



# Unexpected Enterprises

## Research Project Report

'Unexpected Enterprises' – investigating the pedagogic potential of emerging forms of entrepreneurship for media enterprise education.

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## 1. Overview

This research project investigated emerging forms of creative entrepreneurship and their application to the development of approaches to and resources for media enterprise teaching and learning in higher education. The research explored ways in which new modes of creative and cultural work are being generated by enterprising activities that typically fall outside traditional notions of enterprise and entrepreneurship, often through leveraging the affordances of digital technologies. Technical and social innovations that enable increased access to and participation in creative and cultural production can therefore give rise to “unexpected enterprises”.

The project employed design research methodologies, including an open innovation lab process, to enable collaborative co-inquiry involving students, educators and industry partners in considering emerging entrepreneurial forms and their implications for media enterprise pedagogies and creative enterprise education.

We found that the use of a design approach, which leveraged design thinking methods, enabled critical and creative exploration of creative enterprise and entrepreneurship, in ‘developing a context to question what creative entrepreneurship is’. This, in turn, enabled us to produce a set of conceptual and practical considerations and pedagogical resources<sup>1</sup> that contribute to developing understanding of how teaching and learning about enterprise and entrepreneurship in creative and media subject areas within higher education might address and support learners to engage in challenging norms and creating more diverse visions of entrepreneurship.

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 9.1 and 9.2 contain **pedagogic resources** created by the project; an example module descriptor for an undergraduate media enterprise module and several activity guides that were used in facilitating the project’s innovation workshops, which explored potential themes (self-promotion, spaces and networking, business planning) to enable critical reflection on approaches to creative enterprise teaching and learning. The interactive project web doc (at: <http://www.unexpectedenterprises.org/>) also offers materials that may provide useful resource and information to foster thinking about approaches to media and creative enterprise education in the context of higher education. (Note: the i-doc is best viewed on a desktop/laptop computer)

## 2. Introduction

Entrepreneurialism is a widely encouraged attribute across many industrial sectors in the “knowledge-based” economy of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. More specifically, for contemporary cultural workers this entrepreneurial spirit and mindset is demanded (Gill, 2014). Characteristics of entrepreneurialism, including self-promotion and work on the self, have been considered as the key for success across a range of cultural and creative industries. Given the portfolio and project-based nature of much creative work, entrepreneurialism is increasingly important as aspiring creatives are encouraged to “make a job” rather than apply for one. However, this growth can also be understood as “forced entrepreneurialism” (Oakley, 2014).

Set in relation to these industry contexts and transformations, enterprise education is a well-established feature of higher education. Entrepreneurship is increasingly significant to how universities set out the graduate options and outcomes for students. Therefore, higher education is expected to play a key role in developing the enterprising and entrepreneurial skills and capacities of media and creative subject students for future work in the creative and cultural industries (Nesta, 2007, p. 13). Several studies, however, have offered critical accounts of entrepreneurship as a pathway into creative work (Ashton, 2017; Naudin, 2013).

Building on previous analyses of entrepreneurship education (Naudin, 2013) and entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative industries (Naudin, 2018), this research report presents findings from a co-designed research project with higher education students and established entrepreneurs that employed ‘design thinking’ methodologies (Tschimmel et al., 2015) to examine creative work careers. These activities were found to be instrumental in helping to challenge and contest dominant

understandings of creative entrepreneurship. By sharing our methods and critical reflections, we seek to inform higher education pathways into creative work.

Our key research aim was to align more critically with key concerns of media education, in fostering “student’s creative and reflexive capacities” (QAA, 2019, p. 6). Hence, helping to develop student’s critical understanding and active participation in learning about media (Buckingham, 2003, p. 4), through our emphasis on the development of critical pedagogies. Thus, in preparing students for the realities of cultural and creative work, our aim is to contribute to the development of pedagogic approaches that support critical examination of entrepreneurial paradigms (Royle & Mathee 2017), reflecting evolving discourses of entrepreneurship that are more relevant to the contexts and realities of creative and cultural practice. In our exploration of evolving pathways for creative and cultural work, the key starting point was the concept of unexpected enterprises. This concept stresses the possibilities for exploring and experimenting with emerging forms of cultural production in relation to media education: ‘this is less about creating models of existing ways of working such as newsrooms, creative agencies, and media studios, and more about analysing media and culture with a view to kinds of passions, concerns and needs which might give rise to imaginative and unexpected enterprise’ (Ashton, 2017, p. 29).

This study has therefore engaged with wider emerging debates about forms of creative and cultural entrepreneurship that appear to fall outside of traditional notions of entrepreneurial activity such as those which leverage digital media tools and processes. For example, in researching cultural entrepreneurship, Naudin (2018) argues that social media platforms are providing a significant space for revealing diverse or hidden forms of cultural entrepreneurship that are normally excluded from traditional accounts of entrepreneurship.

The notion of unexpected enterprises therefore requires a consideration of how the “real world” is translated into learning and teaching initiatives, for example translating a client brief into a project or developing simulated workplace learning environments. We have rather chosen to place our focus on everyday creativity, and the example of vlogging is examined below to show the conceptual and practical limitations in codifying these activities to create an entrepreneurship checklist for work with media subject students (Ashton, 2017). Along similar lines, Stenvall-Virtanen et al. (2016) identify user-generated content as an emerging trend in the creative industries and consider its impact in relation to pedagogical resources. In order to expand on this, our research addresses how and where the kinds of critical questions and perspectives from academic, activist and industry researchers and commentators, identified below, might be integrated with materials for teaching and learning.

### 3. Literature Review

#### 3.1 Entrepreneurship Education

The call for greater availability of enterprise and entrepreneurship education reflects widespread recognition of entrepreneurship as a driver of economic sustainability and growth (Williamson, Beadle and Charalambous, 2013), fuelling an increased impetus to embed enterprise curricula in higher education. In higher education, enterprise education has been designated as ‘the process of developing students in a manner that provides them with an enhanced capacity to generate ideas, and the behaviours, attributes, and competencies to make them happen’ (QAA, 2018, p. 9). This definition has raised perpetual questions about if and how learners can be *taught* enterprise in terms of developing competencies that typically focus on *becoming* entrepreneurial (Henry & Leitch, 2005). Although the terms enterprise education and entrepreneurship education are often used interchangeably, the inference of the former is to develop learner’s skills and mindset to apply creative ideas and innovations in practical situations, with the latter typically referring to the application of enterprise skills to creating and growing new ventures, existing businesses or in cultivating organisations/networks (Williamson, Beadle and Charalambous, 2013).

#### 3.2 Creative Entrepreneurship

The experiences and practices of cultural and creative entrepreneurs have been well-considered as part of the wider policy, industry and academic interest in the creative economy in many different geographical settings. We consider *media* enterprise, as the key focus of our pedagogic inquiry, as being situated most significantly by and within the policy context of the cultural and creative industries, and the creative economy: ‘an emerging concept dealing with the interface between creativity, culture, economics and technology in a contemporary world dominated by images,



sounds, texts and symbols' (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, n.d.). The creative economy approach brings together 'media' (publishing, audio-visual, new media) with design, visual and performing arts, cultural sites and creative services under the 'creative industries' label. Whilst there are critical questions to be asked in employing the term 'cultural industries' or 'creative industries' (Kuhlke et al., 2015), this terminology and grouping has gathered momentum and wide usage (Bakhshi et al., 2013). (See Ashton, 2017).

However, whereas both concepts of cultural and creative entrepreneurship describe entrepreneurial and enterprise activity in the context of cultural and creative industries work that encompasses media, we mobilise the term *creative entrepreneurship/work/enterprise* to reflect the thrust of its emphasis in higher education policy and practice. None the less, as outlined below, we remain conscious of the critical importance of adopting a *cultural* lens with which to position and question entrepreneurship (Naudin, 2018).

In introducing their research on women entrepreneurs working in the cultural and creative industries, Naudin and Patel (2017, p. 2) offer a definition of cultural entrepreneurs as 'individuals who are self-employed, freelancers and owners of micro-enterprises or who have a portfolio career and work within the so-called creative industries.' This definition helps to indicate the common ways of working associated with entrepreneurship. When examined through the lens of critical studies of cultural work (Banks, Gill and Taylor, 2013), terms such as "freelance" and "portfolio" can be encountered in a different light. Rather than celebratory accounts emphasizing opportunity and possibility, critical debates around these terms also alert to issues of insecurity and precarity (Gill, 2014).

Drawing a contrast with scholarly studies that focus on entrepreneurship as an academic concept, Naudin (2018) positions her focus on the 'lived experiences' of entrepreneurship. Again, in keeping with critical accounts of cultural work (Banks, Gill and Taylor, 2013), Naudin's (2018) approach addresses issues of working conditions, and access and equality. This critical orientation has been an important part of our exploration for understanding and investigating the nature of entrepreneurship within the creative economy, because, as we stated earlier, and which we address further, our priority has not been to identify and rehearse dominant accounts of entrepreneurship.

### **3.3 Creative Entrepreneurship and Higher Education**

In foregrounding issues of working conditions, access and equality we can immediately begin to draw out the tensions in how creative entrepreneurship is constituted and what the implications of this are for higher education learning and teaching. Discussing cultural entrepreneurship and the new realities of work and labour, Ellmeier (2003, p. 3) suggests that the knowledge-based society has 'given birth to historically new forms of employment not yet represented in the traditional canon of the political representation system.' We would extend this analysis to address creative entrepreneurship and its representation/position with higher education. Therefore, what are the challenges for higher education in both describing and constructing entrepreneurship and new forms of creative work?

A 2007 report on Creative Entrepreneurship Education produced by the UK Higher Education Academy and NESTA (National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts) called for more appropriate definitions of entrepreneurship that reflect the nature of education in creative disciplines (echoing Gibb, 2005), such as making it more aligned with the nature of creative practice (a focus on doing and experiential learning) and opening up narrow stereotypes regarding what constitutes

entrepreneurship (allowing recognition of entrepreneurial activity in all contexts of cultural and creative industries, commercial and social) (Nesta, pp. 13 & 14). Such diversification requires critical reflection on normative assumptions about the nature of professionalism/professional identities as they relate to contexts of enterprise. For example, in researching cultural worker's lived experiences of cultural entrepreneurship, Naudin identifies stories of "hidden or quiet entrepreneurial activity" which may take place in private worlds or happen unnoticed, that are normally excluded from narrow accounts of entrepreneurship because they may not resonate with entrepreneurial stereotypes (2017, p. 104).

Calls for a more evolved discourse about creative entrepreneurship also reflect the changing contexts of creative and cultural practices which leverage new communications technologies such as the tools, processes and platforms of digital media. For instance, in investigating the contribution of young people's creative use of digital media to the hidden economies of 90's club cultures, Cunningham reported the emergence of DIY 'businesses' (e.g. 'Do-It-Yourself' video and web site production, graphic design and DJ outfits) using home computers and internet connections to produce cultural goods (1998, p. 133). Similarly, Burgess & Green (2009) found evidence of grassroots entrepreneurial practices in the co-creative work of YouTube Vloggers (video-bloggers) whose successful social media exposure as producers and performers, they argue, represents new models of entrepreneurship in participatory culture, "which is open to a broad range of participants who have access to the means of cultural production and circulation" (Jenkins, 2011). Hence, as earlier noted, in terms of contemporary culture, as Naudin notes, "scholars have begun to find that social media platforms provide a significant space for revealing diverse, or otherwise hidden, entrepreneurial identities" (2018, p. 104).

Academic analysis of cultural entrepreneurship from a global perspective has addressed learning and teaching in national higher education systems (Lazzeretti and

Vecco, 2018). Our particular interest, however, is in the relationship between higher education and creative entrepreneurship in the UK and how this is addressed with regard to government policy and learning and teaching practice. In setting out her formulation of the creativity dispositif, McRobbie (2017, p. 11) identifies 'the expansion of higher and further education from the mid 1990s in the UK with particular reference to the arts, humanities and media fields' and with the directing of young people so that they 'adjust themselves to the idea of enterprise culture'. There is an established body of research on cultural work and policy that reflects upon and intervenes within higher education agendas around employability and entrepreneurship (see Ashton and Noonan, 2013; Ashton, 2017; Naudin, 2018). Two consistent themes are evident when it comes to higher education for/about the creative economy. Firstly, the extent to which higher education connects with contemporary industry or "real world" contexts and developments. Here, there is a question mark over whether working to an idea of real world practice is desirable - especially for giving due attention to the critical perspectives as they are articulated and explored in academic debate. The second theme then concerns if and how critical perspectives from a range of disciplines on entrepreneurship are meaningfully integrated within increasingly employability-focused degree programmes. These conceptual and pedagogical debates are an everyday matter for educators and students.

Through assessed degree programmes, additional enhancement initiatives, and student societies, entrepreneurship is firmly located within university life. In day-to-day learning and teaching experiences and practices, there are pedagogical approaches and experiments that foreground students encountering and embodying creative work practices. For example, Ashton (2013) has examined a university operated creative agency work-based learning environment aimed at developing students' industry-relevant skills and perspectives. As with the stance being

developed in this chapter, the aim was to not just describe this initiative but to draw connections with cultural workforce issues of insecurity and working conditions. Naudin's (2013; 2018) research on media and cultural entrepreneurship similarly presents a critical evaluation of learning and teaching initiatives. Naudin's (2013) overview of 'experiential teaching methods' further helps us to consider approaches beyond the seminar room. Similarly, Ashton (2017, p. 290) examines the checklist approach and argues that 'whilst there are extensive efforts to identify and list entrepreneurial skills, media enterprise education should not be seen as simply becoming "literate" in learning and performing dominant versions of entrepreneurship.' When it comes to creative entrepreneurship, higher education can varyingly be constituted as a productive space for cultivating creative entrepreneurs, and for contesting the associated entrepreneurial identities, practices and contexts. To consider this tension more, we focus further on scholarship that has sought to challenge dominant narratives associated with entrepreneurship.

As Naudin (2018, p. 16) identifies, 'there is increasing interest in exploring non-conventional forms of entrepreneurship, revealing entrepreneurship activities from groups currently marginalised by the literature such as: women, individuals motivated by social objectives and "informal" forms of entrepreneurial activity' (see also Ekinsmyth, 2014, on mumpreneurship). In the following studies we see how cultural producers construct new and challenge existing entrepreneurial career pathways. Moreover, in reviewing this scholarship we can unpack the tensions in teaching *about*, not just *for*, enterprise, and what this can mean for creating creative work.

In their research on the stand-up comedy field in Finland, Kauppinen and Daskalaki (2015, p. 605) looked for processes of 'subversion or subversive organising' and 'resistance to rigid entrepreneurial identities' in everyday activities. This focus on everyday activities resonates with Naudin's (2018) focus on lived experiences.

Kauppinen and Daskalaki (2015) highlight the desires to change the way stand-up comedy is produced. Similar concerns emerge in Speers' (2016) research on London-based rappers as cultural entrepreneurs, in which she notes tensions between rappers' creative practice and increasingly expected entrepreneurial activities, such as the post-performance pitch where rappers are given a platform at events to share information on how to purchase music and access online profiles. In terms of this creative and entrepreneurial tension, Speers (2016) highlights the challenging of expectations through the example of a rapper who assumes a different identity and speaks in an altered voice to explicitly and creatively question and confront the sales pitch moment. Overall, these studies show challenges to existing norms of entrepreneurial activity within specific sectors and geographic contexts.

The creative examination of entrepreneurship modes and norms is something we have explored in our project. As highlighted earlier, in addition to critically examining existing modes and norms of creative entrepreneurship, we are also interested in the new forms of cultural production and the formation of entrepreneurial pathways. Luckman (2018, p. 313) draws on a 4-year study of Australian designer makers to 'challenge conventional capitalist ideas of what entrepreneurial "success" looks like.' As part of this, Luckman (2018, p. 315) summarises decades of feminist critique that have challenged the "'risk-taking", gladiatorial – "Trump-esque" – entrepreneurial figure.' Of particular note is Luckman's analysis that contemporary makers are pursuing "DIY" entrepreneurial career paths. The possibilities for new ways of working associated with digital media technologies is also explored by Ashton and Patel (2018). Moving from the novelty associated with making millions from the bedroom, they examine how vlogging can be understood and constructed through "how to" materials and go on to address starting and sustaining a vlogging career. In relation to higher education, we argue that DIY entrepreneurial career paths

present challenges to established learning and teaching approaches and assumptions, and open up space for critical discussions.

### **3.4 Key research questions**

Given our research aims and insights gained through a review of relevant literature, the key research questions guiding our fieldwork activities were:

- What new forms of media and creative entrepreneurship are emerging/have emerged?
- How might these be effectively applied in teaching and learning about media enterprise?
- What are the implications of this? (E.g. subsequent benefits and challenges)

## 4. Methodology

The contours of the research design were shaped by participatory and design research methodologies to enable co-design and inquiry<sup>2</sup>. The project mobilised design thinking methods inspired by elements of a constructive design research approach developed by Tshimmel *et al* (2015), which draws on the work of Koskinen *et al* (2011). It is claimed that these methods offer opportunities for developing transversal learning and educational innovation. In particular, Koh *et al* (2015) argue that use of design practices in education can support the development of enabling learning environments, contributing to new learning competencies and cultures. Other cited benefits of design thinking approaches include their propensity to support the development of critical and reflective practice and an enterprising mindset (Koh *et al*, 2015). Specifically, design thinking methods typically embody holistic, collaborative and experiential models and approaches in order to explore complex and challenging ideas and issues in ways that are emergent and pluralistic. For example, visual and sense making tools and techniques are employed to iteratively explore, examine and experiment with problems and possibilities. We chose this type of approach to facilitate collaborative reflection with students, educators and entrepreneurs about the significance of evolving entrepreneurial ideas and practices. Reflecting characteristics elements of design thinking models, the project mobilised processes of exploration, ideation, experimentation and reflection.

Our aims were, first, to encourage students to think critically about the changing nature of creative careers, and second, to contribute this critical dimension to higher education pedagogy. In total, the project worked in collaboration with 24 creative

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<sup>2</sup> Ethical approval to proceed with the project was given by UWE Bristol's Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education Research Ethics Committee (Ref. ACE.18.09.006) and secondary approval was provided by the University of Southampton's Faculty of Arts and Humanities Ethics Committee (Ref: 46408).



and media subject undergraduate and postgraduate students, 11 educators/academics with experience and interest in creative and cultural entrepreneurship education and 4 entrepreneurs engaged in forms of cultural and creative enterprise.

The project began with an Open Innovation Lab (OIL). Talks and activities brought together students, educators and entrepreneurs, first, to critically explore the current landscape of creative entrepreneurship, and second, to generate ideas to inform teaching and learning approaches, with a key focus on media and cultural enterprise. An Open Innovation Lab (OIL) is a collaborative process tool, originating from business development approaches, recommended as a pedagogic creative entrepreneurship resource (Stenvall-Virtanen et al, 2016).

The OIL included presentations of industry practitioner's entrepreneurial experiences. These talks were given by female entrepreneurs about their use of digital media and creative technologies for creative and cultural work. In addition, the OIL featured presentations conveying academic perspectives about the changing and emerging contextual landscape of creative entrepreneurship and how they are reflected in higher education teaching. Through discussion activities, participating undergraduate students studying media enterprise were encouraged to share their insights and learning experiences. The OIL culminated in a workshop activity which sought to identify benefits, challenges and opportunities in relation to entrepreneurial teaching and learning. Insights generated through the OIL informed both pilot teaching activity and subsequent Innovation Workshops where emerging themes and ideas for pedagogic resources were further explored.

The pilot teaching activity focused on introducing students of undergraduate media subjects to hidden, less visible or recognised, and marginalised notions and examples

of creative cultural entrepreneurship. One such approach was Naudin's (2018) work focusing on identity and cultural entrepreneurs, which argues that forms of female and social entrepreneurship and quiet (less visible) entrepreneurship create new entrepreneurial identities, challenging and transgressing 'narrow views of entrepreneurship' (p. 104).

From our analysis of the OIL and pilot teaching activity, we identified codes indicating a series of pedagogical considerations for creative entrepreneurship education. The codes informed the generation of three themes – self-promotion, business planning, and spaces and networking – which functioned as areas for further exploration during the follow-up innovation workshops. These three themes were chosen because of their potential to support students' critical examination of established forms of entrepreneurship learning and teaching. The innovation workshop participants were creative and media postgraduate students, educators teaching business, creative and cultural studies, and participants with creative and cultural industry experience. These groups of participants were different to those who had engaged in the OIL and pilot teaching activity. All the participants engaged in collective reflection on our emerging research findings in order to consider new possibilities for, as the workshop title framed it: 'Thinking and Doing Enterprise Creatively'.

As part of our methodological approach, the use of design thinking processes and methods proved valuable, as both research resources and as pedagogical tools for exploring evolving creative career possibilities. The outputs and outcomes of the Open Innovation Lab, the pilot teaching activity and the Innovation Workshops were documented, creating textual and visual data for qualitative analysis, described below, which produced a series of thematic findings that follow.

## 5. Analysis and Results

A constructionist approach was taken in our analysis of findings in which statements were seen as a form of identity work (Taylor and Littleton, 2008). Taylor and Littleton (2008, p. 279) clarify how, 'speakers are understood to be already positioned within larger social formations but also active in their identity work and are able, within constraints, to position themselves and negotiate new positionings.' The larger social formations evident here are industry and education, and participants positioned themselves as: educators working in higher education with either industry backgrounds or research interests; industry practitioners with career pathways that could be described as entrepreneurial; and university students exploring their career aspirations. Data was recorded, transcribed and coded drawing on Taylor and Littleton's (2008, p. 280) approach to 'speaker's use of discursive resources' and the analysis of 'features which were common to the talk of different speakers, including images, expectations, and connections of sequence and consequence'.

### 5.1 Pedagogical considerations for creative entrepreneurship education

From our analysis, ten codes were identified indicating a series of pedagogical considerations for creative entrepreneurship education:

- 1) **Identity and performance of entrepreneurship** - underlining potential tensions and conflicts in how people identify with and enact entrepreneurship, involving the negotiation of personal and professional identities, and how these practices and performances of entrepreneurship are perceived and identified.
- 2) **Entrepreneurial values and valuing** - referring to values associated with being entrepreneurial and how entrepreneurship is *valued*.

- 3) **Power and inequality** - highlighting social dynamics and participation barriers such as lack of diversity and unequal representation/opportunity in creative and cultural work sectors.
- 4) **Money and business models** - conveying the challenges of generating income and surviving financially and a lack of appropriate business planning approaches reflecting the nature of contemporary creative and cultural work.
- 5) **Language and culture** - underlining the need to develop critical awareness of discourses and cultures of creative entrepreneurship.
- 6) **Space and place** - connoting an imperative to create accessible and flexible working environments, processes and platforms, physical and digital, for creative collaboration and experimentation, and in doing so widen participation .
- 7) **Sociality and networking** - emphasising the importance of generating beneficial social connections, informally and formally, and the building up of social and cultural assets and resources.
- 8) **Qualities and attributes** - relating to characteristics associated with the development of entrepreneurialism such as resourcefulness, resilience and tenacity.
- 9) **Skills and knowledge** - regarding an objective to adopt a generative and developmental approach, with an emphasis on creating enabling learning environments rather than on developing definitive *skills*, in order to equip students with the critical and reflective knowledge and capacity to identify how to build entrepreneurial competency.
- 10) **Pivotal experiences** - featuring as a common element of entrepreneurial journeys, for example, seminal events such as encountering challenges, or serendipitous moments of opportunity such as chance meetings, which serve as routes to progression/empowerment or mark turning points - both of which

can be aided by the development of opportunity awareness/the ability to capitalise on opportunity recognition.

The codes informed the generation of **three themes which functioned as areas for further exploration during the follow-up Innovation Workshops: self-promotion, business planning, and spaces and networking.**

A key project goal was to create pedagogic resources informed by our research insights, therefore the Innovation Workshops sought to reflect further upon how teaching and learning activities could be designed in ways that help to challenge existing understandings and encourage new ways of understanding creative entrepreneurship. Specifically, these three themes were chosen because of their potential to support student's engagement in thinking and practices which could play a role in developing their ability to create creative work.

Our research has produced a set of conceptual and practical considerations and resources that contribute to understanding how creative entrepreneurship may be understood as creating creative work. As well as the *10 areas for pedagogic consideration* described above, the themed activities developed for and through the Innovation Workshops, detailed below, function as project findings - they offer a set of ideas and materials for ways of working that can be used to support learning experiences.

Reflecting a constructive design approach, the Innovation Workshop activities enabled us to iteratively explore and develop ideas emerging from the OIL event and teaching pilot activity. The nature of the activities was intended to allow for pedagogic experimentation with ways of teaching creative entrepreneurship (Stenvall-Virtanen et al 2016). This approach dually responds to an impetus to

develop new and emerging pedagogies that cater to the needs of creative subject students (Kellet, 2006) through providing experiences that are relevant, inspiring, interactive, participatory, experiential and student centred (Nesta, 2007). Consequently, for each themed activity, participants were invited to work in small groups, engaging in tasks using visual tools and creative methods, described below. However, before exploring the three themes, the participants were given case-studies - entrepreneurial narratives developed from the entrepreneur's talks from the OIL.

## 5.2 Themed Workshop Activities

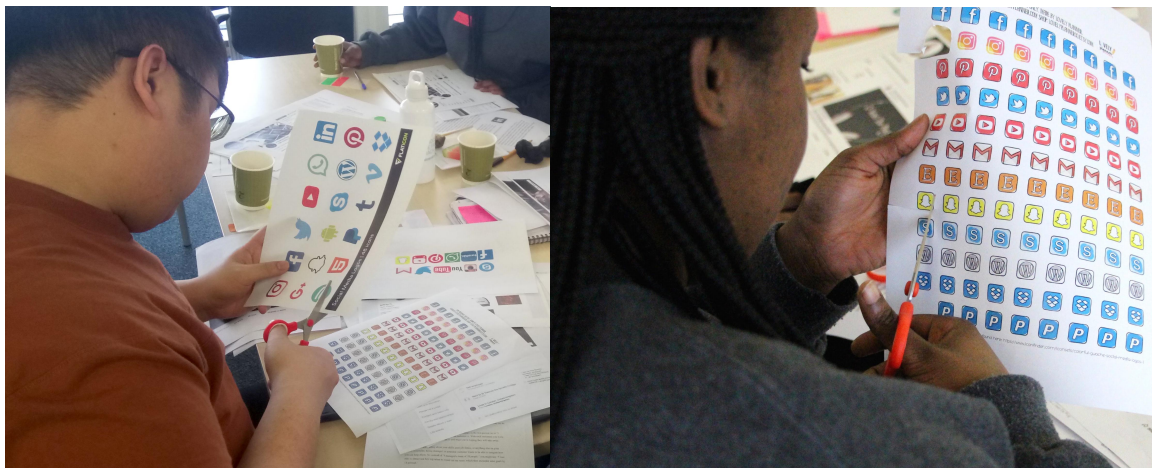
### *Entrepreneurial narratives*

Participants worked in groups to identify and discuss enablers and challenges relating to the stories. The aim of this exercise was to foreground the themed activities by generating insights about entrepreneurial experiences related to creative career pathways. We also shared our own emerging insights on issues generated by the research. As a further precursor to introducing these themed activities, the groups were asked to consider what assumptions might underpin entrepreneurial teaching and learning related to each area, and what benefits and challenges, advantages and disadvantages might be associated with these assumptions.

### *Self-promotion*

The *self-promotion* activity had two tasks. First, participants were asked to individually audit their social media use, using a template that required them to review and describe how they currently use social media platforms and channels. They were asked to consider and discuss strengths and weaknesses, and barriers and opportunities to social media use, in terms of how they represent themselves personally and professionally. Second, participants were asked to collectively outline a LinkedIn profile for a young aspiring creative professional. The purpose of these

exercises was to encourage participants to reflect on issues and challenges of creating and presenting professional identities in the context of developing creative careers. LinkedIn was chosen for its business and employment focus; however, future research could explore other relevant platforms and channels (Naudin and Patel, 2017). Participants were not restricted to populating an existing template, but were given the resources and freedom to critique existing templates and construct their own.



Figures 1 and 2: Self-promotion activity

### ***Spaces and networking activity***

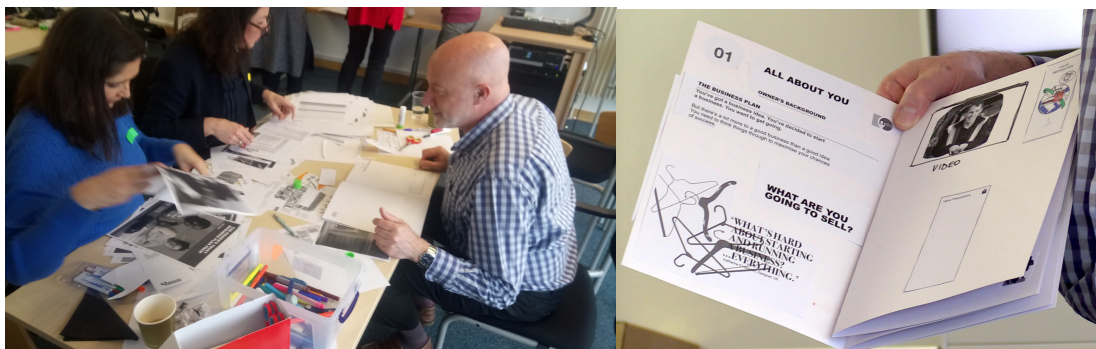
The *spaces and networking activity* had three tasks. First, the group was asked to generate a list of assets they considered to be important, significant or valuable in creating spaces and environments that enable cultural and creative practitioners to network and collaborate. Assets can include people (e.g. individuals, groups, networks and organisations), places, spaces, technologies, products, services, activities, skills, knowledge, experience and other tangible and intangible resources. Ideas were recorded on sticky notes. Next, the group was asked to create representations of the assets. Plasticine was provided for physically modelling ideas. Finally, group members were asked to select assets (represented by text or physical models) and place them, in turn, onto an asset map according to how they perceive their value.





### *Business planning activity*

Finally, the *business planning* activity centred on one key task. Participants were provided with a range of printed business planning resources (a range of existing guides, planning models and templates, articles and example plans) and asked to create a business plan 'zine' (DIY publication) that explores new ways of engaging in creative business planning. They were asked to reflect on challenges associated with self-generating creative and cultural work and consider what processes and resources might usefully support creative enterprise planning. The task encouraged participants to remix and modify existing resources, using collaging as a creative method. The goal of the activity was to enable participants to engage critically with business planning models and methods, examining weaknesses in current approaches and exploring other ways of visualising and planning future creative work.



Figures 5 and 6: Business Plan 'zine' activity

In the next section, we discuss and evaluate how participants benefited and the potential application and relevance of these activities<sup>3</sup> for contesting and creating pedagogical resources linked to teaching for and about the cultural and creative industries.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 9.2 for facilitation guides that are based on the self-promotion, spaces and networking and business planning workshop activities described in section 5.2.

## 6. Evaluation and Findings

In this section, we reflect, firstly, on the benefit of these activities for participants, and, secondly, on the materials created through the activities. To consider the further application and implications of these pedagogical activities for critically examining work in the cultural and creative industries, we return to the literature on cultural work introduced earlier. Specifically, we set out how these activities open up ways for identifying, discussing and creating pathways into creative work.

We found that the themed activities developed for and through the innovation workshops offered effective ways of engaging participants in critical and creative learning processes. As Gauntlett (2015) argues in the context of media and communications studies, the use of making activities that frame tasks creatively can offer opportunities for reflection. Such activities can prompt interrogation of ideas, experiences and technologies. The activities support the exploration of both subject and method, thus bringing together criticality and creativity. Similarly, design thinking methods, such as those we employed, make use of visual and sense-making tools to iteratively explore and reframe issues and problems in different ways to prompt reflection. **These methods, therefore, offer ways of developing relevant and engaging pedagogical approaches and resources to support students in critically exploring and considering different issues associated with creative entrepreneurship and enterprise.**

The following section reflects on the project participants' engagement with the activities from the OIL and the innovation workshops and examines how the pedagogical resources developed have the potential to contest, remix and recreate learning and teaching for/about creative entrepreneurship.

## 6.1 Entrepreneurial Stories as Life Stories

A key resource developed from the OIL was the career narratives or biographies of the participating entrepreneurs. Cultural work literature has provided critical reflection on the status of creative work biographies. Adkins (2013) notes that they are characterised by 'portfolio and/or precarious patterns of work, a lack of discernible boundaries between working life and home life, life-world detraditionalization, continuous patterns of skilling and re-skilling, as well as the positioning of work as a self-managed, self-directed, unfolding event' (p. 149).

The career narratives that emerged through the OIL reflected many of the issues and debates in this literature. In our research these narratives emerged in dialogue between entrepreneurs, educators, and students. Rather than attempting a coherent and complete narrative, the dialogue encouraged the emergence of challenges and contingencies. The characteristics of creative work biographies identified by Adkins (2013) and others became explicit talking points. This was vital for opening up understandings of *what* creative work involves and *who* creative workers can be.

A further finding that emerged through our reflections on the activities was the extent to which entrepreneurial narratives are accidental and unexpected rather than coherent and planned. What might be identified and used as examples of entrepreneurship, for example in higher education learning and teaching, were rarely defined as such by our industry practitioners. The planned networking events and carefully created projects were intricately bound up with accidents, arguments and serendipitous encounters. In exploring creative work futures with higher education students, we caution against post-hoc explanations that seamlessly map out creative work opportunities and careers. Moreover, returning to Naudin and Patel's (2017) analysis, the recognition of constraints is essential. Whether the stories generated in

this project show deliberate choices or not, a range of related social, economic and cultural factors is always in operation.

## **6.2 Self-promotion: narratives of the self and the world**

Several scholars have examined the strategic use of social media to cultivate a publicly accessible identity (Naudin and Patel, 2017). Returning to Speers' (2016) research with rappers, we can see the importance of self-promotion within contexts of oversupply: 'if rappers are not prepared to multi-task, brand and sell themselves, there is an abundance of others willing to do the same' (p. 68). No doubt, this partly explains the emphasis that higher education practitioners place on 'brand and sell' as part of the curriculum. In developing an innovation workshop activity on social media and self-promotion, we took from the OIL the importance of opportunities for discussion rather than adherence to a template. It was clear from the OIL that entrepreneurial life stories are complex and can include a range of unanticipated, even undesirable roles and activities. Particular communication techniques have become well-established. The template nature of LinkedIn encourages a chronological sequence of successes. This activity prompted participants to reflect on the narratives of the self that the template might help to generate, rather than asking them to fill in a template for themselves. They also reflected on the norms and assumptions of using social media to create and promote an entrepreneurial self. The activity prompted participants to question what constitutes professional presentation and to reconsider perceived protocols.

## **6.3 Spaces and networking: reimagining creative collaboration**

In their discussion of co-working spaces, Bandinelli and Gandini (2019) use the notion of 'collaborative individualism' to identify the 'entanglement of collaborative discourses and practices with the pursuit of individual professional success' (p. 103).

The workshops looked at the utility of networking and co-working, and the importance of accessible and inclusive spaces. Our workshop activities promoted discussion around how spaces are organised. For example, the participants debated whether and how spaces should be demarcated and boundaries created. They noted the importance of childcare facilities. By using asset mapping, participants could reflect on their priorities rather than reproduce established norms of studio or co-working spaces. Following this, participants could then articulate their priorities into a modelled area rendered through plasticine. Again, what was offered was the stimulus to imagine spaces as part of a vision for potential creative work, rather than memorising or rehearsing extant versions.

The workshop activities also led participants to question the way in which the concept of networking is understood. As Naudin (2018) underlines, the notion of cultivating *networks* offers a complex and fluid way of recognising the importance of developing enabling and supportive relationships. This contrasts with formal notions of professional networking, which are often disliked or rejected by entrepreneurs engaged in creative work. Such insights are important in shaping more nuanced and dynamic approaches to teaching and learning approaches in higher education, which tend to rely on less agile forms of thinking and practices.

#### **6.4 Business planning: failure, shortcomings and everyday practice**

We suggest that the documents and activities employed within higher education to foster creative entrepreneurship and the creation of creative careers must be critically examined for the conventions and norms they operationalise. For example, the business plan is an approach that is commonly used to set out a business's aims and activities and communicate them, for instance to potential funders. Within our project, the business plan was conceived as a process as much as a document, with the emphasis on examining and remixing its structural and stylistic conventions.

The assumed starting points and pathways for creative work were unsettled. We considered what is at stake in presenting existing businesses and careers as prompts for generating ideas, compared to more open-ended explorations of newly forming industry and technological contexts. For example, participants in the first innovation workshop renamed and extracted specific stages of the business plan when creating their zine. The participants challenged the established business plan structures and terminologies. In the second innovation workshop, a similar cut and paste approach led to a new cyclical model, augmented with annotations. Of course, the efficacy and potential utility of the cut and paste zine approach for developing business models have not been explored, but this approach to remixing business planning prompted reflection and rearticulation.

We identified a tension in the process of developing an associated business plan, which tends to arise when educators explore potential career pathways and occupations with higher education students. Compaine and Hoag (2012, p. 35), who conducted a study of media entrepreneurship and 'big media', asked their interview participants to discuss where their ideas come from. Several media entrepreneurs participating in that study referred to industry structure (e.g. ownership, concentration) as their main source of inspiration. More specifically, they identified shortcomings: 'they expressed belief that big media companies are unable to take risks, be innovative, act quickly, or even to see obvious opportunities' (p. 42). Similarly, we suggest that the failures and shortcomings of existing business and the possibilities of everyday creative practice are important points of reference for exploring how to create creative work. We question how existing business planning toolkits and resources operate from 'originality' as a starting point when, for example socioeconomic factors and constraints can lead to 'shortcomings' and constrain the possibilities for everyday creative practice (Naudin and Patel, 2017; Ekinsmyth, 2014; Luckman, 2018).

## 6.5 Summary of findings

In summary, we identified the value of engaging with:

- Life stories revealing entrepreneurial narratives that are unexpected, accidental and complex;
- Business planning processes that *remix* conventional approaches;
- Self-promotion/branding approaches that question existing materials and perceived protocols;
- Processes that enable participants to reimagine the nature of creative collaboration in terms of co-working spaces and networking practices.

Moreover, when taken together with (as informed by and reflecting) the 10 pedagogic codes for considerations, these themed activities and resources offer pedagogic potential to contest, remix and recreate learning and teaching for/about creative entrepreneurship.

## 7. Conclusions

Berglund (2013) examines how entrepreneurship education can be used to teach schoolchildren to work on improving their selves. This is described as 'shadow-boxing' with the self. Berglund (2013) argues that, instead, entrepreneurship education should involve 'critical reflection on its political dimensions, human limits, alternative ideals and the collective efforts that are part of entrepreneurial endeavours' (p. 731). Embedded throughout the pedagogical activities and materials generated through this project is a commitment to questioning how and why things are the way they are.

The pedagogical resources developed through this project<sup>4</sup> raise questions not just about the entrepreneurial self and how to fulfil entrepreneurial futures, but about the availability and nature of work. For each of activities outlined, the emphasis is not on how aspiring cultural workers might perform better, for example how they might produce the most effective social media profile or the most complete business plan; instead, the pedagogical practice of remixing aims to challenge the status of authoritative resources and open up a space to question the entrepreneurial practices and contexts they allude to.

A pressing question for us in developing and assessing these activities and materials is their effectiveness for challenging norms and creating more diverse visions of creative entrepreneurship. For example, it is possible to question the extent to which workspaces modelled in plasticine may have any visibility or purchase in shaping the design and operation of co-working spaces. Whilst we acknowledge such questions, we would stress that this project was conducted as part of ongoing

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 9.1 and 9.2 (example module descriptor and activity guides) and the interactive project web doc ([www.unexpectedenterprises.org](http://www.unexpectedenterprises.org)).



higher education learning and teaching on creative entrepreneurship. What we provide is an active challenge and alternative to currently dominant forms of entrepreneurship education. As outlined in this report, there are important scholarship and industry debates that challenge the dominant narratives of entrepreneurship. Our aim has been to bring these into the higher education learning and teaching context in order to question and reinterpret creative entrepreneurship.

### **7.1 Limitations, recommendations and future research**

In reflecting on the limitations of this research study, it would seem beneficial to increase the scope and scale of the research, beyond media and creative subject undergraduate and post-graduate students and educators at two universities in the south of England. For example, by increasing the sample size of participants and including geographic variation of collaborating institutions in any future research.

A key recommendation stemming from this study is that we work with professional organisations (for example, [EEUK](#)) involved in thinking about higher education enterprise education to review and evaluate the findings, in order to consider their potential to inform curriculum development (for instance, in relation to subject benchmarks and to the work of [Advance HE](#)).

In addition, we propose that future research be undertaken which could engage in more pedagogic evaluation with media and creative subject students and with more input from a range of creative and media sectors and practitioners. Consequent research should also seek to explicitly engage with issues of diversity and inclusion within the creative industries.

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## 9. Appendices



## Media Enterprise & Environments

*(Undergraduate Media Subject Programme,  
Level 2, 30 credits/15 ECTS)*

This module will help you to develop your understanding of the contexts and environments in which media practitioners engage in creative work. This module presents a range of ideas and concepts related to media enterprise (media work projects, freelancing and creative businesses/organisations), entrepreneurship (activities that create new opportunities for media enterprise) and environments (the wider cultural, political and economic context in media enterprise work occurs).

Through talks and lectures, seminars and workshops, case study research, independent learning and live briefs/work placements you will critically reflect on the practices, characteristics and environments associated with professional media roles in different enterprise contexts and consider how these relate to your own values, skills, practices and career interests.

The module will support you to identify and explore your personal career interests and aspirations and the opportunities offered, directly and indirectly, by the creative industries. You will develop communication and presentation skills and create materials that help you to promote yourself to potential employers or clients. You will develop enterprising and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to support your professional development.

**Key themes:** creative and media enterprises, creative and cultural entrepreneurship, unexpected enterprises, creative and cultural industries, creative economy, innovation and creativity, creative spaces and networks, professional identity and self-promotion. Within these themes concepts and topics are explored such as cultural ecologies, creative milieu, creative clusters, creative cities, creative labour, freelancing, collaborative production methodologies and pathways to creative work.

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<sup>5</sup> As well as applying learning from the research project, the module descriptor builds on a media enterprise and environments module specification first created by Rod Dickinson at UWE Bristol, as part of a BA Hons in Creative Media Design, which was subsequently developed and taught by project researcher Emma Agusita.



## Module Aims

- To develop your critical and contextual understanding of media work in relation industry enterprise practices, environments and career opportunities.
- To enable you to identify and explore career interests, aspirations and opportunities for media practitioners within the creative industries.
- To help you to develop enterprising and entrepreneurial skills and knowledge in order to assist your professional development.

## Module Objectives

- You will engage with talks/lectures and seminar/workshop activities that enable you to explore media enterprise contexts and environments.
- You will carry out case study research exploring activities, roles, skills, practices and attributes of media enterprise practitioners (typically, small businesses, organisations and freelancers who engage in media work).
- You will engage with learning activities that enable you to consider and identify career interests and aspirations and to produce self-promotional materials.
- You will undertake a work placement or engage with a live brief set by industry practitioners that enables you to engage with and experience media enterprise practices and settings and to reflect on your own career interests.
- You will engage in reflective seminar and workshop activities, and in evaluative writing that encourages you to critically consider the enterprise contexts of professional media work.

## Module Assessment

**Assessment 1** - Case-study (contextualisation of creative media enterprise research)

**Assessment 2** - Portfolio (creation of self-promotional materials)

**Assessment 3** - Report (critical evaluation of live-brief/work placement vis-à-vis enterprise and entrepreneurship context)

# Indicative Curriculum Topics

## Contextual Knowledge

- **The Creative Industries Landscape and Economy**
  - Creative Industry and Economy: Definitions, Classifications, Patterns
  - Creative Clusters and Cities
  - The Creative Sector – Fields, Media Businesses and Roles
  - Equality, Access and Participation
- **Creative Enterprises and Creative Entrepreneurship**
  - Discourses and Cultures
  - Cultural Entrepreneurship and Unexpected Enterprises
  - Freelancing and Creative Labour (opportunity, precarity)
  - Pathways to Media Work (journeys and narratives)
  - Creating Enterprises (business planning, models and frameworks)
- **Creative Networks and Cultural Ecologies**
  - Nature of Networks and Ecologies for Creative Work
  - Creative Spaces, Places and Environments: Media Milieu
- **Creative Ideas and Innovation**
  - Creative Production Methodologies (collaboration and co-creativity)

## 'Work on the Self'

- **Professional Identity**
  - Values, Interests and Aspirations
  - Exploring the Entrepreneurial Self
  - Branding and Representation
- **Marketing and Self-Promotion**
  - Personal Communications Strategy
  - Media – Managing Social Profiles and Engagement
  - Pitching and Presenting
- **Sociality and Networking**
  - Cultivating Professional Connections and Relationships
- **Work in the Creative Industries (live-brief/work placement)**
  - Engaging Critically with Media Enterprise Work
  - Creating Work Opportunities – Self-Actualisation: Tools and Resources
- **Building Entrepreneurial and Enterprising Competency**
  - Reflecting on Qualities and Attributes, Skills and Knowledge

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the module students should be able to:

- Understand, analyse and evaluate the broader contexts of media enterprise as related to media work taking place in the creative and cultural industries; (Assessments 1 & 3)
- Understand, analyse and evaluate discourses and practices of creative and cultural entrepreneurship as they connect to media work; (Assessments 1, 2 & 3)
- Identify a range of media enterprise roles, practices, activities and opportunities; (Assessments 1, 2 & 3)
- Identify enterprising and entrepreneurial skills and attributes of those working within different media enterprise roles and contexts; (Assessments 1, 2 & 3)
- Evaluate the working practices and contexts of a media enterprise and relate this knowledge to your own practice and career interests; (Assessments 1, 2 & 3)
- Create a communications strategy and a range of materials for the purpose of professional self-promotion; (Assessment 2)
- Develop a range of research, presentation and communications skills; (Assessments 1, 2 & 3)
- Cultivate enterprising and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to support professional development as a media practitioner. (Assessments 1, 2 & 3).

## 9.2 Pedagogic Resource: themed innovation workshop activities

(Participants activity instructions/facilitation guides)



### **Self-Promotion**

#### Task 1:

Using the template provided, audit your social media use – this requires you to think about, describe and reflect on how you currently use social media networks/platforms/channels for personal and/or professional use. This encourages you to consider the strengths and weaknesses of your current use, whether there are barriers to using it in the way you would like to and if there are opportunities for enhancing your use e.g. by reviewing and making changes to the way you represent yourself personally and professionally.

#### Task 2:

Using profile information and visual materials provided, produce an outline LinkedIn profile for a young music producer. Use the LinkedIn template (with section prompts) and other resources provided to help you think about what you'd like to include in producing a profile summary and creating an outline profile.

#### **Suggested facilitation resources:**

Templates – social media audit and LinkedIn template.

Example profile information and visual materials.

Resources to support reflection on profile creation (e.g. online articles which provide advice, guidance and examples on writing/creating professional profiles)

*Nb. Encourage participants to think critically about what they might want to include/not include and whether this reflects/challenges existing protocols and processes.*

Pens/pencils (different colours)

Sellotape/Glue

Scissors


**Recommended time for activity:** approx. 1 hour (note: include time for feedback).



## SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT

<b><u>Where?</u></b> (Social media accounts: channel/platform e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	<b><u>What?</u></b> (Environment: Type/feel, content/posts: e.g. video /photos/text/article)	<b><u>Who?</u></b> (Audience: e.g. no. of users/ followers – friends, family, colleagues, clients, etc.)	<b><u>Why?</u></b> (Personal/ professional, forms of use/purpose)	<b><u>When?</u></b> (Frequency/ quantity of use)	Strengths/ weaknesses	Challenges/ Opportunities (E.g. obstacles, possibilities for change)	Other notes

## LinkedIn Profile

	<p>Name:</p> <p>Headline:</p>
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## Summary

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### Experience - *Description and tags*

(Education, work history, skills)

Links to relevant sites

Other recommended strategies/content  
(Connections, recommendations, media files e.g. videos/images etc.)



## Spaces and Networking

Task 1: As a group, generate a list of components ('assets') that you consider are important/significant/valuable in creating spaces and environments that enable cultural and creative workers/practitioners/entrepreneurs/professionals to network and collaborate.

Components/assets may include:

People (e.g. groups, individuals, organisations, companies etc.)

Spaces (e.g. non-physical spaces or

Places (e.g. buildings, areas/locations etc.)

Technologies (e.g. tools, platforms etc.)

Products

Services

Activities/Practices

Skills (e.g. technical/social/cultural)

Knowledge (of...)

Experience (of...)

Other resources

*Try to think of specifics e.g. names of people, places, products, technologies.*

Task 2: Create representations of these components using drawings/words (*using sticky notes*) or by making plasticine models (*as a group you will be mapping all the representations onto an A1 sheet of paper so ensure they are made at an appropriate scale to fit!*)

Task 3: In turn, each group member should select an asset of their choice/creation and place it onto the asset map (large sheet with concentric circles in it\*) according to how they view it:

*By placing in centrally on the map you are indicating it is of most value/importance/significance/contributes most. By placing it less centrally, in the outer circles you are indicating it is of less importance/value/significance but that it is still valuable.*

When placing the asset on the map say what it is and why you are placing it in your chosen location on the map.

*Any 'assets' that have connections between them e.g. people and places can be shown using string/blue tack to connect them.*

**Suggested facilitation resources:**

\*Asset maps (large sheets of paper, e.g. A1 size, with 3 concentric circles drawn on them)

Sticky notes/modelling materials

Pens/pencils (different colours)

Sellotape/Glue

String

Scissors

**Recommended time for activity:** approx. 1 hour (note: include time for feedback).

\* This approach takes inspiration from and references the following work:

Alexiou, K., Agusita, E., Alevizou, G., Chapain, C., Zamenopoulos, T. & Turner, J. (2016). Asset mapping and civic creativity. In I. Hargreaves and J. Hartley (Eds.), *The creative citizen unbound: how social media and DIY culture contribute to democracy, communities and the creative economy* (pp. 181–204). Bristol: Policy Press.





## **Business Planning**

Make a business plan 'zine' with a focus on business planning for creative professionals...Try to consider what information/resources might be relevant for creative and cultural workers who want to engage in their own forms of enterprise – what might be most useful? Are there new ways of thinking about and doing business planning?

"A zine, pronounced "zeen" (just like the end of the word magazine), is a homemade publication. There are no set-in-stone rules for making zines. A zine can be about anything you're interested in... The content and appearance of a zine is completely up to the creator and can be as simple or as complicated as you want" – Celia Perez, *Brightly*

Suggestion:

Remix and modify elements of the sample materials in order to collage your own ideas. i.e. cut-out and stick stuff!

You could layer this with your own annotations and drawings.... *creative methods are encouraged!*

### **Suggested facilitation resources:**

Business plan printouts – materials that present different approaches to business planning e.g. this could include Nesta's Creative Enterprise Toolkit, and visual business plan examples and canvases.

Pens/pencils (different colours)

Sellotape/Glue

Scissors

**Recommended time for activity:** approx. 1 hour (note: include time for feedback).