

Report from Workshop 2: Content creation in a changing world: How do we build the right environment?

The workshops that started many of the day's conversations were designed to produce substantive recommendations that lead to policy development and implementation. Of course, this is not quite so easy as it sounds.

Part of the problem, noted Alun Michael MP, was that many discussions of copyright are held between parties with shared interests in a separate room from those who disagree. However, when opposing parties are in the same room, discussions can turn contentious and delay action.

To forestall the usual back and forth on the issue, the chair of the workshop on content creation instead asked what we should expect on the issue ten years down the road. While one panellist declared that copyright would simply not exist in ten years, another pointed to the Digital Copyright Exchange proposed in the Hargreaves Review as a model that might carry copyright into the future, evolved to more appropriately fit the digital environment.

Several members of the audience spoke up to say they felt the question of copyright had to be at the core of any discussion around online content creation. There was general agreement in the audience, but they were more interested in talking about how we devise NEW models for copyright rather than how we enforce the old models.

The main points from the discussion were:

- We need to go back to basics and ask “what do we use the internet for”?
- What is content & who is producing it? It was agreed that ‘content’ is not just creative/storytelling, but information about anything.
- How do we take down the flags of nationality to create an equal and inclusive playing space?
- Instead of asking how do I get paid, ask who should get paid?
- Copyright model needs to change and move away from legislation to relationships & people
- With strong agreement from the audience, Alun Michael MP said we shouldn't ask the government to legislate as they would come down on one side or another – and the new & evolving Internet needs a more balanced approach to copyright. It needs to be more open & flexible.
- We need to look at legislation to promote platform impartiality for big content providers so as to foster an inclusive environment for independent platforms to develop, from the grass roots up.
- Arts & design - we need to find ways to connect the money with the creativity so (especially here in the UK where we have such a history of tech innovation) we can continue staying one step ahead of the curve with designing new technological & Internet solutions.
- We need to be building the future rather than just reacting to it