



# WHERE CREATIVITY MEANS BUSINESS

A Vision for the Future of Digital  
Creative Enterprise in the West  
and North West of Ireland

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CREW STRATEGY 2025 - 2029

The word 'CREW' is displayed in large, bold, black, three-dimensional capital letters mounted on a light-colored, vertically-ribbed building facade. The background of the entire slide is a photograph of a modern building with large glass windows and a textured grey upper section. On the right side, there are several overlapping squares in shades of purple, blue, and teal.

# FOREWORD

by the Chair of the Board of Directors

With the support of our stakeholders, CREW has become a lightning rod and focal point for development actions in creative enterprise and for the creative industries in the region.

The board of CREW are very proud of achievements over the last few years, and indeed since the project was first initiated by ATU (then GMIT) and the WDC. Our recent progress has been remarkable, and much credit is due to the excellent team we have in place.

CREW's journey and work in developing enterprise and entrepreneurship in the digital creative industries in our region, the West and North-West of Ireland, has taken place against a backdrop of significant growth and change in the global creative industries. Our region can share in, and benefit from, this growth with appropriate targeted investment and continued support from the stakeholders working with CREW. For example, Enterprise Ireland, the Western Development Commission, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Screen Ireland, Atlantic Technological University, TG4, Gréasán na Meán and Galway LEO have contributed funding and support to CREW's initiatives, actions, and projects.

The development of this industry is a marathon, not a sprint. The long-term commitment of our stakeholders to the sector provides the solid foundation on which CREW is building actions that will serve the industry for many years to come. CREW's strategy, and the initiatives and projects that stem from it, is designed to deliver into the future through sustained integrated actions that will bring lasting and continuing impact.

The West and North-West has huge potential to become a leading creative region and source of creative output for diverse international markets. CREW is both a catalyst for action and provider of services that help realise this potential. Our strategy will enable us continue playing a central role in contributing to the success of the digital creative industries in our region.

Dr. Paddy Tobin

Chair of the CREW Board of Directors and  
Head of the School of Design & Creative Arts  
at Atlantic Technological University



# ABOUT CREW

CREW (Creative Enterprise West) is a leading innovation hub dedicated to growing the digital creative industries in the West and North-West of Ireland. It provides essential infrastructure, training, mentorship, and networking opportunities to entrepreneurs, startups, and scale-ups in sectors such as film, animation, game development, design, and digital arts.

Since its launch, CREW has successfully developed incubation and enterprise development programmes, engaged in a variety of regional industry development projects, forged strong industry partnerships, and influenced policy to support creative businesses.

By engaging in collaboration between academia, government, and industry, CREW is supporting innovation, job creation, and regional economic growth. The 2025–2029 strategy builds on these achievements, ensuring continued support for the digital creative sector and positioning the West and North-West of Ireland for significant growth in the digital creative industries.

## Executive Summary

The CREW Strategy 2025–2029 charts a course to strengthen the digital creative enterprise ecosystem across the West and North-West of Ireland.

**With a focus on industry growth, infrastructure development, and future-proofing capacity to deliver continuing impact, CREW aims to position itself as a leading hub and support organisation for digital creative industries startups and scale-ups.**

This strategy outlines key priorities, including supporting creative businesses, fostering collaboration, securing recurrent core funding streams, and investing in infrastructure that drives innovation. Through strategic partnerships and contributing to policy influence, CREW will continue to shape the future of the creative industries both regionally and nationally.





# STRATEGIC PILLARS

Our strategy is built on four key pillars that define our approach, ensuring that we create real impact for startups, scale-ups, and the wider creative economy.

Each pillar represents a critical focus area that will shape our future, from developing talent and securing investment to expanding our global reach. By aligning our efforts around these strategic priorities, we will position CREW as a leading force in creative enterprise innovation, delivering lasting value for our members, partners, and the broader ecosystem.



## PILLAR 1

### Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Driving creative enterprise through support programmes, mentorship, and collaboration.

#### Key Actions:

- Expand incubation and acceleration programmes for digital creative businesses.
- Provide an environment where enterprises can increase capacity and accelerate growth.
- Deepen collaboration with creative industries subsectors, including the Design Sector, Media & Advertising / Creative Agencies, Architecture.
- Strengthen mentorship and enterprise training for startups, with a focus on innovation and development of IP.
- Foster a culture of regional, national and international collaboration among digital creative enterprises and industry partners.



## PILLAR 2

### Enhancing Infrastructure and Resources

Providing state-of-the-art facilities and access to essential tools for creative enterprises.

#### Key Actions:

- Advocate for policy support and funding to strengthen creative infrastructure.
- Develop regional and international networks for knowledge exchange, facilitate industry partnerships to provide access to specialised equipment and expertise.
- Seek investment in state-of-the-art facilities, emerging technologies and digital resources for creative enterprises.
- Establish a resource hub and centralised community database of funding opportunities, best practices, and technical support for startups in the creative sector.
- Collaborate with stakeholders and partners to develop balanced infrastructure and resources across the region.

# WHY THIS MATTERS

Our strategic pillars work together to create a thriving innovation ecosystem by enhancing infrastructure, fostering talent, expanding investment opportunities, and building global connections.



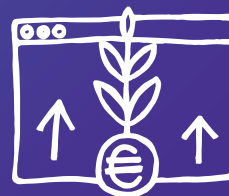
## PILLAR 3

### Industry Growth and Internationalisation

Supporting sectoral growth in the creative industries through planning, advocacy, promotion, communications and dissemination activities.

#### Key Actions:

- Partner on R&D and innovation initiatives in the creative industries.
- Plan and initiate international collaborations, provide advice on funding and market entry.
- Promote Ireland's digital creative sector on the global stage.
- Strengthen data-driven insights to inform future industry actions.
- Engage with stakeholders to contribute to policy formation.



## PILLAR 4

### Capacity for Continuing Impact

Ensuring long-term impact through diversified funding sources and mission-aligned projects.

#### Key Actions:

- Secure recurrent core funding to deliver continuity of support for the digital creative industries.
- Develop and implement projects that align with our mission and contribute to core actions and initiatives.
- Build resources and internal capacity to deliver sustained impact in the regional creative industries.
- Develop models for membership, programmes, and corporate partnerships that deliver long-term value to the creative community.
- Design and deliver initiatives that ensure a steady pipeline of regional talent entering the industry.

# VISION

To be a leader in supporting creative enterprise and driving innovation, entrepreneurship and collaboration for sustainable growth in our region

# MISSION

To support creative enterprise through world class initiatives, the provision of an inspiring and vibrant hub, and the development of a community enabling creatives to thrive, collaborate and achieve long term international success

# VALUES



INNOVATION



COLLABORATION



INTEGRITY



INCLUSIVITY



SUSTAINABILITY



RESPECT



# TESTIMONIALS

“CREW has been an incredible boon regarding my games development business start-up and personal life. The building and the people running it have provided a space for me to separate work and life, and become a part of the community they’ve congregated. I have already made lifelong connections with other creatives, and the resources and support I’ve accessed have been genuinely invaluable for my pursuits. Without CREW acting as a lightning rod for connections and events, my pursuits would have been a lonely experience, and progress would have been much slower. CREW is an incredible asset.”

- Richard Naughton, CREW Member and Incubator Programme Participant

“I joined CREW’s CEED programme soon after deciding it was time to explore digital media design projects as a freelancer, and finding this great support from CREW has made the journey much easier to take. Being among fellow entrepreneurs makes it feel like I’m not taking this path on my own. The programme workshops and mentorship offer insightful feedback on what is and isn’t working, so I know that the business plan I’ll have by the end of the programme is one I can take out to the world with confidence.”

- Michaela Murphy, Creative Entrepreneurship & Enterprise Development Programme Entrepreneur

## CLOSING SUMMARY

CREW remains steadfast in its commitment to empower and elevate the digital creative industries in the West and North-West of Ireland. This strategy provides a clear roadmap for CREW to catalyse innovation, enterprise, and international growth within the sector.

**By collaborating with industry leaders, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and educators, we will create an environment where digital creative enterprises can thrive.**

We invite all stakeholders to join us in delivering this ambitious vision. Together, we will position our region as a leader in supporting the growth of the digital creative enterprise sector, ensuring a vibrant, sustainable, and prosperous future.



