East of England
All Party Parliamentary Group

FAO: The Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 100 Parliament Street, London SW1A 2BQ

Dear Lisa

Request to Meet to Discuss: Stimulating Growth of the Film and Television Industry in the East of England

We are writing as the Officers of the East of England All-Party Parliamentary Group following a recent APPG roundtable examining the opportunities and challenges facing the film and television industry across the East of England – please see the attached minute of the meeting. The discussion brought together Parliamentarians, producers, broadcasters, screen sector representatives, local authorities, universities and business leaders. Please see the attached minute.

A consistent theme emerged throughout the roundtable: the East of England possesses significant creative talent, strong educational institutions, world-class research capability and an attractive range of filming locations, yet remains one of the least supported regions in England when it comes to screen industry investment and development.

This disparity was highlighted in the recent report commissioned from Alma Economics by PACT and is further highlighted in the attached report Hawkshead published last week: Lights on in the East (attached).

Participants were clear that a thriving Film and TV industry not only delivers significant cultural benefits. The sector also represents a major economic opportunity and aligns closely with the Government's ambitions to drive growth, create high-value jobs and expand opportunities beyond traditional centres of economic activity. As such the creative industries are one of the UK's international success stories, but the benefits of that success are not currently being shared evenly across the country.

Evidence presented to the APPG highlighted the extent to which talented young people from the East of England continue to face a stark choice: leave the region in order to pursue careers in film and television or abandon those ambitions altogether. This ongoing loss of talent weakens local economies, limits social mobility and reduces the diversity of voices represented within the industry.

The APPG also heard compelling evidence that productions wishing to film in the East of England often face a competitive disadvantage compared with other parts of the UK where structured regional support, investment funds and production incentives are available. Contributors pointed to what many described as a growing regional imbalance, whereby public investment in screen

industries is available across other nations and regions of the UK but is largely absent from the East of England.

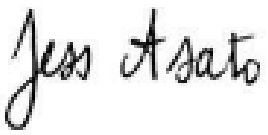
This disparity has practical consequences. Productions that could naturally be filmed in the East are frequently attracted elsewhere by the availability of financial support, resulting in the loss of economic activity, employment opportunities and longer-term investment. The APPG heard examples suggesting that relatively modest levels of public support could unlock substantially greater levels of private production expenditure and generate wider benefits across hospitality, tourism, technology, research and development, and associated supply chains.

However, contributors were equally clear that the objective should not simply be to attract occasional productions. The longer-term goal must be the development of a sustainable screen ecosystem capable of supporting careers and businesses over time. This includes investment in skills, training pathways, production infrastructure, studio and post-production facilities, development funding for original intellectual property, and stronger connections between industry, local authorities and higher education institutions.

The East of England is particularly well placed to develop such an ecosystem. The region combines creative talent with strengths in technology, artificial intelligence, gaming, immersive media and research-led innovation. There is therefore an opportunity to build a distinctive regional screen sector that complements existing national strengths while contributing to economic growth and productivity.

We would therefore welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your officials to discuss how Government can support the development of the screen industries in the East of England and ensure that the region is not left behind as future funding, growth and devolution arrangements evolve.

Yours sincerely



Jess Asato MP
Co-chair, East of England APPG

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Co-chair, East of England APPG

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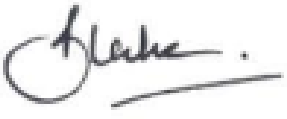
Vice Chair, East of England APPG



Blake Stephenson MP
Vice Chair, East of England APPG