

EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 SATURDAY 10 MAY 2025

Creative titans and industry leaders urge the Prime Minister to support UK creativity and economic growth by enforcing copyright law

The letter to the Prime Minister and full list of signatories can be found in the annex below this Press Release.

Over 400 top creatives, media and creative business leaders, and creative businesses have written to the Prime Minister, urging him to give Government support to proposals that would protect copyright in the age of AI. This comes ahead of a crunch vote on the plans in the House of Lords on Monday 12th May.

Signatories to the letter represent a who's who across the creative industries, and include Elton John, David Furnish, Paul McCartney, Florence Welch, Kate Bush, Coldplay, Antonia Fraser, Tom Stoppard, Richard Curtis, Ian McKellen, Kazuo Ishiguro, Moira Buffini, Russell T Davies, Rachel Whiteread, Shirley Bassey, Antony Gormley, Emily Eavis, Tom Dixon, John Pawson, Justine Roberts, amid hundreds of others.

The letter warns:

“We will lose an immense growth opportunity if we give our work away at the behest of a handful of powerful overseas tech companies and with it our future income, the UK's position as a creative powerhouse, and any hope that the technology of daily life will embody the values and laws of the United Kingdom.”

The letter calls on Sir Keir Starmer to back Baroness Beeban Kidron's amendment to the Data (Use and Access) Bill, which would give the UK creative industries urgently needed transparency over the copyright works ingested by AI models. This transparency would allow creators and creative businesses to hold AI firms accountable for the mass theft of creative works that continues to take place.

The letter, which has also been signed by Oliver Sim, Simon Rattle, Nicholas Hytner, Jimmy McGovern, Lucy Kirkwood, Dua Lipa, Alan Ayckbourn, and scores of business leaders and award-winning artists, tells the Prime Minister:

“The first job of any government is to protect its citizens. So, we urge His Majesty's Government to accept the Lords Amendments in the name of Baroness Kidron that put transparency at the heart of the copyright regime and allow both AI developers and creators to develop licensing regimes that will allow for human-created content well into the future. These amendments recognise the crucial role that creative content plays in the development of generative AI. They will spur a dynamic licensing market that will enhance the role of human creativity in the UK, positioning us as a key player in the global AI supply chain.”

The amendments have been tabled ahead of the first day of ‘Ping Pong’ in the Lords, where provisions that would make copyright law enforceable were passionately supported on a cross-party basis earlier this year. The amendment creates a requirement for AI firms to tell copyright owners which individual works they have ingested. Copyright law is not broken, but you can’t enforce the law if you can’t see the crime taking place. Transparency requirements would make the risk of infringement too great for AI firms to continue to break the law.

Baroness Kidron said:

“The creative industries welcome the new frontier of creativity offered by advances in AI, but how AI is developed and who it benefits are two of the most important questions of our time.

“The UK creative industries reflect our national stories, drive tourism, create wealth for the nation and provide 2.4 million jobs across our four nations. They must not be sacrificed to the interests of a handful of US tech companies. Nor should we underestimate the role of human creativity in the joy of being human nor the need for common facts to cement our collective experience.

“The UK is in a unique position to take its place a global player in the international AI supply chain, but to grasp that opportunity requires the transparency provided for in my amendments, which are essential to create a vibrant licencing market.

I am grateful to the extraordinary list of signatories to today’s letter to the Prime Minister. Behind them stands the thousands of technicians, roadies, agents, costumers, make up, set designers, production and post-production staff, sub-editors, and many more who make their work possible. Today they are raising their voice for all those who make the UK an economic powerhouse of creativity and innovation. Most importantly, they are speaking out to ensure a positive future for the next generation of creators and innovators.”

Government amendments requiring an economic impact assessment and reports on the feasibility of an ‘opt-out’ copyright regime and transparency requirements do not meet the moment, but simply leave creators open to years of copyright theft.

Lord Brennan of Canton, former MP and Labour Peer, said:

“We cannot let mass copyright theft inflict damage on our economy for years to come. Transparency over AI inputs will unlock tremendous economic growth, positioning the UK as the premier market for the burgeoning trade in high-quality AI training data. If the government cannot accept Baroness Kidron's amendments, I urge them to introduce provisions which will allow transparency measures to be developed in months, not years. It is never 'too soon' to protect millions of workers and defend our national interest.”

Lord Black of Brentwood, a Conservative Peer, said:

“The Government amendments set us on a timeline that will not see any transparency provisions introduced until the very tail end of this Parliament at the earliest. Opt-out solutions simply do not exist, and the Government must not rush into a rash decision on copyright law, but transparency is feasible and necessary now. Rather than leaving creative and media businesses defenceless for years to come, transparency will protect UK citizens’ property rights against Big Tech and kickstart a highly lucrative UK market for AI training data.”

Lord Clement-Jones, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Science, Innovation and Technology in the Lords, said:

“Transparency isn't just an ethical obligation - it's the foundation for a vibrant licensing system where creators are respected and compensated. When AI developers acknowledge copyright through clear licensing frameworks, both innovation and creativity can flourish side by side. This dynamic marketplace doesn't hinder progress but accelerates it, transforming potential conflict into collaboration and shared prosperity between our creative and tech sectors.”

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Annex: Full letter to the Prime Minister and list of signatories

Dear Prime Minister,

Creative copyright is the lifeblood of the creative industries. It recognises the moral authority we have over our work and provides an income stream for 2.4 million people across the four nations of the United Kingdom. The fight to defend our creative industries has been joined by scores of UK businesses, including those who use and develop AI.

We are not against progress or innovation. The creative industries have always been early adopters of technology. Indeed, many of the world's greatest inventions, from the lightbulb to AI itself, have been a result of UK creative minds grappling with technology.

We are wealth creators, we reflect and promote the national stories, we are the innovators of the future, and AI needs us as much as it needs energy and computer skills. We will lose an immense growth opportunity if we give our work away at the behest of a handful of powerful overseas tech companies and with it our future income, the UK’s position as a creative powerhouse, and any hope that the technology of daily life will embody the values and laws of the United Kingdom.

The first job of any government is to protect its citizens. So, we urge His Majesty's Government to accept the Lords Amendments in the name of Baroness Kidron that put transparency at the heart of the copyright regime and allow both AI developers and creators to develop licensing regimes that will allow for human-created content well into the future. These amendments recognise the crucial role that creative content plays in the development of generative AI. They will spur a dynamic licensing market that will enhance the role of human creativity in the UK, positioning us as a key player in the global AI supply chain.

To parliamentarians on all sides of the political spectrum and in both Houses, we urge you to vote in support of the UK creative industries. Supporting us supports the creators of the future. Our work is not yours to give away.

Signed:

MUSIC

*Elton John
David Furnish
Paul McCartney
Coldpay
Kate Bush
Annie Lennox
Jamie Cullum
Tom Jones
Eric Clapton
Shirley Bassey
Florence Welch
Dua Lipa
Mark Ronson
Alfie Boe
Sting
Jessie Ware*

*Paloma Faith
Robbie Williams
Lucian Grainge
Pete Townshend
Olly Thornton
Kit Connor
Tony Marnach (DJ Fat
Tony)
Giles Martin
Wretch32
Patrick Woodroffe
Rod Argent
Dickon Stainer
Barrie Marshall
Nickie Owen
Laura Snapes
Simon Rattle
Mark Antony Turnage*

*Edward Gardner
Emily Eavis
Rachel Fuller
Oliver Sim
Dukagjin Lipa
Gia Ford
Sam Pattinson
Jonathan Freeman-
Atwood
Kirsty Macdonald
Paul Dugdale
Ed Newton-Rex
Jamie Wilson
Bob Harris
Mike Batt
Tom Speight
Amy Love
Georgia South*

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Ian McKellen
Kazuo Ishiguro
Tom Stoppard
Richard Curtis
Martin McDonagh
Jack Thorne
Jeanette Winterson
Michael Rosen*

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Richard Eyre
Pippa Harris
Alan Ayckbourn
Michael Frayn
David Hare
Patrick Marber
Stephen Daldry
Joe Murphy
Joe Robertson
Lee Hall
Richard Jones
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*Hugh Grant
Matthew Warchus
Rupert Goold
Ian Rickson
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April de Angelis
Richard Bean
Alecky Blythe
Danny Brocklehurst
Maira Buffini
Eleanor Catton
Carrie Cracknell
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Tom Edge
Nadia Fall
Johnny Flynn
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Dennis Kelly
Kelly Marcel
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Sarah Phelps
Ben Power
Simon Stephens
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Iqbal Khan
Lucy Kirkwood
Isobel McArthur
Lolita Chakrabati
Frank Spotnitz
Mark Rosenblatt
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Bim Ajadi
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Sofia Olins
Kirsty Robinson-Ward
Atem Kuol
Dominic Stephenson
Bill Buckhurst
Sarah Kendell
Aurora Fearnley
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NLA Media Access

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Universal Music Publishing Group

The Associated Press

The Old Vic

Young Vic

National Theatre

English National Ballet

Royal Shakespeare Company

Sadlers Wells

Shakespeare's Globe

Southbank Centre

Birmingham Royal Ballet

Bristol Old Vic

Britten Pears Arts

Donmar Warehouse

Edinburgh International Festival

English Touring Opera

Garsington Opera

Glyndebourne

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The Lowry

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Warwick Arts Centre

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BAPLA (British Association of Picture Libraries & Agencies)
Association of Authors' Agents
Teledwyr Annibynol Cymru / Welsh Independent Producers (TAC)
The Association of Independent Music Publishing Scotland
The Society of Artists' (Illustrators') Agents
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 Rachel Hill, Association of Illustrators and **CRA Board**
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 Jeremy Lascelles, CEO, **Chrysalis Records / Blue Raincoat Music**
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