# Campaigners vow to fight on after government rejects AI copyright safeguards



Campaigners for the creative industries are gearing up for a renewed battle after the government made a contentious decision to reject legislative amendments aimed at safeguarding artists' rights in the face of increasing artificial intelligence (AI) utilisation. The rejection unfolded during a vote concerning the Data (Use and Access) Bill, where MPs opted against a Lords amendment designed to empower creators, enabling them to prevent large technology firms from leveraging their copyrighted works in AI training processes.

As the matter proceeds back to the House of Lords next week—a legislative process colloquially referred to as "ping-pong"—advocates for the amendment have vowed to persist in their efforts. Baroness Kidron, a crossbench peer and prominent advocate for the creative sector, articulated the depth of this issue when she stated, “I will be returning with a new amendment. We will not take this lying down.” She condemned the government's actions as detrimental to an industry that constitutes a vital component of the UK economy and national identity. Pointing to pressing economic challenges, including youth unemployment and declining productivity, Baroness Kidron accused the government of endorsing a framework that favours a limited number of US tech corporations at the expense of local creators.

Her sentiments were echoed within the Commons, where Sir Chris Bryant vocalised fears among artists who perceive the government's decision as an existential threat to their livelihoods. “Many people in the arts feel this is an apocalyptic moment,” he remarked, highlighting how dramatic shifts in legislation could jeopardise careers and diminish the industry’s prospects.

The broader context reveals a growing apprehension among creative professionals regarding AI’s expansive reach. Last week, a formidable coalition of nearly 400 prominent figures from the UK’s artistic community, including iconic names such as Sir Paul McCartney and Dua Lipa, appealed to Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer for a reconsideration of Labour’s stance on copyright measures. Their letter emphatically stated, “Our work is not yours to give away,” encapsulating a broad consensus of concern that artists' intellectual property rights are being sacrificed in the race to harness AI technologies.

Concurrently, four of the UK's leading publishing trade associations have publicly denounced the "unfettered, opaque development" of AI tools that utilise copyrighted materials without appropriate consent. They underscored the economic significance of the creative sector, urging the government to commit to protecting these intellectual property rights as AI continues to evolve. The cultural implications are significant; the creative industries generate approximately £126 billion annually and employ around 2.4 million people, making the stakes in this legislative battle exceedingly high.

In light of these developments, the calls for enhanced transparency and adherence to ethical practices within AI are growing louder. Labour backbencher Polly Billington emphasised the urgency for legislative frameworks that enforce accountability in the use of creative works. She urged the government to demonstrate commitment toward transparent policies in AI development, with the need for definitive public commitments becoming increasingly apparent.

Despite the mounting pressure, the government’s technology minister acknowledged the concerns but did not outline immediate actionable strategies during the vote. The reluctance to integrate robust protections for creative works raises questions about regulatory oversight in the rapidly evolving AI landscape. Owen Meredith, the chief executive of the News Media Association, described the government’s stance as disappointing, reflecting a broader sentiment that digital transformation must not come at the expense of creativity and innovation.

As this developing saga continues to unfold, it is clear that the battle for cultural integrity and the safeguarding of artists’ rights against the encroachment of AI is poised to remain a contentious issue on the political agenda, attracting significant attention from both creators and policymakers alike.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14713393/Uproar-Labour-tries-scupper-AI-copyright-law.html)
2. Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14713393/Uproar-Labour-tries-scupper-AI-copyright-law.html)
3. Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14713393/Uproar-Labour-tries-scupper-AI-copyright-law.html)
4. Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14713393/Uproar-Labour-tries-scupper-AI-copyright-law.html)
5. Paragraph 5: [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/oct/31/publishing-associations-urge-uk-government-to-protect-copyrighted-works-from-ai)
6. Paragraph 6: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14713393/Uproar-Labour-tries-scupper-AI-copyright-law.html), [[3]](https://www.reuters.com/technology/artificial-intelligence/dont-let-ai-rip-off-artists-beatles-star-mccartney-warns-uk-government-2025-01-26/)
7. Paragraph 7: [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/dc1225e1-22ce-4d6f-a343-a15bf360bf3c)
8. Paragraph 8: [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/8c6bb732-2780-4b24-b9ff-30c2798ef66d)
9. Paragraph 9: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14713393/Uproar-Labour-tries-scupper-AI-copyright-law.html), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/aug/31/uk-publishers-association-ai-models-sunak)
10. Paragraph 10: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14713393/Uproar-Labour-tries-scupper-AI-copyright-law.html), [[7]](https://www.mishcon.com/news/uk-government-commits-to-developing-ai-or-copyright-code-of-practice)

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## Bibliography

* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14713393/Uproar-Labour-tries-scupper-AI-copyright-law.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/oct/31/publishing-associations-urge-uk-government-to-protect-copyrighted-works-from-ai> - In October 2023, four leading UK publishing trade associations urged the government to protect authors' and content creators' intellectual property rights from AI exploitation. They criticized the 'unfettered, opaque development' of AI tools using copyrighted works without consent, emphasizing the need for transparency and fair compensation. The associations called for a commitment to safeguard human creativity and intellectual property as AI technology evolves, highlighting the significant economic contribution of the creative industries to the UK economy.
* <https://www.reuters.com/technology/artificial-intelligence/dont-let-ai-rip-off-artists-beatles-star-mccartney-warns-uk-government-2025-01-26/> - In January 2025, Paul McCartney expressed concerns over potential changes to UK copyright laws that could allow AI companies to use copyrighted materials without compensating creators. He warned that such changes might lead to artists losing control over their work and harm the UK's creative industries. The UK government was consulting on new copyright laws intended to balance creators' rights with AI development, but McCartney emphasized the importance of protecting artists' rights to prevent unfair profit by tech companies.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/dc1225e1-22ce-4d6f-a343-a15bf360bf3c> - Investors are increasingly funding start-ups that enable copyright holders in the creative industries to license content for use in artificial intelligence (AI) training. Companies like Pip Labs, Vermillio, and Created by Humans have raised a combined $215 million since 2022 to develop platforms facilitating legal and paid content sharing. These platforms appeal to AI firms seeking high-quality, legally compliant training data to avoid lawsuits and regulatory penalties. Vermillio projects the AI licensing market will grow from $10 billion in 2025 to $67.5 billion by 2030.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/8c6bb732-2780-4b24-b9ff-30c2798ef66d> - A group of cross-party MPs in the UK has expressed concerns over the lack of robust regulations for artificial intelligence (AI) platforms in the creative industries, stating it benefits large tech companies at the expense of creators. A report published by the House of Commons culture, media, and sport committee highlighted the impact of digital distribution and AI on declining royalties for artists. The committee chair, Dame Caroline Dinenage, emphasized the need for updated copyright and intellectual property regulations to address these issues.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/aug/31/uk-publishers-association-ai-models-sunak> - In August 2023, UK publishers urged Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to protect authors' and content creators' intellectual property rights as part of a summit on artificial intelligence. The Publishers Association called for clear commitments to safeguard human creativity and intellectual property as AI systems absorb content produced by the UK's creative industries. This intervention came amid legal challenges against AI companies like OpenAI, which were accused of using authors' work to train AI systems without proper licensing.
* <https://www.mishcon.com/news/uk-government-commits-to-developing-ai-or-copyright-code-of-practice> - In January 2024, the UK government committed to developing a code of practice to balance AI development with the protection of the creative industries. The government's response to the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee's report on AI and the creative industries confirmed that it would not proceed with a broad exception for text and data mining of copyright works. Instead, it emphasized the need for a collaborative approach to enable the AI and creative sectors to grow in partnership.