



CREATE

Welcome to Leicester
A City for the Creative Industries



“My economic action plan identified food and drink, the creative industries and new innovation and technology businesses as priority sectors for the Leicester economy. Each has been growing but we knew that there was scope to do more. Successful businesses are spread across the city but each sector also has a natural geographical focus and we have concentrated our business support and targeted our physical investment into those priority locations, which we have described as Business Investment Areas.

This document highlights the contribution that the creative industries are making to the city economy, tells the stories of some successful companies who are already here, describes the investments that have been made over the past few years and flags up some of the exciting opportunities that remain. It also shines a light on the many reasons why Leicester is a great place to live and do business.”

Sir Peter Soulsby, City Mayor.

4000

People employed in the creative industries in Leicester (2013).

SUCCESS

Leicester has thriving creative industries that represents the second largest cluster of creative businesses outside London.

The creative industries sector nationally represents over 5% of the total UK economy (DCMS Data 2015).

The sector is diverse across Leicester and surrounding areas, represented by fashion and design brands from Next, Boden and Joules to world-class cultural venues, such as Curve and individual entrepreneurs and creators. The city is also nurturing the next generation of creative talent through research and study at its leading universities.

Creative businesses in Leicester have a home in the Cultural Quarter, where more than 200 businesses are currently trading, increasing the demand for supply networks and enabling opportunities for further growth.

Leicester has a strong track record in working with creative businesses to help them grow and succeed.

THRIVING

The geographical focus for the creative industries in Leicester is the Cultural Quarter, minutes from the city centre and a place where many creatives choose to live, work and socialise.

Offering world class entertainment venues, bars and restaurants, easy access to the city centre and railway station as well as workspaces for artists, designers and creative businesses, Leicester's Cultural Quarter is a wonderfully vibrant area and the perfect base for creative entrepreneurs wanting to grow.

Once the industrial hub of the city, the area fuses together elements of the city's more historic architecture with sensitive and award-winning regeneration schemes to create a cosmopolitan cultural environment.

Companies in the Cultural Quarter work together through the Cultural Quarter Business Association.



**Creative businesses working
in the Cultural Quarter.**

"It's been exciting to collaborate with other local businesses to raise the profile of the area and put on a vibrant programme of creative events with internationally-renowned artists."

Jed Spittle, Cultural Quarter Business Association (CQBA).





93

Units for small and mid-sized creative businesses managed by LCB Depot.

WORKING

Creative businesses flourish in the Cultural Quarter with a fantastic range of quality business accommodation, strong local networks and excellent opportunities for business growth.

Leicester Creative Business (LCB) Depot is a dynamic creative hub and venue for small and mid-sized creative businesses, ultrafast broadband, art gallery, meeting rooms and a busy public café/bar.

Phoenix Square is a unique building housing an independent cinema, cafe bar, gallery, specialist media production facilities, apartments and 29 workspaces managed by the LCB Depot team for web and digital media companies.

Makers' Yard is Leicester's leading studio space for professional artists and designer-makers. Located in the oldest surviving hosiery factory in the East Midlands, it has been lovingly restored into a charming and purpose-built complex, ideal for fashion, textiles, ceramics and wood-working.

For art lovers there's a developing network of independent artist studios, galleries and event spaces including *Two Queens* and *HQ*.

Channel 2020 Ltd has been operating since 1991, and now has offices in London and New York. They produce a wide range of TV programmes, campaigns, events, websites and web TV portals for thousands of clients.

Their successes are broad-ranging: from producing the longest running TV ad to creating the world beauty awards. Today they are creating niche web TV portals for global audiences.

"We like the flexibility, setting, and the people who run Phoenix Square. It is also very cost effective and cultivates skilled people around who can work with us when needed".

Rob Potter, CEO, Channel 2020

The City Studio is based at Makers Yard where Graeme and Michaela Hawes, award-winning artists working in glass and ceramics, produce individual and commercial glassware and ceramics to high-end stores and galleries. They also use the studio for art workshops for the public to enjoy.

"The location of the LCB Depot is great for us as a business; close to the train station, close to the motorway and a couple of minutes from the city centre."

James Riley, Managing Director, effect.



COMMUNITY

Creative businesses working in the Cultural Quarter range from individual artists to leading design agencies to world - renowned festivals.

£2m

Contribution to the local economy, Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival.

Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival attracts 100,000 people annually and contributes £2m to the local economy. It is managed by independent cultural agency The Big Difference Company, based at LCB Depot.

"Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival was established in 1994 making it the longest running comedy festival in Europe. With Dave as title sponsor, the festival attracts some of the biggest names in UK comedy."

Geoff Rowe, BEM, Director, Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival.

"An Indian Summer has been at the heart of cultural development in Leicester, we have worked with over 90 organisations since 2013 and strive to create a stronger creative city through innovative partnerships and local collaboration."

Bipin Anand, An Indian Summer.

An Indian Summer is a festival that has grown from 2,000 - 9,000 visitors in the last four years, and is based at LCB Depot. The festival helps people to experience Indian culture through transformed venues across Leicester's Cultural Quarter.

Creative Triangle is a graphic design and marketing agency that has grown from three people to sixteen in eight years. They now have a national reputation, have achieved 'Elite Agency' status in The Drum's Design Census, have ranked in Design Week's Top 100 Consultancy Survey and are on the Recommended Agency Register. Clients include Heathrow Airport and several leading universities.

Jadu create web and information management systems for local government and leading universities and colleges. Since starting as a one-man band in 1999, they've grown into a 70 strong international company with offices in Leicester, the US and Australia.

METRO-BOULOT-DODO (MBD) create innovative cross art-form work for theatres, heritage sites, galleries and outdoor venues. The company has a base at LCB Depot and a national reputation for its unique blend of live performance, original music and new media. MBD became an associate artist at Leicester's world-class theatre Curve in September 2013.

"METRO-BOULOT-DODO is one of the brightest of the new crop of theatre companies disregarding theatrical convention."

The Guardian.

"The LCB Depot team helped us in many ways and were defining in our history. From supporting us with office moves, to allowing us to customise our workspace to fit our culture to the advice and support offered during difficult times - LCB Depot has been much more than a workspace."

Mani Aujla, Jadu.

"With so many creatives in the area, it's easy to plug into local networks to connect and give your business that extra edge."

Peter Chandler, Creative Workspace Development Manager, Leicester City Council.



SUPPORT

In Leicester, we work with creative businesses to create the right conditions for growth.

Over 700 creative professionals have benefitted from free business development opportunities.

- 1-2-1 coaching or advice from experienced and trained professionals
- Tailored workshop covering sector-specific topics to meet the needs of businesses.
- Grants to support business growth.
- Networking events including sector-specific networking and enterprise start-up weekends.

“I’m privileged to help grow companies to deliver excellent products and services to businesses around the world.”

Russ Pacey, Enterprise Development Manager, Leicester City Council.

“The support, networking and resource we’ve had has been inspiring. It’s one of the key reasons our business has grown to where it is today.”

Dan Lamoon, Director, Seed Creativity.

700

Creative professionals have benefitted from business development opportunities.





OPPORTUNITY

The Cultural Quarter is the natural choice for creative businesses looking to establish and grow in Leicester, offering a range of exciting development opportunities.

Quality managed workspace – affordable premium offices and workshop studios including LCB Depot, Phoenix Square and Makers' Yard.

Property for development – a broad range of unique, privately-owned properties ready to move into or refurbish.

Step-by-step support – Leicester City Council provides targeted help to those looking to develop in the Cultural Quarter, working with building owners, agents, developers and creative businesses to help find and refurbish spaces.

Thriving local business community – there's huge ambition and drive for the area's cultural and economic success, with companies proactively engaged in shaping, delivering and promoting new developments.

£3bn

£3 billion of recent investment, transforming the city centre into a hub of entertainment, shopping and culture.

"Leicester City Council worked with us to secure our chosen site and provided support, facilitation and advocacy. As a result we will be celebrating our 30th birthday in 2016 in a superb, exemplary building that will see us printmaking for another 30 years."

Lucy Philips, Director, Leicester Print Workshop.

High fashion jewellery and accessory brand LB Concepts relocated to Makers' Yard after five years in London - *"This is the perfect place for us to expand. There are beautiful buildings and lots of manufacturing in Leicester, but we're still only an hour away from London and it's only four hours to Paris."*

Eve Lucron, Co-Director, LB Concepts.



1%

The University of Leicester is ranked in the top 1% of universities in the world.
(Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2014-15)

2500

IT graduates every year from University of Leicester, DMU and Loughborough.



SKILLED

Leicester is home to a skilled and diverse workforce supported by outstanding higher education institutions, a strong further education sector and effective workforce development programmes.

The presence of excellent universities provides the city with a significant competitive advantage, in terms of expertise, international links, research and a combined total of over 50,000 students.

Ranked in the top 1% of universities worldwide, the University of Leicester (UoL) brings tangible benefits to the city's creative industry. Local design firm Bulb Studios developed its award-winning Crowdlab™ app thanks to a fully funded graduate brought in to work on the project and access to researchers working on user-centred software design.

The UoL also works with creative companies on funded collaborative research projects: Cuttlefish Media developed an app with support and content provided by university researchers, bringing local history to life in Leicester's Cultural Quarter.

Short courses include creative writing, and oral history interviewing techniques and the university's arts centre – Embrace Arts – works closely with arts organisations and will unveil a new gallery wing in Autumn 2015.

De Montfort University (DMU) is nationally recognised as a higher education Centre for Excellence in Performance Arts and was rated highly for its creative scene in the Which? University Student Survey 2014. DMU has pioneered collaborations with national and international commercial organisations, industry specialists and funding bodies across the creative sector. These include bespoke training courses in contour garments, footwear, and fashion as well as coordinated work placements and internship schemes providing growing businesses with employable, creative graduates.

The city has excellent further education colleges and progression rates to higher education are high. Leicester College is one of the largest in the UK with more than 27,400 learners studying on a wide range of courses including music technology and performing arts.

“Outstanding.”

Leicester College Ofsted result in 2011.

2763

Supporting the next generation - new apprenticeship starts in Leicester 2012/13.

LIVING

Whatever you enjoy doing, Leicester has a lot to offer with a vibrant cultural scene, thriving retail centres and leisure facilities.

- The city boasts the largest covered market in Europe, the largest Caribbean carnival in the UK outside London, the largest Diwali celebrations outside of India and the largest comedy festival in the UK – Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival.
- In October 2014 our King Richard III Visitor Centre won the British Guild of Travel Writers Award for 'Outstanding New Tourism Project' and in January 2015 was named as one of the world's top 25 hottest new attractions for 2015 by travel guide Lonely Planet.
- Theatre and cinema-goers will enjoy Phoenix arts cinema and Curve, one of the UK's leading producing theatres, achieving widespread critical acclaim, attracting audiences from across the UK and beyond.
- The National Space Centre is the UK's largest attraction dedicated to space exploration and space science.
- Leicester has a strong sporting history and is host city for the Special Olympics and the 2015 Rugby World Cup.
- Leicester is one of the UK's top 10 retail destinations. The Highcross shopping centre boasts hundreds of shops and restaurants including the flagship John Lewis store, a 12-screen cinema and luxury apartments.
- Leicester is located on the edge of the National Forest, with beautiful countryside just minutes from the city centre.

25

Richard III Visitor Centre in top 25 hottest new attractions.
(Lonely Planet 2015)





£12k

Average savings to businesses per employee per year when relocating to Leicester.

INVEST

Leicester has been voted as one of the best UK cities in which to do business.

- Compared with London and many other UK cities Leicester has a remarkably low operating cost per head. Relocating to Leicestershire saves on average £12,000 per employee per year.
- Leicestershire has the largest economy in the East Midlands, estimated to be worth £19 billion.
- There is a diverse workforce of over 1 million within a 45 minute radius, and over 2.4 million consumers living within an hour's drive time.
- Leicester's residents speak over 70 languages and 30% are of south Asian heritage, which have allowed the city to develop strong links with major growing economies, including India and China.
- Leicester has a dedicated service that works alongside potential inward investors. Our support can help businesses to find the right premises, talk to the right people, locate and recruit the right staff and provide all the background information and contacts to help make the right commercial decisions.
- Leicester was recently ranked in the top 10 places to start up a business in the UK, heralded as the 'startup capital of the East Midlands' [startups.co.uk.]
- Leicestershire ranks top amongst Britain's best areas for bringing up a family. The cost of living is low with affordable housing and one of the lowest house prices to income ratios in the UK. The city and county also boast excellent schools, colleges and universities.

CONNECT

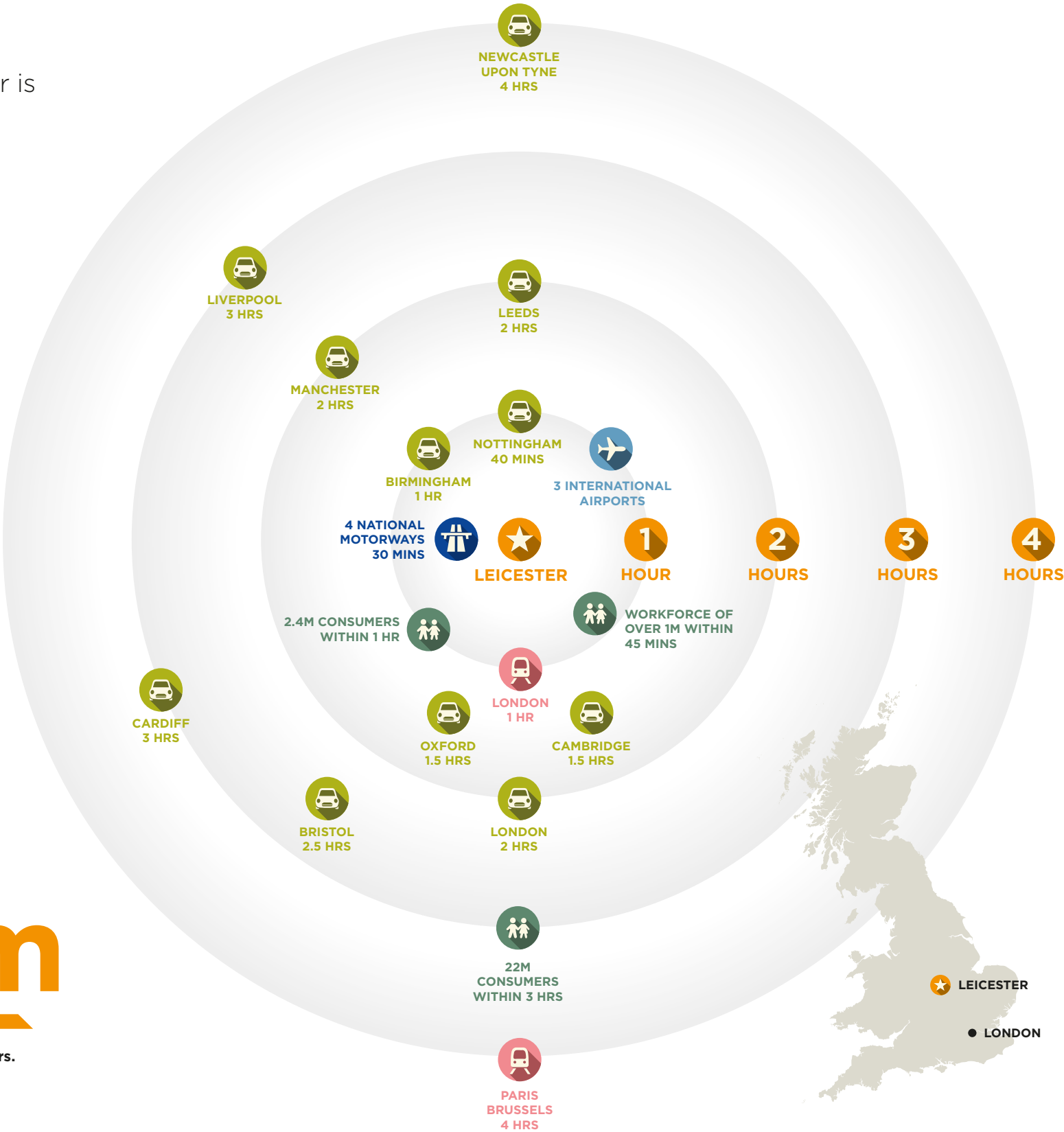
Located right in the centre of England, Leicester is progressive, enterprising and ambitious.

- Leicester is one of the best-connected cities in the country.
- 4 national motorways are within 30 minute's drive.
- Direct rail link to London and Eurostar.
- 3 international airports are within a 40 minute drive.
- East Midlands Airport is the 2nd largest freight handling airport in the UK.

Time to major cities:

- North: Nottingham, 45 mins
Sheffield 1.5 hours
- West: Birmingham 1 hours
- East: Cambridge 1.5 hours
- South: London 1 hour, Paris 4 hours

22m
Consumers within 3 hours.



The Creative Industries is one of four business investment priorities in Leicester:

- Food and Drink
- Innovation and Technology
- Leicester City Centre



For more information

To find out more about how Leicester can support you to set up and develop your business in the city or information regarding other Business Investment Areas, please contact our dedicated Economic Development Team at:

EnterprisingLeicester@leicester.gov.uk



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in Your Future
European Regional Development Fund 2007-13

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