



Research Report

MUSEUMS AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S CREATIVE CAREERS

BY AMALIA G SABIESCU AND NOÉMI ZAJZON

CONNECT2ASPIRE. CULTURAL ENGAGEMENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATIONS

This work was supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), grant number AH/S004424/1 for the AHRC ECR Leadership Fellowship & UKRI Innovation Fellowship

Connect2Aspire. Cultural Engagements and Young People's Professional Aspirations
(2019-2023)

Cover design and graphic layout by Noémi Zajzon

Graphic design of report visuals by Mădălin Moise

Cover image credentials: [MORI Building DIGITAL ART MUSEUM: EPSON teamLab Borderless](#) by [Dick Thomas Johnson](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

Version 2.0, June 2023
Loughborough University, London

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 DATA AND METHODS.....	5
1.2 YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED.....	7
2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	10
2.1 YOUNG PEOPLE AND CREATIVE CAREERS: THE CHOICE AND ACCESS CONUNDRUMS	10
Theorising educational and career choice	11
2.2 THE POST-PANDEMIC MUSEUM.....	13
3 FINDINGS	15
3.1 CHOOSING A CREATIVE CAREER	15
Choice as continuum: A non-binary journey	15
A repertoire of career influencers	16
Gaps in the repertoire: When young people feel failed by schools.....	18
Building cultural capital from families to creative professionals and museums.....	20
3.2 HOW MUSEUMS SUPPORT CHOICE AND ACCESS TO CREATIVE CAREERS	23
Needs and expectations from museums	23
A four-tiered model of building agency for choice	28
1 Experiential and informative engagements in museums.....	28
2 Developing career insight: A personalised journey	30
3 Developing self-efficacy	32
4 Agency as expanded horizons of action	34
4 CALIBRATING THE MUSEUM SUPPORT OFFER	35
4.1 YOUNG PEOPLE PERSONAS.....	35
The Selector	35
The Multifaceted Creative	36
The Decided	37
The Switcher.....	38
The Explorer	38
4.2 HOW MUSEUM PROGRAMMES ADDRESS THE FIVE PERSONAS	39
5 CONCLUSION	42
REFERENCES	43
ANNEX 1. SAMPLE OF DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOLS	45
Questionnaire, V&A Festival Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2020 edition.....	45
Interview guide, V&A Festival Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2020 edition	46
ANNEX 2. YOUNG PEOPLE PERSONAS	48

1 INTRODUCTION

This report examines the information and support needs experienced by young people who wish to pursue creative careers and the actual and potential role of museums in filling these needs. Based on a four-year mixed methods study and an interdisciplinary literature review, the report provides information about the process of career choice, influencers and support needs as experienced by young people. The core concern is to shed light on how museums might (re)calibrate their support offer so that they can better respond to young people's interests and needs. This concern is captured in a segmentation study which identified five career status profiles or personas representing young people with close characteristics regarding career choice 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 and testing the relevance of future museum programmes for young people interested in creative careers.

This report has been produced in the frame of the AHRC Leadership Fellowship & UKRI Innovation Fellowship *Connect2Aspire. Cultural Engagements and Young People's Professional Aspirations*. The main research problem addressed by the study regarded the challenges experienced by young people in choosing viable professions that align with their inner predispositions, interests and talents. In response, the study looked at new ways of mobilising cultural and creative resources, spaces and networks to support 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. This report contextualises a specific outcome resulting from the Connect2Aspire study: a workshop-based method for engaging young people in a playful exploration of their creative career aspirations and pathways. This is offered as part of the Connect2Aspire aspirations mapping toolkit¹ and uses the same personas listed above, which young people select and use throughout the game, as they advance on strategic points along their projected career pathways. The playful format has been designed as a creative research method with a dual purpose: for cultural organisations to gain valuable insight into young people's experiences of choosing and accessing creative careers; and for young people as a reflexive device for enabling them to reflect on their needs and wants against opportunities and challenges encountered as they seek to achieve career goals. This report provides context around the research process that led to crafting the five personas and the card-based engagement format; and offers insight and guidance for using these materials by museums to align their youth programmes to young people's interests and needs.

Some considerations regarding the scope of the report are necessary: The report is not mapping the vast practical and research literature on museum education, nor does it attempt to create taxonomies of museum programmes addressing young people. Rather, it uses best practice examples to illustrate the points made, most of these coming from the research and evaluation of youth programmes offered by the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) and museums in the West Midlands (specifically Coventry), which have been studied in depth for this study.

¹ <https://connect2aspire.lboro.ac.uk/outcomes/aspirations-mapping-toolkit/>

The remainder of the report is structured as follows: **Section 1.1** provides methodological details, focusing on the strand of the Connect2Aspire project that looked at the role of museums in informing young people's creative careers, reflecting the views of 265 young people who attended V&A events. This was embedded in a broader scope exploration of the role of culture, communication and media in inspiring and supporting young people to choose and pursue viable professional pathways.

Section 2 provides background and context to the study, looking at the current situation within the UK cultural and creative industries and the issues experienced by young people who wish to access them (section 2.1); and the recent shifts in the social role of the museum, exacerbated throughout and after the Covid-19 pandemic (section 2.2).

Section 3 outlines the main findings of the study, clustered around the process of career choice and main influencers; gaps and needs experienced by young people interested in creative professions; and how museums currently support young people with issues of choice and access to creative domains. The centrepiece of the Findings section is a four-tiered theoretical model that offers a unique perspective on how museums support young people, a process initially catalysed by

1. **experiential and informative engagements in museums**, with a wide variety of approaches, from applied skills workshops to youth collectives; which then leads to
2. the development of **career insight**, a highly personalised integration of museum engagements which consists of a balanced assessment of career options against inner talents, predispositions and skills; and
3. the development of **self-efficacy**, which refers to the development of inner confidence in one's own capacity to reach out to those goals, and awareness of both skill sets possessed, and those needed to advance steadily along one's professional path. These converge in the expansion of
4. **agency as 'horizons of action'** (Ball 1997; Ball et al. 2002), the key end goal to which museums (potentially) contribute.

The study offers a nuanced analysis of the role of museums in the process leading up to development of agency, pointing to the fact that museums cannot act alone to support young people in this long-term, often arduous process. Rather, museums act within complex ecologies of socio-cultural and educational assemblages, within which they start filling ever more important roles.

Section 4 focuses on the design of support programmes for young people, putting to use the findings outlined beforehand. The core of the section is made of the afore-mentioned segmentation study, leading to the identification of unique personas with interests and needs to be addressed by museum programmes. The theoretical model outlined in the Findings section is once again referred to in here, looking at how distinctive types of informative and experiential engagements in museums can support the needs of young people personas.

The report offers concluding remarks on the usefulness of this research and associated design outcomes for either assessing or (re)calibrating the museum support programmes for being genuinely useful for young people from all walks of life. A concern with young people from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds is evident throughout the focus and approach of this study, especially given the significantly higher barriers to access they experience for entering creative professions. Particular attention is given in the concluding remarks regarding the ways in which museums can effectively reach out to and engage these audiences.

1.1 DATA AND METHODS

The project included 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. This report draws in particular on the latter strand of research, which analysed the role of museums in informing choice and supporting young people's understanding of potential 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:

1. the careers festival *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume* and *Making It: Careers in Art and Design* and
2. a 5-day creative workshop for young people not in education, employment and training.

Overall, 265 young people who engaged with V&A events have been consulted through interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, participant observation and analysis of creative artefacts produced by themselves. This sample includes 83 young people involved in the Connect2Aspire study in 2020, while 182/265 young people have been involved in a pilot study that preceded the Connect2Aspire research, which covered two editions of the *Making It* careers festival and one edition of the 5-day photography workshop, also offered by the V&A. Details on the research design and data collection protocols are provided for each of the two flagship events, below.

V&A creative career festivals

The *Making It* career fairs have been offered by the V&A Museum in years preceding the Covid-19 pandemic in two versions: one themed on Art and Design (held in the V&A Museum in South Kensington) and the other on Careers in Fashion and Costume (held in a location in East London). This study collected data on three editions held in consecutive years, including:

- 2020 edition of *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume* (Stratford Circus Arts Centre, February 2020, sample: 67)
- 2019 edition of *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume* (East London, sample: 82)
- 2018 edition of *Making It: Careers in Art and Design* (V&A Museum, South Kensington, sample: 89).

Data collection instruments included interviews and self-administered questionnaires with a complementary research design. Interviews targeted young people 18-24 years old, and questionnaires were administered by participants 15 years old and over. In both editions, interviews and questionnaires were distributed with the assistance of the *CreateVoice* team on the day of each event. 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. Questions in the interview and questionnaire were structured according to three dimensions aligned to the V&A theory of change (see below).

Some limitations to the research design were posed by the slightly different protocols for data collection used in the two editions. The research design was more complex for the 2020

and 2018 editions², and included more questions about young people's interests and needs for progressing in creative careers and influencers.

V&A creative skills workshops

The study carried out over two editions of the workshop *CreateFutures*, offered as part of the of the V&A's Young People's Programme. The two editions have been held respectively in December 2018 and January 2020, organised and run jointly by the V&A Young People team in collaboration with two different charities. The 2018 event was organised in collaboration with the Newham-based charity Community Links, with course activities taking place alternatively at the V&A and Community Links headquarters. The 2020 event was organised in partnership with The Prince's Trust and course activities were held at the V&A in South Kensington and the Stratford Circus Arts Centre in East London.

Both editions were themed on photography. In 2018 participants were invited to create a collection of photos to represent the themes of community and belonging. In 2020 the focus was on streetstyle photography and participants were invited to capture the streetstyle of Stratford in their photos. On the last day of the course participants had their work displayed in an exhibition staged at the V&A in South Kensington (2018) and at the Stratford Circus Arts Centre (2020). For the 2020 edition, the streetstyle photography 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.

The report covers both editions, looking at how the two workshops contributed to building up knowledge and skills in photography as well as shaping attitudes and choices for careers in the creative industries. Participants' views were captured via interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, participant observation during sessions and analysis of creative artefacts produced during the workshop and reflections submitted for their Bronze Arts Award. The data collection protocols were designed to capture how young people engaged with and benefitted from the workshop and used a theory of change that analysed and probed relationships among key dimensions of a theory of change (outlined in next section).

Study design and the V&A's theory of change

Study protocols were designed in line with the V&A's theory of change, which looked at relationships among three dimensions:

1. Young people's profile, expectations and motivation to attend
2. Change mechanisms (participation, engagement, satisfaction with activities)
3. Outcomes - the development of skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking and self-efficacy (for the career fairs) and creative thinking, learning to learn and self-efficacy (for creative skills workshop) and .

This 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 focus was in particular on probing the outcomes experienced by young people (Case box 1).

² See sample questionnaire for 2020, in Annex 1.

Info box 1: Expected outcomes probed in V&A events for young people

Outcomes probed in creative careers fairs

Critical thinking

- Scepticism – healthy questioning and challenging assumptions
- Make judgement and decisions, based on analysis of data
- Problem-solving – overcome obstacles and seek alternative approaches

Creative thinking

- Divergent and convergent thinking
- Fluency and originality of ideas
- Flexibility – comfort with ambiguity and change
- Generate new approaches and solutions

Self-efficacy

- Act within the bigger picture
- Self-awareness and belief in one's abilities
- Grit – use tactics to overcome setbacks and failures
- Aim high – set clear goals, devise routes to achieve them

Outcomes probed in creative skills workshops

Learning to learn

- Awareness of one's learning process & needs
- Gain, process & assimilate new knowledge and skills; Seek & make use of guidance
- Manage goals & time; Self-directed learning

Self-efficacy

- Act within the bigger picture
- Self-awareness and belief in one's abilities
- Grit – use tactics to overcome setbacks and failures
- Aim high – set clear goals, devise route to achieve them

Creative thinking

- Divergent and convergent thinking
- Fluency and originality of ideas
- Flexibility – comfort with ambiguity and change
- Iterate – generate new approaches and solutions

Expert interviews and desk research

While the views of young people are the main source of this study, additional context and nuance are added by expert interviews and desk research. Expert interviews (n=20) have been conducted with professionals in the fields of culture and education, as well as youth development and social care, the majority active in Coventry and the West Midlands. The interview topical areas revolved around the role of culture and informal education in informing young people's professional choices and supporting job preparedness and access to the job market. A desk research study was conducted in 2022-23 to embed and give context to the empirical findings with particular attention to the effects of the pandemic on the museum world and museum education. Desk research was limited to the UK cultural and creative industries, focusing on museum programmes for young people, as well as additional literature on the CCI policy environment and young people development and employability.

1.2 YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED

It is important to get a sense of the young people involved in this research, as their views are central to the findings that are outlined in it.

The 238 young people involved in the creative career fairs had a different socio-demographic make-up when looking at the events held in the South Kensington location (2018 edition) compared with East London (2019, 2020). 89 young people took part in the 2018 fair in South Kensington, with the following socio-demographic details:

- Young women made the majority of participants (82% females, 16% males)³
- Age segment 18-24 was best represented (74%), and 22% were 16-17 years old⁴
- Ethnicity: majority of 67% white, followed by 11% Black, and 8% Asian⁵
- Education: 31% of respondents completed an undergraduate degree, 42% their A-Levels, and 65% GCSEs⁶
- Location: the majority of respondents came from Greater London (64%), followed by UK (29%) and few participants from outside the UK (7%).

For the festival editions held in East London, 149 young people were consulted, with the following socio-demographic details:

- a majority of 92% were girls
- 66% (86 participants) were in the age range 18-24, and 24% (31) 16-17 years old, with 7% being 25 and over⁷
- Ethnicity was measured in self-administered surveys in both editions, averaging a majority of white (59%) followed by Asian (17%), Black (9%) and mixed (8%).

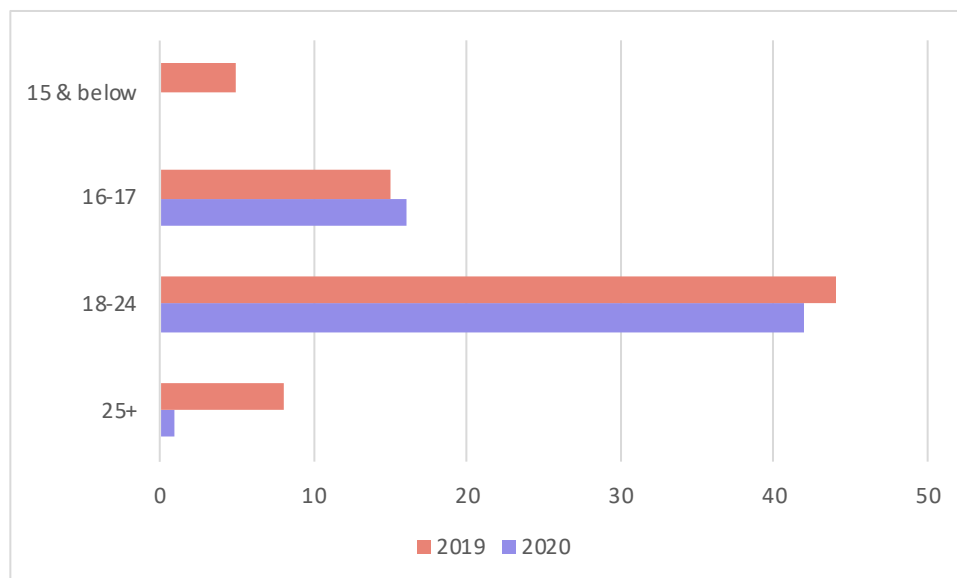


Fig. 1. Comparison of age ranges across the 2020 and 2019 editions of the *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume* Festival. Overall sample who answered this question: 131.

³ Across all registered responses in interviews and questionnaires

⁴ Age range ratios should be kept in mind for assessing current findings; however they cannot be generalised for the overall Making It 2018 attendance, and should account for the fact that 1) interviews covered only young people 18+ unless accompanied by parents; only 24 out of 64 questionnaire respondents filled their age, leaving 40 uncovered. Most mentioned education levels completed for the 40 respondents who didn't mark their age are up until and including GCSEs - indicating that many respondents are around 18 and younger.

⁵ Percentages based on questionnaire responses only.

⁶ Percentages based on questionnaire responses only.

⁷ This is the age representation of the sample of respondents, however this is not representative for the age make up of the entire cohort of young people, as the interviews only included young people above 18 y.o.

Significantly, a relatively low percent of young people across both editions held in East London were actually located in East London (20%)⁸ while 38% come from Greater London (except East London). 37% came from the rest of the UK, with some specifying they drove to London for this event, a few taking long journeys from Cardiff or Liverpool. 5% of participants were international.

The 27 young people involved in the **photography workshops held in East London** were recruited from young people not in education, employment and training (NEETs). The majority of the young people were in the age range 18-24 years old. Gender participation was balanced across the two editions, with 14/27 young men attending. All participants are London based, however neighbourhood locations are varied. While in 2018 a majority of participants were coming from East or South-East London, in 2020 locations were spread more evenly across different areas of London including East (Redbridge) or South-East London (such as Lewisham), but also North and Northeast/Northwest, South and South-West London. Ethnic data was gathered only for the 2018 edition: Majority Black (6/11), three Indian and Pakistani, one North African (one preferred not to disclose). In terms of educational qualifications, the majority had finished their GCSEs; 5 participants (out of 14 survey question respondents, 2020) and 4 (out of 10 survey question respondents 2018) had a Bachelor degree.

In 2018, 6/11 participants held a **creative qualification**, and 3/11 wanted to study for a creative qualification. In 2020, just 2 survey respondents mentioned they had a creative qualification. Awarded qualifications include Multimedia Design Technology, Creative Media production, Cultural Heritage, Photography & Art textiles. Some had completed informal education short courses such as Product Design course with Prince's Trust, a 7-week Documentary film making course, and a Sculpture Bronze Arts Award for an informal course offered by Central St Martins. 5 participants in 2020 and 4 in 2018 mentioned they were self-taught artists and learnt an artform or creative practice by themselves.

In both editions the majority of participants declared to be unemployed and looking for jobs. At the same time, a sizable number stated they lacked financial resources to pursue education and careers in creative sectors. Many of them had to get a job quite early after finishing compulsory education. In essence, they had to become autonomous quite early in life, which posed serious obstacles in their creative career plans. Thus, most of them had to make difficult choices between earning a living and training for creative careers they really wanted to get into.

⁸ Significant as the event has been held in East London.

2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 YOUNG PEOPLE AND CREATIVE CAREERS: THE CHOICE AND ACCESS CONUNDRUMS

The case of the cultural and creative industries has been high on the international agenda already for some time. Numerous studies have argued for their social and economic potential, and the spill-over effects that investing in the CCI might have on the entire society and economy (e.g., OECD 2022). At the same time, significant issues related to job precariousness, lack of representation, diversity, inclusion and skills gaps have been persistently studied and debated (Banks 2013, 2017). This report focuses on two inter-related issues related to the cultural and creative industries: on how lack of representation and low diversity in the UK creative industries tie with limitations around access for marginalised and under-represented groups. When considering cultural and creative employment, this report makes reference to “the trident approach” to cultural and creative occupations endorsed by the European Statistical System Network on Culture (ESSnet-Culture), which spans:

1. Specialist workers in cultural and creative occupations
2. Support workers in the CCI, whose activity is not regarding as ‘creative’
3. Embedded workers, who are working in other non-creative sectors (OECD 2022).

The focus is on the first and the third categories – therefore creative workers whether they are employed in creative sectors or outside them. A nuanced appreciation of the strategic importance of cultural work and the distinctiveness of the cultural worker can be emphasised by referring to notions of ‘value’ – values and ethics endorsed by creative professionals, as well as the value of the creative outputs resulting therein (Banks 2017). Thus, representation in the cultural and creative sectors has important repercussions, as it comes to define whose values come to be perpetuated through the process and the products of creative work. It then becomes an issue of major concern that the sector is dominated by a small minority, who monopolised in particular senior positions in the sector, as Baroness Deborah Bull, the Co-Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity claims in the Foreword to the Creative Majority report (Wreyford et al. 2021). The literature offers numerous statistics that highlight slices of pronounced inequality: 52% of the creative workforce come from high socio-economic backgrounds or professional families; 44% of influential editors and broadcasters attended an independent school are examples of such statistics, drawn from the 2017–2019 Labour Force (Social Mobility Commission 2021).

Agenda-setting reports such as *Creative Majority* (Wreyford et al. 2021) and *The Toolkit for the Creative Industries* produced by the Social Mobility Commission (2021) amply document the lack of ethnic, gender and racial diversity in the UK creative industries and focus on ‘what works’ to dismantle the status quo and empower the ‘creative majority’ in the CCI, those living at the margins of the sector or those not being able to access it in the first place (Wreyford et al. 2021). For example, the *Creative Majority* report provides a framework for structural change in the CCI, with guiding principles for the UK government, organisations and businesses to drive issues of diversity (the “five As”), namely ambition, accessibility, allyship, adaptability and accountability in the creative industries. *The Toolkit for the Creative Industries* (2021) sets out Action Plans for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy, for example through the Group for Education and Museums (GEM) and issue-based support networks such as Museum Detox, Museum as Muck and other campaigns (2021, p.83).

How such practices play out to inform agendas and practices to address economic inequality remains underexplored and often controversial. Kolbe (2022) draws attention to the controversies arising from the strategic framing of cultural organisations and the policy advocated by the government due to re-embedding austerity discourses and measures that deepen structural inequalities. While funders of the creative industries and their strategic agendas, e.g., Arts Council England' [Let's Create strategy and delivery plan](#) (2020) emphasise "collaboration" and "inclusivity", the policy behind urges institutions "to develop business models" that "maximise income, reduce costs and become more financially resilient" (ACE, 2020, pp. 27, 49). The cultural policies and Delivery Plans outlined by *Let's Create* aim to extend partnerships between public and private, not-for-profit, and commercial organisations. As Kolbe (2022) argues, this promotes an entrepreneurial conduct, e.g., commercialising curatorial programs and museum services, without tackling the actual challenges and thus leads to an increased shift in taking up social responsibility with a decreased access and availability of public funding. With private sponsorship and the "privatisation of programming", Kolbe (2022) notes, commercial galleries have gained more influence over artistic production and the creative industries than public institutions such as museums, given their resources to fund cultural workers also in non-profit institutions (p.263). In other words, while organisations advocate inclusivity and diversity discourses, this is done based on commercial rationales and market-led solutions (Kolbe, 2022).

This study acknowledges the complex entanglements and structural conditionings that maintain the status quo in the cultural and creative industries from a perspective firmly rooted in young people's perspective. From their perspective, the challenges they experience when considering creative careers revolve around two areas: **choice** and **access**. These two areas also define distinct though highly interconnected strategic areas for museum support actions. The remainder of this section looks at the roots of this problem, found in the process of education and career choice, which, it is argued, is configured in ways that keep creative career routes outside the reach of underrepresented communities.

Theorising educational and career choice

This study adopts a theory of choice drawing on the work of British sociologist Stephen J. Ball, which integrates Bourdieu's notions of *social capital*, *cultural capital* and *distinctions* (Bourdieu 1986) and Hopkinson & Sparkes' theory of careership. The theory of Ball and colleagues (Ball 1997; Ball et al. 2002) emphasises the social dimensions of choice. Drawing on Bourdieu's thinking, Ball (1997) argues that for parents, the process of school choice uses social and cultural capital that are unequally available and accessed in society. For parents in particular school choice is a mode of re-attesting and re-investing in the confirmation or uplift of their social class and position in society. As such, choice is performed at the crossroads between a cognitive/performative register, which matches performance to selections of places and institutions for study; and a social-cultural register which relates to how the agent classifies oneself and the institutions (Ball et al. 2002). In this process, parents employ what Bourdieu calls 'programmes of perception' (Bourdieu 1986: 2), by which their family, social, cultural and educational background enable them to decode cultural objects such as schools in very particular ways. This background and associated experiences equip them with specific knowledge that allows reading cultural objects beyond obvious interpretations: a school is not just a place for their children to get an education, rather the choice of certain schools will reflect back on their own social class and status. As Bourdieu

would put it, this is about being able to infer 'secondary meanings', get right to that which is actually signified in the cultural object (Bourdieu 1986:2; Ball 1997).

In summary, the choice of the school is a choice of lifestyle, influenced by perceptions of class and distinctions among them. What does this imply for underrepresented communities and their offspring? First, the theory implies that social class is the no. 1 predictor of educational choice. Parents sometimes explicitly wish to ensure 'class fit' through their school choice (Ball 1997: 11), because they wish for their children to mix with children from families 'who are like them' (Idem: 12). Ball's 1997 empirical study gives compelling examples of how affluent parents make choices specifically for their offspring to be able to mingle only with children and young people from the same social class. Naturally, the tendency is to perpetuate class distinctions and leave out for instance minorities, working classes and others perceived to be outside the desirable circles.

However, we should not over-simplify the process of choice and consider that class and social status define the distribution of educational choices unilaterally. The process of choice is very complex, very context dependent; depending on specific situations and upbringings, some aspects and some values may be considered determinant over others. Rational and non-rational factors come into play and are enlisted very differently by agents. For example, finances are key in choice for some, but for others they do not come into play at all (Ball et al. 2002). The most elusive yet arguably the most important aspect in this theory is **the freedom to differ from the norm**, with enormous implications for the disadvantaged. Some choices are automatic, not really deliberated especially for affluent young people, what Du Boys-Reymond (1998) calls 'normal biographies', and well-illustrated by Ball's numerous examples from interviews with affluent parents who wish to perpetuate the status quo for their offspring as a matter of fact. This is in huge contrast with the deliberate, complex decision-making process of young people who are the first to go to university in their family - what Du Boys-Reymond (1998) calls 'choice biographies', these people have more open choices in front of them, but constantly need to deliberate on them and legitimate them. They do not go along on pathways dictated by tradition, but their work is arduous and fraught with challenges, because they are often road openers, and need to carve with effort each step of their way.

It is on this aspect of differing from the norm that we wish to dwell on, to understand ultimately what is needed for these young people to be supported in their choices where they beg to differ from tradition. To look at this, we introduce Hodkinson & Sparkes (1997) theory of careership, according to which choices are made within 'horizons of action'. These horizons are complex and layered through many years of experience. They have spatial, temporal and deeply influential perceptual dimensions. They filter the outside realities for children and young people, separating between places, positions and groups that are 'like them' and they can choose to attain or reach out to; and those that are either out of reach or not desirable, not 'for them'. Young children are fed information that build and shape these perceptual horizons since the day they are born. Thus, before being limited and dictated from the outside, boundaries of choice are actually built within children and young people's perceptual and choice mechanisms. Hodkinson & Sparkes (1997) call the process of deciding within these horizons 'pragmatically rational decision-making': decisions are not made based on systematic analysis, rather pragmatically drawn from often fragmented information that is offered in familiar, well-known contexts. They are context-dependent, and deeply embedded in family and community structures and histories. Despite the name of the theory, Ball et al (2002) argue that Hodkinson & Sparkes 'resocialise the rational within choice' (p. 55);

therefore, despite the theory name, they purport choices to be only part rational, and part opportunistic and emotionally laden.

How information is perceived, its trustworthiness is highly important for the process of choice. In his thought-provoking article 'I heard it on the grapevine', Stephen Ball and Carol Vincent (1998) argue that parents and young people will perceive as relevant and integrate 'hot', 'grapevine' knowledge, that heard in familiar environments, not the formal, cold information offered by institutions, often for the masses or undistinguished generic audiences. In the rest of this report, we will look back at this theory, from a perspective that puts the museum in picture as an actor that can potentially influence young people's horizons of choice and action.

2.2 THE POST-PANDEMIC MUSEUM

Pre-pandemic visions already speculated about the social role of museums shifting from a cultural institution to acting as well as a "social agora" (Baggesen 2014), a "start-up hub" (Murphy 2018), the "activist museum" (Bergevin 2019) or a "learning centre" engaging with activism, the entrepreneurial subject, locality, experientiality and transformations (Garner et al. 2016). Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, museums sought to reposition themselves in relation to the creative industries but had to adapt also to how social imaginaries of cultural and creative work (CCW) have changed (Flore, Hendry & Gaylor, 2023). The pandemic had a disproportionate effect on the arts and cultural sector, with severe implications for job and revenue loss for cultural organisation, especially those thriving on large scale cultural events such as festivals (Khlystova et al., 2022), but also memory institutions including museums (Kidd et al., 2022). On the other hand, as Flore et al. show (2023), Covid-19 triggered as well global solidarity generated by the imperative of having to cope collectively to an exceptional situation, however one that ended up defining a new normal for regular and working lives.

One of the most significant impacts on museums resided in the new imperative of going digital. Contributions to Issue 25 of the *Museological Review* (2021) documents how the pandemic triggered both the 'imperative of virtuality' as well as resistance to it. The digital space provided continuity to institutional agendas (Samaroudi et al., 2020) as well as a space for collective reflection on museums' roles in society and the cultural sectors. Besides, the 'virtual' became fundamental to maintaining community and solidarity networks and collaborations creating a viable substitute for physical assemblies. At the same time, the discourse of the 'new normality' crystallised social inequalities, tensions between emerging 'creative forces' and organizations struggling with their precarious circumstances (*Museological Review* Issue 25). The pandemic has also compelled cultural institutions to devise new ways of coping with crisis and new means of continuing to function as cultural and educational bodies. Research on museums social media practices by Kidd et al. (2022) indicates that museums were quick to shift from a reactive mode in their social media content strategy, in which they documented pandemic effects and new regulations adopted; to more 'tactical approaches' in which the digital was used as a platform to continue to deliver their cultural and social mission, where the top concerns were with education and using the arts as means of coping with pandemic effects; and finally to a period marked by hopes of re-opening and preparing for hybrid modes of cultural offerings and interaction. Their study also documented new strategies of engagement, blending informative one-way communication with dialogic formats and more space for user interaction, playfulness and creativity.

The consequences of the pandemic need to be seen in the context of structural changes in the UK socio-cultural and economic fabric, taking effect throughout the past decades. These include funding cuts for the cultural sector and the downgrading of arts and cultural subjects in UK national curricula (Moss et al. 2020). However, institutional coping strategies meant that new, creative ways of generating resources and reaching out to audiences were devised by museums. For example, Morse and colleagues' (2022) policy genealogy of museums in the UK shows how austerity politics has consolidated the role of museums as service providers and partnership developers responding to health and wellbeing while encouraging new partnerships (e.g., Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, Creative Carers Programme at Birmingham Museums Trust, NHS and other social care providers). Collaboration and partnership make one of the most significant strategies for the UK museums and cultural sector and can go from small partnerships focused on single projects, to more enduring regional or cross-country partnerships of broader scope and duration. Partnership building across cultural, social and community sectors have been encouraged by national agencies such as The Arts Council, along with principles of good practice. For instance, the Arts Council identified five pillars for building new partnerships – community centred, responding to need, meaning of partnership, sharing ownership and future focused (Arts Council 2019).

3 FINDINGS

This section outlines the key findings from this study, covering: Key empirical findings on how young people choose creative careers, who influences this process and what are the critical areas where young people need support; and a theorisation of the process of creative career choice and the actual or potential role that museums (might) play within.

3.1 CHOOSING A CREATIVE CAREER

Choice as continuum: A non-binary journey

Findings suggest that young people's career decisions are placed on a continuum, usually marked by initial broad fields and followed by more specific directions up to definite job roles. This does not only apply to young people starting to think of future professional directions; the process of choice is rather a continuous assessment of personal interest and capacity against outer opportunity, influenced in often invisible ways by a person's socio-cultural background and upbringing. This is aligned to the conclusions of research on educational choice by Ball, captured in the phrase '*Choice is a process not an event*' (Ball 1997: 6). Case box 1 illustrates this through empirical findings from the V&A *Making It* festivals.

Case box 1: Degrees of choice among young people attending V&A events

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 costume⁹, 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:

⁹ Sample: 54 respondents, across surveys and interviews

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.

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 should be regarded rather as degrees on a continuum, where 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. For many young people going into a creative career may also be a way to expand on their creative and artistic talents.

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.

A repertoire of career influencers

This study asked young people to select and rank influencers (see Case box 2), while also seeking to provide a nuanced understanding of the role that influencers play in the process of choice, going beyond linear rankings.

Case box 2: Key career influencers among young people attending V&A events

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.

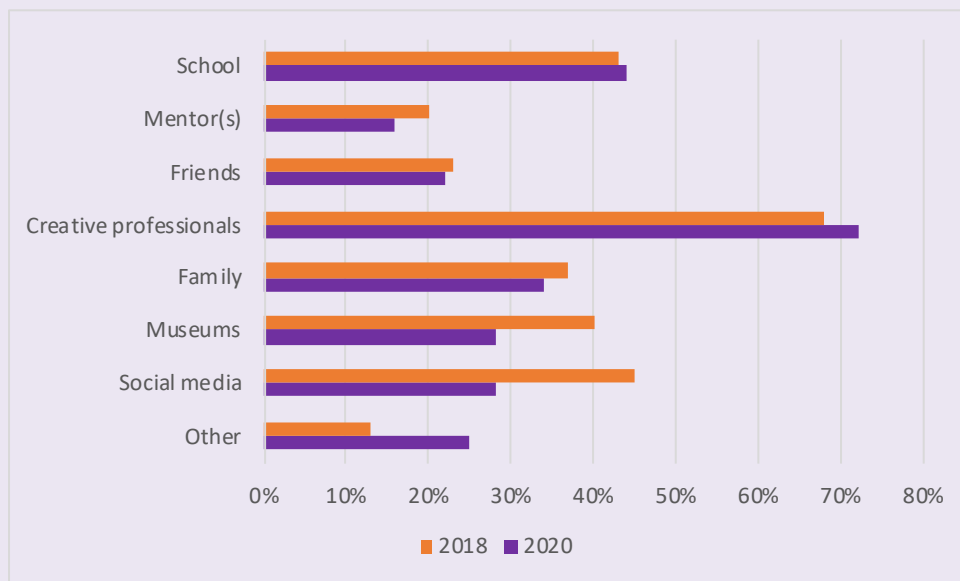


Fig. 2. Q: Who influences your career choices? (please tick all that apply). Survey, Making It Festival, 2018 & 2020 editions. Sample: 97 respondents.

The first important take away is that while they may rank influencers, young people **tend to rely on a repertoire**, with varying degrees of actual influence, depending on highly personal factors and circumstances, 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 are most often indicated as the top, or among the top 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.

In data interpretation stages, we compared the findings of this study to other studies on career influencers. There is a body of scholarly work that studies the key influences on young people's education and occupational choices (see for instance the work of Louise Archer on career choices and aspirations, Archer et al., 2014; the work of Stephen J Ball; Ball 1997; Ball et al. 2002). While influence structures are complex and multi-dimensional (Archer 2012), and the role of social class and socio-economic background play nuanced influencing roles, in general parents and schools tend to make the top of the influencer rankings. This is, however contradicted by this research. Not only are creative professionals consistently ranked first as key influencer, moreover many young people (especially those from underrepresented communities and NEETs) manifested a deep lack of trust and rejection of schools as reliable source of information and influence on careers. The next two sections look first at the role of schools and the widening gaps they leave in meeting young people's needs, especially when the latter come from underrepresented communities; and the role of families and building cultural capital. These patterns then shed light on the emerging role of museums in filling the gaps left by schools, and at times by families.

Gaps in the repertoire: When young people feel failed by schools

The role of schools within young people's repertoire of influencers **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%)¹⁰
- A smaller number of young people (33%) want to enter the creative industries via non-traditional routes, without going to the university¹¹. 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 detailed 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.

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 V&A 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 (NEETs)**. Most of the 27 participants consulted held a deep mistrust and rejection of schools for skills building and career development, as this selection of quotes illustrates:

School's trash. There was no performing arts in my school. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

The school where I went to, it was just about getting students to pass an exam. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

I think school in this country is outdated. (F, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

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)

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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.

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 remains important, especially when it comes to the weight of the formal creative qualifications they provide. The role of schools as influencers is much more nuanced. Many young people rely on influencers within school settings – such as teachers, mentors and career advisors. However, some of these and many others (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.

Building cultural capital from families to creative professionals and museums

Young people's process of choice and the challenges they encounter while contemplating creative professions require a nuanced reading of multiple datasets, often triangulating among multiple sources of data. This is because often in one-off data collection only a side of the story is likely to be captured – for instance, young people's rejection of school or family influences, or a rejection of working-class professions that are prevalent in a certain community. This seems to justify in first instance that young people will choose to trust and follow in the foot-steps of creative professionals (as empirical data suggest), all the while rejecting formal schooling structures where they felt disengaged or underrepresented; or family and community environments where there are no role-models to follow. However, to avoid superficial readings into data and to do justice to this complex entanglement of agency and choice, we have made a distinction of the type of influence between:

1. influencing structures that are enduring and drive choice through repeated, daily interactions; and
2. more directed, purposeful influences, those coming often from people and institutions that young people trust or look up to.

The first may be acknowledged or unacknowledged by young people, it operates both in overt and in covert ways. It affects and curbs what Appadurai (2013) calls ‘the capacity to aspire’, putting a ceiling onto what young people feel entitled to aspire towards; and it models what Ray (2002) calls ‘the aspiration window’, the reachable role models and professions young people are exposed to, and identify as potential attainment targets for themselves. The second influencer is acknowledged directly by a young person, they are a role model they trust and look up to, operating a direct and well acknowledged influence on the young person.

To make sense of the dynamics of influence across these two categories, it is useful to refer to Bourdieu’s concept of ‘cultural capital’, discussed at the beginning of this report in relation to the process of choice. As indicated by previous research (both quantitative and qualitative), cultural capital plays an important role in occupational choice and attainment (e.g., Koppman 2016), and the family environment is the prime context in which exposure to cultural experiences is offered to children and young people. This influence is building up gradually, is subvert, and may be acknowledged by young people or not. When young people expand their agency and are able to cultivate their own connections, they may (continue to) cultivate those that keep on building cultural capital where this was already being developed in family circles; or, albeit more rarely, start building cultural capital where families did not provide for this in the first place. In both cases, young people acknowledge these influences on their creative education and professional choices because these are clear, visible sources of authority and role models they look up to. We offer this as a potential explanation for the very compelling ranking of influencers made by young people in this study, where creative professionals are consistently ranked first. Thus, we may conclude that the disparity in findings with studies featuring the family and schools in top positions may be due to the fact that contexts and people for cultivating cultural capital may be under surface and even unacknowledged for young people for most of their lives, going back to early years education. When they start to be aware of these influences, they are already able to point to the figures that shape their ideas and choices, such as creative professionals and social media.

This is an important implication for **the role of museums**. They may, in situations where young people already have high cultural capital cultivated from childhood, build up on this basis and offer them opportunities to continue to cultivate it. But most importantly, they may catalyse very significant change in young people coming from working class and underrepresented communities, who may not have cultural capital assets, but can build them through the mediation of museums.

When it comes to acknowledging museums’ role by young people themselves, opinions expressed in this study were mixed: some were regular museum goers, while others did not 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 could be helpful as information and inspiration sources. Young people acknowledged firstly the role of museums as information providers, “*every single thing you look at, gives you a piece of information*” (F, V&A photography workshop, 2018). Information can be used to spur novelty and creativity by “*contrast[ing] it with something new, trying to*

put it in your own way" (F, V&A photography workshop, 2018). Information can also be used to give context around one's professional field of interest/career profile.

Young people need, however, a rewarding experience to start thinking of museums as potentially useful. Among the young people involved in the V&A photography workshops, for instance, there were those who were visiting the V&A for the first time. They were offered a guided experience which included a tour of the Photography gallery. This helped them make connections between the range of information offered by the museum and a creative profession such as photography, as this quote illustrates:

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)

There was agreement as well that museums contribute to spurring creativity and new ways of thinking. Participants were particularly impressed by the tour of the Photography exhibition during the V&A visit. Having with them a professional photographer who could drive their attention to key aspects to look at was also helpful to understand that a museum such as the V&A could be valuable for enhancing creative thinking and inspiration.

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 and then I'll kind of use it. I would find my own way obviously not trying to steal his style, but I'd use it. You always learn something. I walk in there, I walk away remembering something from there. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

However, 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, as this young girl, a regular museum goer, commented:

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, while the role of influencers is crucial, this study acknowledges that this needs to be seen in the context of a complex, enduring and very contextualised process of career choice. 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 for some people also museums. Many young people are prone to rely on several of these actors for moving from options to final decisions. The bearing of influencers or the consideration of opportunities are nuanced and gain complex undertones depending on specific individual circumstances and socio-cultural embedding of young people.

3.2 HOW MUSEUMS SUPPORT CHOICE AND ACCESS TO CREATIVE CAREERS

For many young people, museums are not the go to places when it comes to seeking reliable information, advice and support for choosing or advancing creative careers. Yet, museums often come to be acknowledged as such by young people who lack vital information and support from the more traditional sources – the family or the school for instance. In this study, we looked at the challenges experienced by young people and coupled with these the needs and expectations when turning to museums to overcome them. We then analyse the difference that museum engagements actually make for young people – for informed choice of a creative career and for understanding viable routes to career progression. This is integrated in a four-tiered theoretical model of choice, which builds on and extends the theory of educational and career choice by Ball (1997; Ball et al. 2002) and Hodgkinson and Sparkes (1997).

Needs and expectations from museums

We identified three main challenges affecting creative career choice and progression, as experienced by young people attending events offered by the V&A Museum. The first has to do with **lack of skill building opportunities**. Young people felt this challenge differently depending on their personal circumstances. For some, the challenge had to do with lack of time and resources to engage in skills building activities or to get creative qualifications from arts schools and universities. This applies in particular to young people who have to make a living on their own very soon after finishing school. For example this young girl who attended a V&A skills workshop mentioned in a discussion about education and skill building options:

I don't know if my situation is a bit different. I've got a rent and bills to pay. So I have to work for that, and by the time I go back home I just wanna chill, I'm exhausted already. So for me I need to be a bit more regimented in that. That's a big factor. (F, 2018)

Other young people are put back by the educational approaches prevalent in formal education, citing issues such as grade chasing, mass education and a lack of connection to contemporary creative work realities.

The second key challenge emphasised by young people regards the **lack of applied experience** for either landing first full-time jobs or for understanding first-hand what it is like to act in a certain professional role and if the role is suitable for them over the long-term. While the first can get an answer from an internship or placement, the latter is especially significant for young people, because they may need more than a one-off event or even training period. Uncertain about what a creative role is about, they remain often stuck and unable to choose; or they may even embark on a creative degree or professional qualification that they soon come to find out is not for them.

The third challenge has to do with **pre-conceptions about creative work** that hinder choice and progression. Some of these come from the influence of families and carers and may cause anxiety about the status of creative professions as low-paid and precarious. While this is bound to often reflect the reality of creative work, we found that young people who are not dissuaded and made to shift towards other types of roles by such pre-conceptions, are then challenged in their attempts and are in dire need of reliable information about how to progress creative careers while avoiding these pitfalls. We have also encountered the views that

creative careers are somewhat more simple, easier to get into than other professions, as this young person exemplifies:

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)

Young people experiencing these or similar challenges approach museums with **pre-existing needs and expectations**. While these are highly specific and contextualised, the rich dataset enabled us to identify a range of recurring expectations:

- Get information and advice for choosing and advancing creative careers
- Develop creative skills
- Network with peers and creative professionals
- Validate creative career abilities and decisions

These are described below, with examples of specific needs and expectations from young people attending V&A events.

1. Get information and advice for choosing and advancing creative careers

This need pattern is about receiving reliable, trustworthy information from a similarly reliable and trustworthy source. This source might be the museum or creative professionals that young people access in events organised by museums. Some young people are drawn by events that offer information about creative work, going from deep to specific. For example, the creative career fairs offered by the V&A until 2020 provided unique insights into the arts and design, fashion and costume industries through a blend of talks, demos, applied skills workshops, career advice and one on one coaching from creative professionals. Some young people consulted came by with a generic interest to find out more, as these quotes illustrate:

I heard that this is an interesting event, as I joined a previous V&A event before. For fashion and photography, I just find it very interesting, so I want to find out more.

[I came to] attend the talks and get inspiration. (Interviews, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2020)

I was keen to learn more about the fashion industry - particularly menswear & costumes.

[I came to] find out more about industry. (Survey, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2019)

However, we could also distinguish more targeted information needs, that could either a) support career entry and progression and b) support informed career choices.

Getting information about careers entry and progression: Many participants come with a ready-made decision to pursue a career in a field such as graphic design, architecture or fashion. As discussed above, this decision is however just one among many more decisions that they will have to make until entering the job market and further. They are looking for information about more specialised career options within a field and advice on entry routes and pathways. Some have just graduated or are about to graduate and lack information about the transition from school to work. The majority come with a quite **generic outlook of advice**

seeking, related to for instance skills needed, next steps on their career pathway, or ways to enter a certain industry such as fashion industry, as this selection of quotes illustrates:

I study a degree in costume. I need advice about what the next stage for my career would be and what kind of skills I need, from someone who is working in this field. Maybe, join the costume network. And learn how to stand out.

I am interested in the fashion industry; I am studying fine arts and fashion in London. [I came] to get some advice; to know different career paths.

I want to learn more about ways to get into costume and network. (Interviews/survey Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2020)

[I am looking for] career guidance. I am a graduate wanting to get into the industry. (Interview, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2019)

Others are interested in **specific advice** to help them inform a particular activity or career stage, for example a few came specifically to get advice on portfolio design, preparing for an interview or getting advice on the CV.

Getting advice for choosing creative careers: While there is overlap with the category above, these young people are specifically concerned with *choosing* their future career. For this, they expect information, but many also expect validation of their hesitant initial decisions or ideas about what a creative career implies. This need pattern has been well represented among young people attending a skills workshop as well as a one-day career fair. For example, young people attending the 2019 edition of *Making It* wanted to make a choice between different creative career options, or were exploring whether a creative career is for them. Some were undecided between broad creative fields, and some were looking at specific (often related) career options.

[I have an] interest in fashion and costume design. [I am thinking of a] possible career. (Survey, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2019)

[I am a] recent graduate and unsure what career to pursue. (Interview Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2019)

I don't know what career path to take. I need opportunity. (Survey Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2019)

A portion of respondents were still exploring **creative education options**. They were either applying for a creative degree or choosing which creative degree to go for.

I have dyslexia and I'm thinking of different avenues to art/fashion-based careers. Would like to go to fashion-specific college instead of 6th form. (Interview, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2019)

I'm doing fine arts right now, but I'm thinking of doing a fashion foundation. I came here to learn about the fashion industry, look for inspiration, to know what careers are available as a fashion designer. (Interview, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2020)

Or, young people with broad ideas about what they wish to do, are seeking to validate initial decisions or to get information about more specific types of roles and career trajectories in a specific industry. In the 5-day *CreateFutures* workshop offered by the V&A, those young people interested in a photography career indicated they were hoping to get information and tips for advancing in a photography career, and accessing creative professionals for information, ideas and career advice.

I am taking a gap year because I'm, I don't really know what I want to do. And so I want to know more about the different kinds of careers in photography and also if it was something I might want to do in further study as well like actual information as well. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

2. Develop creative skills

This need pattern is about more applied, experiential and skill-generating engagements, rather than purely information. For example, participants in the creative skills workshop *Create Futures* came interested to develop hands-on skills in photography, learn about original ideas and creative techniques, and learn to use photography equipment. Participants with low or no skills wanted to get basic photography skills, while some participants had already taken formal education or informal courses in photography or were self-taught, for them the course was a means to deepen and expand on photography skills:

I wanted to know more about photography, because I know the basics work, I wanted to see how other people work with photography and how they take pictures, what they like to do, because I always do landscape photos, I never did portrait. So, it's interesting learning how to do portraits for different cameras. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

I've come here because photograph, for me, is a passion I have and I've been getting a lot of shots and I've also had a pass through my exam in GCSE Creative Media so I thought I should take it further and I should learn more the in-depth of it. I thought of coming here and think of where I could get next, cause my future a goal would be to be a photographer and probably a cinematographer, so I thought maybe this could be a helping hand, teach me more about photography, the elements to it. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

Some mentioned they specifically wanted **photography skills to apply to other career fields**, such as film.

The reason why I chose the photography course was that I wanted to help me get into the make-up industry, like YouTube videos and make-up and have like pictures, modelling make-up. (Transgender, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

Shorter one-day events like career fairs are typically seen more as reliable sources of information (fitting the need pattern above) but can also offer a glimpse at applied work, through for example short workshops and demonstrations. In the festival *Making it*, a small number of respondents reported they came to learn a specific skill, such as creating a fashion portfolio; or for learning about openings and job opportunities in fashion and costume.

3. Networking with peers and creative professionals

Creative professionals are among the top valued (and for many *the* top valued) information source when it comes to creative careers. Industry professionals are sought for providing genuine views about the fashion industry, and also to give specific advice on career access and progression. Young people associate creative professionals with first-hand, valued information that they cannot get from elsewhere.

I'm learning fashion in LCF in my second year. I want to talk to people from industry to get some different perspectives.

I came here to have an occasion to meet theatre professionals and ask advice, moreover, to understand how fashion and theatre industry works in a country which is not the one where I'm from. (Interviews, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2020)

I've recently realised I have a desire to work in fashion but have nobody I can ask about it - so this was an introductory opportunity. (Survey, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2019)

Apart from professionals, young people are also interested in meeting like-minded peers with similar creative interests. This happens especially when opting for a more intensive collective engagement such as a creative skills workshop.

I really wanted to meet more people who had similar interests. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

Some were hoping that networks opened in the course may help them access future job opportunities.

Also gives you a chance to open a few doors into photography as well. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2020)

We found that at time expectations from museums may be either unrealistic, or not fully met by the type of event. In both the careers fairs and the skills workshop, some young people were hoping that museums might broker opportunities in creative sectors, such as meeting potential employers or getting opportunities for placements, internships and even first jobs. While this requires a very specific type of programme, coming across this need indicates that young people do regard museums as potential door openers, reliable sources of support that can put them in contact with creative work realities and opportunities.

4. Validate creative career abilities and decisions

This expectation emerged when participants were asked to reflect on their learning experience and its outcomes in qualitative data collection, which revealed that a key reason for joining was the need to build confidence about previous skills and their own ability to make valid choices. In *CreateFutures*, those young people who had prior skills in photography needed to validate it with people having similar interests and an instructor with solid industry experience. A young boy with self-taught photography skills remarked how before the course he had to “second guess [him]self if [he] was sort of good”, and he needed the course to validate this for him and boost his self-confidence.

These four sets of expectations are fundamental for understanding how museum experiences can function as bridging experiences between what their former educational experiences offered or failed to offer (as described above) and young people’s training and support needs, as they were preparing to make critical professional choices. The next sections look at how museum engagements are experienced by young people and integrated, focusing on the difference that these make for processes of choice or changed perceptions of openness and opportunity in the creative industries.

A four-tiered model of building agency for choice

In this part of the report, we integrate the empirical findings generated by this study in a theoretical model centred on choice and expanding agency or horizons of action (Hodkinson and Sparkes 1998). 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, 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 (Hodkinson and Sparkes 1998), 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 scope for choice, this focuses directly on the agent. This, according to this study, will happen by contributing to the development of career insight and self-efficacy related to the creative industries and ways of progressing creative careers. The remainder of this section breaks down these propositions and examines them within a four-tiered model which outlines:

1. How informative and experiential engagements in the museum support understandings of creative sectors and creative careers;
2. How these engagements contribute to developing career insight; and
3. Self-efficacy; which in turn might serve to
4. Expand young people's agency, seen as horizons for enhanced awareness of opportunity, choice and action.

1 Experiential and informative engagements in museums

The process of taking creative career decisions relies on the dynamics between **experience (experiential engagement)** and **information**. These may be connected to two domains: creative industries and creative careers. 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. Two distinctive patterns could be identified in the data, as depicted in Figure 3:

1. According to the domain of application: applied to creative industries (more experiential) vs applied to creative careers (more bent on information provision)
2. Depth and breadth of the know-how needed: wide-ranging and more generic vs deep and focused information/experience specific to one sector.



Fig. 3. Types of museum engagements according to domain of application and depth

The need for experiential engagement is mainly related to industry insight, 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.

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

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

A common pattern across respondents in our study 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)

Informational needs, on the other hand, are in particular related to career-related knowledge. 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)

In the following pages, we look at how museum engagements are integrated by young people and may result in the development of career insight, self-efficacy and expanded agency (Figure 4).

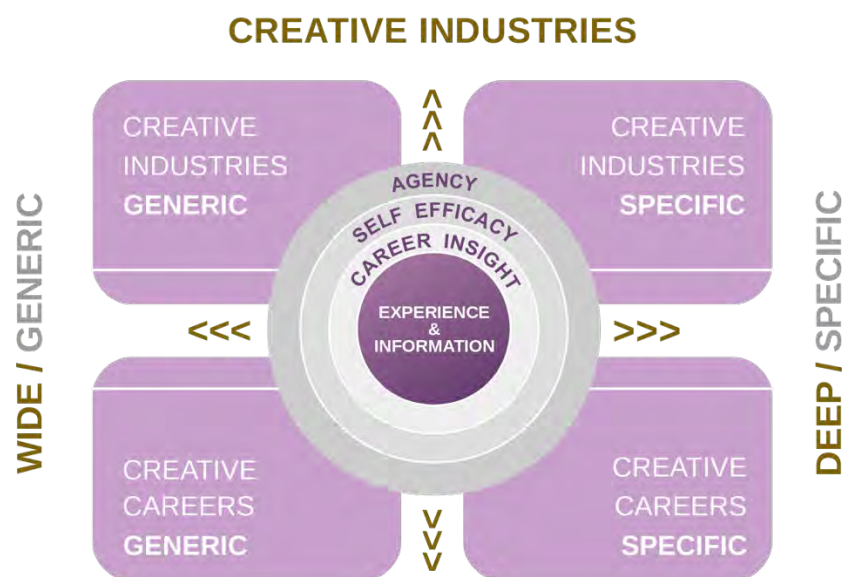


Fig. 4. From museum engagements to personalised outcomes for young people: enhanced career insight, self-efficacy and agency

2 Developing career insight: A personalised journey

While engagements are in general offered to groups of young people attending an event or taking a course, the way these engagements are crystallised and integrated by each young person is highly personal. In this section, we look at it in terms of developing career insight. We build on London's definition of career insight, in his exposition of a multidimensional theory of career motivation (London 1983; London & Noe 1997). According to London, career insight is one of the three internal factors that drive the dynamics of personal career motivation. The other two factors are career resilience and career identity (see Info Box 2). Career insight bridges between the realistic assessment of a career domain and of one's personal capacities, crystallised in the formulation of clear and pertinent career goals.

Info box 2: Career insight in London's theory of career motivation (1983, 1997)

Developed since his 1983 article, 'Toward a theory of career motivation', London's theory has been tested now for 30 years, and updated with associated measurement tools in the 1997 article co-authored with Noe. According to London's theory, career motivation is driven by three internal factors: **career resilience** (degree of resistance to external challenge and disruption); **career insight** (the degree of holding realistic assessments of one's capacities and relates these to clear career goals) and **career identity** (the degree to which work and one's profession are central to one's personal identity). The factors mutually influence one another as well as determining motivation:

- insight is the engine, the energy of motivation, through a constant assessment of internal capacity, need for development and outer professional conditions and opportunities, the agent is either driven or halted in their professional pursuit;
- resilience is the persistence and maintenance factor, the capacity to withstand challenging external conditions without deviating significantly from the set track;
- career identity gives the direction, steers the agent's pathway in the desired direction.

The theory conceptualises how the three internal factors are influenced by external conditions, and in turns determine the agent's choices and behaviours. Each of the three factors also feature more detailed components, for example self-efficacy is in London's theory a component of career resilience.

In this study, we explored the development of career insight in relation to participants' self-reported perceptions of having been supported to better understand realities of creative work and industries; as well as assessing their own position and capacity against the conclusions of this assessment.

For example, in the study on the *Making it* festival, we investigated participants' enhanced **know-how** about creative sectors and careers (industry know-how and career know-how), and awareness that this knowledge is valid, coupled with ability to understand their own positioning against this landscape, and consequently formulate career decisions. According to 2020 survey responses, these components are among the top four take aways from the event:

- Being more aware of progression routes for creative careers (Career know-how, 66%)
- Being more able to set career goals and plan to achieve them (45%)
- Being more able to take decisions for the future career (41%)
- Feeling more confident about one's creative abilities (38%)

Industry and career know-how are among the most significant outcomes from the Festival, with career know-how being especially strong, according to the young people consulted. The knowledge got is very varied, from specific advice on portfolio building and preparing for an interview to different ways of accessing creative careers, including non-traditional or 'back routes' into the industry:

Great. I took lots of notes. Lots of resources to learn. I found ideas for back routes into the industry.

Learning about apprenticeships and different ways of getting into fashion. (Interviews, Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume, 2020)

Many participants indicated as well that the festival helped them to **identify skills and knowledge areas to develop further:**

I understand a bit more about the industry and portfolios, I know there's much more hard work [to succeed] than meets the eye. So I know what I need to improve and need to do more.

Know about what to work on and improve, such as digital drawing.

I know more about what I want to learn, I know some websites where I can find information, like fashion apprenticeships, and know more about styling and fashion design.

*I realised I can make money out of it [my career]. I thought I would need to be at minimum wage, but not so. I learnt what skills I need to develop, and got some new knowledge. For example, [costume for] film TV and theatre are two different fields. (Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020)*

Some participants remarked that the know-how gained also helped them get clarity around career options and the implications of their choices, for instance:

I [was] already interested, [this event] enhanced the experience and told me how to proceed in this career and get yourself out there.

*I have a better understanding to go forward with. (Interviews, *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2019)*

3 Developing self-efficacy

If insight is about abilities to realistically assess self and external conditions, self-efficacy relates to one's self-perceived *capacity* to act in ways suitable for reaching out to those goals. Another important aspect of distinction from the previously introduced concept is that while career insight is focused on a specific career domain, the feeling of confidence and accomplishment associated with self-efficacy is not necessarily related to the same domain where one seeks to profess. Rather, skills and confidence in one's ability have a spill over effect, even if experienced in relation to skills from different domains. This is highly significant for the value of museums engagements; the implication is that by helping to build young people's self-efficacy, museums will serve young people beyond the very specific application domain where young people have been engaged.

The concept of self-efficacy has been widely used in career theory, and features in London's career motivation theory as a component of resilience (London 1983; London & Noe 1997) and in socio-cultural career theory as one of three variables informing career choice, alongside goals and outcome expectations (Lent, Brown & Hackett 2002). Its roots go back to the work of psychologist Albert Bandura, who argued about the important role self-efficacy plays in the way people approach tasks or act when faced with challenging situations (Bandura et al. 1999).

In this study, we specifically measured the degree to which museum engagements contributed to: (1) increased confidence in one's own abilities, judgements and decisions, and (2) the capacity to formulate career goals and plan to achieve them. Case box 3 provides details on the how young people have been supported to develop self-efficacy in a 5-day creative skills workshop offered by the V&A Museum.

Case box 3: Building critical components of self-efficacy through creative workshops

Building self-confidence and camera confidence

The quality most cultivated by the courses resides in building self-confidence associated to the new knowledge and skills developed, summarised by many participants as 'being more confident with the camera'.

I think the best thing about this course was, it really helped my confidence because previously, I took some courses and was self-taught, but I was never really sure. (M, 2020)

I've also learnt to look out for certain things when taking pictures. The lines and everything we've mentioned. So I think I've got a slightly better eye, I'm more confident with it, at least. I'm more confident with the camera. (F, 2018)

Improved my relationship with the camera. (F, 2018)

Increased confidence in using the camera also positively linked to confidence to act professionally, as (trainee) photographers.

I got the confidence that I can just go and stop people and take a photograph. (M, 2018)

Several participants associated this boost in confidence with increased **motivation** to do more photography, as this quote exemplifies:

I think for me personally, what I took the best, it's really yeah, just took a confidence boost really, because I'm feeling a lot more confident in my photography and I'm wanting to feel more enthusiastic and wanting to continue doing photography. I'm not sure if that's sort of just as a hobby or as a career, but I really want to do more photography. (M, 2020)

Importantly, **learning with peers & a mentor/friendly instructor were seen as instrumental to building self-confidence.**

So the fact that I can take pictures of me to show a bunch of other people that have their own ideas and be like, "Oh, this is good. Maybe you could do this better." And they can show me that they're just like ... and do the same thing. And if all everyone here can take really good shots and since everyone has also said that, my shots are pretty good as well. I can think okay, maybe I am kind of decent, I'm pretty good at whatever. Because being able to discuss, share your work? I think that's what's been most helpful. (M, 2020)

Devise goals and plan to achieve them

We asked participants how they planned to integrate the learning gathered during the course. Respondents mentioned different ways to use the newly acquired skills, not necessarily for a single-track photography career, but also in different aspects of their personal and professional life, including different creative careers.

I definitely see myself now taking up photography in my day to day life, mostly for personal professional reasons. For a more professional and official look to my work and production. I will now continue with my art and use my new-found skills in photography to add a more professional and valuable look to my work. (F, 2018)

I will start a YouTube channel about make-up, and will learn more about editing and use these skills for this. (Transgender, 2018)

4 Agency as expanded horizons of action

Study findings are in agreement with research by Ball and colleagues, suggesting that the process of making a decision 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 (Ball et al. 2002: 54). The influence of all these factors converges in the development of ‘horizons of action’ (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997; Ball et al., 2002) that 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.

In this study, we only could come to the understanding that museums can play a definite role in expanding young people’s agency as horizons of action. The study design also enabled us to gain some nuance on the degree to which this can happen, and what type of museum engagements are more likely to have enduring influence. The most important take away is that the degree to which museums might make a difference in terms of young people’s agency building is very difficult to pinpoint, and especially it is very difficult to do so in the aftermath of a museum event. These influences take time to be digested by young people, in conjunction to others, and may have ripple effects that are captured with difficulty in a research study. We could get the best sense of this influence in the two studies on the V&A photography workshop, which involved data collection over the five days of the workshop, through multiple methods.

Some of the young people involved in the research were acutely aware of the need to cultivate or strengthen chances across an array of creative career potential pathways. For the majority, photography was something in between a hobby and a plan B, a second option for a career.

Photography is kind of my back up plan. And my main one would be music. Cause I like singing. I want to be a musician in the future. (M, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

I graduated last year and I did Sociology. But photography's been a long time passion of mine, I've been into arts and events so I just want to get into things related to my degree to see how I can do photography on the side as well. (F, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

We looked at instances for developing agency where young people demonstrated a keen discernment of career goals and associated steps and skills they have to hone to get there, considering these blurred lines of division between photography as a hobby, a plan B profession or source of visual literacy skills to apply to other creative domains. For example, some of the young people wanted to develop photography skills as a means to help them advance related creative careers such as visual arts, cinematography or UX design.

What I'd like to do in the future is to direct films, shoot films and music videos. Predominantly music videos, and bringing different kinds of visuals is my thing, I think that element is missing for music videos and videos in general. That cinematic feel, I want to create that alchemy that is missing now, imagery. (F, V&A photography workshop, 2018)

4 CALIBRATING THE MUSEUM SUPPORT OFFER

4.1 YOUNG PEOPLE PERSONAS

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 status: 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 insight).

According to these factors, five profiles or personas 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.

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 insight 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.

4.2 HOW MUSEUM PROGRAMMES ADDRESS THE FIVE PERSONAS

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 5).

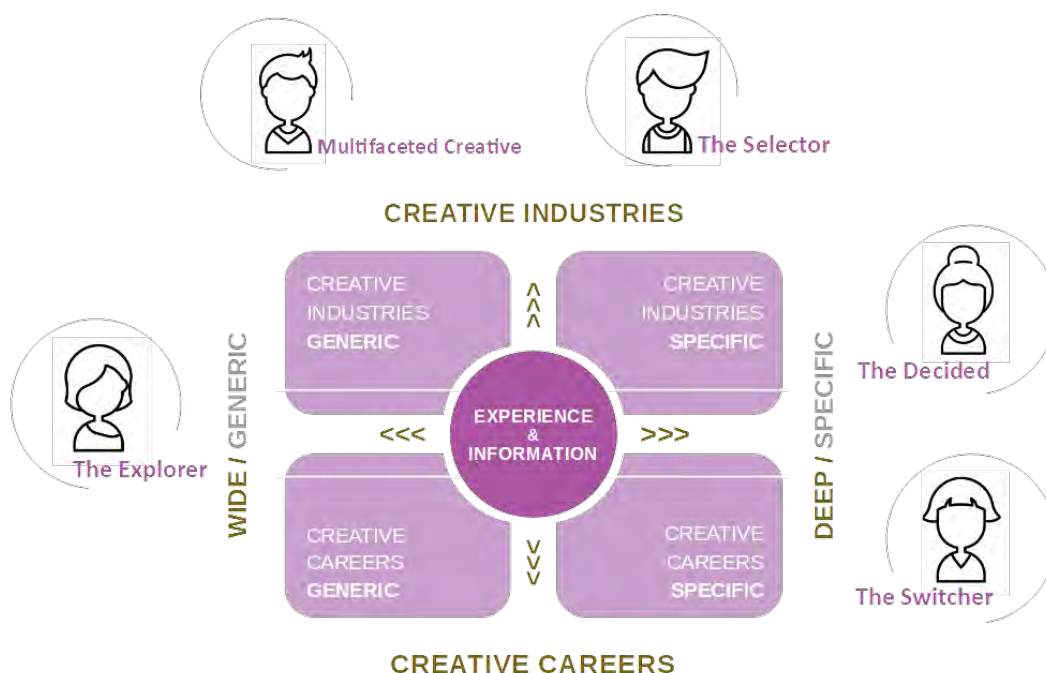


Fig. 5. Mapping young people personas on museum engagements types

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 insight needs are largely about wider and more generic industry and career insight, 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 insight 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.

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 insight**, 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 insight and career progression insight 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 insight 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 insight**. 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. These young people tend to explore more career options and opportunities to see what suits them and what has more chances to concretise into a profession. 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 insight 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, whereas 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 insight**, 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 insight** 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 insight and industry insight**. 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 insight**, 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.

5 CONCLUSION

This report examined the information and support needs of young people interested in creative careers and how museums may approach them in a systematic way. The in-depth multi-method study identified three key factors that appear to influence young people's creative career support needs:

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

These findings have been used to produce 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 report 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. Most 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 development of career insight and self-efficacy. Drawing on London (1983) *career insight* is a relational concept encompassing knowledge and awareness of self (interest, aptitude, capacity) and outer professional realities, concretised in abilities to set clear career goals. Self-efficacy is about the self-perceived ability to meet these goals and devise realistic pathways to achieving them. The report offered an analysis of how different types of museum engagements may serve to develop career insight and self-efficacy, and how these can be mapped onto 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.

REFERENCES

- Alsop, R., Bertelsen, M. & Holland, J. (2006) *Empowerment in Practice From Analysis to Implementation*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Appadurai, A. (2013). The future as cultural fact. Essays on the global condition. Chapter 9. *The capacity to aspire. Culture and the terms of recognition*. Verso.
- Archer, L., DeWitt, J., & Wong, B. (2014). Spheres of influence: What shapes young people's aspirations at age 12/13 and what are the implications for education policy?. *Journal of Education Policy*, 29(1), 58-85.
- Arts Council (2019) [National Partners Programme 2019-2022](#). Arts Council Collection.
- Arts Council England (2021) [Let's Create Strategy and Delivery Plan](#).
- Baggesen, R. H. (2014). Augmenting the agora: Media and civic engagement in museums. *MedieKultur: Journal of media and communication research*, 30(56), 15-p.
- 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.
- Ball, S. J., & Vincent, C. (1998). 'I Heard It on the Grapevine': 'Hot' knowledge and school choice. *British journal of Sociology of Education*, 19(3), 377-400.
- Ball, S. J. (1997). On the cusp: parents choosing between state and private schools in the UK: action within an economy of symbolic goods. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1(1), 1-17.
- Bandura, A., Freeman, W. H., & Lightsey, R. (1999). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control.
- Banks, M. (2007). *The politics of cultural work*. Springer.
- Banks, M. (2017). *Creative justice: Cultural industries, work and inequality*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bergevin, J. (2019). Narratives of Transformation: Stories of impact from activist museums. In *Museum Activism* (pp. 348-358). Routledge.
- Bourdieu (1986) *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. London, Routledge.
- Du Bois-Reymond, M. (1998) 'I don't want to commit myself yet': young people's life concepts, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 1(1), pp. 63-79.
- Flore, J., Hendry, N. A., & Gaylor, A. (2023). Creative arts workers during the Covid-19 pandemic: Social imaginaries in lockdown. *Journal of Sociology*, 59(1), 197-214.
- Garner J.K., Kaplan A. & Pugh K. (2016) Museums as Contexts for Transformative Experiences and Identity Development, *Journal of Museum Education*, 41:4, 341-352
- 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.
- Khlystova, O., Kalyuzhnova, Y., & Belitski, M. (2022). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the creative industries: A literature review and future research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, 139, 1192-1210.

- Kidd, J., McAvoy, E. N., & Ostrowska, A. (2022). Negotiating hybridity, inequality, and hyper-visibility: museums and galleries' social media response to the COVID-19 pandemic. *Cultural Trends*, 1-18.
- Kolbe, K. (2022). Unequal entanglements: how arts practitioners reflect on the impact of intensifying economic inequality. *Cultural Trends*, 31(3), 257-272.
- Morse, N., Thomson, L. J., Elsdon, E., Rogers, H., & Chatterjee, H. J. (2022). Exploring the potential of creative museum-led activities to support stroke in-patient rehabilitation and wellbeing: A pilot mixed-methods study. *Arts & Health*, 1-18.
- Koppman, S. (2016). Different like me: Why cultural omnivores get creative jobs. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 61(2), 291-331.
- London, M. (1983) 'Toward a Theory of Career Motivation'. *Academy of Management Review*. 8:, pp.620-630
- Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Hackett, G. (2002). Social cognitive career theory. *Career choice and development*, 4, 255-311.
- Moss, R., McGuire, S. and R. Noel (2020) What next? *Supporting young people from under-represented backgrounds into creative careers at Tate and across the sector*. Summary report for *Routes In Young People's Programmes*, 2020.
- Murphy, O. (2018) Coworking Spaces, Accelerators and Incubators: Emerging Forms of Museum Practice in an Increasingly Digital World, *Museum International*, 70:1-2, 62- 75, DOI: 10.1111/muse.12193
- Museological Review (2021). *Issue 25. Revisiting museums*. Museum studies, University of Leicester.
- OECD (2022), "Cultural and creative jobs and skills: who, what, where, and why it matters", in *The Culture Fix: Creative People, Places and Industries*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/1357bbe7-en>.
- Ray, D. (2002). Notes on Aspirations and the Poor. Presentation at New York University and Instituto de Analisis Economico (CSIC), 2.
- Roberts (1993) Career trajectories and the mirage of increased social mobility, in: I. BATES & G. RISEBOROUGH (Eds) *Youth and Inequality* (Buckingham, Open University Press).
- Samaroudi, M., Rodriguez Echavarria, K. & Perry, L. (2020) Heritage in lockdown: digital provision of memory institutions in the UK and US of America during the COVID-19 pandemic, *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 35:4, 337-361, DOI: 10.1080/09647775.2020.1810483
- Social Mobility Commission. (2021). Socio-economic diversity and inclusion toolkit: Creative industries.
- Wreyford, N, O'Brien, D, and Dent, T (2021). *Creative Majority: An APPG for Creative Diversity report on 'What Works' to support, encourage and improve diversity, equity and inclusion in the creative sector*. A report for the All Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity. Accessed here: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority>

ANNEX 1. SAMPLE OF DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOLS

Questionnaire, V&A Festival *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020 edition

Making it: Careers in Fashion and Costume Saturday 22 February 2020

Thank you for your time! Your feedback helps us to plan similar events. Return the completed feedback form to the reception desk or a member of staff for the chance to win a Tote bag of V&A goodies!



<p>What is your ethnic group? <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>		<p>What's been the most valuable part of today for you?</p>		<p>What else would you like to see in future editions?</p>	
<p>What motivated you to attend today's event? (Please tick all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> To learn about creative industries in general <input type="checkbox"/> To learn about getting a creative career without going to University <input type="checkbox"/> To learn about a specific creative sector (please specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> To get information and advice on career progression <input type="checkbox"/> To gain access to creative professionals for industry insights <input type="checkbox"/> To develop hands-on skills and applied techniques <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>		<p>What is your interest in the creative industries? (Please tick all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am interested in a creative career <input type="checkbox"/> I have a creative career (please specify) _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am interested in the creative industries as a hobby <input type="checkbox"/> I know what sort of career I would like <input type="checkbox"/> I have not decided what sort of career I would like <input type="checkbox"/> I want to study for a creative qualification <input type="checkbox"/> I am studying for a creative qualification <input type="checkbox"/> I have a creative qualification <input type="checkbox"/> I want to change careers <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer</p>			
<p>What is your gender? <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say</p>		<p>How old are you?</p>		<p>Who influences your career choice? (Please tick all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> Mentor(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Creative professionals <input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> Museums <input type="checkbox"/> Social media <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>	
<p>Where do you normally live? (East London, other London borough, UK county or country)</p>		<p>After today, ... (Please tick all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I feel more able to take decisions for my future career <input type="checkbox"/> I learnt about original ideas and techniques <input type="checkbox"/> I know more about what it means 'to be creative' and 'creativity' <input type="checkbox"/> I am better able to set career goals and plan to achieve them <input type="checkbox"/> I am more aware of progression routes for creative careers <input type="checkbox"/> I've learnt about current trends in creative sectors <input type="checkbox"/> I feel more confident about my creative abilities</p>		<p>How did you find out about Making it: Careers in Fashion and Costume? (Please tick all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth/ friend <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/ Trusted guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Social media <input type="checkbox"/> V&A Flyer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CreateVoice Newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> V&A website <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine/ Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Walked past on the day</p>	
<p>Have you visited the V&A before?</p>		<p>Which of these qualifications, if any, have you achieved? (Please tick all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> GCSE(s) <input type="checkbox"/> A Level(s) <input type="checkbox"/> BTEC <input type="checkbox"/> NVQ <input type="checkbox"/> Foundation degree <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate degree <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate degree <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above yet <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>		<p>Please list all the Making it sessions you have or will attend.</p>	

Interview guide, V&A Festival *Making It: Careers in Fashion and Costume*, 2020 edition

Interviewer initials:

Interview number:

Hello. We are collecting feedback from visitors to improve future editions of the Festival. Unless you have already been approached by one of my colleagues, are you available to answer a few questions about your experience today? This would last 2 to 5 minutes, or as long as you can spare. To take part in this interview, it is important that you are 18 years old or above. Please confirm if you are 18 or above.

[If visitor says YES] **I want to specify that we will not collect any personal data from you that could lead to your identification. All the information you provide will be treated in strict confidence and used to improve the future editions of the Making it Festival.**
[Continue with questions]

[If visitor says NO or is below 18 years old] Thank you, and I hope you will enjoy the rest of the event.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS [in bold the ones to cover if visitor is in a hurry]

1. Have you already completed and handed a written feedback form? Yes No

[If visitor says YES]: If you have things to add beyond what you shared in the feedback form, we would be glad to ask you a few questions. [Skip to question 8] Otherwise, the feedback form you filled out will be sufficient, and we thank you for having provided this already.

[If visitor says NO]: Continue with questions

2. What motivated you to attend today's event?

[Prompt] For example, are you here to meet creative professionals and artists? To learn about building a creative career? To learn about new techniques and original ideas in arts and design?

3. Have you visited the V&A before? Yes No If yes, how often do you visit?

4. Have you ever attended a CreateVoice meeting? Yes No If yes, how many?

5. Have you decided what sort of career you would like to pursue? [If YES] Which one?

[If NO, prompt] Are you deciding between some options? If so, which are these?

[If time, follow up] What sort of information, advice or help you need in order to decide?

6. What kind of skills would you like to learn to add to your CV?

7. When you need information or advice about your future career, where do you usually turn to?

[Prompt] For example, do you receive advice and information from school, a mentor, from social media or creative professionals? If social media, which platforms do you use?

8. Which sessions have you attended or will attend today? *[Please mark sessions attended]*

TALKS

Careers in the Fashion Industry, Becoming a stylist, Creating fashion portfolios, Careers in costume design, Ways into fashion, Sportswear design, Streetstyle

photography, Costume for the stage, Being a fashion designer, Fashion shops, Hip-hop style, Socially Sustainable Fashion
--

<input type="checkbox"/> DEMOS AND TASTER WORKSHOPS

Fashion Illustration, Make up demo, Tailoring demo
--

<input type="checkbox"/> ADVICE

Jane Francis, Dean Blunkell, Jane Bowler, Becky Okell and Huw Thomas
--

<input type="checkbox"/> PRESENTATIONS AND EXHIBITS

FAD (Fashion Awareness Direct), Univ. East London film costumes, Streetstyle photography
--

9. Which sessions you found most relevant for your interests and why?

10. Overall, how satisfied are you with this event and why?

11. What's been the most valuable part of today for you?

12. What was not covered today and you would like to see in future Making it festivals?

To close with, some questions about yourself. These will help us better understand who are the young people interested in the Festival and how we can design a better experience for them.

13. How old are you? _____

14. Where do you normally live? [East London/London borough/UK county/Country]

15. What is the highest educational qualification you have achieved? [If necessary give options: GCSE(s); A Level(s); BTEC; NVQ; Foundation degree; Undergraduate/Postgraduate degree]

16. Respondent gender _____

17. Is there anything preventing you from getting access to information and opportunities about creative industries education and careers?

Thank you for your time. If you have any additional questions about this study or the Festival, please visit the CreateVoice area. I hope you will enjoy the rest of the event.

ANNEX 2. YOUNG PEOPLE PERSONAS

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



*"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."*

Talented and interested in more than one field

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/or-ganisations/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

<p>Creative Career Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a career in a chosen creative field • Keep informed and aware of what happens in the chosen creative sector 	<p>Challenges in Career Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Career Stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have chosen a career, either still studying for a creative qualification or moving from study into work 	<p>Needs and Expectations to be delivered by Provider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Career Influencers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More autonomous decision-making, likely to accept information from peers and creative professionals, trusted instructors/mentors 	<p>What Activities match their profile?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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



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

Transitioning into a creative career

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

<p>Creative Career Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition into a creative career • Looking for alternative/ non-traditional routes to enter a creative sector 	<p>Challenges in Career Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Career Stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<p>Needs and Expectations to be delivered by Provider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Career Influencers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomous in taking decisions and choosing their influencers • Likely to trust peers and creative professionals for information and advice 	<p>What Activities match their profile?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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