



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S

CREATIVE Industry



REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
MINISTRY OF TRADE
AND INDUSTRY

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BACKGROUND

In this new global economy based on innovation, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has acknowledged that creativity now drives global competitiveness. This appears to be more evident as the Creative Industry is increasingly becoming a significant part of the economy of Trinidad and Tobago. In an effort to leverage this growing trend the National Policy Framework in respect of attaining sustainable growth and diversification of the economy has identified the Creative Industry as one of the areas targeted for development.

The Government's interest in the Creative Industry derives from the obvious need for the country to diversify its economy away from an over-dependence on revenues generated from the petrochemical sector. The volatility of the commodity and services sectors in light of the recent global recession has also served to underscore the urgency diversification must take place. The Creative Industry presents itself as one of the potential areas to hinge future efforts of sustainable development.

The Creative Industry cluster comprises the following eight (8) subsectors/niche areas:



MUSIC



FILM



FASHION



**DANCE & THEATRE
INCLUDING VISUAL AND
PERFORMING ARTS**



BROADCASTING



**LITERATURE AND
PUBLISHING**



HERITAGE



**FESTIVALS
INCLUDING CARNIVAL**





The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) has been charged with the development of the Film, Fashion and Music subsectors in an effort to increase their financial contribution to the economy.

FASHION INDUSTRY

The Fashion Industry is grouped into four (4) broad areas that are currently active and form the core of the local industry.

1. **Fashion Apparel** - refers to garments worn with fashion and style in mind. It speaks more to the design and beauty.
2. **Functional Apparel** - refers to garments designed for a specific function e.g. uniforms, safety clothing etc.
3. **Accessories** - refers to items that can be used to accentuate the fashion garment. It includes items such as jewellery, hats, purses/bags, shoes, scarves etc.
4. **Support** - organizations within the Supply Segments of the fashion value chain (provision of raw materials, textiles, equipment etc.) and Distribution (Branding, Marketing, Model Management, Merchandising etc.)

In 2014 the local Fashion Industry consisted of 210 companies which employed over 1465 persons and generated in excess of TT\$266,350,000.



MUSIC INDUSTRY

The Music Industry of Trinidad and Tobago is ever-evolving and it is now ready for purposeful and sustainable plugs in the right direction. While there is still a mindset that local music consists only native genres (calypso, soca, rapso, chutney, pan music and the like), there is now a new, persistent paradigm that local music can be a song of any genre, once it is birthed in the heart and mind of a Trinbagonian. As such, the emergence of strong footholds in local pop, jazz, hip hop, RnB and other globally trending genres has revolutionized the horizon Trinidad and Tobago's Music Industry now looks toward.

Following in the footsteps of such greats as the Mighty Sparrow, Kitchener and Calypso Rose, some artistes such as Machel Montano, Kes the Band, Bunji Garlin, Positive, Jointpop, Orange Sky and other Trinidadian artistes are making significant inroads to achieving international recognition and success for their respective genres. Trinidadians such as Nicki Minaj and Trinidad James are also being featured in the international forum and receiving media coverage which all helps to promote the country's brand of Music.

According to one study undertaken by the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Investment and Communications in 2004, the Music Industry which has been classified as a subsector of the Creative Industry is estimated to generate TT\$169,000,000.00 annually and employs some 5,600 persons.



FILM INDUSTRY

Products of the local film sector includes feature films, documentaries, music videos, television dramas and sit-coms, entertainment programs, commercials, corporate productions and educational programs. As of November 2014, Trinidad and Tobago film industry consisted of: forty-five production companies, eight (8) post production houses and three (3) distribution companies; and seven (7) television stations. During the period 2007-2016, Trinidad and Tobago earned revenues of approximately \$37,000,000 from eleven (11) film crews shooting on location.

In an effort to increase the development of local film content and the production of films on location in Trinidad and Tobago, the Government has implemented a range of financial incentives over the past decade. One such incentive is the Production Expenditure Rebate Programme. The programme offers a cash incentive to national and international producers for expenditure incurred while filming in Trinidad and Tobago. The rebate includes payments on the rental of local equipment and supplies, accommodation and transportation services, wardrobe, props and set dressing services, location fees, local cast and crew hire, craft services and local travel. These incentives have achieved a limited amount of success as a result of issues related to the administration of these measures. There is therefore significant room for improvement.

The MTI has therefore adopted a two pronged approach to develop the local Creative Industry. Firstly, it has mandated the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company (CreativeTT) to stimulate and facilitate the business and export development of the Film, Fashion and Music Industries in Trinidad and Tobago to generate national wealth.



Secondly the MTI is actively strengthening the legislative and regulatory framework through the development of policies geared toward the creation of an enabling environment where the Creative Industry can thrive.

THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CREATIVE INDUSTRIES COMPANY LIMITED (CreativeTT)

The Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT) is a state enterprise under the Ministry of Trade and Industry and is responsible for stimulating and facilitating the business and export development of the Film, Fashion and Music Industries in Trinidad and Tobago to generate national wealth.

CreativeTT supports the development of the industries through its subsidiary companies, MusicTT, FilmTT and FashionTT.

THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FASHION COMPANY LIMITED (FashionTT)

FashionTT is charged with aggressively driving the development and commercialization of the local Fashion Industry on a local, regional and international level. This is in keeping with Trinidad and Tobago's thrust in respect of attaining sustainable growth and diversification of the economy.

FashionTT is working toward strategically branding the developments of the local industry, which will increase its local, regional and international visibility and consumption.



Citizens of Trinidad and Tobago can benefit from the services of FashionTT through programmes that encourage:

- Business related capacity development
- Fashion business export facilitation
- Promotion of Trinidad and Tobago's fashion, international and regionally

THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO MUSIC COMPANY LIMITED (MusicTT)

MusicTT exists to strengthen the capacity of the local music industry in T&T as well as to explore avenues for business and trade by a commercially-viable music subsector.

As such, MusicTT focuses generally on accomplishing the following within the local music industry:

- Assisting with understanding and developing the business and finance of music;
- Providing industry-wide collective direction and support;
- Supporting the development of selected music subsectors to international standards;
- Promoting the market and championing various music art forms to the global stage;
- Performing activities to ensure the sustainability of Trinidad and Tobago musical art form.



THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FILM COMPANY LIMITED (FilmTT)

FilmTT supports both its core and peripheral stakeholders by engaging in the following:

- Functioning as the Film Commission of Trinidad & Tobago;
- Administering the Trinidad and Tobago production incentive rebate (Up to 35% rebate for filming on location in Trinidad and Tobago);
- Administering equity and grant funds to support the development, production and distribution of indigenous film and television properties;
- Supporting the development of creative capacity in the sector by providing development opportunities to all stakeholders via workshops, bursaries and competitive learning opportunities.

FilmTT also provides support to the T&T film festival community as well as engages in outreach activities with stakeholder organizations, vendors, institutional financiers and government agencies and international distributors.

CREATION OF AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The MTI acknowledges that the rapid changes taking place in the global energy markets mandates that a more strategic approach is adopted if we are to depend on the Creative Industry as a major source of revenue in the near future.

The MTI is therefore undertaking strategic planning and fore sighting initiatives which will determine the economic potential of the Film, Fashion and Music subsectors as well as identify the gaps that prevent these subsectors from realizing this potential. Once these gaps have been identified the MTI will be outfitted with the intelligence required to make informed national policy decisions regarding the Creative Industry.

INCENTIVES

Quite a number of countries have applied various tools and incentives to foster growth and development in their Creative Industries. Some of the incentives offered by the Government geared toward the development of the Creative Industry include:

Production Expenditure Rebate Programme

The Production Expenditure Rebate Programme which was first introduced in 2006 provides a cash rebate to local and foreign film producers for production expenditure incurred whilst filming in Trinidad and Tobago. This programme was designed to make filming on location in Trinidad and Tobago more attractive and to encourage persons to invest in film making. The rebate includes refunds for local services related to the rental of local equipment, accommodation, transportation, police, fire and ambulance services, local travel, location fees and local cast and crew.

The Production Expenditure Rebate Programme currently offers a tiered system of 12.5% to 35% rebate on an initial expenditure from TT\$630,000.00 up to a maximum of TT\$51,200,000.00 for foreign production companies filming on location in Trinidad and Tobago. However, for local film producers the programme offers a 35% rebate for expenditure from TT\$100,000.00 up to a maximum of TT\$51,200,000.00. An additional rebate of 20% is granted on the labour cost incurred in the hiring of local labour (i.e. citizens of Trinidad and Tobago) for a film production.

Import Duty Concessions for the Importation of equipment for Motion Picture Production

Import duty concessions are granted on machinery, equipment and materials under the Third Schedule of the Customs Act Section 1, Item 73, which provides for "machinery, equipment and materials for the production of motion pictures" in Trinidad and Tobago.

Remission of VAT and Duty on the temporary importation of film production equipment

Film producers who import film equipment temporarily into Trinidad and Tobago for production purposes are required to post a Customs Bond which is refunded when the equipment leaves the country.



Provision exists for the remission of Customs Duty under Section 9(1) of the Customs Act, Chapter 78:01 which states that 'the President may, upon application by the importer or exporter remit or refund in whole or in part any Customs Duty whenever he shall deem it expedient to do so'.

Under Section 44(b) of the Value Added Tax Act 1989, goods that are imported for temporary use shall not be charged Value Added Tax on entry, except where such goods cannot reasonably be exported within three months or, that the goods are liable to Customs Duty.

Section 55(2) of the Value Added Tax Act states, inter alia, that Section 124 of the Income Tax Act shall apply to the administration of this Act and the collection and recovery of any amount payable, as if that amount were payable under that Act. Section 124 of the Income Tax Act states that the President may remit or refund in whole or in part the tax payable or paid as the case may be by any person if he is satisfied that it would be just and equitable to do so.

Cultural Tax Allowance

A company that sponsors audio, visual or video productions for the purposes of local education or local entertainment or reflecting local culture for radio or television, are allowed as a deduction, in ascertaining the chargeable profits of the company for that year of income, an allowance of 150% of the actual expenditure incurred in respect of such productions up to a maximum of three million dollars.



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WEB PRESENCE**CreativeTT:**

Blog - <http://creative.co.tt/wordpress/>
Social Media – Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube
and Twitter

MusicTT:

Social Media – Facebook, LinkedIn,
YouTube, Instagram and Twitter

FilmTT:

Social Media – Facebook, LinkedIn and
YouTube

FashionTT:

Social Media – Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube
and Instagram

All companies, except FilmTT, were established in 2013 but began operations in 2014. FilmTT, formerly TTFC, was established in 2006.

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