

**Self-Made Sector:
Working in the creative industries**

A report by Partnership for Young London and
Roundhouse. July 2019

**Partnership
for Young
London**



Self-Made Sector

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Young Londoners should not have to work this hard to do what they love

Matthew Walsham
Policy and Campaign Lead
Partnership for Young London

Young Londoners have some of the widest access to culture than ever before; with instant music streaming, on-demand TV and film, and an internet library of self-referential memes at their fingertips. Yet opportunity is not being given to all in London's second biggest economic sector, and they're fully aware of it.

This research wanted to look at what the reality was for those trying to get opportunity in the creative industries. We spoke to young people from a range of ages, backgrounds, and at different stages of their creative career journey, with questions and topics being guided by their lived experience of trying to get into the industry.

We found a striking contradiction with those we spoke to, between low expectations and pessimism about the industry, and optimism and defiance that drove them forward towards it. Young Londoners are not only aware of the challenges they face, but sadly now expect them as just 'the way it is' in the creative industries.

It was expected that they would have to work for free for a long time, to build their experience or their portfolio. It was expected that they would be working freelance, and face irregular and insecure employment. It was expected that they would face racial discrimination and must change the way they spoke.

Yet they persisted and were resilient in the face of numerous challenges and the lack of support usually provided by teachers or parents. It was inspiring to listen to so many passionate young Londoners who, despite knowing the risks involved, pursue a career that they are passionate about and have talent for.

Young Londoners should not have to work this hard to do what they love; chasing invoices and never expecting a contract, educating themselves as schools cut creative subjects, using their savings to work for free, changing the way they speak to fit in, and fighting negativity of teachers, parents, and friends.

We need change

Marcus Davey CBE
Chief Executive and Artistic Director
Roundhouse

We live in a time when the creative industries are flourishing more than ever. Yet young people are largely unaware of the potential opportunities within our industry, or don't feel welcome. This report highlights the many challenges young people face along this journey – from education, to family, and then in the industry.

The Roundhouse works with 6,000 young people each year, through projects and opportunities in music, media and performing arts – 53% of young people on our programmes come from the areas ranked the most deprived in the UK, and 38% are BAME.

Statistics show that arts and creative subjects are rapidly declining in schools and our report shows young people are being discouraged from following a creative career path. Yet we see many young people persevere, learn new creative skills and hone their craft and go on to build brilliant careers in the industry. But those are individual stories and we need a bigger, nationwide change, so that this is a realistic outcome for many young people.

Through these recommendations, we believe all young people will have the opportunity to realise their potential and develop a career in the creative industries. Or they will use their creativity to go on to build a more positive future for themselves and for society.

Trying to breakthrough the barriers to working in the creative industries is exhausting and frightening

Temidayo Oyekan

I really related to the participants' discussion on having to breakthrough social barriers in an industry where social capital is prevalent. Being from a BAME background and having to experience the anxiety of feeling the requirement to 'code-switch' and break through preconceived negative stereotypes is exhausting. It's also frightening. It creates extra barriers that we have to climb.

I, as well as many others, face the barrier of having to overcome stigma about creative industries within my family. This is because they are unable to see the



financial certainty of creative endeavours. Most parents desire a financially stable future for their children and there are some costs to navigating the creative industries. Having to pay for transport, to see shows and pay rent when most work is unpaid at internship level, are all big creative costs. I experienced the cost of the extra time spent learning where and how to access information about the creative industry.

It isn't easy accessing information about what kind of creative positions are even available in different companies. It isn't taught in school. It prevents some

people from looking at the creative industry as a viable route for their career. Some like me, chose to take opportunities when they come and live in the passion for as long as they can. Hoping that their dream gets bigger.

Recommendations

The sector	<p>The creative industries need to stop using unpaid internships.</p> <p>Some organisations in the creative industries have already taken a lead on this, but there remain many unpaid opportunities. To ensure that opportunities in the sector are open and available to all people, regardless of background, we need to stop using unpaid internships.</p> <p>The industry needs to overhaul its recruitment practices for entry level roles.</p> <p>There is an over-representation of people with a degree in the industry – closing off opportunities to people who cannot afford, or don't want to go to university – industry should stop requiring degrees for entry-level roles where a degree isn't necessary. Recruitment practices need to be addressed so young people who have chosen other education and training routes are still able to apply for entry-level roles.</p>
Regional Government	<p>We need a new creative careers advice and guidance strategy.</p> <p>London needs a new careers advice and guidance strategy for young people who want to work in the creative industries. It is important that the sector is involved in helping design this, and also providing opportunities for it. Furthermore, as outlined in the Bazalgette review, a new 'attraction strategy' will help strengthen the talent pipeline, and attract more young people from diverse backgrounds. The strategy needs to engage with parents, guardians, carers and schools as key influencers in children's life choices.</p>
Central Government	<p>Support young creative talent through grants.</p> <p>Young people need to be better supported to work and learn in the creative industries – particularly those not entering from Higher Education. There should be access to the same system of student loans, and maintenance grants, for apprenticeships or those starting their own business without going through university. This would enable young people to develop their business with financial backing from the government.</p> <p>Government should add creative subjects to the EBacc.</p> <p>Following a decline in creative subjects being taken at school, and a recommendation from the DCMS Select Committee, the Government should add creative subjects to the EBacc – otherwise arts education will continue to become the preserve of those who can afford it.</p>

What are the creative industries?

The Creative Industries were defined in the Government's 2001 Creative Industries Mapping Document as: "those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property."

The DCMS definition includes the following sub-sectors: advertising and marketing, architecture, crafts, design and designer fashion, film, TV, video, radio and photography, IT, software and computer services, publishing, museums, galleries and libraries, and music, performing and visual arts.

The creative industries in the UK

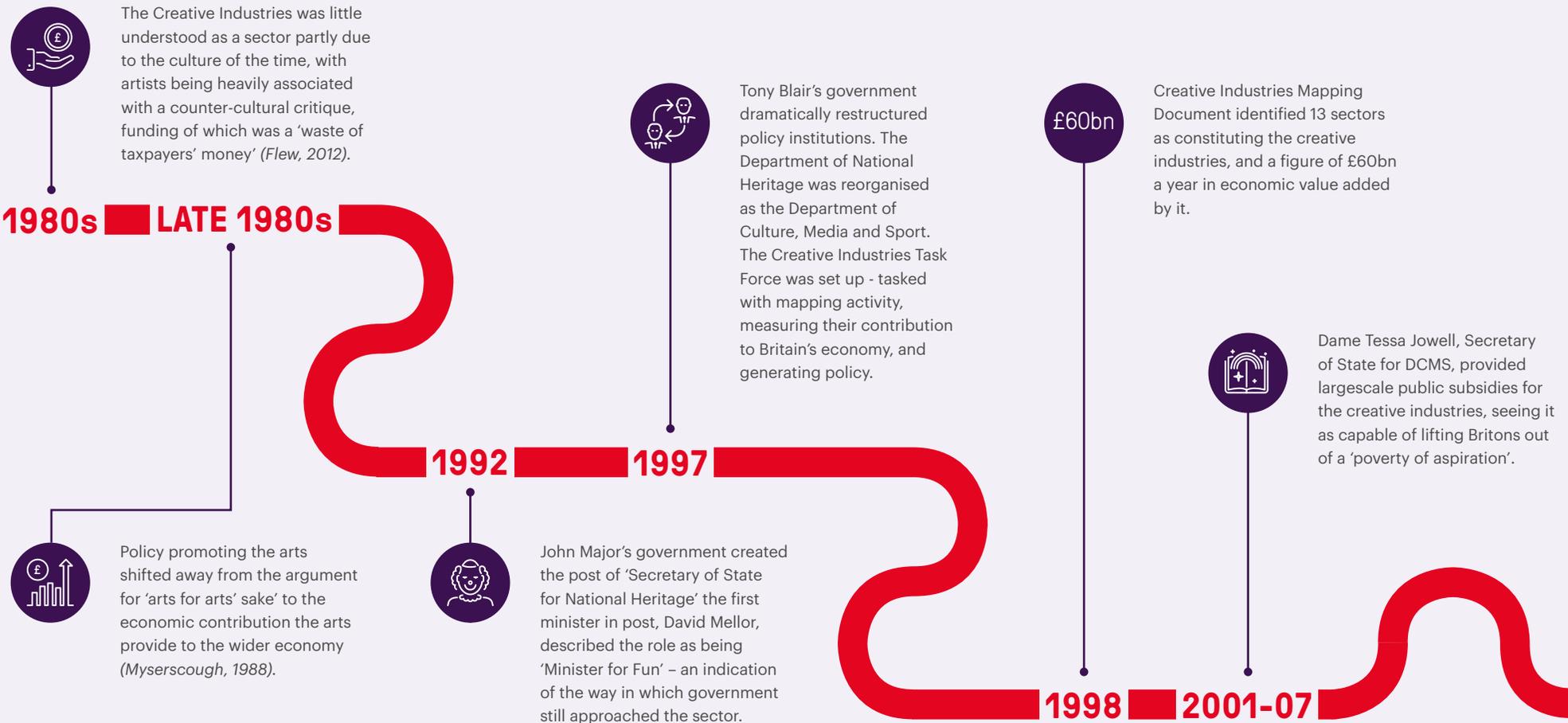
- The creative industries made up 6% of all jobs in the UK in 2017, employing just over 2m people, up from 5.2% in 2011.
- The number of jobs in the creative industries has increased by nearly 30% since 2011, faster than the UK's average rate of growth.
- The creative industries are made up of 65.5% employed, and 34.5% self-employment jobs. This is a higher proportion of self-employment than the DCMS sector average (22.8%) and the UK average (16.3%).
- The creative industries workforce is made of 87.6% UK nationals, 6.7% EU nationals, and 5.7% non-EU citizens. The proportion of total UK jobs done by non-EU citizens is 3.8%.
- The creative industries accounted for 9.4% of total UK exports, contributing a record £91.8bn to the UK economy in 2016.
- The contribution of the UK creative industries rose by 7.6% in 2016, more than twice the average growth rate in the UK economy of 3.5%.

The creative industries in London

- There were 622,600 jobs in London's creative industries in 2016, equivalent to 11.9% of total jobs in the capital (compared to 4.9% in the rest of the UK).
- Looking at the wider creative economy, there were approximately 882,900 jobs in the capital in 2016, up by almost a quarter (24.2%) since 2012.
- Just over 1 in 4 (27.8%) of jobs across the creative economy are held by self-employed workers, compared to 16.8% of jobs in the non-creative economy.
- A relatively high share of creative economy jobs were held by workers born outside of the UK – 33.5% of jobs in London in 2016, compared to 12.8% of creative economy jobs in the rest of the UK.

*Source: The Creative Industries Council, 2016
DCMS Economic Estimates, 2017*

Policy in the creative industries: a timeline



2008



"In the coming years, the creative industries will be important not only for our national prosperity, but for Britain's ability to put culture and creativity at the centre of our national life" (Gordon Brown (DCMS, 2008a)).

£850m

£850m in tax relief to the creative industries.



Creative Britain: New Talents for the New Economy, would cement the shift to the economic potential of the creative industries, stating: 'The creative industries must move from the margins to the mainstream of economic and policy thinking, as we look to create the jobs of the future'.



The Government introduced the English Baccalaureate. A report by King's College London found that the Ebacc was responsible for narrowing the range of subjects being taught for GCSE examinations, squeezing out creative and vocational subjects.

2010



Sir Peter Bazalgette review of the creative industries, commissioned by DCMS recommended support for regional growth, investment in research and an attraction strategy to inform and excite young people about careers in the industry.

2017

£150m

The Government announced a £150 million Creative Industries sector deal for 'immersive technologies', careers programme and Cultural Development Fund for towns and cities.

2018



Methodology

Young people

The aim of our research with young people was to understand how they perceive the challenges and opportunities available to them in the creative industries.

- We conducted four focus groups and two in-depth interviews with a total of 34 young people. There was a mix of ages between groups, with the youngest being 15 and the oldest being 24.
- Discussions often devolved from the main questions into a series of presented sub-categories as raised by participants, such as the role of parents, social capital, and educational experience. Each focus group session lasted from 60-90 minutes, and participants were not provided with questions or a brief beforehand.
- We wanted a representative range of young people; as such one focus group was conducted with young people studying art, fashion and creative design, one focus group was with young people still at school but involved in a creative programme, and two focus groups were with a mix of young people with no particular interest in the creative industries.

- The sample of young people contained an over representation from BAME backgrounds, as we wanted to keep the focus on the challenges for young people from diverse backgrounds getting into the creative industries. We also conducted a focus group with disabled young people, with mostly visual impairments.
- Our sample were also asked for their subjective social status, with the vast majority of participants self-identifying as from the “working class”, with a minority identifying as being in the “middle class”.

Organisations in the creative industries

The aim of our research with organisations was to understand their experience of apprenticeships, and the challenges smaller organisations face in providing opportunity for young people.

- We conducted two sets of interviews with a total of 11 organisations in the creative industries, representing eight creative industries sub-sectors, such as marketing, IT, publishing, and music.

- In the first set, we interviewed four organisations of varying size who had taken on an apprentice in the past year, about their experience of apprenticeships.
- In the second set, we interviewed seven small and medium enterprises (SMEs) about their experience recruiting talent, and how they can provide more opportunity for young people.
- All quotes and information were anonymised, so that organisations could speak freely about sensitive issues such as funding. Discussions were informal, and covered a wide range of issues, focusing on the challenges they face in London.

Part 1: A creative education

We wanted to first understand how young people perceive creativity, their experience in education, and the importance of qualifications. Secondly, we spoke to organisations about experiences they had with apprenticeships.

Key points

Young people are losing the opportunity to do creative subjects at GCSE and A-Level.

There is confusion in organisations about apprenticeships, from their benefits to the process.

The cost of doing an apprenticeship can be prohibitive for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Young people are unclear on the different qualifications required to work in the creative industries, reflecting the difference in opinion found amongst employers.



Teaching creativity

We first asked young people whether creativity can be taught in school, which revealed a mix of opinions. Many believed that education played a fostering and nurturing role for existing creativity.

“ I think you need a nub of talent, and then that can be developed. But you need something there, a capability, some talent.

However, a large proportion were of the opinion that creative talent was something one was born with, and that can exist without education. This reinforces the latter belief in the meritocratic nature of the creative industries as an environment in which the naturally talented succeed, rather than the educated.

“ I think (creativity) is there, if you just have it, you have it.

“ You can have creativity without being taught.

Young people recognised the importance of creative subjects for exposing them to creativity and helping them discover an interest in it. Most expressed a wish that they had done a creative subject or had gone to a school which provided creative subjects. For almost all our participants who came from state schools only, creative subjects were either underfunded, not available, or not promoted by the school.

“ I feel like, if there was more of a focus on creative subjects in schools, if I did drama and if I did media, things would have been different.

“ I feel like there's not enough funding for creative industries for schools, and I wanted to do drama, but they didn't have it. I wanted to do music, but they didn't really take it that seriously.

As a result, the need for better creative education was often met by alternative sources for the young people. The internet, through platforms like YouTube, can provide practical information but also role models.

“ There's a few really good filmmakers on YouTube that you can buy weekly content stuff or digital film writing and places like that, they don't just make films, they sort of make tutorials that you can follow so if you want to do similar things and pick up from them.

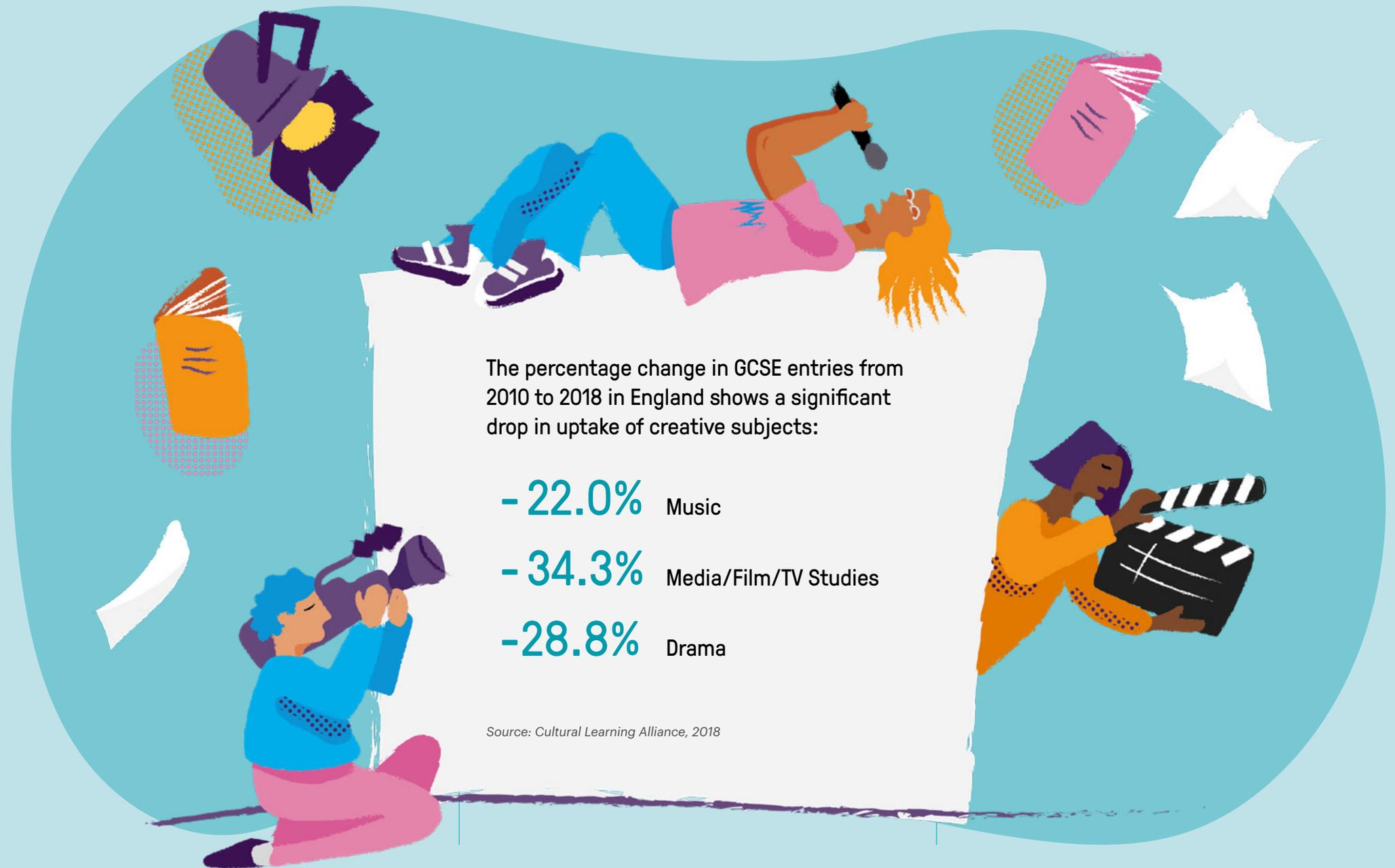
Creative subjects in schools

Arts subjects have been found to be slowly disappearing from schools across the UK, with decreasing entries into subjects such as media studies, drama, and art. We have also spoken to teachers who have seen creative subjects removed from the school entirely.

The teachers' perspective

- A survey of over 1,000 educators found that many felt arts are being side-lined from the school curriculum, with a third of secondary teachers believing that time allocated for art and design has decreased in the last five years, while 89% of primary school teachers believed the same (*Nsead, 2016*).
- A survey by the Guardian Teacher Network of over a 1,000 teachers found 80% claiming their schools had been making general cutbacks to art, with one in 10 claiming that art, music, or drama had been dropped from their school due to cuts, and two in 10 saying the subjects had been given reduced time (*Guardian, 2017*).





Apprenticeships

Our previous research, [Young People and their post-16 options](#), found apprenticeships not being fully valued by young Londoners when compared to university. For the post-16 research, we conducted six focus groups with over 40 young people, exploring the difference in perceptions they had of university, apprenticeships, and traineeships. It found that apprenticeships still face a strong association with sectors like construction, and no positive expectations around lifestyle unlike university, which was associated with freedom, parties, and friends. For the creative industries however, more young people were positive regarding apprenticeships, with a better recognition of the variety of courses on offer.

“ I think there’s quite a few cool ones out right now. I think I spied a few that I wouldn’t have minded, like an entry level in a theatre. But I’ve got a degree now, so it’s a bit going backwards.

Yet, for most young people we spoke to, apprenticeships were simply not promoted at schools, and they did not have much understanding of them.

“ I was never told about an apprenticeship, it was quite an academic focus. The creative teachers in schools would make an effort and be supportive but there was like two.

Similar attitudes remained around the low pay of apprenticeships or the lack of flexibility to work and learn at the same time.

“ I see that totally as an example of excluding people who can’t afford to do it through the bank of Mum and Dad. I need a job to afford to be able to do your job.

Despite a reduction in the numbers of young people taking up creative subjects at GCSE since 2010, there has been a large overall increase in the participation in apprenticeships related to the creative industries.

Change in participation in arts, media and publishing apprenticeships from 2010 to 2018 in England



Source: Department for Education, 2018

Apprenticeships in practice

We spoke to four small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), businesses with less than 250 employees, on their views on apprenticeships. Each had experience with apprenticeships, and came from a range of sub-sectors including; an architects, a creative ad agency, a museum, and a theatre. We conducted in-depth interviews with each, and identified six themes which emerged from them.

1. Communication between educational providers and organisations can be a challenge

“ It started well, the person who was in their business development team, who engaged with us and told us about the course was really good, but they left as our apprenticeships were starting. Then it was very hard to get a hold of.

We often found that communication between the learners, the organisation, and the educational providers could be difficult to manage. Relationships were held by individuals rather than organisations, which led to a breakdown if someone left post.

2. Many organisations are not fully clear on the difference between frameworks and standards

“ We were sent the breakdown of the different modules, but the documents we were given were very lengthy, five six hundred pages long. I know there are new frameworks and new standards, and they're a lot shorter like two pages.

None of those we spoke to were comfortable with identifying the distinctions in the frameworks, or the

standards, lacking the capacity to do their additional research.

3. Apprenticeships were viewed as “the right thing to do” or “important” for promoting diversity, rather than as a valuable means to recruit staff

“ I saw it as a great way to get people with different backgrounds, qualifications and viewpoints on what we do. But there was a lot of hesitation, particularly because the first two went to work in the archive team and the archivists are highly qualified, having done degrees and archive qualifications.

Of the four organisations we spoke to, only one identified apprenticeships as necessary to address recruiting challenges going forward. Too often they were driven forward by a single member of staff, securing external streams of funding, as a good means of promoting diversity in the workforce.

4. There is a perception that apprenticeships are not for the creative industries

“ I think people in this industry aren't quite sure what they are. It's easy to think of a building apprenticeship, as it's a term that's been used for a long time, but for this sector people aren't too sure.

Apprenticeships are still viewed as for the construction sectors, or engineering, and are less thought of for the creative industries.

5. Those taking an apprenticeship can be overqualified, seeking work experience

“ In fact, all the people we interviewed were highly qualified. Some of them had master's degrees. So, they were going for this apprentice role, and in the interview we said, 'You do know this is kinda, a lower qualification than the one you already have?'. I got the impression

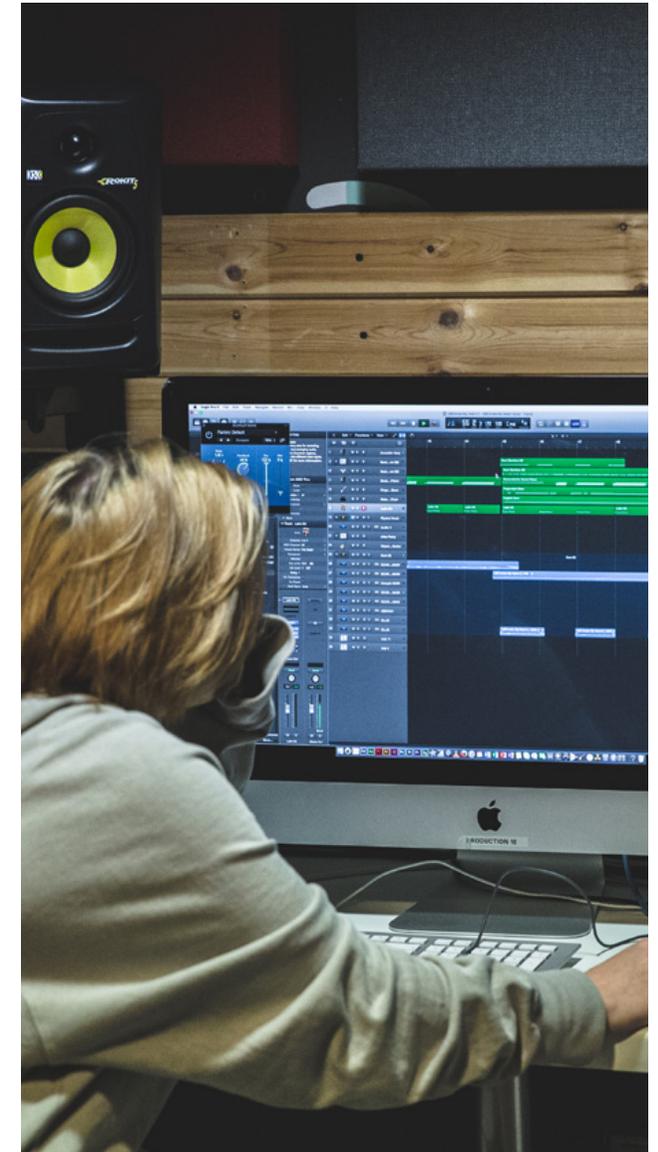
from the people who came to interview that they came to get a foot on the ladder, and that didn't matter if it was an apprentice or an administrative role, because it's so competitive.

The majority of organisations we spoke to indicated that they had an overrepresentation of graduates applying for their lower level apprenticeships, with some even having post-graduate qualifications.

6. Apprenticeships aren't worth it to some employers

“ It's not ideal really. If we're paying someone the equivalent wage and they're not an apprentice, you get more time from them. It does put you off really. Then of course you have the training contributions on top of the salary. From my colleagues in the executive team there were questions to why we are doing these things.

Multiple employers told us clearly that from a HR perspective alone, they would likely not take part in apprenticeships, and had only done so due to the availability of funding for apprenticeship programmes from independent funders.



Further education

Thoughts on the role of university as a route of progression into the creative industries were mixed amongst young people. Some participants felt that the creative industries didn't require a university degree unlike other sectors like medicine or law, and work experience was more important while others felt they needed a degree.

“ I don't really tell anyone I'm in uni, unless I trust them. I feel like I failed that I had to go university, because I didn't get a job. I tried everything I possibly could to not go to university, but I had no other option in this year.

“ I felt silly, I couldn't take myself seriously without a degree saying that I wanted to

be a writer. I was worried people wouldn't take me seriously without a degree.”

“ Once you get to like post-grad level as we said, you have to start your career with all these unpaid internships, and you feel really shit. I've got a Masters degree but I'm making lattes in a café in London to afford to do this.

One of the main reasons why participants believed university was important was often as a safety net, or a way of navigating the wishes of parents and teachers. As a result, many young people we spoke to would do degrees unrelated to their career ambitions, in 'academic' subjects like chemistry.

“ I don't care what people think. One, degrees are a safety net for what you're telling your parents, the grownups in your world. I'll do a degree so they feel okay with letting me do a creative job.

Yet many young people believed that in the creative industries in London it was likely that they would be competing with people with degrees. This reflects what we know, with more than 60% of the workforce across the sector having a degree or equivalent qualification, compared to a third across the UK workforce as a whole (DCMS, July 2017).

Recruitment strategies at SMEs

We spoke to seven SMEs in the creative industries about how they recruit young people. Participants came from a range of sub-sectors, such as tech, publishing, marketing, architecture, and furniture design.

Challenges

We found that SMEs often lack the capacity to adequately support young people with work experience, or training, unlike larger organisations with dedicated HR staff. Recruitment of the right candidate can be difficult, and time consuming.

“ As a sole trader, helping a young person can actually be very hard work.

“ I mean, there's talent out there it's just about spending the time finding them, you know, there's definitely talent out there!

The sheer number of applications can be challenging for smaller organisations, and a number of organisations spoke of workforce shortages for non-creative roles.

“ So on the design side, there seems to be more applicants, it's not necessarily an issue getting applicants, there's a lot of design graduates and a much stronger list to go through on the design side of things. On the sales side, it's the opposite way round.

Recruitment was found to be additionally time consuming for organisations who placed emphasis on candidates fitting a “workplace culture” which was often loosely defined, and very subjective.

“ I think the culture fit is the same as well, because you can have people who are very talented but they don't necessarily fit in the culture...

Employers were also largely unsure on what the impact of Brexit would be on their recruitment, however expectations were wholly negative.

“ Yeah, hugely, it's going to have a huge and distractive impact on the creative sector, not only is it about a reduction in the amount of candidates, but I think more in terms of creative energy, creative spirit and the ability and confidence of everyone to want to be able to create ideas to problems.

Qualifications, work experience, portfolios

We found that organisations, when asked about their minimum requirements for qualifications or experience, were keen to emphasise their relative unimportance compared to soft skills or a strong portfolio.

“ I've worked with self-taught designers who haven't got a degree and they are as good as Central St Martin's grads. I'm not interested in what education they've got, I need to see their portfolio and if it's good enough I would consider them.

“ Work experience isn't necessary. They can have no work experience but as long as they've got a portfolio of obvious abilities that's fine. So they need to show creative flair and a good eye for detail.

This, in part, stemmed from a belief previously expressed by the young people; that educational qualifications are less important in the creative industries because you can't teach creativity.

“ You can't teach creativity, you can train them in a way I guess but like natural flair, natural abilities is there from start, you can't up-skill someone from there, you can just see and tell. They need to be quite artistic.

Yet when pressed many of the SMEs we spoke to still required a degree as minimum, with educational requirements only being dropped for non-creative roles.

“ Yeah, on the design side is degree minimum. On the sales side, not necessarily, experience counts for a lot more than education.

Incentivising SMEs to support young people

When asked to identify ways in which they could be supported to provide additional opportunity for young people, the majority wanted support coordinating placements.

“ ...some kind of organisation that all placements and work experience could happen for two weeks, if you know what I mean, kind of organised by someone else?

Additionally, many had no experience of work placements, but had fears over the additional capacity they'd need to manage them.



Part 2: Representation

Diversity and representation was a key issue for the young people we spoke to. Participants felt that the creative industries lacked diversity, and identified the barriers created and the strategies to mitigate the barriers.

Key points

Young people are keenly aware of the racial and gender bias in certain roles, and sub-sectors, in the creative industries.

The lack of visible diversity prevents young people from identifying role models they can aspire to be like.

Many BAME young people already have acculturation strategies to navigate the creative industries, such as code-switching.

Young people believe that there is class and gender discrimination in the creative industries.



Segregation

For every group we spoke to, the role of race, gender, and inequality was an issue.

Sometimes it would be said explicitly, through experiences of racism and sexism. Yet often it was through the experiences not had, the role models not available, and the dreams that seemed unavailable because of their race, gender, or financial standing.

“ There’s not really a lot of coloured people in the media sector, so it does stand out. I felt like I did stand out more when I even came on to the course; there’s not really a lot of people like me on the course.

Furthermore, certain jobs within the creative industries felt divided by ethnic lines. Many BAME young people expressed that they felt that drama and acting was more for white people and that music was more for black people.

“ I guess from my opinion, in my experience it’s more segregated, music and drama. Drama and dance, and media, and art and design.

Research has found that BAME young people face several barriers to progression in the creative industries to leadership roles (*Cultural Leadership Programme, 2011*).

For participants we spoke to, one barrier expressed was that BAME people are more expected to be in performance roles rather than behind the scenes.

“ I guess you might look at people as being more like, their jobs in acting might be something to do with like slavery or housewife and the white person they might have more of jobs like a director or an editor or writer of the film.

Many suggested that part of the reason why there is an underrepresentation of BAME young people in these roles is due to the lack of academic steer given to them compared to their peers.

“ I think we’re trained up in a way to just express ourselves and not necessarily be like more academic than the white person. So, we might study drama, they might do English and then maybe study media and get into film writing but we’re not really, so much into that.

The importance of seeing people like yourself

Person 1 I didn't ever think I could do that, it was never in the realm of possibilities, you know what I mean? I dunno, I always thought writers just had something that I didn't, they just weren't nothing like me.

Interviewer Why?

Person 1 I dunno, they were cultured, they were whiter, they were richer. I mean, I only really got into reading more black writers when I got to this sort of age and there are loads of really great young black female writers that I enjoy right now. But when I was younger I was never exposed to that, maybe it was going on but I didn't know, so it was never really an aspiration because it never even seemed possible.

Person 2 Yeah that's a good point, I think that's why I never had a role model is because I never really saw anyone that was like me, but an actor.

The most significant barrier to BAME young people was not understanding that they could even have a job in the creative industry.

One effective way in which young people realise that they can work in the creative industries is having a family member currently in it, serving as a role model and an example.

“ I guess I looked at the industry and industries that I already liked, the ones that my cousins have gone to, they're my role models. Also looking at members of my family who had done the creative industries thing.

This reflects previous studies into media representation, which found black success overrepresented as through sports and entertainment (*The Opportunity Agenda, 2011*) and concerns over BAME representation in cultural production (*Reviator, 2016*).

But young people also expressed a lack of knowledge about diversity in behind the scenes roles.

“ The thing is we see actors more like, people are more aware of lack of diversity on screens as we see them and in terms of writers, how do we know what’s going on behind the scenes? Like when googling the names that come at the end of the film at the credits, I reckon it’s probably less (BAME people).

“ Yeah because people don’t complain about it because we don’t know so, it’s not easy to see so you watch films and actors but you don’t see the writers and directors.



Leadership

In all the groups that we spoke to, young people expressed a belief that leadership positions in the creative industries are dominated by white men and, to a lesser extent, those over 40, and from an educated background. We asked, what do the leaders of the creative industries look like?

The answers included:

“ Straight and white

“ Bill Gates

“ I think it will be male

“ My brothers a white man and he works in it

“ Educated, very educated, university. Probably much older, like 40 or 50

“ I can't see myself being a CEO in the creative industry. I can't identify.

The unanimity on this perception of the creative industries leadership is likely very damaging to the ambitions of those young people we spoke to.

A belief that those who looked like them did not reach leadership positions often led to young people not believing that they could do it themselves rather than engaging (Weiler and Bernasek, 2001).

Leadership diversity in the creative industries

- For every one female leader in the creative industries, there are 2.5 male ones.
- Almost a quarter of organisations have an all-female management team, compared to two-thirds that have an all-male team, with around one tenth being mixed.
- There are half the number of female executives per organisations in the creative industries compared to the UK average.
- One impact of this imbalance is that women are increasingly setting up their own new businesses rather than engaging in the sector (Weiler and Bernasek, 2001).
- Partly as a result, there is a higher proportion of all-female managed organisations in the creative industries compared to the UK average.

Source: “Women leaders in the creative industries: a baseline study” (2012)

- 3.3% of sole directors in the creative and cultural sector are BAME.
- 5.5% running their business in the creative and cultural sector are BAME.

Source: Cultural Leadership Programme (2014)

Case study: Roundhouse

The Roundhouse is in a pilot year of our Roundhouse Creative Leadership Programme in partnership with Bloomberg. A programme for young (aged 18-30), emerging leaders that aims to empower young people to lead creatively, helping them to transform their own working practices and futures. One of the main goals of the programme is also to increase opportunities for young people from all backgrounds to lead change in the sector and beyond.

Over the year-long programme the cohort work with successful leaders from across different industries, highlighting and bringing to life the meaning and value of creativity in leadership. The group engage in workshops, residencies and mentoring to build skills, networks, resilience and insights into modern leadership practice.

Recruitment for the first cohort began at the end of 2018 and it received over 100 applications – showing a real appetite for programmes such as this.

Of the 24 young people selected for the programme:

63% are BAME

61% female

41% self-describe as coming from a lower socio-economic background

17% of those who answered have a physical condition or impairment

“ With the support of this programme, young people are challenging the existing boundaries of leadership in the creative industries and beyond, and are working together to redefine the leadership of the future.

Caroline Ellis, Director, Deeds and Words

The feeling of conforming and adapting

Many BAME young people spoke about their experiences navigating the creative industries given their experiences of racism. This included several ways in which they felt they had to adapt to get opportunity, or simply be understood.

“ You feel like you have to speak a certain way just for them to understand you.

“ She was like, what you say a typical black person sounds quite road, but she’s really educated and very intellectual, well spoken. She doesn’t sound like a stereotypical black person.

This sense of conforming and adapting becomes the default action in working spaces in which they are aware that they are in a minority. BAME young people

perceive that the way they speak, at home or to friends, is not acceptable in certain environments.

“ My sister works in publishing and in her office there’s only her and another black girl, and she’s a writer so she meets a lot of authors and publishers and they’re all white. You have to be, my sister is very white friendly, she knows how to go into a room and, get along and knows the correct things to say. She doesn’t just isolate herself to talking to people who look like her.

Code-switching

Code-switching can mean when a person in a minority group ‘tones down’ elements that associate them with their community in order to fit into a more mainstream

group, often linguistically. Many BAME young people do this daily, changing their accent or dialect when they are with white people. Similarly, in the LGBT community, this might mean avoiding bringing up their sexuality around heterosexual people.

The BAME participants that we spoke to discussed the need to speak, and present, yourself differently due to being in a minority in the creative industries. Many spoke about the anxiety and fear of being the only minority in the workplace.

Code-switching is common as a way of avoiding linguistic discrimination, with previous studies finding that those with ‘foreign’ or non-standard English experience are less likely to be trusted or believed (*Shiri Lev-Ari, 2010*).

Class

The young people we spoke to were aware of the role that class played, with many feeling unwelcome or out of place due to how they perceived their own class. The significant barriers to working in the creative industries for those from working-class backgrounds, from prejudice attitudes, to a lack of awareness of the opportunities available to them, have been well documented (Eikhof & Warhurst, 2012; Friedman et al., 2016; Randle, Forson, & Calveley, 2015).

“ Well, acting-wise it used to be traditionally white actors in this country like you know, now is a lot more like middle class, upper middle class, people who go into these really posh acting schools and drama schools and then end up with opportunities.

“ Yeah cause like, again, if you are from a wealthy background you don't have to like think about it cause if your parents are like, 'I'm paying you don't have to think about any of that' then you can go straight, straight, straight but, yeah... That's life!

One reason is the prevalent narrative that the creative industries are meritocratic in nature, which has been found to obscure structural inequalities associated with gender (Gill, 2002), class (Friedman, O'Brien, & Laurison, 2016) and other forms of discrimination (Littler, 2013).

Privilege in the creative industries

The proportion of young cultural workers from upper-middle class backgrounds more than doubled between 1981 and 2011, from 15% to 33%. The proportion from working class origins dropped by about a third, from 22% to 13% over the same period (Barbican, 2018).

In 2015, 91.8% of jobs in the creative industries were done by people from advantaged socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 1-4), this is compared to 66% in the wider UK economy (DCMS, 2016).

Gender visibility

Gender visibility was also an issue for young people, especially for the group studying creative subjects. DCMS (2016) found a significant gender disparity in workforce in the creative industries, especially compared to the wider UK workforce.

“ I think it’s harder for women to get into the industry. I think people think it’s a stressful job and that women won’t be able to handle it.

This was especially true for many young women who knew specifically what they wanted to do but were aware of the lack of gender equality in their chosen roles.

“ Camera operators are worse, because they still say camera man. I want to be a camera operator.

The hidden barriers, and “glass ceiling” that prevents women getting to the top of the creative industries

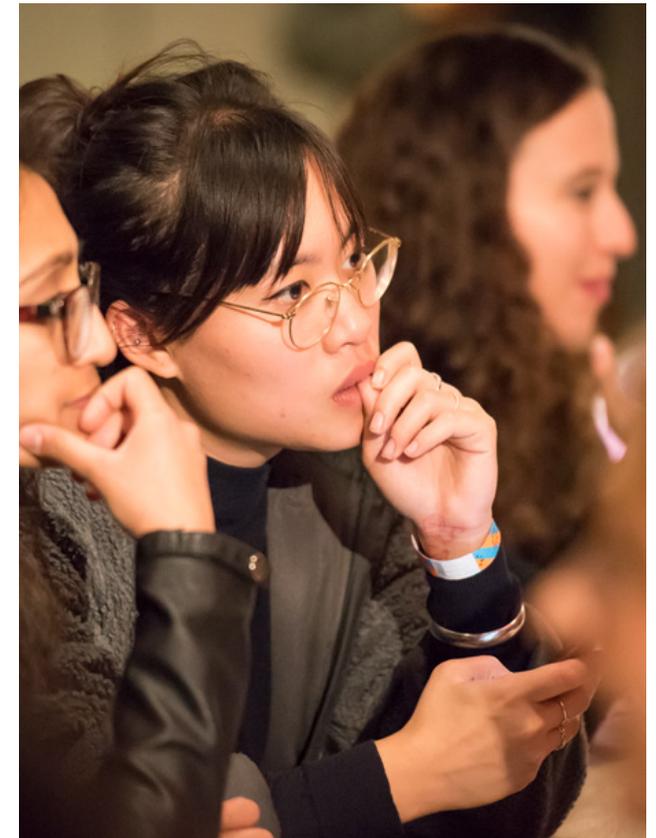
has been well documented (Conor, Gill, & Taylor, 2015; Gill, 2014; Scharff, 2015; Skillset, 2010). Participants demonstrated an awareness of the impact of both historical and current gender and racial imbalance of accolades in the creative industries.

Pay

A 2017 analysis by Daniel Laurison at LSE into Britain’s cultural workforce, found female employees having average earnings of over £12,000 a year less than men with similar class backgrounds.

The most significant gender pay disparity was found in architecture, craft, film, TV and radio, and IT, ranging to nearly £15,000 a year in film and other media.

Dr. Laurison concluded that: “Our analysis demonstrates very clearly that even when women and those from working-class backgrounds are able to make it as employees in this sector they face significantly lower average wages as compared to the middle class and compared to men.”



Part 3: Creative stereotypes

Young people face a multitude of negative stereotypes when considering a career in the creative industries, from the advice they get in school, to their family and friends.

Key points

Careers advice and guidance in schools is non-existent for many young people. Where it does exist, it often reinforces negative stereotypes about the creative industries.

Young people who pursue a career in the creative industries are often confronted with the fears and anxieties of friends and family.

Young people understand social capital to be more important in the creative industries than other sectors.



The advice in schools

Most participants we spoke to also experienced discouragement from a teacher at some point when asked if they discussed their desire to go into the creative industries with them.

“ Yes, and they advised me against it.

“ Yes, I talked to my drama teacher and they told me not to go into drama.

Young people believed that teachers emphasised university and subjects that were seen as ‘more academic’ than creative subjects, to the detriment of providing fair or useful advice about their interests in the creative industries.

“ Strongly advised against it, because I

had good grades at school they were like, you could do so much more!

“ They didn’t even make us think about jobs, they made us think about university only.

“ Uhm, my secondary school experience is like, the creative subjects wasn’t pushed as much as non-creative subjects.

Often this first negative encounter about their interest in the creative industries would lead to young people to be reluctant in the future to talk to others about it.

“ I chose not to talk to them.

However, money was also seen as being able to buy a better education which provided better opportunity, to study a wider range of subjects, or be provided with paid extra-curricular activities.

“ It depends on what type of school you go to as well, and if you can afford, if you’re wealthier and maybe push their children and pay for their theatre class, acting class since they were 8 whereas if you’re not from that background you may not have encountered until a certain point in your life, you might get into it later and then you have to pay for yourself I guess.”

Case study: Camden Council

Camden's local Cultural Education Partnership SPARK

Camden Spark brokers partnerships between schools, young people and the creative industries and helps cultural organisations connect their offer to schools. It also supports schools and cultural organisations to co-design artistic projects that are led by school need.

A key priority for Camden Spark is to develop fairer access routes to the creative and cultural industries for young people and it specifically looks at addressing the barriers faced by disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.

Camden Spark organises industry careers events, highlighting the variety of professional career opportunities available to young people. In summer 2018, a careers event for students studying creative subjects was held at the Acland Burghley Assembly Hall and students had the opportunity to hear from and speak to a range of professionals and guest speakers. In all, representatives from twelve varied organisations were involved with the event, including: Roundhouse; The Poetry Society; The Jewish Museum; October Gallery; The Place; WAC Arts; Cockpit Arts; Goldsmiths Centre; Into Film; Warner Brothers; Almeida and Camden Apprenticeships.

Feedback was highly positive with 78% of the students that participated saying they were likely or very likely to research more into the careers or sector they had learned about and 89% of them feeling more confident about a career in the creative industries sector after the session.

Making local creative industries jobs available to local young people

Camden's Film Service works closely with film and television production companies to secure work experience and jobs for local people. As part of Camden Council's partnership with its film service contractor 'FilmFixer' there is a staff member whose role is to unlock film industry training and employment opportunities for young people in the borough.

For example in 2018 Camden local Charles Roskilly landed a full-time role with Lime Pictures on *Celebs Go Dating*, after years of applying for paid work in TV.

With the support of FilmFixer's training manager Sue Russo, Charles spent 10 weeks on Series 5 of *Celebs Go Dating* over the summer (2018).

Having impressed Lime Pictures as a freelance runner, he was invited to return on a full-time contract for the next series, 12 weeks' work, which started filming in November 2018.

Although Lime Pictures, like many film and TV production companies, is based in Camden, just around the corner from Charles' home, his access to a job there, despite extensive experience in TV, was not necessarily a given.

"It wouldn't have happened without Sue," he says. "A lot of people working in these London roles are not from London. Initially the people at Lime Pictures didn't recognise the way I speak as a genuine London accent, they thought I was from Essex! Because London is such a melting pot these days it doesn't really have a recognisable accent anymore. I grew up right here in Camden, five minutes' walk from the Lime Pictures office."

Facing down parents, family, and friends

Most of the young people we spoke to did not have the support of their family when considering the creative industries. Research has shown the importance parental perceptions play when young people consider a career in the arts (*Arts Council England 2008*).

“ Well I kinda live with my mum right now, so it would be hard to defy my mum right now. But I definitely would, it would just be really uncomfortable. I'd probably lie to her.

“ When I was younger I was really keen on pleasing my mum, so I think her disappointment would have been really hard for me, so I would have gone along with her.

Most participants described their parents as having overwhelmingly negative perceptions towards a creative career, having concerns about the pay, and “not making it”.

“ They were really upset, they were worried, how are you gonna make money? Yeah my parents were worried that a lot of people just go half way then give up.

Similarly, participants describe their parents as being discouraging regarding creative subjects, as they perceived them to be less respectable or less employable.

“ People, like my dad, don't think it's a proper subject to study.

“ Dad didn't think it was a proper subject, like history, and made me less likely to get a job.

When we asked young people why their parents held negative attitudes towards the creative industries and creative subjects, cultural background tended to be the key reason.

“ She didn't really care about academics, because of the culture she came from. Her culture was about being married and having kids. She would be happier if I did that than a career.

“ My mum is used to struggling, working really hard in physical jobs. She finishes her job exhausted, properly tired, and that’s a proper job to her.

“ My whole family are so academic, my grandad did a PhD at Stanford. So they felt so afraid, because they were so afraid of not having a degree.

However, the most common approach by participants was to seek compromise, either having a plan B, or moderating their choices to appease their parents.

“ When I started, I had to convince my parents, they weren’t keen on me doing it at the start. I would defy them, but I would try and compromise, and trick them, which is what I did. At the time I wanted to do a much more creative job that I was doing now, and I said I would do a humanities degree first and then I would do an arts degree.

These barriers, difficult to overcome, can exact a heavy toll on the mental health of participants. Facing discouragement and negativity from multiple relationships can create a grinding down effect on the optimism and confidence of a young person.

“ The personal toll, for when you say you want to work in the creative industry, everyone will try and stop you, your teachers, your parents, your friends, who are like ‘are you sure?’ There are just so many barriers to get there, there’s a mental toll.



Social capital

When young people were asked to consider the ways in which they could get opportunity and access into the creative industries, the most common discussion was on the role of social capital. Some believed that obtaining social capital was possible through perseverance, by constantly attending events and networking.

“ I’ve been to several events, and they say they just managed to speak to this person, and it managed to change their careers. There’s not many examples of people who’ve worked their way up, it’s just networking, networking, networking. There’s no hierarchy to get there.

Most participants recognised the importance of contacts, with most agreeing with the phrase

‘it’s not what you know, it’s who you know’. Previous research has shown how powerful social networks, more commonly from privileged circles, can greatly help advance cultural careers (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2012; Nelligan, 2015).

“ You don’t need it, but it’s helpful to know people in the industry too.

“ If you know someone in the industry, it’s just an easy way in.

“ Yeah it’s like, there are people have talents yeah, and you can be somewhere with a talent, but to get further to being like big, then you need someone who is already big to put you on.

For the majority of young people that we spoke to, family and friends did not provide social capital, or access into the industry. Instead they were often dissuaded by them from getting involved in the creative industries entirely, feeling it was “rigged” without the right existing contacts.



Part 4: The creative cost

Young people face a range of financial and geographical barriers to accessing opportunity in the creative industries, while expressing anxiety about the uncertainty a career in it might entail.

Key points

The cost of living can be very restrictive, especially transport and housing in London.

Young people expect to burden a financial cost at the start of their career, through unpaid work and the cost of equipment.

There is a lack of clarity regarding wages in the creative industry, with expectations ranging wildly depending on the sub-sector or role.

Some young people who want to work in the creative industry expect to work freelance, despite the insecurity associated with it.



The cost of living in London

Rent in London was cited as the biggest financial challenge to working in the creative industries, with rising rents (Fernie et al, 1998) and high cost of studios (Moreton, 2013) forcing many to live with parents.

“ The rent makes it 100% harder. The only reason I can do this right now is because I've moved back in with my Mum, and I'm not really paying rent.

Yet many young people do not have family members living in London and are being excluded, or face additional difficulties with transport.

“ When I was living at home in Reynes Park SW20, it took me two hours to get to the Roundhouse, and I had to skip out

on so many things. If I had something in the morning and in the evening I would have to pick one. The transport was too expensive. If there was a gig that went on to 10 or 11, the trains would stop and I couldn't get home.

Participants also felt that the creative industries had additional costs not associated with other sectors, such as having to see shows, exhibitions, travel to openings.

“ You have to see a lot of stuff, see a lot of shows, and you obviously have to do a lot of internships that doesn't really pay you, just expenses and food.

“ There's the financial cost, but there's also the personal cost to your social life, a lot of evening events.

“ I think also, transport is so expensive in London, just like zones. You travel way more in the creative industries than in other jobs.

The cost of opportunity in the creative industries

Young people believed that the initial opportunities in the creative industries would not be paid. Recent research has found that 86% of internships in the arts, which includes theatre and music, are unpaid (Sutton Trust, 2018).

“ If you do volunteering, you lose so much money.

Unpaid internships have been institutionalised as a way to get opportunity, and a foot in the door in the creative industries (Siebert and Wilson, 2013), however they are not accessible to all.

“ You're expected to do lots of unpaid internships. People just expect you to starve, you know like the starving artist, before you can actually get paid.



Part 4: The creative cost

This blurring of paid and unpaid, amateur and professional is uniquely prevalent in the creative industries (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011). A recent study found three-quarters of photographers, 58% of radio freelancers and nearly half of the TV workforce had undertaken unpaid work (Skillset, 2010).

“ So usually you have a portfolio, but say you've done tonnes of productions, but without that they won't pay you a lot, if at all.

“ They don't pay you at first because you don't have experience.

The importance of money in accessing opportunity was also found to be important to young people and was perceived to make getting employment and experience easier.

“ It's near impossible for a musician to get recognised, or make money, without a lot of money. The studio, the marketing, volunteering (affording it).

“ You can buy your way, you can buy an office space, equipment, and pay people.

“ It's so much more expensive than buying books.

“ Well if you're starting off by yourself making films then you have to buy all the equipment.

86%

of internships in the arts, which includes theatre and music, are unpaid

Source: Sutton Trust, 2018



Case study: Universal Music UK

Talent is everywhere but opportunity is not. The creative industries have historically been a sector in which 'who you know' often outweighs talent and potential.

We weren't comfortable with that, or the fact that only those who lived in London and could afford to work for free were able to take advantage of work experience opportunities.

All this is why, back in 2009, Universal Music UK became the first major music company to introduce a paid internship scheme. Over the past 10 years our scheme has seen hundreds of people from all different kinds of backgrounds given opportunity to enter our business while being paid the London Living Wage. As well as levelling the playing field, it has significantly enlarged the 'talent pool' from which we recruit and subsequently increased the diversity - in all of its forms - of our teams.

Crucially, we also ensure we look in the right places when hiring interns. That means sending staff around the country talking to young people about careers but also thinking outside the box when it comes to advertising. In recent years we have supplemented the scheme by launching intern recruitment events with organisations such as the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, who specifically work with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

However, encouraging a diverse range of interns to join us is only the beginning in building a truly diverse workforce. For the interns of today to become the executives of tomorrow they also need the right coaching and mentoring, which is something we are keeping under constant review.



The creative industries, does it pay well?

Young people did not have a positive impression of the wages and pay within the creative industries, especially not at the start. However, the most negative impression that emerged was on the frequency of pay, and the instability, rather than simply the amount.

“ I just thought I don't want to go into the creative industries because that's just another way to be poor, I've done that. So yeah I didn't want to go into the creative industries because I found it just really unstable.

The precariousness of the creative industries has been well discussed (*Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010*), and is likely a significant disadvantage for some sections of society (*McRobbie, 1998*). Furthermore, the lack of a career structure to support progression means women

are unable to establish a secure and regular pattern of employment in the sector (*Skillset, 2010*).

“ I can't imagine a lifelong career in the arts without a certain level of uncertainty in the future, you know like not sure where the next pay-check is coming from but that's part of the whole deal you have to accept it if you want to do this thing for a career.

With a lack of perceived financial incentive, and instability throughout, many of the young people who wanted to work in the creative industries believed they wanted to do it because they loved it, rather than because it paid well.

“ From what I've seen, media jobs aren't really well paid. You did it because you love it, you don't do it for the money. It's not going to get you money unless you're famous, or working with famous people.

Previous research by *Haunschild and Eikhof (2009)* found those doing creative jobs are likely to accept low pay, extremely demanding working conditions and precarious employment. The exploitation of workers 'seduced into putting a great deal of themselves into what they do' is still a prevalent and much discussed aspect of the creative industries (*Hesmondhalgh, 2010: 282*).

Freelancing

Research has found more than a third of people in the creative industries, including support staff, are self-employed, compared to 15% in the total UK workforce (BFI, 2017). A survey by Creative Skillset (2015) found that across creative media industries an average of 43% of the workforce were freelancers. Young people understood that freelancing was an option, and sometimes an inevitability, of working in the creative industries.

“ Freelancing is good if you want to get experience and learn a few things but I just think if everyone becomes freelance it becomes jumbled. I prefer security, and working in a building, for something specific.

35%

Research has found more than a third of people in the creative industries, including support staff, are self-employed, compared to 15% in the UK workforce

Source: Workforce diversity in the UK screen sector: evidence review, BFI (2017)



However, young people would not see freelancing and self-employment as a positive for them, but another aspect of employment in the creative industries that made it unstable. This partly reflects research finding the creative industries becoming increasingly uncertain and competitive (Antcliff et al, 2007; Townley and Beech, 2010).

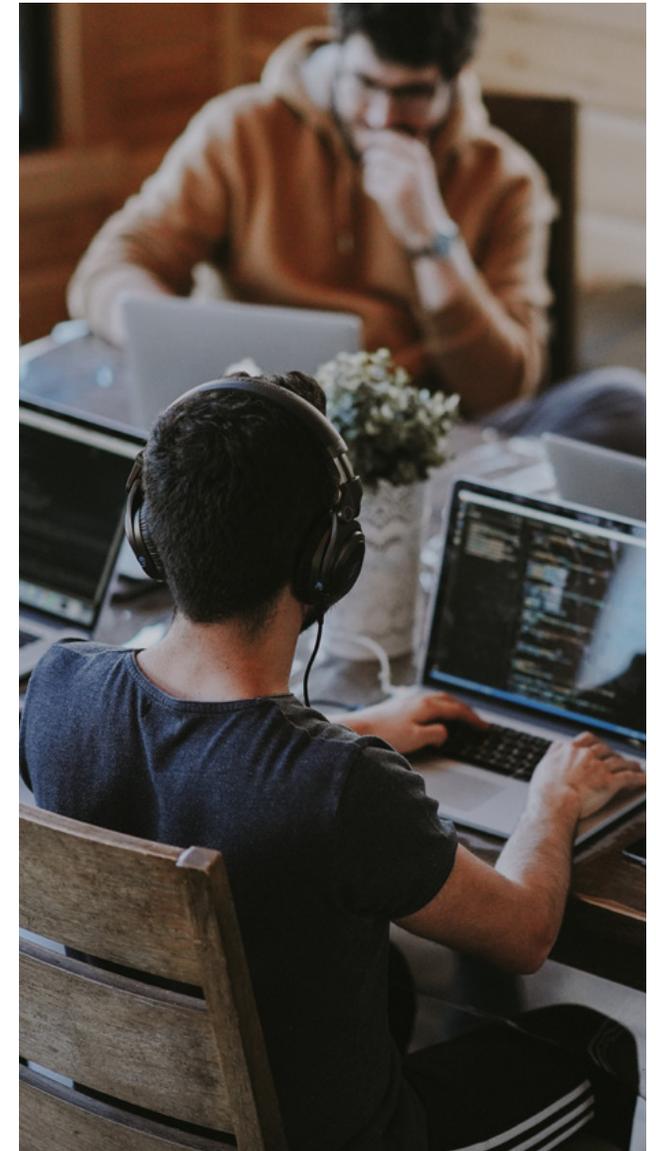
“ I think it's hard because everyone's doing it, so there's a lot of competition.

“ No, not stable, you don't know when a job is gonna come up.

“ I could be (freelance) for short term experience, but not really long term.

Yet the acceptance by most young people that freelancing and self-employment might be inevitable, if not desirable, echoes critics like Andrew Ross (2008: 19) who argued that creative artists have entered through the promotion of precarious work and employment conditions into 'a model of enterprising, risk-tolerant pluck'.

“ I would say freelancing has positives, you're not tied to one space, it gives you opportunity to go and try things but the negative is you're not getting a consistent amount of money. If you have bills, and things you have to pay for, it can be discouraging.



About us

Partnership for Young London

Partnership for Young London

Partnership for Young London is the regional youth unit for London. We connect the youth sector through a diverse network of over 400 organisations, develop and share knowledge with training and events, and influence policy through our local and regional research.

This work was funded with the support of Trust for London.



Trust for London

Tackling poverty and inequality



Roundhouse

Roundhouse works with 6,000 young people each year, helping to develop their skills and confidence through creativity – especially the most excluded and disadvantaged. The Roundhouse offers music, performing arts and media projects and rehearsal space for young people at our venue in Camden and through outreach work in the community and at local schools.

We are responding to the findings of this report by looking at our own entry-level workforce strategy to ensure all communities feel they can apply for, and work at our venue - we're working with some great organisations such as The Forum to do this.

We've also launched the Self-Made Series - a new series of events that will help young people make a career out of their creativity. This is alongside our campus project which will contain a Centre for Creative and Digital Entrepreneurs where we'll work with creative entrepreneurs aged 18 to 30. We'll support the next generation of creative business owners, from illustrators to tech innovators, to achieve their dreams. Through desk space, mentors and networking we'll help young people build their future in the creative industry.

Images

Page 4 - Temidayo Oyekan

Page 12 - Crayons beside child coloring
Photo by Aaron Burden on Unsplash

Page 16 - Roundhouse music studios
Photo by Francesca Elsey for Roundhouse

Page 19 - Roundhouse Co-working Hub
Photo by Cesare De Giglio for Roundhouse

Page 23 - Roundhouse choir
Photo by Ellie Pinney for Roundhouse

Page 28 - Roundhouse Music Industry Day
Photo by Ellie Pinney for Roundhouse

Page 33 - Two people standing on gray tile paving
Photo by Ian Schneider on Unsplash

Page 34 - Group on laptop
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Page 37 - Roundhouse Music Industry Day discussion
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Page 39 - Person holding mixing console
Photo by Drew Patrick Miller on Unsplash

Page 42 - Work space
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