



sport, arts & culture

Department:  
Sport, Arts and Culture  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



south african  
**cultural observatory**

NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY

4<sup>th</sup> International South African Cultural Observatory Conference 2022

## #SACOConf2022: Call for abstracts, papers & presentations

Under the theme:

**'Creative economy reset: Structuring the creative and cultural industries for a sustainable and inclusive future.'**

The South African Cultural Observatory (SACO) invites you to submit an abstract or proposal for consideration for the SACO's 4<sup>th</sup> international conference #SacoConf2022 to be held on **9 and 10 November 2022**, at the **CSIR International Convention Centre** in **Tshwane, South Africa**. This will be a hybrid event with opportunities offered for both in-person and virtual attendees.

### Who should participate?

- local and international academics;
- industry professionals and practitioners;
- public managers, policy-makers and intellectuals;
- researchers and consultants;
- private sector sponsors and practitioners;
- NGOs and NPOs;
- arts funders and impact investors;
- organisations working in cultural and creative industries (CCIs);
- creative workers and young creators; and
- organisers of cultural festivals & events.

### What abstracts and proposals should be submitted?

Proposals from fields that are relevant to the themes and subject matter outlined below will be considered. New proposals from practitioners, organisations and interested parties in all cultural and creative domains – and particularly case studies and reflections on lived experiences – are also welcome. Co-authored or presented pieces are welcome.

### What should be included in your proposal?



**MEASURING & VALUING SOUTH AFRICA'S CULTURAL & CREATIVE ECONOMY**

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- Proposals for papers and presentations should take the form of an abstract of between 300-400 words. Abstracts should show clearly how the relevant theme/s of the conference are addressed, the approach and the kinds of information used (such as data, case studies, literature reviews), and the findings and/or lessons learned.
- Proposals for popular or academic panel discussions should be accompanied by a short rationale, abstract or motivation, under 400 words, and a short outline of the speaker/s' experience in the field.

Consideration will be given to all submissions and applicants will be notified of acceptance within 2-3 weeks of the deadline. Selected papers will be considered for a post-conference publication or academic output.

Deadline for submissions: **[14 August 2022 via online submission form](#)**

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## SACO 2022 Conference

### Theme: 'Creative Economy Reset: Structuring the Creative and Cultural Industries for a Sustainable and Inclusive Future.'

The South African Cultural Observatory's (SACO) 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference, in hybrid format, takes place amid trying times for all nations and people, as the impact and after-effects of Covid-19, climate change, heightened international conflict, disrupted supply chains, and mounting inflation collide to produce severe uncertainty for the world economy. For developing economies and the most vulnerable – many of whom are precarious creative workers – these crises amount to an ambush on global and local ambitions for the sustainable growth of nascent creative economies and work. Yet they are just symptomatic of an increasingly uncertain future of shocks for which we need to prepare.

These constant threats are complex and painful and present a significant challenge for policy makers, big and small business, civil society leaders and organizations, for value and supply chains, and the creative producer, maker, and worker. Yet the inbound crises came at a time when the creative economy and the cultural and creative industries (CCIs) and sectors had gained mounting recognition as a potential growth engine for economic, inclusive and sustainable development. The CCIs finally have the attention of policy-makers and planners within the constituent sectors of the creative economy. According to UNCTAD (2020):

*[t]he creative industries – which include advertising, architecture, arts and crafts, design, fashion, film, video, photography, music, performing arts, publishing, research & development, software, computer games, electronic publishing, and TV/radio – are the lifeblood of the creative economy. They are also considered an important source of commercial and cultural value. The creative economy is the sum of all the parts of the creative industries, including trade, labour and production.*

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, alongside heightened global recognition, more investment was also flowing toward the CCIs from both public and private sources. For example, the East African focused [HEVA Fund](#) has allocated funds to more than 40 regional creative businesses since inception in 2013. In 2017, the United Kingdom incorporated the CCIs into the nation's future-orientated [industrial strategy](#). In 2021, the [African Export-Import Bank \(Afrexim Bank\)](#) set up a \$500 million fund to support Africa's creative industries to help effectively monetize its creative output. This occurred alongside calls for greater investment in the arts, such as the 2021 call by [NESTA and the Upstart Co-Lab](#) at the onset of the 2021 United Nations International Year of the Creative Economy for Sustainable Development.





The impetus for more funding, investment, and support is greater than ever as the world seeks to rebalance after Covid-19, while harnessing the moment to deal with embedded inequalities, protecting livelihoods, and maximizing the opportunities that technology and digital transformation brings.

While crises abound, new technologies and digital spaces are opening up markets and providing tools for global reach for creators, artists and those generating creative intellectual property. Technological disruption, according to UNCTAD, is however “two-phased”, at once driving income inequalities while also helping reduce poverty in low-income countries (2021: xv). “Technological changes combine with financial capital to create new techno-economic paradigms – the cluster of technologies, products, industries, infrastructure and institutions that characterize a technological revolution” (ibid.).

The impact of disruptions from artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of things (IoT), big data, blockchain, 5G, 3D printing, robotics, drones, gene editing, and nanotechnology are a critical part of the creative economy discussions. In addition, big digital platforms (MAAGs) are radically affecting creative sector consumption and production.

These debates and others are not just about the advent of technologies but broader human challenges as well. For that reason, it is important that the underpinnings and workings of the creative economy, now and into the future, are addressed. These should include the critical question of cultural rights, participation, livelihoods, climate and human survival; and consider the rethinking of cultural policy, processes and production in a changing world.

Right now, it is important for the agents and agencies working in the CCIs, from global to local, to maintain the gains, leverage the opportunities but also critically assess and where relevant redress the trends. This conference aims to do so considering South Africa and Africa, and the global creative community. In support of the major theme, papers, presentations and panel discussions are invited within the following broad thematic areas, which will be refined in line with accepted proposals and papers.

## Macro-themes

1. Dealing with disruption: trends, developments and responses: global perspectives on the creative economy.
2. The cartography of the new creative economy: Constructing, categorizing and revaluing the creative economy.
3. International trade and creative markets.
4. Cultural policy in transition.
5. Innovation, adaptation, entrepreneurship: from theory to lived experience.



6. Creative work and human capital.
7. Cultural participation and consumption.
8. The creative economy and digital transformation.
9. Funding, financing and investing in the creative economy.

Under each of the macro themes we welcome **case studies, lived experiences** and **sub-sectoral analyses** and insights from the CCIs and sectors in South Africa, Africa and internationally.

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## Macro-themes and guiding sub-themes

1. **Dealing with disruption: New trends, developments and responses - global perspectives on the creative economy.**
  - a. The political, technological and social disruptions and challenges to the contemporary creative economy.
  - b. The global and national economic trajectories and the increased fiscal squeeze on cultural and creative sectors.
  - c. The creative economy and the challenges of increased socio-economic inequalities.
2. **The cartography of the contemporary creative economy: Constructing, categorizing and revaluing the creative economy.**
  - a. The widening of the creative economy and the question of redefining boundaries.
  - b. New and/or improved ways of mapping the creative and cultural industries and associated agencies.
  - c. Methodological approaches, models and data.
3. **International trade and creative markets.**
  - a. Trade trends, patterns, products and people.
  - b. Stimulating demand for cultural goods and services in local, regional, national and international markets.
  - c. Borderless or borderline: Copyright, IP and the trade in cultural and creative services.
  - d. Levering the AfCFTA and other regional agreements and making them work for the creative sector.
  - e. Accountability and access: What can developed nations do for developing nations' creative economies?
  - f. International categorization of the CCIs: Current and new methodologies, debates and discussions.



**4. Cultural policy in transition.**

- a. New developments in cultural policy.
- b. Strategy and policies for promoting and building partnerships in the CCI: best practices, precedents, institutional arrangements and support organizations.
- c. Cohesion, inclusion and well-being in the creative economy.
- d. The new urban cultural policy, creative-based urban strategies and cultural policies in cities of the south.
- e. Embedding the creative economy: Regional, national and sub-national perspectives.
- f. Regulating and taxing global digital platforms and players impacting the creative economy.

**5. Innovation, adaptation, entrepreneurship: From theory to lived experience.**

- a. The inter-relationships between innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity: purposes, partnerships, productivity and platforms.
- b. Boosting entrepreneurship and incubation in the creative economy.
- c. Entrepreneurial ecosystems for cultural and creative industries.
- d. Developing creative entrepreneurship through creative-based urban strategies.
- e. Still the creative class? To what extent does the creative class exist and/or contribute to good cultural policy and CCI development?

**6. Creative work and human capital.**

- a. Work and participation in the creative economy: Debates, theories and case studies.
- b. Training, education and continuous learning for the creative industries: Theories, debates and case studies.
- c. The fourth industrial revolution: Preparing for the future of work, and new opportunities and obstacles.
- d. Brain drains and gains: Methods and modes of national and industry talent development and retention.
- e. Precarity, gigs, freelancing and the creative practitioner: The question of inequality and structural issues.

**7. Cultural participation and consumption.**

- a. Sustainable creative industries: Industrialization, beneficiation of cultural and creative resources and products and audience and market development.



- b. Who will watch, read, buy? Creative markets versus the market for creativity - understanding audiences, clients, consumers and patterns.
- c. Debates, approaches and international, comparative and country specific case studies and analyses.
- d. Cultural rights and participation: Creative freedoms, rights and unions
- e. The question of national cultural policy: State-centred models and approaches, and more horizontal articulation of social and cultural capital.
- f. Towards a circular and green creative economy: possibilities and angles.

**8. The digital creative economy and digital transformation.**

- a. The creative economy and the new derivatives: new technologies, NFTs, the metaverse, blockchain, smart contracts, DAO, and creative skinning of the online world.
- b. Accounting for the role and impact of global digital platforms on the creative and creator economies.
- c. Creating IP: Who owns what in a digital world?
- d. How national and super-regional structures are responding to challenges and opportunities as digital platforms internationalize nationally located creative work.
- e. Social networks, start-ups and cultural entrepreneurship.

**9. Funding, financing and investing in the creative economy.**

- a. Widening the notion of “cultural policy” to include its various and new components, beyond mere arts policy: The economy of culture and new sources of funding.
- b. Funding models for the CCIs in developed, emerging and developing economies.
- c. Impact investment: A new route to sustainable funding and finance?
- d. Investment strategies for thriving creative economies.
- e. Sustainable finance, jobs and growth in the CCIs.
- f. Beyond public funding and new philanthropies: Possibilities and opportunities.
- g. Social enterprise: A way forward for sustainable funding for the CCIs and arts?

