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Dear Chancellor of the Exchequer,  
Rt. Hon. Jeremy Hunt MP,

**We write to you as a group of concerned leaders within the UK's creative industries. As you and your department draw up your funding priorities for the Autumn budget, we urge you to consider the impact of state school under-investment in Art & Design subjects, and the damaging impact this is already having on one of the UK's most successful sectors.**

From 2010 to 2019 the creative industries grew more than one and a half times faster than the wider economy, to be worth more than £115bn to the UK economy, making up around one in eight businesses, and accounting for 7.1% of all UK jobs.

What's more we're a multiplier: PEC research over the last 20 years suggests that each creative job can generate 1.9 new jobs in local services, and of course creative skills are a driver of success across every aspect of the UK economy.

Our creative companies lead the world, and our skills are sought by clients globally – in 2019 we accounted for nearly 12% of total UK service exports.

Yet every year we find it harder and harder to recruit the diversity of talent we need. We see an ever-increasing proportion of applicants from fee-paying school backgrounds where it is possible to study and gain qualifications in subjects like art and design, and fewer from state school backgrounds where these subjects are increasingly rare.

This restricts not only the potential talent pool, but also the diversity of our teams. An industry like ours depends on diversity of background, perspective, and ideas.

**We believe this trend has four causes:**

1. Reduction in funding of arts subjects in UK state schools since 2010. To give a recent indication of the picture: the Association of School and College Leaders surveyed its members last year and 72% reported that they had cut GCSE courses. And those cuts disproportionately fell on creative subjects: 44% said they had cut design and technology subjects, 18% music, 26% other performing arts, 16% art and design courses.
2. Lack of recruitment and retention of teachers for arts subjects: [The Art Now Inquiry](#) survey revealed that 34.9% of teachers in the UK reported that resourcing was an issue, and 93.2% said there had been a decrease in resources. Teachers also reported having to pay for their own materials. Two thirds of current art and design teachers surveyed are considering leaving.

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3. Changes to qualifications and league tables de-prioritising arts subjects: for example the English Baccalaureate, which is part of the basis for determining a school's place in performance tables, exclude all arts subjects.
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4. Careers advisers at state schools are too often unaware of opportunities in creative industries – animation, brand strategy, film making, client service, illustration, copywriting and so on – as well as the pathways into them.

**To reverse this trend and safeguard the future of the UK's vital creative industries we urge you to make the following commitments:**

1. Restore funding of arts subjects in UK state schools to real terms 2010 levels.
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2. Establish a taskforce to reverse the decline in arts teacher recruitment and retention.
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3. Initiate a review of creative education assessment and qualifications to ensure that valuable qualifications are protected, and new models of creative education that respond to emerging practice and new markets are explored.
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4. Deliver funding for a large-scale programme of cross-sector knowledge and opportunity sharing between state schools and the creative industries.

This would be a decisive and positive first step. But there is much more that can be done - it's detailed in the [Creative Education Coalition's #ArtsEssential Creative Education Manifesto](#) which we fully support.

We are at a critical moment. The creative industries are central to the UK's future success, and they rely on investment in arts education today. We urge you act.

Yours faithfully,

Concerned practitioners, employers and business leaders across the creative industry, some of whom are listed below.

**Jack Renwick**, Founder, Jack Renwick Studio. D&AD President. ISTD Fellow  
**Sean Thomas**, Executive Creative Director, Jones Knowles Ritchie  
**Claire Blyth**, Host, My Life in Design Podcast  
**Kate Stanners**, Chairwoman & Global Chief Creative Officer, Saatchi & Saatchi  
**Chrissy Levett MA R.C.A. PhD**, Founder & Creative Director, Creative Conscience  
**Neville Brody RDI FRSA**, CEO, Brody Associates.  
**Greg Quinton**, Chief Creative Officer, Design Bridge and Partners  
**Aaron Garbut**, Head of Development, Rockstar Games  
**Ruth Phillips**, Managing Director, Zeppotron Productions  
**Richard Brim**, Chief Creative Officer, adam&eveDDB

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**Graeme Struthers**, COO, Devolver Digital

**Ben Terrett RDI**, CEO, Public Digital

**Chris Wilson**, Co-founder & Creative Partner, Scriberia

**Marina Willer**, Partner, Pentagram Design

**Dr. Adam Brinkworth MA R.C.A.**, Founder, Brinkworth Design

**Scott Morrison**, Executive Board, British Fashion Council

**Leslie Benzies**, Chairman & Game Director, Build A Rocket Boy

**Minnie Moll**, CEO, Design Council

**Deborah Dawton**, CEO, Design Business Association

**Sarah Munro**, Co-chair, Contemporary Visual Arts Network. Director, Baltic

**Saad-Edine Said**, Co-chair, Contemporary Visual Arts Network. Director,  
New Art Exchange

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