

The remit and model

Everything that Channel 4 does is governed by our public service remit, which is agreed by Parliament and enshrined in legislation. It is the template which gives us our unique and important role in British life. The remit makes up a core part of Channel 4’s DNA.

The remit, which has evolved and been refined in legislation since 1982 combines a number of elements. It requires Channel 4 to be innovative, to inspire change, to nurture talent and to offer a platform for alternative views. It also requires us to not just provide Education content for 14–19-year-olds, but to provide content with an editorial tone that is educational in programmes from other genres, including Factual.

It applies across all genres and services, Channel 4, E4, More4, Film4, 4Seven, All 4 and digital projects. Channel 4 must also meet a set of specific quantitative licence obligations, set and monitored by Ofcom, for news and current affairs, original production, regional production, subtitling and audio-description services and much else besides.

The Statement of Media Content Policy (pages 12 to 106) was introduced to enable Channel 4 to report on the fulfilment of its public service remit. The idea is to look across the full range of services Channel 4 offers and, in this report, provide a transparent and comprehensive account of our delivery of the remit.

The component parts of the remit are included against each chart and case study contained in the report as an indication of how we have delivered the remit across the year.

Some rounding differences may occur in the presentation of the metrics. A detailed breakdown of the remit, along with background to the selection of public value measures and changes to metrics, can be found in the methodology document that accompanies the report. All audited metrics in the document are identified with a remit icon, as indicated opposite.

The evolution of our remit

Since Channel 4 was launched in 1982, the remit has evolved to support both a changing society and a diversifying media landscape. Whilst our core purpose has remained the same, over the years our remit has broadened and deepened, meaning that Channel 4 now occupies a unique space within British public service broadcasting.

1982

Launch of Channel 4

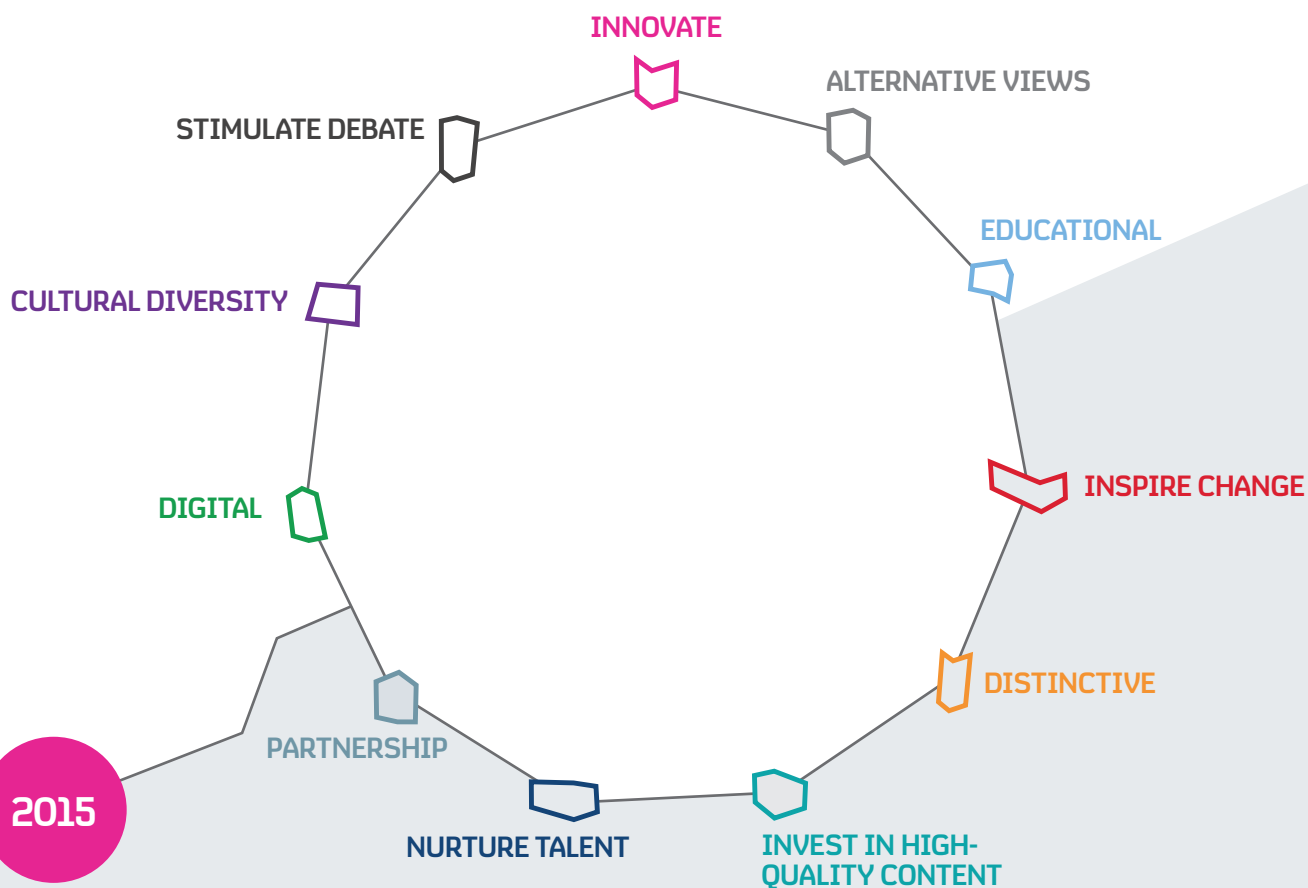
- Appeal to tastes and interests not generally catered for by ITV
- Educational
- Innovation and experiment
- Distinctive
- High general standard
- Wide range of subject matter

2003

Communications Act

S.265 (3) of the Communications Act 2003 sets out Channel 4’s public service remit as follows:

- High-quality and diverse programming
- Innovation, experimentation and creativity in the form and content of programmes
- Distinctive character
- Appeals to tastes of a culturally diverse society
- Make programmes of an educational nature and schools programming/provide educational content for teens



Digital Economy Act

- High-quality and diverse programming
- Innovation, experimentation and creativity in the form and content of programmes
- Distinctive character
- Appeal to the tastes and interests of a culturally diverse society
- Make programmes of an educational nature and schools programming/provide educational content for teens

In addition, the DEA 2010 introduced new media content duties as part of Channel 4's primary functions:

- Support the development of people with creative talent, in particular people in the film industry and at the start of their careers
- Support and stimulate well-informed debate
- Promote alternative views and new perspectives
- Provide access to material that inspires people to make changes in their lives
- Work with cultural organisations
- Make a broad range of relevant media content of high quality via different types of communications networks
- Appeal to the tastes and interests of older children and young adults
- Make relevant news content
- Make relevant current affairs content
- Make, distribute and broadcast high-quality film

Channel 4 is a creative greenhouse

Our overall role is to champion innovation in TV, film and digital – nurturing and growing new ideas, formats, views and voices, faces, talent, audiences, and production companies.

Creative greenhouse

We're a greenhouse for new creative and digital ideas of significant economic importance.

Our overall contribution to the UK's creative economy is notable given our relative size in the marketplace.

We grow small businesses across the whole of the UK and our formats are successful around the world.

We have a track record of commissioning more programme ideas than any other public service broadcaster ('PSB') and spend more with independent producers than any other channel.

PSB challenger brand

We're a challenger brand in broadcasting, encouraging high standards across the industry.

Our investment in UK-originated content is rising, set against declining investments in PSB elsewhere.

Our existence is important in providing plurality in genres that deliver public good, where it is important that audiences have a choice of distinctive provision, such as News and Current Affairs.

We're at the forefront of innovation and harnessing new technologies and in the premier league of international creativity. Being ahead of the market again and again not only has kept viewing share stable but also keeps others on their toes.

Catalyst for social change

We inspire citizenship, especially among hard-to-reach audiences.

We have a greater impact than any other UK broadcaster in making audiences think, giving diverse viewpoints and inspiring change in people's lives.

We have a stronger relationship with young people than any other PSB in the world.

And we're a world leader in bringing diversity into the mainstream.

We fulfil the government's innovation strategy in broadcasting

The government's innovation strategy focuses on support for small businesses to bring ideas to market, increase knowledge sharing and grow global businesses.

Our model

The UK broadcasting ecology is the result of enlightened intervention by politicians and regulators. It's a carefully balanced mix of different organisations, with different missions, business models and governance structures that has made UK broadcasting a worldwide success.

Within this ecology, Channel 4 is a government-owned, self-sustaining social enterprise, raising commercial revenues from the market and reinvesting surpluses back into British content from UK independent producers.

We do this through cross-funding commercially challenging genres such as News and Current Affairs, and Education with revenues from commercially profitable programming, like Factual Entertainment.

£ = CROSS-FUNDING

