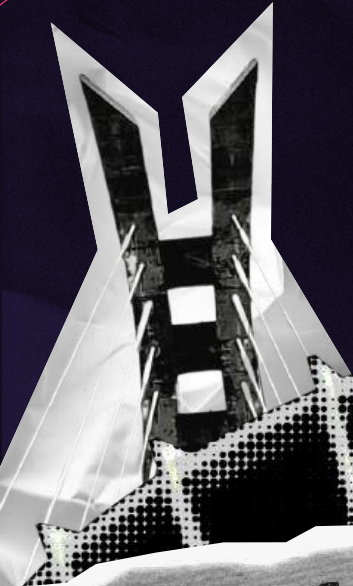


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CREATIVE ECONOMY

BUSINESS & INFRASTRUCTURE DIAGNOSTIC



Executive Summary

This diagnostic captures the lived experience of **377 creative** professionals across Nigeria, gathered in the weeks following NECLive 2025. It maps the structural fault lines between Nigeria's remarkable cultural influence and its ability to sustain, reward, and export that creativity at scale.

The data is unambiguous: Nigeria's creative sector is not held back by a shortage of talent — it is held back by the systems surrounding it: the infrastructure, the financing, the payment rails, the training pipelines.

377

Total Respondents

8 Creative Sectors

83%

Lose 10%+ weekly

To non-creative admin

2.84/5

Talent Score

Mid-tier skills scarce

Four findings define this report:

- 1 Power and connectivity are the #1 daily obstacle — rated above funding, regulation, and IP theft.
- 2 **83%** of respondents lose more than **10%** of productive time every week to non-creative administration.
- 3 **52%** cite poor briefing as a collaboration friction point; **51%** cite payment disputes —a systemic trust deficit.
- 4 Access to funding and distribution are the top structural gaps, above infrastructure or IP tools.

This report moves the conversation from dialogue to evidence — and from evidence to policy.

Methodology & Respondent Profile

The survey was distributed to creative stakeholders following **NECLive 2025** — open to Landmark Centre attendees, global broadcast viewers, and the wider NECLive community. Participation was voluntary; responses confidential.

Respondents by Creative Sector



Respondents by Career Stage



Primary Income Source



Only **19.4%** report international markets as primary income — a figure that resurfaces critically in the export section.

Section 1

The Daily Grind – Routine Obstacle

Respondents ranked seven routine obstacles preventing regional or global growth. Lower score = higher priority (**1 = most critical, 7 = least critical**).

Rank		Avg Score
1	Power outages or poor internet disrupting workflows	2.98
2	Team coordination and scheduling issues	3.39
3	Limited access to reliable equipment or tools	3.50
4	Funding delays for materials or travel	3.64
5	Market access barriers like visa or export hurdles	3.98
6	Regulatory red tape slowing daily operations	4.33
7	IP theft or piracy affecting output	4.46

Power and connectivity ranked #1 – above funding delays, IP theft, and all regulatory concerns combined.

The single most impactful intervention for Nigeria's creative sector is reliable electricity and broadband. Until that foundation exists, every other creative economy programme builds on sand.



"Stable electricity supply and better planning — that is the single most urgent fix."



"Having all the equipment required, 24-hour electricity, and faster internet services."

Section 2

Where Projects Bleed - Waste & Loss in Production

Respondents ranked five sources of production waste. The remarkably close average scores indicate near-simultaneous pain points. Creative enterprises are not losing at one point — they are leaking across the entire production chain.

Rank		Avg Score
1	Budget overruns from unexpected on-site costs	2.48
2	Equipment breakdowns or supply chain delays	2.55
3	Opaque payment systems or delayed royalties	2.67
4	Lack of follow-up after production (e.g. promotion)	2.85
5	Mismatches between skills and project needs	3.26



"A more transparent payment tracking system with regular follow-ups would ensure royalties are processed on time."



"Early and easy payments from clients for jobs already done would resolve most of my daily stress."

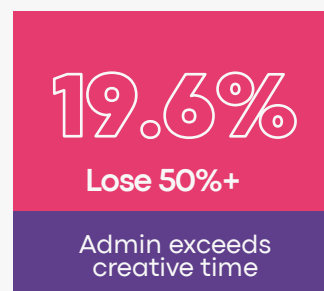
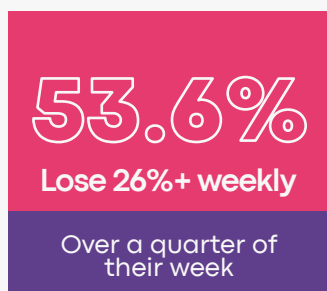
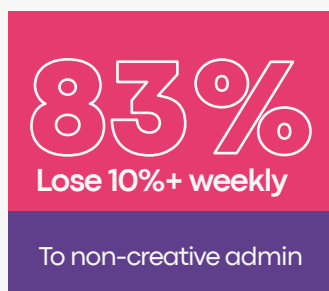
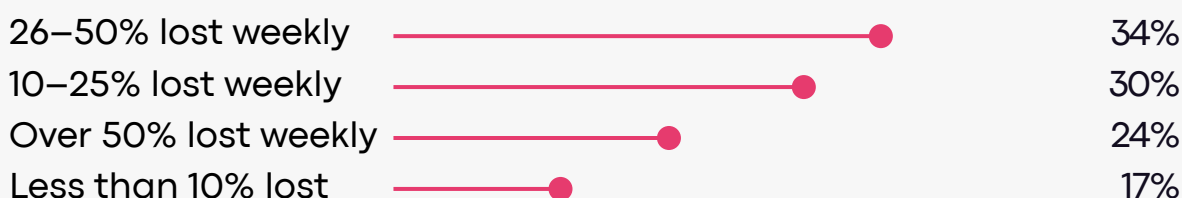


"Clearer budget templates and payment schedules upfront would avoid scope creep and delayed compensation"

Section 3

The Administration Tax - Productive Time Lost

How much weekly productive time is consumed by non-creative tasks: logistics, sourcing, chasing payments?



More than one in five creative professionals spends more time on administration than on creative output. This reflects the absence of reliable financial infrastructure and legal frameworks that mature markets take for granted.

If Nigeria's creative sector reclaimed just half the time lost to administration, productive output would double — without a single new hire or fund.

“Having someone else handle admin and communication tasks so I can focus on creative work.”

“Money — most of the problems I face can be resolved with extra liquidity.”

Section 4

The Structure Gap - What Holds The Sector Back

Respondents ranked six structural gaps — the systemic conditions that determine whether a creative professional can build, sustain, and scale a viable enterprise.

Rank		Avg Score
1	Access to affordable funding or micro-grants	2.49
2	Reliable networks for distribution or exposure	2.78
3	Skills training for operational roles	3.02
4	Basic infrastructure like studios or training spaces	3.14
5	Cross-sector teamwork opportunities	3.43
6	Tools for IP tracking or anti-piracy	3.59

Funding and distribution dominate. Nigerian creative professionals are not primarily asking for infrastructure to make things — they are asking for capital to start and routes to reach markets. The product exists. The pipeline does not.



“Local tools and platforms that can scale my work internationally without spending excess foreign currency.”



“Funding will unlock access to other tools and human resources that would allow me focus on the bigger picture.”

Section 5

If You Had 1 Billion - Allocation Priorities

If n1 billion were available to fix daily issues in Nigeria's creative economy, what would respondents fund first?

Rank		Avg Score
1	Hands-on talent training workshops	2.59
2	Community funding pools for equipment	2.61
3	Shared production spaces or hubs	2.85
4	Local distribution networks	3.04
5	Simple IP protection apps	3.52
6	Data tools for personal analytics	—

Training and community funding top the list — ahead of infrastructure and distribution. Respondents want to be skilled and funded first. This is a sector that knows its own needs with precision.



"Access to resourceful support programmes with workshops available in clusters and zones across Nigeria"



"A shared equipment pool in my area would eliminate my biggest recurring expense."





Section 6

AI Integration- The New Access Divide

What is the biggest practical challenge in integrating AI tools? The results expose an emerging frontier of inequality — where access to AI risks becoming yet another marker of who can compete.

Respondents by Creative Sector



Cost is the primary barrier (35.8%), ahead of training (29.7%), legal uncertainty (17.8%), and connectivity (16.7%). Financial access precedes every other concern — this mirrors the survey's entire structural profile

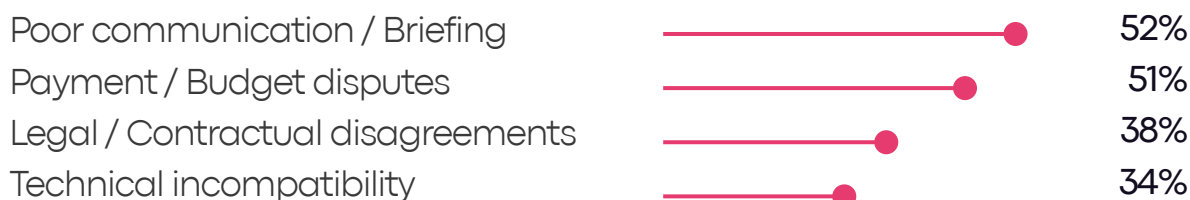
The AI divide is not primarily a skills divide. It is a cost divide — and cost maps directly onto geography and class.

Section 7

The Collaboration Problem — Friction Between Creatives

Where does friction arise most during creative collaborations? Respondents could select multiple friction points. The data exposes a trust and communication deficit running across the entire sector.

Respondents by Creative Sector



The near-identical scores for communication failure (52.0%) and payment disputes (51.5%) tell a single story: the sector lacks the operational infrastructure professional industries take for granted — clear briefs, enforceable contracts, reliable payment timelines



“Clearer briefs and better explanations from clients on their specific needs would stop most rework.”



“Legal contract templates would save hours I currently spend negotiating basic terms.”

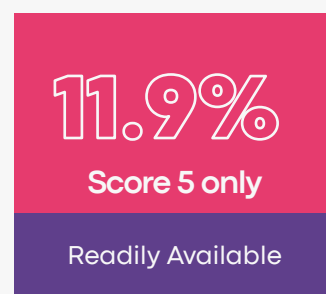
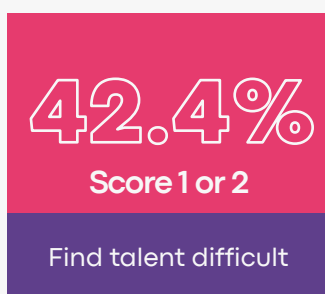
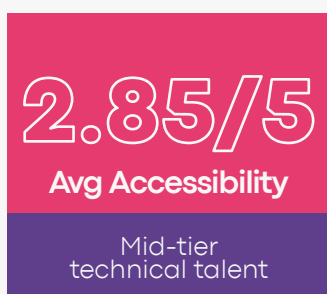
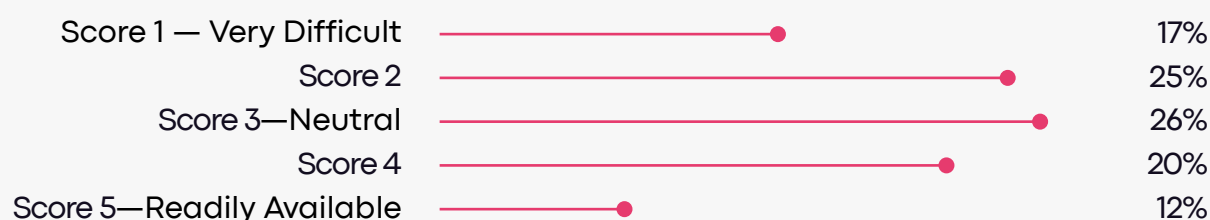


“Fair and fast payment culture from clients — many want to pay only after a project is completed, and this

Section 8

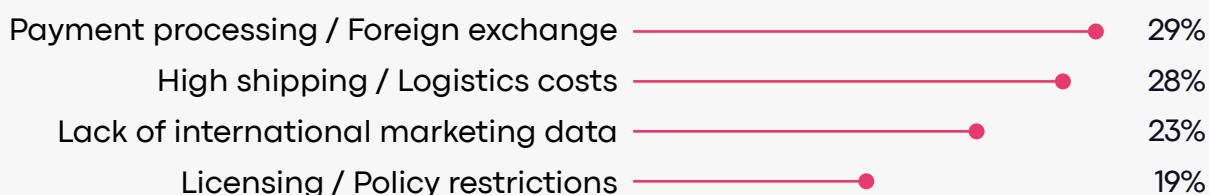
Talent Availability & Export Barrier

Middle-Tier Talent Accessibility (1 = Very Difficult, 5 = Readily Available)



The 2.84/5 average confirms a persistent mid-tier talent shortage. The skills exist in Nigeria — but there is no organised marketplace, training pipeline, or professional certification system to surface and connect them.

Biggest Export Hurdle



Payment infrastructure leads (29.2%), narrowly ahead of logistics (28.4%). Together they capture 57.6% — more than half of Nigeria's creative exporters are blocked not by quality but by the plumbing of international commerce.

Nigeria's creative exports are not blocked by a quality gap. They are blocked by a payment gap.



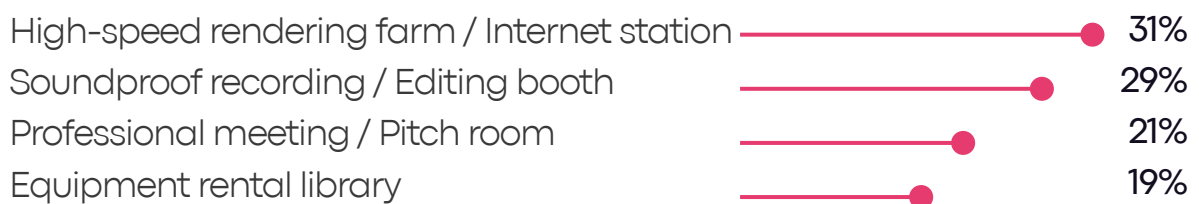
"Being able to receive foreign payments easily would immediately open new markets for my work."

Section 9

Infrastructure Demand — The Creative Hub Question

Which facility would respondents use most if a Creative Hub were built in their neighbourhood?

Respondents by Creative Sector



Digital infrastructure leads (31.3%), followed by recording and editing (28.6%). Nearly 60% prioritise connectivity and technical access. The pitch room (21.0%) underlines the lack of formal business environments. Equipment rental (19.1%) confirms the capital access challenge.



“A one-stop infrastructure system that can provide all that is needed for success.”



“A reliable high-speed internet connection and access to powerful computing tools that remove technical delays.”

Section 10

Voices — What Would Double Your Output?

375 respondents answered: "What is the single biggest win that would double your creative output this year?" All quotes are drawn exclusively from the first 150 survey respondents, organised by theme.

Theme 1 — Capital & Funding

- ▶ "A grant or an Angel investor that would allow me hire the right hands, subscribe for the best tools, and distribute effectively."
- ▶ "Funding will unlock access to other tools and human resources that would allow me focus on the bigger picture."
- ▶ "Reliable funding for film production, supported by uninterrupted power supply and high-speed internet, would dramatically increase my creative output."

Theme 2 — Stable Infrastructure

- ▶ "A reliable high-speed internet connection and access to powerful computing tools that remove technical delays."
- ▶ "Stable electricity supply and better planning — that is the single most urgent fix."

Theme 3 — Systems & Professional Structures

- ▶ “Fair and fast payment culture from clients — many want to pay only after a project is completed, and this disrupts workflow.”
- ▶ “Legal contract templates would save hours I currently spend negotiating basic terms.”
- ▶ “Building a consistent system that dedicates protected, distraction-free time each day solely to creating.”

Theme 4 — Markets, Community & Networks

- ▶ “A single, functional creative industry database that would allow me network for clients, collaborators, and potential employers.”
- ▶ “Access to distribution and monetisation pathways for content is the single most urgent systemic gap.”
- ▶ “A community of like minds to work on projects together — without isolation, output doubles.”
- ▶ “Being able to receive foreign payments easily would immediately open new markets for my work.”



Key Findings at a Glance

Power & Connectivity	The #1 daily obstacle — ahead of funding, IP theft, and regulation. Every other intervention is constrained until electricity and broadband are addressed.
The Administration Tax	83% lose 10%+ of their week to non-creative tasks. 19.6% lose more than half their week entirely to administration.
Funding First	Access to affordable funding is the top structural gap. Distribution and training follow. IP tools rank last — capital comes before everything else.
Production Losses	Projects bleed at multiple points: budget surprises, equipment failures, missing post-production follow-up, and delayed royalties.
Collaboration Friction	52% cite briefing failure; 51% cite payment disputes. The creative sector has a systemic trust deficit within its own ranks.
The Export Payment Wall	Payment processing and FX barriers are the #1 export hurdle. Nigeria cannot monetise its cultural exports because of financial plumbing — not quality.
The AI Cost Divide	35.8% cannot afford AI subscription costs. The AI divide is a cost divide that maps directly onto existing inequality.
Mid-Tier Talent Gap	Average accessibility score of 2.84/5 for editors, engineers, and technicians. The skills exist; the marketplace to find them does not

Recommendations for Stakeholders

Five action-ready recommendations for government, the private sector, and civil society — derived directly from this data.



Treat Power and Connectivity as Creative Economy Infrastructure

Power outages ranked as the most critical daily obstacle above every other concern. Creative hubs must include power backup as non-negotiable. Advocate for priority grid access in creative districts at state government level.



Launch a Creative Economy Lending Facility

Access to affordable funding is the top structural gap. Partner with fintech companies and DFIs to pilot a creative economy lending window with simplified collateral and repayment structures calibrated to project revenue cycles.



Build a Standardised Contracts and Payments Framework

Communication failure and payment disputes each affect over 50% of collaborations. Develop and distribute a standard suite of creative industry contracts alongside a code of payment practice. NECLive is the natural convener.



Establish a National Creative Talent Registry and Mid-Tier Pipeline

Average mid-tier talent accessibility is 2.84/5. Commission a national registry of creative technical practitioners with verified credentials, anchored to a skills training programme targeting operational roles.



Create a Dedicated Financial Rail for Creative Exports

Payment processing and FX barriers are the #1 export obstacle. Engage the CBN and leading fintech partners to develop a dedicated remittance and licensing payment corridor for creative exports with favourable FX rates.

At NECLive, we believe creativity is Africa's strongest diplomatic and economic tool.

This data is the blueprint.



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