

soundwaves

UK Audio Production Industry News – Podcasting, Audiobooks, Radio
Spring 2023



Official evaluation states Audio Content Fund was successful

The [formal evaluation of the Audio Content Fund](#) was published in February.

The report, commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media & Sport and produced by independent consultants Wavehill, concluded that: *“the Fund has been successful in achieving its objectives across all of the eight eligibility criteria set by DCMS”*.

Evaluation of the Audio Content Fund

October 2022



Wavehill also found that the Fund created 9,842 freelancer days, as well as up to 40 full-time jobs and 240 part-time jobs. The fund also created new partnerships between independent

production companies and the commercial radio sector, leading in some cases to further commissions

Overall the fund commissioned 165 projects from 91 different suppliers broadcast on 350 stations across the UK. 71% of the grants were awarded outside London and 7% of the fund was spent on non-English indigenous languages, above the 5% limit set by Government.

A third of the funded projects had a life beyond their original broadcast, demonstrating real value for money.

The ACF was a pilot scheme which was given three years' worth of UK Government grant funding, at £1m per year between 2019 and 2022. It received two additional grants during the pandemic period to provide rounds to lift the national mood and tackle issues of loneliness. The ACF is currently seeing through the final projects awarded funding.



Future of ACF funding to be discussed at Parliamentary symposium

Following on from the successful evaluation the Audio Content Fund has arranged a symposium to discuss Wavehill's report findings. It will also look at next steps for the Fund, with input from experts including from the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and others who have run the Sound & Vision contestable fund for well over a decade.

Hosted by Andy Carter MP, the event will take place from 4pm-8pm on 20 March 2023 at Portcullis House Westminster. If you would like to attend the symposium please contact info@audiocontentfund.org





Measures for growing audio sector highlighted at Westminster Forum

AudioUK Managing Director Chloe Straw set out the case for how the Government can maximise the potential of the UK's audio production sector, in a wide-ranging speech at last November's at the [Westminster Media Forum on the future of radio and audio policy](#):

"The global podcasting market is expected to grow at a rate of 31.1%, to reach \$94.88 billion by 2028. The UK sector is currently one of the most developed in terms of

numbers of companies and professionals involved in audio production. But this may only be for a period of time as other countries seek to build their own sectors."

The speech highlighted areas for potential Government support, including introducing an Audio Production Tax Relief, supporting skills and training in the sector and membership of the Creative Industries Council.



Audio producers looking forward to Podcast Show London

Over 15,000 people from the global audio industry will attend [Podcast Show London](#) on 24-25 May, at the Business Design Centre, Islington.

Amazon Music, Sony Music, Spotify, Global, BBC Sounds, Acast, AudioUK and over 60 other industry players will gather to do business and update on trends in podcasting, now a £7bn worldwide industry and predicted to grow 27% yearly through to 2027.

The Show is happy to offer Parliamentarians free entry: contact tbillington@thepodcastshowlondon.com, ccing tclarkson@thepodcastshowlondon.com.



Other news in brief...

- **The BBC's radio / audio Speech Production Review will now be concluded in April, later than previously expected.** This Review could see the BBC's speech audio and radio production moved into its commercial production arm, BBC Studios. Given that this would give the BBC's producers the ability to compete against independent producers in the open market, [AudioUK has been calling for measures](#) to open up the BBC's own radio and audio programmes to more competition if this takes place.
- **Podcasts are among the media types UK users expect to consume more of in 2023**, according to a recent YouGov survey. 13% of UK respondents said they would increase their use of podcasts this year, behind only live in-person events (19%), streaming video (15%) and the cinema (15%) as the other activities people said they would increase 2023.

Soundwaves is produced by AudioUK, the trade body for the independent audio production sector. The sector has 200+ SMEs based around the UK producing high-quality podcasts, radio programmes, audiobooks and other audio-led content. For more information on us or this newsletter, or to meet with us, please contact Tim Wilson, AudioUK Lead on Policy and Regulation: tim.wilson@audiouk.org.uk

audiouk
the audio producers association

www.audiouk.org.uk
[@weareaudiouk](https://twitter.com/weareaudiouk)