet often remain under-supported by formal policy and economic frameworks. This policy paper presents findings from the Creative Economy Policy Campaign, conducted by Scholarly Art to assess how policy can bolster creative sectors in Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa.

Using stakeholder consultations, qualitative analysis, and sector observations, the campaign identified structural barriers such as fragmented policy environments, limited financing opportunities, and underdeveloped cultural infrastructure. This paper proposes evidence-informed recommendations, an evaluation framework, and implementation strategies to integrate the creative economy into national development plans across emerging African markets.

## **Campaign Background**

The global creative economy is recognized as one of the fastest-growing sectors, contributing to employment, innovation, and global cultural exchange. Cultural and creative industries generate significant economic value and can serve as tools for national branding and international influence. However, in many African contexts, the creative economy is not sufficiently integrated into national economic strategies, limiting the sector's potential to drive sustainable development.

## **The Creative Economy Policy Campaign was initiated to:**

1. Map existing policy frameworks across Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa.
2. Identify structural barriers to creative entrepreneurship.
3. Produce actionable recommendations for governments, cultural institutions, and private stakeholders to strengthen the creative economy.

## **Methodology**

This campaign employed a qualitative research approach incorporating:

Focus Group Discussions with artists and creative practitioners.

Structured Interviews with policymakers, cultural institutions, and industry stakeholders.

Stakeholder Workshops to validate findings and recommendations.

Sectoral Observation of funding mechanisms, digital platforms, and cultural infrastructure.

This multi-layered approach ensured that the recommendations are grounded in the lived experiences of creatives and the realities of the African creative sector.

## **Campaign Timeline**

### **Phase Activity Duration**

Phase 1 Literature review and preliminary research Month 1

Phase 2 Stakeholder consultations Month 2

Phase 3 Focus group discussions with creatives Month 3

Phase 4 Policy drafting and analysis Month 4

Phase 5 Validation workshops Month 5

Phase 6 Finalization and dissemination Month 6

## **Key Findings**

### **Under-recognition of the Creative Sector**

The creative economy significantly contributes to employment and cultural identity but is often excluded from national economic planning frameworks, limiting institutional support and investment.

### **Limited Access to Finance**

Creative entrepreneurs often face barriers in accessing formal financing, as financial institutions may perceive arts and culture ventures as high-risk. This limits expansion and innovation within the sector.

## **Policy Fragmentation**

Responsibility for arts and cultural policy is often spread across multiple ministries and agencies, leading to inconsistent implementation and weak strategic alignment.

## **Underutilized Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power**

African creative industries possess significant potential to enhance national soft power and cultural influence globally. However, policy frameworks rarely prioritize global cultural export strategies. Cultural outputs like film, music, and fashion offer pathways for soft power but require strategic support to reach global markets.

## **Infrastructure Gaps**

Insufficient investment in cultural infrastructure—including performance spaces, galleries, studios, and digital platforms—limits creative productivity and audience reach.

## **Policy Recommendations**

- Establish National Creative Economy Strategies
- Institutionalize arts and creative industries within national economic plans.
- Define measurable targets for employment, revenue growth, and cultural export.

## **Create Dedicated Funding Mechanisms**

- Develop grants, low-interest loans, and innovation funds tailored to creative entrepreneurs
- Offer incentives for private sector investment in creative ventures.

## **Strengthen Creative Education and Skills Development**

- Integrate arts management, cultural policy, and creative entrepreneurship into formal education.
- Provide vocational and professional development programs.

## **Invest in Cultural Infrastructure**

- Expand facilities such as performance venues, studios, galleries, and creative hubs.
- Ensure equitable geographical distribution of infrastructure within countries.

## **Promote Cultural Export and International Collaboration**

- Support participation in international festivals, markets, and digital distribution channels.
- Facilitate partnerships with global cultural institutions and export platforms.

## **Policy Implications for Nigeria and Emerging African Markets**

Nigeria: Formal creative economy policies can unlock investment, create jobs, and enhance sectors like Nollywood and Afrobeats.

Ghana: Digital infrastructure and export strategies can help scale creative industries regionally and globally.

South Africa: Enhancing royalties, legal protections, and institutional frameworks can strengthen sustainable livelihoods for cultural practitioners.

Regional collaboration and knowledge-sharing across African markets will help create cohesive, continent-wide approaches to creative economy policy.

## **Policy Impact Metrics & Evaluation Framework**

### **Recommendation Metric Target Review Frequency**

- National Creative Economy Strategy % of countries implementing frameworks 80% by 2028 Annual
- Funding Mechanisms # of creatives accessing funding 5,000 artists in 3 years Bi-annual
- Education & Skills # of institutions offering creative entrepreneurship curricula 50 institutions Annual
- Cultural Infrastructure # of new/upgraded creative facilities 20 hubs Every 2 years
- Cultural Export & Collaboration # of international partnerships 100 collaborations Annual
- This framework ensures that policy interventions are measurable, trackable, and outcome-oriented.

### **Implementation Framework**

- Establish multi-sector task forces to oversee strategy implementation.
- Launch creative economy funding programs with transparent criteria.
- Build monitoring systems for royalties, infrastructure development, and policy alignment.
- Promote regional policy harmonization across African markets.
- Conduct annual evaluations to track progress and refine policies.

## **Conclusion**

The Creative Economy Policy Campaign highlights that while Africa's creative industries are dynamic and culturally influential, structural barriers hinder their full economic potential. Through supportive policies, strategic investment, and robust evaluation frameworks, governments across

Africa can position the creative economy as a cornerstone of sustainable development, innovation, and cultural identity.

Scholarly Art advocates evidence-based, inclusive policies that empower creatives, strengthen institutions, and transform the cultural and creative sector into a key economic driver for the continent.

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