

**Structured dialogue**

**EU – Cultural Sector**

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**OBSTACLES TO ARTISTS' CREATIVITY IN THE EU AND  
REALISTIC SOLUTIONS: A PRE-STUDY**

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**a paper commissioned by the Creativity and Creation Working Group**

**Access to Culture Platform**



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## BACKGROUND

Participation in cultural life, exposure to artistic creation, access to artistic skills and knowledge enriches individuals and communities, and strengthens the civic and social nets that compose the fabric of our European societies.

The arts can have many different impacts on society. If the right circumstances are present, they can foster citizens' open-mindedness, critical awareness and potential for individual creativity, thus contributing to a supportive environment for general creativity in society. A number of European studies have already underlined the benefits for enterprises, commercial sectors, public services and workers in those fields that the presence of artists can offer.

If artists<sup>1</sup> are counted on to fulfil essential tasks in the development of society, from stimulator (catalyst) to facilitator to educator, and are expected to do so on account of their being creative, they need a framework that allows them to develop their creativity. In order to support this we believe it is necessary to deepen our knowledge of the circumstances that sustain creativity and explore what the barriers might be to its development. How do we create training, employment and social conditions conducive to the growth of artistic creativity and how do we best mitigate against current obstacles?

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<sup>1</sup> In this context, the notion of "artist" is understood as including artistic creators (creators of original works such as authors, architects, choreographers, composers, visual and graphic artists, film directors, street artists, circus artists, etc.) as well as artistic interpreters (creative interpreters who contribute to the creation and manifestation of a work, such as but not limited to literary translators, editors, actors, dancers, singers, musicians...)

## THE STUDY

The purpose of this study on Creativity, in the context of policy and planning, would therefore be to:

- [ *research* those circumstances that best encourage and support artists' creativity, including,
  - exploration of theoretical context surrounding the encouragement of creativity
  - good practice used by artists to develop their own creativity
- [ *examine* existing policies and schemes directed at developing artists' creativity and explore how, and, if these differ from those available to the general population (e.g. other workers or sectors)?
- [ *identify* models of, transferable, existing exemplary practice, available to artists and other workers, including
- [ optimal conditions developed by mobility schemes and residencies
- [ *present* a series of case studies offering effective ways of providing this support including,
  - good models in existing national unemployment schemes for artists,
  - support that Life Long Learning programmes can offer to artists
  - examples of partnerships between artists and universities/other enterprises that support artists' creativity
- [ *identify* current obstacles and barriers to the development of artists' creativity.
- [ *outline*, feasible, short, medium and long term solutions to overcoming these obstacles at both EU and MS level
- [ *look at* the implications this research might have for reconsidering and reframing the EU's culture programme(s)?

Many stakeholders take for granted that the artists are creative, since their daily work is to create. But all artists, even those who have benefited from high-quality artistic education and training, need to develop this competence on a day to day basis and through other channels than formal training. In this, artists are no different from other workers. Knowing that "creativity" can be fostered and incentivised but not taught, how can policymakers contribute to its development?

## **METHODOLOGY SUGGESTIONS**

- [ Members of the Creativity & Creation Working Group, through their networks and circles, help to identify good and bad practice, policies and schemes
- [ The researcher interviews stakeholders and analyse the collected data
- [ The researcher writes a preliminary analysis proposing preliminary recommendations to the EU, the MS and the civil society and feasibility study outlining a budget and plan for a comprehensive study, taking into consideration the concept of European Added Value and the importance of the linkages identified in the Value Chain of Processes

A first set of recommendations should be presented during the European Culture Forum 2011.

## **TIMEFRAME**

The analysis of the data for the comprehensive document should be delivered on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, after a work session with the Creativity & Creation Working Group, and should include *a set of key questions to explore in a possible bigger study on the subject and elements on a related methodological approach.*

## PROPOSED STUDY

1. *Research* into those circumstances that best encourage and support artists' creativity, including:

- good practice used by **artists** to develop their own creativity
- reports on **circumstances** contributing to the development of creativity

This would involve desktop investigation into findings from appropriate research and theoretical explanations of the ways artists (and others) develop their creativity and exploration of ways which creativity is encouraged and developed in broader society and education and learning. e.g.

### **Practice.**

Examine a number of those strategies cited by artists as contributing to their own creative development - through desk-top research of reports and selected interviews.

- [ Work placement - emerging artists undertaking internships, placements within creative industries and other creative and cultural contexts.
- [ Industry experience - including access to apprenticeships and other similar schemes.
- [ Creative clustering - organised by cities or by groups of young artists themselves, taking up cheap accommodation offers, finding run-down ex-manufacturing areas (c.f. Fish Island in Hoxton, London) and renting space at cheap cost.
- [ Multi-disciplinary clustering with other small scale businesses and cultural initiatives e.g, Rhur City of Culture initiatives
- [ International residencies - including with creative industries as well as arts and culture organisations.
- [ Partnerships - with non-artists, especially in IT, media contexts and between art forms to explore innovative ways of working
- [ Coaching and mentorship - from more established artists for emerging artists and artists who are new arrivals in a new cultural context
- [ Cheap places to both work and display work e.g. schemes to use empty shops etc. popular in cities such as Glasgow, Helsinki.
- [ Places to meet and network with other artists.

- [ Moving to cities such as Berlin where accommodation and living is cheap and young creatives are welcome.
- [ Access to markets/places where there is a demand for creative skills
- [ Access to small (low interest) loans, or unemployment benefit schemes, in order to undertake creative research and initiate, develop and evaluate projects, not only whilst creating the work
- [ International residencies - particularly in intercultural contexts, offering real contact with the local community and its artists, crafts people as well as the institution/organisation being placed with
- [ International residences with non-arts organisations, creative industries.
- [ Mobility schemes - national and international
- [ Open residencies - without any expected outcomes
- [ Opportunities to develop inter-cultural practice and experience.
- [ Cross-sectoral working - c.f. Crossover: How Artists Build Careers across Commercial, Nonprofit and Community Work Arts Research Monitor - December 2010

Individual artists would be identified for interview through working group and partners including:

- [ ELIA (artists emerging from art schools across EU)
- [ IETM (artists working on intercultural/trans-national projects across EU)
- [ Cultuur-Ondernemen (programmes for artists in Netherlands)
- [ Arts Council England, Creative Scotland, NESTA, Creative, Cultural Skills (programmes for artists UK)
- [ Theatre Information Centre and TEAK, (artists initiatives in Finland)
- [ Recipients ECF travel grants (EU and C and E Europe) through Rhiz.eu
- [ University of Gothenburg -making art work project.

### **Reports and Case studies**

- [ Creative Career Stories, Ball L, Pollard E, Stanley N, Oakley J.  
*Research into the ways in which young artists develop their careers. Cites the role of **work placements and industry experience** as being seen as central to career development, gaining experience and building work contacts in the lives of most emerging artists.*

- [ Interviews with established artists around developing their creativity  
<http://www.2010lab.tv/en/list/Why-are-you-creative/91>
  
- [ Creative Clusters and Innovation NESTA Nov 2010 and The Geography of Creativity 2009  
*Looking at role of **co-location** and **creative clusters** and having space with like-minded creatives/artists in creativity and innovation.*
  
- [ <http://www.creativefactory.nl/>  
*Rotterdam scheme for young artists - offering everything from cheap rental on spaces to coaching, partnerships, events, news*
  
- [ The Impact Of Culture On Creativity KEA for DGV  
*Policies on innovation need to be developed so as to recognise **the cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary aspect of “creativity”** which mixes elements of “culture-based creativity”, “economic” as well as “technological innovation.”*
  
- [ <http://www.2010lab.tv/en/cities>  
*Overview initiatives different cities in EU, Capitals of Culture etc.*
  
- [ <http://www.ccskills.org.uk/Apprenticeships/CreativeApprenticeships/tabid/82/Default.aspx>  
***Apprenticeship initiatives** Including short case studies*

**2. Examine** existing and past policies and schemes directed at developing artists' creativity. Identify models of, transferable, existing exemplary practice, available to artists and other workers.

Including:

- optimal conditions developed by mobility schemes, residencies and other support
- how, and if, these differ from those available to the general population (e.g. other workers or sectors).

Desk-top research into Mobility Schemes.

Including comparative research referencing:

- [ Ericarts - Mobility Matters - schemes
- [ ENTACT - Artists Moving and Learning - lifelong learning context
- [ Changing Rooms Project - Trans-Europe Halles and partners

Identifying different kinds of initiatives at both a national, regional and local level, desktop research into examples of the kinds of schemes that are available, selected interviews with an agreed number of recipients of such awards and/or possibilities. Many of these at a city, regional or national level centre around support for creative clusters and or cheap studio/exhibition/performance spaces, including:

- [ EU Cities of Culture,
- [ re-configuration of spaces previously used for industry as incubator spaces
- [ local initiatives such as making unused shop fronts, unused business premises available to young/emerging artists - London, Rotterdam, Berlin, Glasgow, Liverpool
- [ formalising anti-squatting possibilities to make studio spaces available- London, Amsterdam, Brussels

e.g.

- [ Rhur.2010
  - Initiatives of European Capital of Culture 2010 "Essen for the Ruhr" including international residencies, creative quarters, 2010.lab, exchange across EU creative ideas, celebration.
  - <http://www.essen-fuer-das-ruhrgebiet.ruhr2010.de/index.php?id=3038&L=1>
- [ <http://www.creativefactory.nl/>
  - Rotterdam scheme for young artists - offering everything from cheap rental on spaces to coaching, partnerships, events, news*
- [ Escalator Supporting Artists in the East of England Programme ACE East
  - Offering small amounts of funding, mentorship, spaces - in partnership with leading arts organisations in the region.*
- [ J Montgomery: Creative business incubators and managed workspaces. Planning,



Practice, & Research, 22 Routledge 2007

*Looking at support schemes in UK, Australia, Ireland, Europe that focus on offering space and surrounding oneself with like-minded individuals*

[ Cultuur-Ondernemen.Netherlands

*Supporting development of creativity through supporting development of entrepreneurship, loans, training, setting up spaces, links with other industries and third sector organisations*

[ Guidelines for Employers offering Work Placement Schemes in the Creative Industries Skillset, CCS, ACE

*Examples of effective practice models and case studies as well as guidelines*

[ ACE Year of Artist Year of the Artist – Evaluation of the programme in England Research report 26, by Lucy Hutton and Clare Fenn 2002

*Learning from year of 1000 artists placements throughout UK*

[ freefall: Arts Council England International Artists Fellowships 2001-2003 ACE 2004

*Report of Arts Council England initiative from artists point of view*

[ Evaluation Pilot NESTA International Cultural Leadership Awards C Tiller 2005

*Evaluation for NESTA of Pilot Programme for artists and cultural workers focused on role of international working and learning in developing entrepreneurship and change*

[ CCSkills: Creative Apprenticeship Schemes (not for graduates but a possible model)

*Access to creative industries for young people who are not coming from usual routes - highlighting financial, class, ethnicity, educational, gender barriers.*

[ Pépinières Parcours d'artistes – Artists' experiences 2005 – 2008

*Currently has EU funded programme to do more research into international exchanges and placements*

[ Artist Links England Brazil. External Evaluation. Momentum Associates and New

Media Networks. ACE Sept 2010

*External Evaluation of Artist Links England-Brazil Final report to Arts Council England and the British Council with useful suggestions regarding exchange programmes*

[ Do it yourself: Cultural and Creative self-employment in hard times. New Deal of Mind for ACE 2009

*Study of the benefits and learning from the UK Enterprise Allowance scheme that was so successful in encouraging creativity and giving openings for creative enterprise in 1980s UK. Based on additional benefits alongside Unemployment Benefits.*

**3. Present** a series of case studies offering effective ways of providing this support including,

- good models in existing national unemployment schemes for artists,
- support that Life Long Learning programmes can offer to artists
- examples of partnerships between artists and universities/other enterprises that support artists' creativity

National Unemployment Schemes

Looking at different models including:

UK - None currently but Enterprise Allowance in past. See above report. Creative and other entrepreneurs paid additional unemployment benefit if setting up own company.

KSK Social Security Scheme for Artists Germany. Paying half of artists' social security insurance. Although the debate is on-going. <http://www.kulturrat.de/>

Austrian Law on Social Security Artists - some specific support with pensions and unemployment benefits.

- France - artists' Social Security Scheme - special status for performers on short-term contracts such as "Intermittents du spectacle" scheme for those working in film or sound recording, in theatre or music productions or in festivals.

Finland artists and other short contract workers are covered by Social Security (but

not freelance artists) and from 2008 artists given recognition of particular circumstances.

Netherlands - WIK scheme (up to 4 yrs in 10 yrs), artists entitled to 70% of unemployment benefit but able to earn additional income up to 125% of the benefit. Professional expenses may be deducted from the gross supplementary earnings before these are offset against the benefit payments.

- New Zealand. Pathways to Arts and Cultural Employment (PACE). Unemployed 'cultural worker' can list "art as first career choice. Must still sign a Job Seeker Agreement, but freed from looking for work outside their field. The term 'cultural worker' incorporates practitioners involved in arts administration, preservation, tuition production, curation, as well as those working in the design industry, and, of course, those involved in creating original works.

Lifelong Learning programmes

Many of the EU lifelong learning programmes offer artists opportunities for mobility possibilities but are often aimed at artists working within institutions or organisations. There are less opportunities for those who are working freelance or as part of SMEs.

Many universities, conservatoires do offer Masters programmes but often these are out of the financial reach of emerging creatives or older artists coming from other countries. Look at flexibility of post-graduate programmes.

Partnerships artists and other enterprises

Universities and Art Schools. Creative incubator units e.g. Paideia Project-Incubator, Umea Arts Campus, Sweden, Northern Periphery programme - Norway, Finland, Scotland. Sweden etc.

Companies working with artists in residence. e.g. Philips, IKEA. c.f. Ways of Working: Placing Artists in Business Contexts, ACE 2002

Creative Community Building through Cross-Sector Collaboration  
Pub Centre for Creative Communities 2004 ISBN 96080639

Third Sector Partnerships c.f. The Creative Worker.

**4. Identify current obstacles and barriers to the development of artists' creativity.**

Desktop research into relevant reports and literature and initiatives to both identify and combat these. Interviews with select group of artists - including artists from newer EU countries where the move from state supported systems to the market based/privately funded arts world has caused particular issues.

e.g.

- Institute for Employment Studies Public Policy Research UK Reports 477 &471 *IES survey of 10,000 graduates from three graduating years ('02, '03 and '04) focusing on time taken to establish career, the difficulties/challenges making the transition to work and professional practice, and the importance of professional development. A small number of in-depth telephone surveys (approx. 30) then explored portfolio nature of early career development.*

*"A key barrier to career progression identified was **lack of finance** to enable individuals to undertake learning to benefit their practice and develop new knowledge, either through postgraduate study, moving to relatively risky but rewarding jobs, or by undertaking low or unpaid roles to gain experience.*

*Other career inhibitors were perceived **lack of opportunities, relevant skills or experience**, coupled with competition and the difficulties encountered in gaining entry to new areas of work". Ball L, Pollard E, Stanley N (Jan 2010) *Creative Graduates Creative Futures**

e.g.

- **79% working part-time**
- **42% having to undertake unpaid work** to get experience (not feasible without support from partners, parents, bank loans, excludes progress for those from less privileged backgrounds)
- **rely on combined income streams** many of which are not well paid, at least 33% earning less than national average
- **relying on combined income streams means that *between contracts or commissions have no income*** portfolio careers emphasises low earnings
- **-not enough income to cover lifelong learning** although most would welcome opportunity
- **-many of opportunities in capital cities, which are expensive to live in**
- **self-employed nature of much of the work** means they are often

*working by themselves*

- **gender, age (older graduation), disability are all inhibitors** but one of the major ones is not coming from a family with degree level qualifications.
- **family and care issues** for those with young children

*Many of the above can mitigate against taking part fully in international mobility opportunities and taking advantage of intercultural experience.*

- *Decibel Programme ACE*

*Support and research into barriers artists of diverse practice - BAME, Disability and Decibel showcase now international opportunities for showcasing diverse work. Looks closely at race, ethnicity, gender and disability issues for artists and how they are reflected in policy making.*

- [ ERICarts Institute, The Status of Artists in Europe, study undertaken for the European Parliament, 2006 and explore further nature of familiar issues still unresolved. e.g.

- *the still atypical (**project-based**) nature of artists' work - portfolio careers encouraged but means identifying with normal unemployment conditions is difficult*
- ***irregular and unpredictable income** means that support is sometimes needed to cover those periods in between contracts*
- *- **unremunerated research and development** phases - most artists are paid for their commissions, their performances, their projects but there is little funding available that is just to develop the ideas. most of this kind of work is done without income.*
- ***accelerated physical wear and tear - of certain art forms, particularly dance, circus, street performance -***
- ***high levels of mobility** - work and commissions are often in different towns and cities, different regions, different countries and expenses of moving constantly are great -*

*all of which are **not yet systematically addressed in legal, social security and tax structures across EU.***

- ***mix of being salaried worker, freelance and self-employed complicates social security rights and claims, contributions and doubling up of***

*fiscal/social contributions*

- **lack of information** regarding mobility issues

[ <http://carrotworkers.wordpress.com>

*Carrot Workers Collective - London-based group of current or ex interns, mainly from the creative and cultural sectors who think together around **the conditions of free labour in contemporary societies**, undertaking a participatory action research around voluntary work, internship, job placements and **compulsory free work** in order to understand the impact they have on material conditions of existence, life expectations and sense of self, together with their implications in relation to education, life long training, exploitation, and class issues.*

See also

- [ Poláček, Richard: *Study on Impediments to Mobility in the EU Live Performance Sector and on Possible Solutions*. Brussels/Helsinki: Pearle\*/Finnish Theatre Information Centre, 2007.
- [ ERICarts Institute: *Causes, Consequences and Conflicts of Mobility in the Arts and Culture in Europe*. A Study for the LabforCulture. December 2006.
- [ Issues identified by SE Europe and other new member artists, such as needing to move constantly for work but having to re-establish oneself each time, the move to independent worker status from being part of a permanent company, updating of practice, lack of cultural diversity policies, visa regulations and working practice.

**6: outline**, feasible, short, medium and long term solutions to overcoming these obstacles at both EU and MS level

This is what we hope will emerge from the full study but possibilities might include:

- [ looking at ways in which local initiatives, that support artists such as usage of empty industrial properties for studios, empty shops for galleries etc. might be upscaled at regional, national and European level
- [ looking at ways in which universities and conservatoires could open themselves up to the wider public, including emerging artists, and offer more

opportunities to use space cheaply or freely, to undertake short CPD courses, offer teaching residencies that include time to develop own work etc.

- [ exploring possible guidelines for an integrated approach between cultural policies (including direct and indirect measures) and other areas of policy making (e.g. economics, social affairs, health or employment) to support artists in concrete ways including exploring ways in which artists can work in partnership with other sectors - from business to third sector and social organisations and how that might be supported/facilitated.
- [ developing schemes that support the widening of artists' employability potential -through placements/internships in other sectors/lifelong learning opportunities.
- [ supporting training models that place focus on employability and mobility possibilities for young artists.
- [ researching different possibilities for artists in terms of employment policies for cultural sector, social security or labour frameworks for self-employed artists, special tax exemptions on artist's expenses, etc.
- [ seeking innovative approaches to the issues surrounding research periods in creative practice and the need to look for work in the field when unemployed.
- [ considering ways in which mobility programmes can be developed so that individual cultural workers can undertake their own research programmes.

**7. look at** the implications this research might have for reconsidering and reframing the EU's culture programme(s) including:

- [ re-visiting issues around artists' social position usually as part of an SME or a sole-trader/freelance worker - develop creative ways to support trans-national partnerships of groups of small organisations and individuals who wish to develop work together, share CPD possibilities with each other.
- [ offer possibilities for schemes that explore new ways of supporting creative clusters/hubs/regeneration of manufacturing areas etc.
- [ addressing sustainability issues and economic circumstances affecting artists and creative development through making funding available directly to artists and projects rather than administration
- [ identifying projects that are likely to have multiplier impact at EU level, through developing models of good practice in supporting creative development, offering

innovative access to lifelong learning and training, exploring new ways of working in partnership across commercial/not-for profit/public sectors etc.

[ promoting true inter-cultural learning through projects, especially where this is an aspect of developing creativity and innovatory practice - see Culture Action Europe report on need to make intercultural dialogue a meaningful part of the programme