

WORKING PAPERS COLLECTION | 3

MUSEUMS AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S CREATIVE CAREER CHOICES

YOUNG PEOPLE PROFILES AND
INFORMATION NEEDS

BY AMALIA G.SABIESCU

CONNECT2ASPIRE

CULTURAL ENGAGEMENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATIONS

This working paper is published in the frame of the AHRC ECR Leadership Fellowship and UKRI Innovation Fellowship **Connect2Aspire**.

Cultural Engagements and Young People's Professional Aspirations
(2019-2022).

This work was supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), grant number AH/S004424/1.

Cover design and graphic layout by Britta Boyer
Graphic design for young people profiles by Holly Ling Hou
Cover image credentials by Matheus Viana from Pexels

Vs. 1.0, March 2021
Loughborough University London

Table of Contents

1 Introduction	2
2 Background to the research	2
3 Creative careers: choices, influencers and needs	4
3.1 <i>The career choice continuum</i>	4
3.2 <i>Who influences young people's career choices?</i>	5
3.3 <i>What do young people need in order to decide on their creative careers?</i>	10
4 A segmentation of young people's creative career needs	12
5 Museums and young people's creative career choices and pathways	16
6 Conclusion	21
Acknowledgements	22
References	22

1 Introduction

Taking an informed decision over a career and getting needed support in its initial stages are some of the most important landmarks in the life of a young person, with life-changing consequences. Young people interested in creative careers may face additional questions and doubts about the viability of creative professions, financial sustainability and ways of accessing them either via traditional school to work transitions or through non-traditional means that do not rely on creative qualifications. Getting information and advice from trusted, knowledgeable actors is essential in this process and is bound to influence not only the process of career choice, but also young people's confidence that they are making the right choices and getting well prepared for the careers they target.

This working paper examines the information and support needs experienced by young people who are choosing creative career pathways, and the role that museums may potentially play in filling these needs. Based on a 3-year study on the Victoria and Albert Museum's Young People's Programme, the paper provides information about the process of career choice, influencers and support needs. On this basis, it offers an in-depth and structured look at young people's career choice and support needs, by identifying five profiles or personas representing young people with similar or close characteristics regarding decision-making and the career progression stage in which they find themselves. Each of the five personas – The Selector, The Multifaceted Creative, The Decided, The Switcher and The Explorer – also display related needs for career information, guidance and support, and can be used for designing or testing the relevance of future informative and guidance programmes for young people interested in creative careers.

The paper is structured as follows: after a background to the research that informed the segmentation study, Section 3 looks at the process of career choice and key factors that affect it, with a focus on influencers and the main support needs experienced by young people. Section 4 introduces the young people profiles and describes each of them, looking at creative career goals, decision-making status, progression stage, influencers and challenges. Section 5 then maps corresponding needs and matching activities and events for each of the five profiles, which can inform the design of career guidance and information programmes by creative organisations, museums in particular.

2 Background to the research

This working paper have been produced in the programme of research for the AHRC Leadership Fellowship & UKRI Innovation Fellowship *Connect2Aspire. Cultural Engagements and Young People's Professional Aspirations*. The programme of research for the Connect2Aspire Fellowship has as main research aim to explore new ways of mobilising cultural and creative resources, spaces and networks to support UK's young people to embark on and pursue confidently career pathways that capitalise on their actual and potential talents and skills, and cultivate attitudes open to lifelong learning. The project includes a community ethnography in Coventry and a study on cultural engagements in cultural sites and museums, with a focus on the Victoria and Albert Museum's Young People's Programme.

The working paper and the young people profiles draw on the strand of research involving the V&A's Young People's Programme, which aimed to examine the actual and potential role of museums in informing and supporting young people's informed decisions over creative careers and understanding possible routes and entry points into the creative industries. This research strand used datasets gathered over three years, involving young people who have attended one of the two flagship programmes for young people: the careers festival *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume* and *Making It: Careers in Art and Design* and a 5-day creative workshop for young people not in education, employment and training. Overall, 265 young people have been consulted through interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, participant observation and analysis of creative artefacts produced by themselves.

Data gathered in 2020 as part of the Connect2Aspire project included 83 young people. 67 of them attended the careers festival *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume* (Stratford Circus Arts Centre, February 2020) and were consulted via interviews and self-administered questionnaires with a complementary research design. These covered topical areas related to young people socio-demographic data, creative careers interests, influencers and information needs for career choice, as well as motivation patterns, engagement and satisfaction with the V&A events that they attended.

Additionally, 16 young people took part in a photography workshop organised in partnership with The Prince's Trust, which aimed to develop skills in photography and introduce participants to entry routes and pathways in photography careers. Course activities were held at the V&A in South Kensington and the Stratford Circus Arts Centre in East London. On the last day of the course participants had their work displayed in a streetstyle photography exhibition staged at the Stratford Circus Arts Centre. The exhibition was also featured in the V&A careers festival *Making It: Careers in fashion and costume*, held at the Stratford Circus Arts Centre on 22 February 2020, included as well in this study. Participants' views were captured via interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, participant observation during sessions and analysis of creative artefacts produced during the workshop. This complex research design offered an in-depth look at young people's socio-demographic profiles, interests and needs for creative careers, patterns of informal learning and skill development and engagement and satisfaction with the course.

The 2020 data has been analysed jointly with a dataset gathered during a pilot study conducted with the V&A Young People's Programme, which included 2018 and 2019 editions of the two events. This resulted in an additional number of 182 participants. 171 of these took part in two editions of the festival *Making It*, themed on fashion and costume (East London, 2019) and Art and Design (V&A Museum, South Kensington, 2018). 11 additional participants took part in a creative workshop also themed on photography, offered to young people in East London in December 2018, with a similar set of aims and schedule with the 2020 photography workshop.

3 Creative careers: choices, influencers and needs

This section examines how young people experience the process of career choice, who are the main influencers in this process and what sort of support needs are raised.

3.1 The career choice continuum

Findings suggest that young people's career decisions are placed on a continuum of choices, usually marked by initial broad fields and followed by more specific directions up to definite job roles. When asked to mark whether they have decided on their career or not, young people may give a Yes or No answer, however a deeper look at their choices (especially through qualitative techniques such as interviews) reveals that differences between those who have decided and those who are yet to decide are degrees of choice, rather than firm binaries. For example, among participants in the 2020 edition of the *V&A Making It* Festival themed on fashion and costume¹, 56% of respondents stated they know what sort of career they want; while 44% are still deciding. When we look at qualitative responses, the positions are more nuanced and difficult to place firmly on a Yes/No binary. Among **young people who have decided over their career**, a limited number have a very definite sector targeted, such as fashion photography or illustration, and even a definite job role. However, most young people tend to have chosen just the broad field in which they want to be active such as: 'Fashion', 'Something about design and styling', 'Costume', or 'Something to do with costume. Costume making'. The quote below is representative for many young people who have decided over a creative field they want to build a career in, but are still looking to identify a clear role or career direction.

I wanted to do costume, but [...] this is broad, [...] I'm not sure which direction. This moment, I'm not sure about my career yet, but I know I want to do something interesting. (Interview, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2020)

From the **young people who are still deciding on their future career**, most have some broad sectors, directions or interests they are exploring, but still have to decide on a more clear direction or role. For example:

I am not certain [what career I want], but it will be about fashion design or styling. (Interview, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2020)

These broad directions are generally related to pre-existing creative interests, talents, hobbies and areas that young people have studied or are studying. Oftentimes young people seek to blend some of their interests into a unique career, as this selection of quotes exemplifies:

[I am] still very open. Exploring options: fashion design, or fashion forecasting, like using AI to predict future fashion.

¹ Sample: 54 respondents, across surveys and interviews

I am exploring options. I also studied psychology and I want something that combines fashion and psychology. Or fashion and new technology. I'm thinking also about resources and environmental issues, what good is this for if we are destroying the environment? So thinking about the future, how we can make fashion sustainable for the future.

(Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)

Thus, the differences between those young people who state they know what direction to go for, and those who appear to be still choosing need to be regarded rather as degrees on a continuum of choices. On this continuum, the extremes are made on the one hand of young people who are firm and decided in their choices, and on the other by young people who have very vague ideas and are just starting to identify broad directions and sectors. In the middle, positions are much more nuanced, and non-binary. Some young people have a core interest or talent they want to build on such as being good at spatial design or drawing; some may be interested in a broad sector such as fashion or design but are still to identify a more clear direction or role.

Understanding where young people are with their career decisions is critically important for shedding light on the sort of information and support they need. Another important aspect, tackled in the next section, regards career influencers - who young people rely on for clarifying career directions and making decisions.

3.2 Who influences young people's career choices?

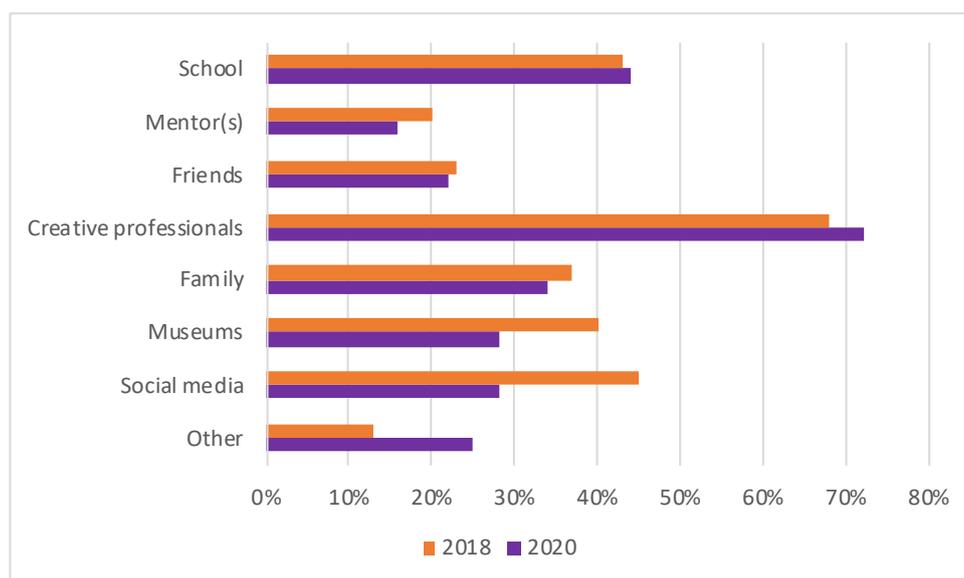


Fig. 1. Q: *Who influences your career choices? (please tick all that apply)*. Survey, *Making It Festival*, 2018 & 2020 editions. Sample: 97 respondents.

Quantitative data available from the 2018 and 2020 editions of the *Making It Festival* suggest that **creative professionals** are the most important source of influence with respect to creative career choices (ranked #1 influencer by 72% of young people in 2020 and 68% in 2018). The ranking of other influencers varies across the two editions (see Figure 1), however

the following are featured in Top 5 after creative professionals for the two editions: **Schools** (#2 in 2020 and #3 in 2018); **Social media** (#2 in 2018 and #5 in 2020); **Family** (#3 in 2020; #5 in 2018); **Museums** (#4 in both editions). The role of each of these key influencers is further discussed below, showing how young people draw not on one but on repertoires of influencers to guide their career choices.

A repertoire of influencers

While influencers can be ranked, qualitative data suggests that **young people rely not on one, but rather on a repertoire of influencers**, as this sample of qualitative responses in interviews reveal:

[I rely on] social media, I talk to lots of people who are in fashion or fashion design, I go to workshops. I get career advice in College. They are helpful.

[I get advice from] teachers; people from the industry; Internet/different websites.

(Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)

Creative professionals rank first as trusted, reliable information sources in this repertoire. Creative professionals are trusted as they are the closest to the creative sector realities that young people want to access. They are role models, and their life and career stories and the advice they can provide are highly appreciated by young people. Accessing them means accessing the creative work realities that they inhabit.

The trust in creative professionals is linked to young people's trust in the power of connections and networking. For many participants, networking and talking to people is the best means for getting information and finding out about career opportunities.

If you leave the house, things happen. Every opportunity I've had, not one, not even survival jobs have been through applications. I don't think I've done anything that hasn't been through talking to people.

(F, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

Connections and networking encompass creative professionals met face to face personally or during events, but also contacted online or followed on social media. **The blend of personal acquaintance and social media following** is a pattern on which many young people rely.

[I get information from] career events and festivals, talks, Instagram, Facebook.

[I get information from] social media: Instagram, Facebook. And I turn to professionals I know personally.

(Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)

With respect to **social media platforms**, Instagram is the chief social media platform used for getting inspiration and information about creative and artistic activities, posting and following inspirational figures. Some participants use social media and Instagram to shape

skills and knowledge through tutorials and expert advice. Other platforms mentioned include LinkedIn (though young people do not always update their profiles). Facebook and Twitter have been used in the past, at present only a few participants mentioned they use Facebook for very specific things like events or interest groups.

The ambivalent role of schools as career influencers

Within this repertoire of influencers, **the influence of schools for career choice appears important but ambivalent**. From the qualitative responses received in the careers festivals and the careers workshops, young people list lecturers, school tutors and career advice services as reliable advice and information sources. For example:

University gives career advice. [...] Lecturers and tutors are helpful too, most of them worked in industry, then came to be academics. So they have a lot of practical knowledge.

(Interview, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)

However, many others consider that **schools offer quite generic advice**, and cannot cater for the needs of individual students.

Yes, we have a career advice, but they can do so much more. It's quite basic. Universities expect students to learn those things by themselves, but students wish to get all the information from university and teaching.

(Interview, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)

It is interesting to analyse school influences also with respect to the **role of formal education** in young people's career progression, where we can identify two patterns:

- Young people may rely on creative qualifications to access creative careers. According to findings, in general this cohort is in the majority (e.g., in the 2020 *Making It* Festival, 72% of survey respondents either have a qualification - 15%, studying for a creative qualification - 33%, or want to study towards one - 24%)²
- A smaller number of young people (33%) want to enter the creative industries via non-traditional routes, without going to the university³. These may have a qualification in a different domain, or are young professionals from a completely different field who want to shift towards a creative career. The 5% overlap (above 100%) between this answer and the interest in creative qualifications above, in multiple choice questions, can be explained by young people who are undecided, and would go for either a traditional study to work or non-traditional creative career route, depending on opportunity.

² Data from answers to the question "What is your interest in the creative industries? (Please tick all that apply)", in *Making It 2020* survey. Sample: 33 respondents.

³ Figure based on answering the question "What motivated you to attend today's event? (Please tick all that apply), with "To learn about getting a creative career without going to the university", in *Making It 2020* survey. Sample 33 respondents.

Yet, relying on schools for creative qualifications needs to be distinguished from the perceived role of schools as trusted career influencers. The in-depth findings from the two photography workshops tell us that schools as institutions tend to be mistrusted especially by **young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, or not in employment or training**. Some participants dropped out of school before graduating, or if they graduated they considered it a deeply unsatisfactory, even pointless experience. Others did pursue education and even earned an undergraduate degree, however the main driver was the qualification not the educational experience or its role in advancing a desirable career. They consider schools to be outdated, and not effective in their role for skills building and career development as they rely on old models, not attuned to contemporary creative work realities.

It's just [that if] you have to pass the course and get the qualification, you have to hit certain criteria. And that's not necessarily relevant to you or helpful to you at all. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

I think school in this country is outdated. (F, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

Some teachers will have good approaches, but still for young people the majority are perceived to be cut off from industry realities, often teaching subjects that are either outdated or irrelevant, as this young boy remarked:

It can still be good teachers, but a lot of the time, that sort of industry with their people that worked in industry years ago, and now they're just doing teaching, they don't have the actual experience what it's like right now what you actually have to do now. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

One consequence of the above is that the learning itself ends up being irrelevant to contemporary times and contexts that young people would end up applying their knowledge to.

I did college, I've learnt history of photography and I was like well okay, that's cool and everything but I want to learn skills, like new skills and new cameras coming out today, in the 21st century, not 18th, 20th stuff like that, this is outdated. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

Lack of relevance is also connected to **schools lacking representation**, there are no role models for students to be inspired by. This applies in particular to young people from BAME backgrounds, as a bright, extremely talented young Black girl remarked:

A lot of the time, it's a lot to do with the lack of representation as well. (..) When you don't see someone that looks like you doing what you want to get into, you don't even consider that as something that you can possibly go into. (..) Some people may not know [what they can do in life] because they don't even think about something that they can go into, because they don't see someone that looks like them doing that. (F, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

In exceptional cases, individual teachers and instructors may fill the gap left by what are perceived as outdated models of education.

I suppose the institution isn't gonna do that, but I suppose that's why we have the individual teacher. And it takes for people to genuinely care about their trade and what they are doing, to have passion for it. (F, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

However, these appear to be the exception rather than the norm for the cohort of young people interviewed during the two creative workshops.

In conclusion, the role of schools as key actors in paving the ground towards creative careers appears overall as extremely important. Yet a good part of this role is covered by the importance of formal creative qualifications provided by schools. The role of schools as influencers is much more nuanced. Many young people rely on key influencers within school settings – such as teachers, mentors and career advisors. However, many young people and especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds think that the school as an institution is not representing and supporting them, moreover it works on outdated teaching models and curricula distanced from contemporary creative industry realities.

The museum as key influencer

Museums are ranked 4th as key influencers in two editions of the Making It Festival (2018 and 2020). In the 2020 edition, they rank above social media (#5). While the one-day Festivals did not offer the research set necessary for deepening these understandings through richer qualitative data, in the photography workshops the role of museums as career influencers could be examined in greater depth. Young people participating in the two photography workshops held mixed opinions on museums: a few were regular museum goers, while others did not visit, nor think much about museums. However, when asked directly to reflect on the role that museums could *potentially* play in informing their creative career choices, most young people agreed that museums can be helpful as information and inspiration sources.

There was agreement that museums offer information that can be immensely valuable for creative professionals or students. *“Every single thing you look at, gives you a piece of information”*, a young girl remarked, who was a regular museum goer. Information can be used to spur novelty and creativity and enrich one’s own creative practice by *“contrast[ing] it with something new, trying to put it in your own way”* (Photography workshop, 2018 edition).

Museums can spur creativity and new ways of thinking, which are central to the success of creative professionals.

Oh yeah, museums do help, because when I walk into a museum I walk away with something at the back of my mind. .. Like, the guy I looked at took pictures of a village or something, if he took it in a certain way, I'll remember that way (..). You always learn something. I walk in there, I walk away remembering something from there. And then I use that, either in photography or normal life. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

Specific museum types can cater to the needs of certain creative professions, and provide contextual information, information and inspiration geared towards particular fields. However, some young people may need the right opportunity to become aware of the supportive and informational role that museums could play in their lives. The V&A event provided just this sort of opportunity for young people, some of whom had never visited the V&A before, as this young man remarked:

Whatever you're interested in, [museums] give you a taste to see the outcome of it. When I went to the V&A, it was my first time there. And I am interested in photography. (..) So basically they just give you like a taste of, or examples of other photographers if you want to be a photographer. Because I like to be a photographer too. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

However, young people concurred in pointing to the fact that museums are not automatically useful in their role as informants or supporters of skills development or creative career advice. Rather, it all depends on how information is presented and how it relates to one's interests. Participants insisted on the importance of being able to relate to the information and displays in a meaningful experience. Being able to relate in first person is crucial and may even make up for lack of interactivity in experiences – such as label reading.

If it makes sense, you enjoy it. I spent so much time reading things at the V&A yesterday cause I like content. I like understanding things. That's why I am here, I'm just putting myself in this space. Because that's the way I'm comfortable learning, and I'm used to it. And I find it works for me, it kind of forms you. And museums are safe spaces. (F, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

In conclusion, the role of museums as creative career influencers is acknowledged by a relatively high number of young people. However, many of them need to first be exposed to positive experiences of museum visit and events, before recognising their potential. The museum experiences that young people have are crucial for the sort of attitudes they develop with respect to museums, and how they may choose to relate to them throughout their career journeys. It is important that they gauge the relevance of museums or of specific museums to their own interests and aims, as a first step towards stronger, longer term museum connections.⁴

3.3 What do young people need in order to decide on their creative careers?

Two patterns of needs stand out: in order to take creative career decisions young people need on the one hand **experience** and on the other **information**. These may be connected to two areas of knowledge: industry know-how and creative careers know-how. The need for industry and career information and experience depends on young people's previous knowledge, training and degree of exposure to the creative sectors and careers that appeal to them.

The need for experiencing is mainly related to industry know-how, it is about understanding first-hand what it is like to work in a specific creative sector:

I need more experience to know how the industry works and how the field is like.

[What I need in order to decide is] experience, I need to try it out.

⁴ For a richer discussion about the role of museums in lifelong learning and the importance of creating connections based on relevance, see the working paper *The Art of (Re) Engaging the Young Learner. Insights from Informal Learning Workshops Run by the V&A Museum*, available [here](#).

I need to enter industry training [in order to decide].

(Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)

A common pattern across respondents regards their strong wish to embark on a creative career they are passionate about, or that they genuinely like and feel motivated to do. Going for a creative career stems from interest, passion and talent. However, many young people are not certain what they will really like on the long term. They need experience, therefore, in order to decide that a certain profession is the right one for them, which for many young people equals something they will like to do years on end.

I want to do something I'm passionate about. I need to find my motivation. I want to spend time experiencing different things, then I may find my hidden ability. Sometimes, after an experience, I realise that I can't be motivated by this. So I try to find out more stuff and experience more.

[I am still] deciding [about my career], but something related to fashion design.

Interviewer: What do you need in order to decide?

I try to experience different things and find out what I like.

(Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)

Dilemmas of choice are confronted in particular by young people with multiple creative talents and interests. For example, this young person with a natural talent and self-taught competences in photography and IT is undecided between photography, IT, or ways to combine them for a viable creative profession:

*I started from IT and photography, but it's hard to pin down what kind of career for the future. Photography is like my hobby, but I have not decided on a career as a photographer. I need a year to try different things. Maybe find a job that can allow me to use a combined skill set, such as photography plus editing. You can't do photography only. (Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)*

Informational needs, on the other hand, are rather related to career know-how. Young people need specific information and advice about how to move and network, how to access a creative sector or organisation, and how to train and prepare for a creative career. The information needs may range from very general, such as:

I need more information about fashion careers.

I need to gather more information about financial sustainability.

To very specific ones:

[I need to know] what to include in the portfolio, practical advice, and good links.

I need some business advice, how to become successful.

(Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)

Many of these needs are catered by careers festivals such as *Making It* – including portfolio development, CV writing, preparing for a job interview and the like.

4 A segmentation of young people's creative career needs

One of the aims of this project was to get a deeper understanding of how young people's career support needs relate to other socio-demographics and characteristics, and how this critical information may feed in the design of relevant career information and skill building events. In this process, we first identified what are the key factors that influence different career information needs. Three factors were identified as influential:

- Career decision-making: having made a career decision vs still exploring opportunities
- Career progression stage: studying vs seeking industry entry vs holding an entry-level position
- Young people's knowledge base level (low, intermediate, advanced) according to knowledge area (career vs industry know-how).

According to these factors, five profiles of young people were identified:

1. **The Selector**, who is starting to make decisions that will affect their career path.
2. **The Multifaceted creative**, who is talented and interested in more than one field.
3. **The Decided**, who has chosen a career and is looking for relevant opportunities in that field.
4. **The Switcher**, who wishes to transition into a creative career.
5. **The Explorer**, who has not yet decided over a career, whether it is creative or not, but is looking for new ideas and experiences to form opinions and future choices.

These profiles are further described below, looking at characteristics such as creative career goals, career stage, influencers and challenges in career progression. The forthcoming section will then look at their needs and expectations for career support from institutions such as museums, and the sort of events relevant for each profile. For a structured overview of characteristics for each profile, please refer to Annex 1.

The Selector

The core characteristic of The Selector at the stage surprised in this segmentation is that they want to make the right, informed decisions about their future career. They know for certain they are interested in a creative career. And many may have already some creative fields they are interested in, often corresponding to hobbies and talents. However they are yet to define a narrow sector or job role, as this sample of quotes illustrates:

I am doing an MA in museum studies. I want clarity on what career paths to pursue.

I am trying to decide on a career. Discovering.

(Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Art and Design*, 2018)

Or, if they have some initial thoughts about a creative role, they do not know what it really entails, whether they fit the profile, therefore are uncertain and need validation, as this young person attending the 2018 edition of the *Making It* Festival stated:

[I want] to become more confident about my choices. I sort of know already, but just to learn if I am on the right path.

The Selector will be still studying or possibly having just finished A Levels or an undergraduate degree. They may have limited employment experience such as a placement or internship or none at all. However, they are likely to have some broad knowledge about the creative industries they are interested in, which served them to cut down the options to a few. Despite this, many of them do not yet understand what a creative career is and the sort of skills that are required.

The main challenges they experience relate to lack of information about what happens in the creative sectors they are interested in, what sort of skills are required to enter, and what activities the roles entail. As a young person attending the V&A Making It Festival in 2018 remarked, their main motivation to attend was that they felt “*confused about where to go with a creative future.*” Thus, lack of access to creative networks and professionals who could shed some light on these aspects is one of the key challenges they experience in progressing their careers.

Their career choices are influenced by a broad range of actors and organisations, but they will be at this stage likely influenced most by authority figures such as active professionals and teachers or career advisors. This is because they are about to take life-changing decisions, and what they need most is not reduced to information, but really validation of options and initial choices. Thus, they are likely to seek this from experienced figures with a good working knowledge of the creative industries in the first instance, or teachers and career advisors otherwise.

The Multifaceted Creative

Often extremely talented and bright, The Multifaceted Creative will be interested in a creative career as a way to express their creative ethos and often multiple talents. Many of them are actually not so keen to decide on a unique creative direction just yet, and they may wish to keep several options open. This bright young Black woman who took part in the V&A photography workshop (2018) represents very well this profile, with her multiple talents, all exploited to a certain extent:

I do comedy and acting, I've done stand-up comedy a bit. So I'm in entertainment, and I perform, I dance. I do music. And I do art. So two things I'm incorporating now are my art and my youth work. And I've got a business called [Anon.]. I like clothing, I like fashion. I've got new stuff that's gonna come, I've got my design. And then my brand is delivering programmes to youth, teaching them about art in different stages.

These young people may explore different career routes, often connected but at times also in completely different fields, such as photography and music, as this young Black man who attended the V&A photography workshop (2018) exemplifies:

Photography remains a plan B, plan A is music, so photography is something to fall back on. I know what's trendy, you have to go with the times.

Creative directions may be explored in parallel or at different times. Catching the right opportunity is very important for these young people, and in these beginning stages they may switch from one direction to another following suitable opportunities. Some of them may even train formally in different fields, but end up professing in just one of these.

A career challenge that is quite particular for this group is that being driven by enthusiasm and extremely talented, they may find it hard to persevere and build solid skills, especially when this requires focusing, giving up on other activities and working very hard. They are most prone to have an interest-based learning style, and they are most responsive and able to go over their limits when they really are passionate about what they study or train in. The young boy interested in music and photography mentioned above shared with the group his experience of moving from music as a light hobby activity to serious training:

For me, for my music thing, I was like, it's so easy. But then I started taking it seriously and then I realised there's a lot of complications, there's keys, pitches, cords, left-right ... So to take it to profession you have to put a lot of time into it. Do exercises for different things, range extension, pitch, accuracy, and so on. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

Other challenges for this group are quite common among young people as they pursue creative careers, and include lack of experience in the creative sectors targeted, lack of awareness about needed skills and the associated steps needed to access and progress in a creative career, and lack of access to creative professionals and networks.

With respect to career influencers, the multifaceted creatives involved in V&A events appeared to be the most independent, authority-rejecting of all participants. They may especially reject school and formal education, but to compensate, they will have respect and look up towards creative professionals, who tend to be the most trusted career influencers for them. They will respect professionals' views because these latter have a first-hand knowledge of creative work realities that they want to access. And they may see professionals as mentors, rightfully placed in that position due to their deep experience and knowledge, different from the teachers in formal education, where authority is based on pre-defined student-instructor roles. Some multifaceted creatives, on the contrary, may lack confidence, feeling stretched by their talents which may drive them in different directions. But in this case as well, validation from trusted figures such as active professionals will be sought after. They may also rely on social media to get multiple sorts of information – on creative careers, professional pathways, events, gigs that they can attend.

The Decided

These are young people who have already taken a decision with respect to their creative career, and are now looking for relevant opportunities to access or to progress in that field. They are keen to understand what skills are needed and how to develop them and get prepared for entering the profession they target. They may still be studying or just graduated,

and for many the study area and the chosen profession will be in the same creative field. The next step is to get some opportunities to explore this field and make an entry, as this selection of quotes from the 2018 edition of the V&A Making It Festival illustrates:

I am looking for a placement, internship, I am doing a BA in Product Design.

I am looking to start an art career.

The Decided may have a reasonable knowledge base about the field they are interested in, often gathered through studying in that domain or short-term placements and internships. However, this will tend to be low, and leave many unknowns, thus for them two key challenges in career progression will be (1) to get a deeper understanding of the workings of the industry they want to enter and (2) lack of access to professionals, networks and access opportunities.

They are more autonomous in their decision-making than The Selector and The Multifaceted Creative, and likely to churn critically career advice. They may accept information equally from career professionals, peers, mentors and social media, but will be more selective about how this will influence their views and choices.

The Switcher

This young person is already working or studying in a field, and want to switch to a creative career. They may be disappointed about their current field or job, and are seeking a job that is giving them more fulfilment and satisfaction. Many of them have a targeted creative sector, while others are undecided, and are weighing options seeking to understand which creative role is suitable for them. They experience specific challenges for accessing and progressing in a new creative field. While they may be more experienced and more advanced in age (possibly 23+), however they may still lack vital know-how about the career they want to get into. And they may feel pressure to be competitive against often younger talented people already in the field. Another challenge is that many Switchers do not wish to complete the traditional formal education to work track for entering a profession. Thus, they are keen to find out non-traditional routes in a creative sector, which does not require them to complete a degree, as this young professional attending the Making It Festival stated:

I want to change career to architecture, but I am bad at mathematics. I am working in film/visual arts. I am interested in alternative career routes, not the traditional ones. I'm not going to do another degree as I have already 2 degrees in visual arts and film. (Interview, Making It: Careers in Art and Design, 2018)

They are also likely to lack connecting networks for getting information and access opportunities in the creative industries. Some of them may have found entry points through gigs and internships, but find it challenging to move from there to more stable jobs.

The Switcher is autonomous in their career decision-making, and critical about the information sources they consider. They are actively looking for information through the Internet, creative organisations and events, and are likely to trust creative professionals and peers for career information and advice.

The Explorer

Often very young and still studying, The Explorer has plenty of time to consider options for their future career. They may be interested in a creative career, or still weighing options in several broad fields. Their key characteristic is that they are eager to be well-informed and to network to form opinions about the career and industries of potential interest. They will be active, even avid social media users, many with carefully curated profiles on platforms such as Instagram.

The Explorer is not in a hurry to make a career decision. They are taking their time to see what's going on in creative work and what may suit them. For instance, this participant in the Making It Festival remarked about their motivation to attend:

I want to see what's like to work in the creative industry. I heard about it from friends and social media. (Interview, Making It: Careers in Art and Design, 2018)

The Explorer trusts the power of connections and networks and knows the importance of catching the right opportunity. So while they browse social media and attend relevant events, they will keep an eye for opportunities such as training, workshops and placements, often just to try things out and gather some experience.

Their main challenges with career progression revert around choosing from the wide array of available options out there. They have some concerns over employability and want to get prepared, but are also aware that they still have plenty of time to do this. With respect to career influencers, they may have some of the largest repertoires from the five profiles. At this point in their career preparation stage, they are accepting information and advice from a wide range of sources. They may get hints from social media, test them in discussions with family and peers, and whenever they get the opportunity, listen to career stories and get advice from creative professionals.

5 Museums and young people's creative career choices and pathways

Much of the creative career support that creative institutions such as museums offer to young people reverts on the process of choice or decision-making between the wide array of career options available out there. Yet before we dig deeper into how such organisations may support career choice and progression and how the five profiles described above can be used, it is necessary to set the role of career influencers in the right perspective. The first step in this clarification is about doing away with simplistic approximations about career choice, drawing on mechanistic interpretations where a certain piece of information or even experience may help incline the balance of young people's choice one direction or another. In reality, this process is a lot more complex and many more factors and actors are involved in it over long periods of time. This study findings are in agreement with research by Ball and colleagues (2002), suggesting that "the process of choice is a lot more than just a matching of qualifications and attainments to opportunities." (p. 54). Rather, it is influenced by a complex range of factors, many of them associated with the socio-economic contexts from

which young people come, significant formal and informal education experiences and how these have been internalised in their cognitive structures.

This study builds on scholarship arguing that the process of choice is articulated by 'horizons of action' (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997; Ball et al., 2002). These offer the space but also the limits within which choices are made. They possess perceptual, social as well as spatial and temporal dimensions (Ball et al. 2002), refined and appropriated by the agent through layers and layers of experiencing, along many years. Very different actors and settings contribute to this process. In this research, we attempted to identify some of the most important actors and settings that specifically influence career choice. As outlined above, these include creative professionals, the family, several actors within scholarly institutions, social media and museums. Many young people are prone to rely on several of these actors for moving from options to final decisions. Thus, when it comes to the role of museum as supporter and influencer, a key observation is that their contribution needs to be positioned alongside that of many other different career influencers.

With this understanding, we found that museums contribute to career choice and progression by **supporting young people's development of agency** in two ways. The first has to do with enriching the range of career information and support opportunities offered to young people, some of which would not be otherwise accessible. These opportunities are not necessarily some that yield immediate follow up action. Rather, they help shape the opportunity structure (Alsop et al. 2006; Ibrahim and Alkire 2007; see also Roberts 1993) for young people interested in creative careers. According to Alsop and colleagues (2006), the opportunity structure is a key determinant of people's agency and is made of the institutional ecosystem and how the agent is positioned within in terms of inclusion/exclusion, participation, information, capacity etc. Museums can affect this structure and contribute to expanding young people's horizons of action as explained above, by putting young people in contact with creative work realities and professionals. For instance, they may expand perceptions of available choices by exposure to careers young people did not consider before; by making appear approachable some careers they would have thought out of reach; or by making creative professionals available for dialogue and advice.

The second aspect has to do with the young people themselves as active choice agents. If the first aspect was rather about the opportunity structure related to choice, this focuses directly on the agent. Ultimately, while fully acknowledging the role of influencers, decisions will be made (or ideally ought to be made) by young people themselves. Certainly, they will be the ones to meet the consequences. Thus, part of the museum contribution will revert around supporting young people to take informed decisions. This, according to this study, will happen by contributing to the development of skills and know-how related to the creative industries and ways of progressing creative careers.

These two dimensions of career support are converged in the concept of **enhanced know-how** as one of the key contributions that museums can make to young people's career decision-making and progression. Know-how is not restricted to information, but encompasses knowledge, skills, experiences, as well as opportunities to network and get exposed to creative people and realities. As represented in Figure 2, the know-how that

young people need and which they can get from museum interactions and events can be depicted along two axes:

1. Type of know-how needed: industry know-how (more experiential) vs career-related know-how (more bent on information provision)
2. Depth and breadth of the know-how needed: wide-ranging and more generic vs deep and focused information specific to one sector.

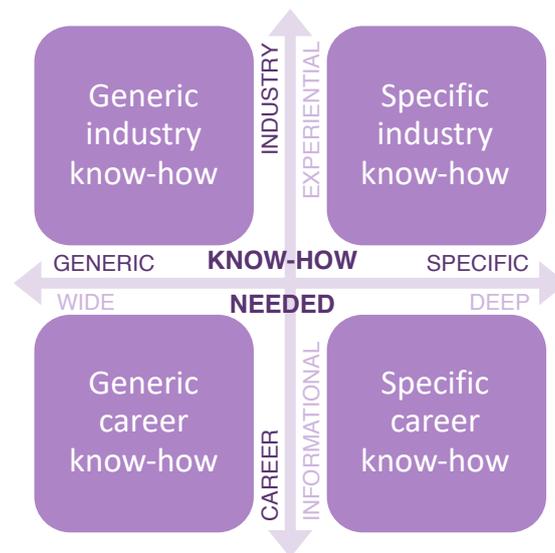


Figure 2. Representation of young people's needs for creative career choice and progression, focusing on know-how. Specific know-how needs will differ according to type (industry-related, more experiential vs career-related, more informational); and breadth (generic and wide vs deep and specific).

While acknowledging the limits of generalising and the diversity of real-life scenarios, to illustrate the argument we can represent young people's main needs for career decision-making and access along these axes (Figure 3).

The first personas pictured starting with the left hand side quadrants (The Explorer, The Multifaceted Creative and the Selector) are those who are still deciding over a career. However, since as discussed decisions should be seen rather on a continuum of choices rather than binaries, these young people are not by default completely undecided. Many of them will have some targeted sectors and professions considered. Thus, we encounter here both young people whose know-how needs are largely about wider and more generic industry and career know-how, as well as those that need quite specific information and experience in a handful of domains.

The Decided and The Switcher would both benefit from focused, specific career and industry know-how on one or a few targeted domains. The Decided is likely to have narrowed their choices to one creative domain and even one professional role, and they will appreciate specific information and experience related to that. The Switcher may be weighing options among several creative domains or may have decided upon a particular one to enter.

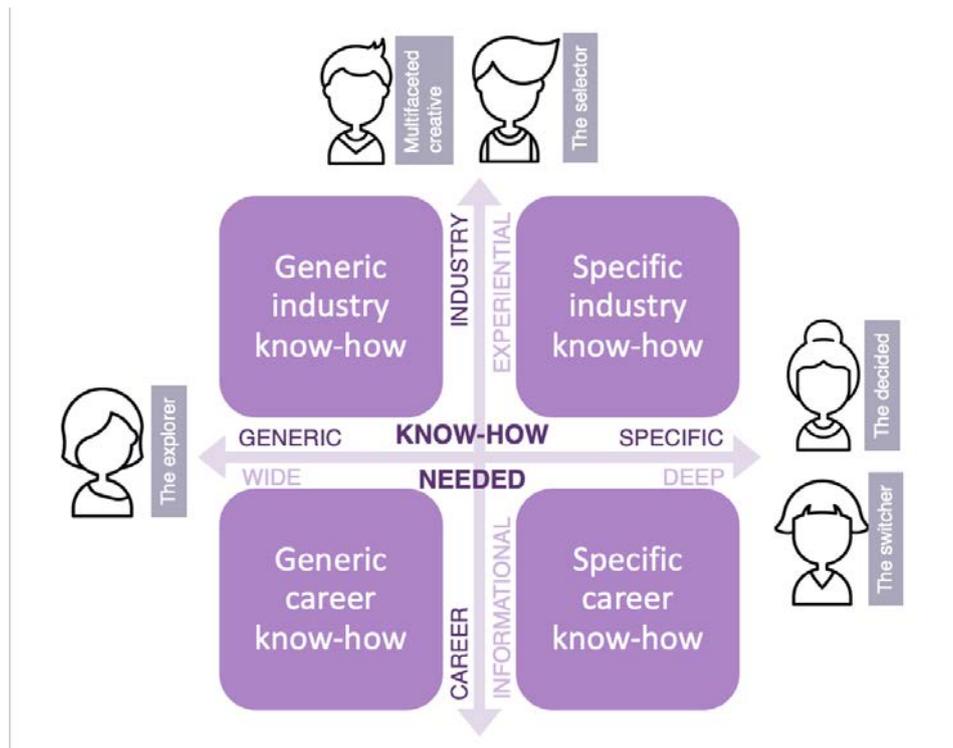


Figure 3. Mapping chief career support needs for the five profiles according to type and breadth of know-how needed.

The Explorer is the farthest away from taking a career decision from the five profiles. They also do not feel pressured to do so, as they are likely to be young, with plenty of time to explore career options. They may also be uncertain as to whether they wish to go for a creative career. Their main aim is to explore and understand more about a broad range of career options. What they need most is **generic industry know-how**, blending information and some hands-on experience wherever possible, through for example workshops and interactive demonstrations. Explorers may start to feel the need for more specific industry know-how and career progression know-how as they get closer to choosing among a range of sectors or professions. However, at that stage they are transitioning from being an Explorer to being a Selector – someone choosing among options.

The Selector knows they want to become a creative professional, and are likely to have a few sectors and/or roles that they are considering for their future career, to choose from. What they need most is **industry know-how in a few selected domains**, to be able to make an informed choice. Since a handful of sectors may already be already identified, The Selector may hold some level of relevant knowledge and even light experience. They will benefit most from specific information and advice on targeted domains. For example, a participant in the *Making It* Festival appreciated how the Festival helped her decision-making process around two options:

[I found relevant] the specific advice on product and UX design - as I am between 2 directions, product and digital design. I found it useful to learn about the skills required for each, and what are the trends. (Interview, Making It: Careers in Art and Design, 2018)

The Selector may benefit as well from longer experiences such as a placement or internship to see what it's like to work in that domain. Career skills workshops offered by museums, such as the V&A photography workshop are also suitable options for these young people as they enable them to get deep knowledge and experience and assess whether that career is for them. While their main aim is to understand what it takes to work in a certain creative sector, they will also be interested in **career-related know-how**. This may be related to ways of accessing a specific sector, which may also help them decide if that profession is accessible for them and worth pursuing.

The Multifaceted Creative is talented and potentially interested in more than one field. In order to make up their mind, they need to get first-hand knowledge and experience about how it is to work in a specific domain, and whether it is right for them. Thus, they are likely to need most **industry know-how for a few targeted sectors**, pretty much like The Selector. Just the same, they are likely to benefit from targeted information and opportunities for light-touch creative work experiences. However, where the selector is set to choose one among several options, the multifaceted creative may consider keeping their options open and specialising in more than one field. They may thus look for longer-term industry experiences, and even 'trial jobs' to see how it is like to be active in a professional domain. They will also need on the side **career-related know-how**, particularly about how to access a creative career.

The Decided has made up their mind about the career they want to profess in. Now what they need most is **career-related information and opportunities** for accessing it. Apart from this, they will also benefit from **specific industry-related know-how** about the profession and sector that they target. For example, some participants in the *Making It* Festival joined for very specific information in the areas they target:

I came to learn about graphic design.

I came here to learn about fashion creative direction.

I came to learn about a specific creative sector, curating.

I wanted to listen to talks about apprenticeships in architecture. (Interviews and survey, *Making It: Careers in Art and Design*, 2018)

They will be keen to get in touch with creative professionals for career and industry insights, inspiration and advice. And they will be most interested in identifying potential workplaces and entry-level experiences such as placements and internships. The sort of events that match their profile will provide focused, deeper information about the creative sectors and professions they are interested in and opportunities for networking and job access. These may include for instance talks, interventions and advice from working professionals. They may be interested as well in applied workshops to hone and strengthen their skills for getting in the desired creative sector.

The Switcher wants to transition into a creative career. They are working or studying in a different field, but look up to creative work as more fulfilling and satisfying. Some of them may have a clear targeted profession, and others may be considering one or more broader

sectors. Their key need blends **career-related know-how and industry know-how**. They will be interested in ways of progressing creative careers, often through non-traditional routes, without having to earn a new creative degree. Participants in the *Making It* Festival, for instance, specifically asked for:

Deeper information. More about alternative career routes, non-traditional.

Career transitions paths. In relation to this, transdisciplinary tools. (Interviews and survey, Making It: Careers in Art and Design, 2018)

They will also need **industry know-how**, particularly when they have to decide among several options of creative professions or sectors. The sort of information they need is targeted, specific, as The Switcher does not have a lot of time. Many of them are in their mid- or even later twenties, and may have to maintain themselves or even families. Apart from information, the Switcher will need opportunities for accessing creative professions, especially through non-traditional routes. Getting in touch with creative professionals and networks will be particularly valuable for them.

6 Conclusion

This working paper has examined the information and support needs of young people interested in creative careers and how creative organisations such as museums may approach them in a structured way. Based on a 3-year research study involving young people attending V&A Museum events, it provided a segmentation of young people's profiles based on their different career goals, progression stages and degrees of decision-making. The five profiles can be used to assess the relevance of a wide range of creative career events for a variety of career support needs.

The paper contextualised the segmentation of career needs in broader concerns about the range of actors and organisations that influence young people's career decisions. Professional choices are, just as higher education choices, highly complex processes (Ball et al. 2002) in which a variety of actors may intervene over very long periods of time. When we seek to understand the role that museums play or could play, we have to take into account this complexity. This study suggested that firstly, the role of museums needs to be considered alongside that of many other influencing factors. Some of these factors of influence go back long into young people's life and development trajectories, internalised as cognitive structures (Ball et al. 2002) that determine their horizons of action (Hodkinson & Sparkes 1997; Ball et al. 2002). In this paper we considered factors that are important, even determinant, closer to the moment when young people are actively considering and weighing options. We identified five such influencers for creative careers choices and pathways: creative professionals, schools, social media, the family and museums. Each of these can be seen to influence young people's decision-making by contributing to enriching but also constraining their horizons of action.

Museums can influence young people's horizons of action by enhancing acquisition of know-how, used in this study as a broad concept encompassing knowledge, skills as well as

opportunities for networking and connections with creative industries people and realities. The last part of the paper offered an in-depth analysis of the type of know-how that different young people may need and the sort of events that could cater for it, using the five personas. Depending on their different career goals and progression stage, young people may need industry-related or career know-how, either broad and generic for a wider range of creative sectors, or focussed and specific on one or a few sectors.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), grant number AH/S004424/1. The contributions of the V&A Museum's Youth Collective, the Young People's Programme Team and Holly Ling Hou in shaping the young people profiles are gratefully acknowledged.

References

Alsop, R., Bertelsen, M. & Holland, J. (2006) *Empowerment in Practice From Analysis to Implementation*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Ball, S. J., Davies, J., David, M., & Reay, D. (2002). 'Classification' and 'Judgement': social class and the 'cognitive structures' of choice of Higher Education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 23(1), 51-72.

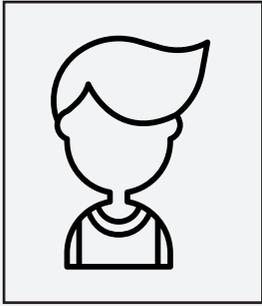
Bourdieu (1986) *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. London, Routledge.

Hodkinson, P. & Sparkes, A. (1997) *Careership: a sociological theory of career decision making*, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 18(1), pp. 29–44.

Ibrahim, S., & Alkire, S. (2007). Agency and empowerment: A proposal for internationally comparable indicators. *Oxford development studies*, 35(4), 379-403.

Roberts (1993) *Career trajectories and the mirage of increased social mobility*, in: I. BATES & G. RISEBOROUGH (Eds) *Youth and Inequality* (Buckingham, Open University Press).

Profile 1: The selector



“Confused about where to go with a creative future.”

“[I want] to become more confident about my choices. I sort of know already, but just to learn if I am on the right path.”

“I am trying to decide on a career. Discovering.”

Starting to make decisions that will affect their career path

Demographics

Age range: 14 -19 years, possibly early twenties

Education level: Still studying or just finished GCSE/ A-levels, possibly undergraduate

Employment experience: none/ scarce/ placements and internships

Defining Traits

- Concerned about making the right decisions, aware of the importance of informed choices
- Open to new experiences, keen on exploring possibilities
- Often uncertain about their own choices, seeking external validation
- Willing to gain volunteering experience
- Perhaps unsure where to start/find sources of information
- Sometimes lacking confidence

Creative Career Goals

- Definitely interested in a creative career, but not certain which one to go for
- Probably looked at various options, and have some idea what’s out there
- Maybe overly ambitious / unrealistic about goals vs reality
- Sometimes don’t fully understand what a creative career is, or the skills/qualifications needed

Challenges in Career Progression

- Lack of information about what happens in a creative sector
- Lack of knowledge about needed skill and steps to pursue a career / route ahead
- Lack of access to networks and creative professionals

Career Stage

- Still deciding over ‘the’ career
- Don’t know the broad range of potential careers
- May have already a shortlist of suitable professions
- Some may have decided on a career, but are uncertain and want validation

Needs and Expectations to be delivered by Provider

- Industry know-how and career know-how to be able to decide or validate one’s choices
- Access to creative professionals for career advice and first-hand experience stories
- Rather broad, generic, wide-ranging information covering more creative sectors
- Opportunities for hands-on taster activities

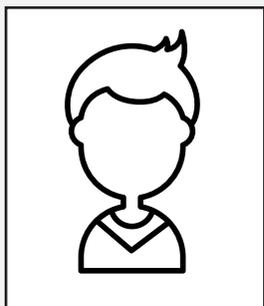
Career Influencers

- A wide range (from creative professionals to teachers, parents, and peers), different for individual profiles
- Likely to be particularly sensitive to information and advice from experienced professionals and teachers
- Hard to find a balance view
- Decisions often formed too quickly without verification

What Activities match their profile?

- Career focus festivals, events giving: informative talks on industry know how and career know how, advice sessions, taster sessions, workshops, demos
- Longer/more engaged, hands-on courses and workshops to experience a creative practice and /or another skill

Profile 2: The Multifaceted Creative



Talented and interested in more than one field

"I'm interested in visual arts. I'm coming from a background of writing and music but I'm trying to learn more about the visual aspects of it."

"Photography remains a plan B, plan A is music, so photography is something to fall back on. I know what's trendy, you have to go with the times."

Demographics

- Age range: 16 -21years
- Education level: Still studying or just finished GCSE/ A-levels, possibly undergraduate or new graduate
- Employment experience: Scarce or some experience – internships/ some arts gigs/ occasional one-off creative work
- Take part in a wide range of societies/organisations/clubs
- Often have voluntary experience

Defining Traits

- Talented in more than one creative domain
- Anchored in contemporary youth culture – heavy users of social media, contemporary music, love dynamic, exciting experiences, don't like repetitive boring stuff
- Embrace flexibility: Open to freelancing workstyle that gives liberty, despite low job security
- The younger the more open to exploring possibilities, but not keen to focus on one thing just yet even at 22yrs+
- Unsure how to choose which career to pursue

Creative Career Goals

- Interested in a creative career, but not keen to settle on one just yet
- Exploring different routes that match their talents, often connected
- May also explore creative routes as a hobby/side profession while pursuing another career

Challenges in Career Progression

- Need to build solid skills to match their interest-based learning style
- Lack of knowledge about the experience of being creative in a certain sector
- Lack of knowledge about needed skills and steps to pursue a career
- Lack of connecting networks and access to creative professionals
- Lack of confidence and direction

Career Stage

- Still deciding over 'the' career, they have already some firm options to choose from (some still in talent/ potential stage)
- Likely show interest in more than one area and train for more than one
- Often not keen to decide over a single and final career, rather exploring different routes and matching them to opportunities

Needs and Expectations to be delivered by Provider

- Map creative career paths – skills needed/the route ahead (career know-how)
- Sample or hear about the experience of practicing in a creative sector (industry know-how)
- Get access to creative professionals for career and industry insights, advice, inspiration, new ideas
- Guidance on how to follow multiple careers or pick one
- Benefit from mentoring

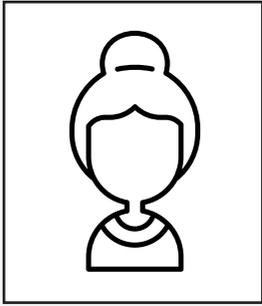
Career Influencers

- Reject schools and authority, likely to want to learn more from creative professionals and peers
- May also use social media to get informed, and to propel their own career, actual influence of social media on career choices likely to be higher for the under 20yrs

What Activities match their profile?

- Career focus festivals, events giving: informative talks on industry know how and career know how, advice sessions, taster sessions, workshops, demos
- Longer/more engaged, hands-on courses and workshops to experience a creative practice and /or another skill

Profile 3: The Decided



"I study art and design and want to be an architect."

"I am looking for a placement, internship, I am doing a BA in Product Design."

Chosen a career, looking for relevant opportunities in that field

Demographics

- Age range: 20 -24years. Can be younger and studying in a chosen creative field
- Education level: Likely to be still studying or just finished undergraduate or postgraduate
- Employment experience: Some experience – starter jobs/ entry levels/ internships/ some arts gigs/

Defining Traits

- Keen to build a broad base of skills to get ahead of the crowd/ consolidate one's position in a chosen creative sector
- Be aware and informed about what happens in one's field

Creative Career Goals

- Build a career in a chosen creative field
- Keep informed and aware of what happens in the chosen creative sector

Challenges in Career Progression

- Lack of knowledge about the running of the industry they have just begun to explore
- Lack of access to connecting networks and creative professionals for leads and opportunities – jobs, freelance, training and internships

Career Stage

- Have chosen a career, either still studying for a creative qualification or moving from study into work

Needs and Expectations to be delivered by Provider

- Get access to creative professionals for career and industry insights, advice, inspiration, new ideas
- Identify leads and opportunities such as workplaces, internships, etc
- Deeper, more specific information about industry and career know-how, above the basics

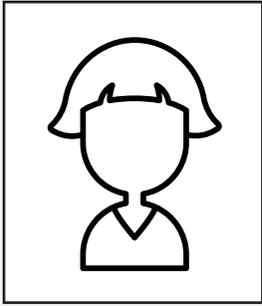
Career Influencers

- More autonomous decision-making, likely to accept information from peers and creative professionals, trusted instructors/mentors

What Activities match their profile?

- Events that put them in touch with creative professionals and expose them to how things work in a field and enhance networking
- Talks and career stories from creative professionals and follow up information
- Possibly applied workshops, more in-depth than the taster workshop to get more advance skills

Profile 4: The Switcher



Transitioning into a creative career

“I am working in film and visual arts. I am interested in alternative career routes, not the traditional ones.”

Demographics

- Age range: 23years+
- Education level: finished studies, possibly undergraduate qualification/postgraduate
- Employment experience: employed and / or with professional experience not necessarily in the field they want to be in

Defining Traits

- Preoccupied with finding a job that gives them more fulfilment and satisfaction than the current/recent one
- Feel pressure to succeed and get up to speed with others already in the field

Creative Career Goals

- Transition into a creative career
- Looking for alternative/ non-traditional routes to enter a creative sector

Challenges in Career Progression

- Lack of connecting networks and opportunities for career change
- Lack of knowledge about alternative/ non-traditional routes into creative industries
- Moving beyond volunteering/ casual working into an actual job in the creative sector

Career Stage

- Already working/ with professional experience but decided to change career
- May have decided on a target career or exploring options such as work experience or paid internship

Needs and Expectations to be delivered by Provider

- Gain knowledge on how to enter a new professional field without new studies.
- Want to find out about non-traditional entry routes
- Gain access to creative professionals for advice and career insights
- Access leads and opportunities they can follow up on

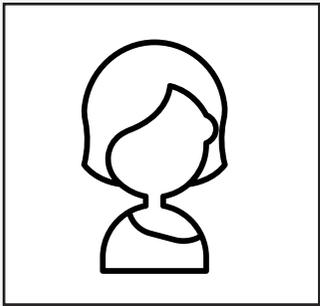
Career Influencers

- Autonomous in taking decisions and choosing their influencers
- Likely to trust peers and creative professionals for information and advice

What Activities match their profile?

- Looking for leads, networking opportunities and connections, information to follow up on rather than ‘how to’ or exploratory talks and workshops
- (when exploring target career options) Sessions that give an insight into the experience of working in the sector, advice from experienced professionals

Profile 5: The Explorer



"[I came] to see what's it like to work in the creative industries. I heard about it from friends and social media."

Looking for new ideas, spends time critically thinking to form new opinions

Demographics

- Age range: 14 -19years, likely to be in the younger percentile
- Education level: Likely to be still at school or just finished GCSE/A -levels

Defining Traits

- Exploring what to do with their lives and looking around
- Believe in the importance of catching the right opportunity – eager to attend industry events/ networking/research
- Not yet quite ready to take a final career decision – want to get a sense of what's out there first
- Active on social media
- Very busy schedules

Creative Career Goals

- Still developing career goals
- Not certain about their career, and whether it's a creative career or not
- Want creative industry insights

Challenges in Career Progression

- Deciding. Too many choices
- Concerns over employability

Career Stage

- Still deciding over their career and study paths, and whether creative careers suit them

Needs and Expectations to be delivered by Provider

- Get general and specific information about choice of creative careers and a taste of how it is to work as a creative professional
- Need honest perspectives of particular industries

Career Influencers

- Social media (especially Instagram and YouTube), family, school and peers are all likely to influence them

What Activities match their profile?

- Informative talks on industry and career know how; taster workshops; demos
- Workshops and courses, hands-on activities where they can try out things and develop basic skills