



RESPONSE

BBC Public Purpose Remits

BBC Trust Discussion Document, 16 January 2007

PPL¹ and VPL² welcomes the BBC Trust's consultation on the Public Purpose Remits. The biggest challenge for the BBC is now remaining relevant in a multi-channel environment with additional competition from online global players. Stimulating creativity and cultural excellence will mark the BBC out as distinctive and valuable and the BBC's relationship with other creative businesses will be the driver for success in achieving this.

A. CONSULTATION TOPICS

1. *Do the priorities adequately reflect the requirements of the Charter and Agreement?*
2. *Do the priorities need amending in any way? If so, how? (Please answer with reference to specific priorities).*
3. *Are there any important priorities that have been missed?*

Stimulating Creativity and Cultural Excellence

1. The public purposes of the BBC emerged from the debate around the Charter renewal. They encapsulate the remit of the BBC and reflect broad opinion on expectations as to what the BBC should deliver as a public service broadcaster. The purposes range in their degree of specificity, but the one which perhaps best embodies the essence of the BBC is stimulating creativity and cultural excellence. This has always been at the heart of the BBC, but as the BBC finds itself increasingly competing with global players, it is this which will give it its distinctive voice. In terms of priority, stimulating creativity and cultural excellence should imbue all the work of the BBC and should run through the other public purposes.

¹ PPL is the UK licensing society for 40,000 performers and 3,000 record companies.

² VPL is the UK licensing society for 1,000 music video producers.

2. The Purpose Remits set out in the BBC Trust's consultation document helpfully flesh out the public purposes. As currently drafted, they do broadly cover the areas in which one would expect the BBC to deliver public service.

BBC and the World

3. The one area which is not covered is the role of BBC Worldwide in bringing the UK to the world. Through overseas programme sales, its own TV channels and, latterly, overseas visitors online, BBC Worldwide performs a valuable function for the UK abroad. This goes beyond merely serving as a cultural ambassador. BBC Worldwide is a showcase for UK creativity and an increasingly important player in a competitive export market. This has become one of the benefits of a strong independent BBC to the UK creative economy.

Respect for Rights

4. The other aspect which could be highlighted more is the BBC's responsibility to respect the rights of creators and of creative businesses. As a major player within the creative industries, the BBC relies on the creative input of others, both directly and indirectly. Indeed, its success in reflecting and stimulating cultural excellence across the country and across genres is dependent on drawing from a broad creative pool. The BBC's relationship with its contributors is both creative and financial and this should be based on a respect for rights. It is perhaps implicit in the BBC's role in stimulating creativity and cultural excellence but if these Purpose Remits are aiming to set out completely what that means, they should include respect for rights.

<p><i>4. Do the Purpose Remits present the BBC with enough challenge in promoting the Public Purposes? If not, how might they be improved? (Please answer with reference to specific Remits and /or priorities).</i></p>
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Competition

5. The Public Purposes and the Purpose Remits set out a broad and challenging agenda for the BBC. Until recently, the BBC faced competition from a small number of other terrestrial broadcasters. We are now in a multi-channel environment, with additional competition emerging online from search engines, aggregators, portals and IPTV. The distinctiveness and quality mark of the BBC, through stimulating creativity and cultural excellence, will be key to the BBC remaining relevant over this Charter period.

BBC Archive

6. There is one particular challenge for BBC Worldwide which is quite rightly not in the Purpose Remits (as it requires a commercial solution), but one which is worth highlighting to the Trust. This concerns release of the archive.
7. The BBC has a valuable archive containing around 1 million TV and radio programmes. If the experience of online retailers is indicative, there will be interest in most of these titles and a consequent commercial value. Even titles which

attract a handful of viewers can be distributed economically online (the long tail effect). Release of this archive by BBC Worldwide will ensure that the costs of digitisation do not fall to the licence-fee payer. This approach will also generate additional revenue for new programming and mitigate against negative market impact on other players making available back catalogue online. It goes without saying that the terms of the release of the BBC archive would need to be agreed with rightholders against a backdrop of respect for the rights of creators and contributors to the archive programming.

5. In addition to the measures included in annex I to each Purpose Remit, are there any other performance measures which the Trust should use to monitor the Purpose Remits?

Measurement Against Other Creative Businesses

8. Measuring many of the Purpose Remits will inevitably be a challenge as many of them are qualitative judgements rather than quantitative outputs. Stimulating creativity and cultural excellence is perhaps the key Public Purpose. It is also the one that is hardest to measure. Most of the measurements proposed involve measuring audience perception. This will be a key component (and an important one in terms of the BBC justifying the licence fee). However, the BBC's relationship with the wider creative economy and its impact, both positive and negative, on other creative businesses should feature alongside audience perception. The music industry and others should input to the Trust's critical analysis of the BBC's performance in relation to the creative economy.

6. How well do you think the BBC is currently delivering the Purpose Remit priorities? In particular:

- a) are there any priorities which the BBC could deliver better? If so, why?*
b) are there any priorities which you think are being delivered well? If so, why?
(Please answer with reference to specific priorities)

Stimulating Creativity and Musical Excellence

9. Many in the music industry have felt there has been a reduction in prime time music programming since the demise of Top Of The Pops, despite assurances from the BBC that music would feature prominently in its overall creative and cultural offering. Music is such a key part of the UK's creative scene and its international successes that it should feature prominently in any plan to stimulate creativity and cultural excellence. Music falls within all five of the Purpose Remits supporting the Public Purpose of stimulating creativity and cultural excellence. It should feature in programme outputs.

Media Literacy

10. The BBC was given a responsibility for media literacy in the Communications Act four years ago. This is expanded in the proposed Purpose Remit to enable audiences to access, understand and interact with different types of media.

Emphasis is placed on trustworthy sources and a level of understanding and discernment on the part of consumers. Of key concern to the wider creative industries is an understanding of copyright and when content consumed online is legal or not. There has been little progress in this area since the Communications Act. Given the work the creative industries have undertaken with Government in this area in recent years and the importance of copyright to the wider society, it would be good to see the BBC playing a more active role.

PPL
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Confidentiality Statement

What do you want the BBC Trust to keep confidential? Nothing

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