



Accumulate

The Art School for The Homeless

Creative Futures, January 2023 Report

Contents

Project outline and aims	2
A Summary of Creative Futures July 2022	3
Our Learnings: How Creative Futures July 2022 informed our project	4
Creative Futures January 2023 Programme	5
Creative Industry involved: Portfolio Reviewers	8
Creative Industry involved: Opportunity providers	9
Project Outcomes	10
Project Impact	12
Feedback from Portfolio Reviewers and Creative Business	12
Feedback from Participants	14
Learnings	17
Next steps	18

Project outline and aims

Creative Futures January 2023 (funded by the National Lottery) was a free 3-day workshop that breaks down the barriers for people affected by homelessness to enter the creative sector, build networks and have access to opportunities. It took place at D&AD offices in Shoreditch on 18, 23 and 25 January 2023.

Creative Futures is a real game-changer that is completely new, led by industry and aimed to overturn the systemic challenges that exist in the creative industries. The primary role of Creative Futures was to break down the entry route barriers into getting work related opportunities in the creative industries – a sector well-known for being highly network driven, educated, experience led and hard to get into. This is even more poignant for Accumulate participants (as well as other “non traditional” groups) who may have the talent but lack the credentials to get any work related opportunity that the sector may offer.



A summary of Creative Futures July 2022

In July 2022 we held the first-ever Creative Futures which was funded by Adobe. It was met with huge enthusiasm and positivity. Through Creative Futures July 2022, we were able to offer 55 work opportunities to 18 participants.

Creative Futures provided participants with confidence and self-belief workshops so that they could talk about themselves to prospective creative industry employers, but also offered them tangible work opportunities in the creative industries.

Here is what your industry peers and Creative Futures July 2022 participants said about the experience:

“Even without the outcomes/opportunities it was a great way to learn how to present yourself and your work digitally and in person... It helped me form an idea of my direction as an artist and I no longer panic so much when people ask to see my work. I think the best thing was getting feedback on how people who already work in creative industries see where and how my work would fit in. It’s given me lots of ideas for the future.” - Mitchel, Participant

“I have never gotten so much information in one day I left feeling empowered to network that I put it to the test when I left and stopped by a shop that sells organic hair products [and was offered a social media opportunity then and there!]” – Nikol, participant.

“Thanks again for involving us in such a great event, and so many talented people!” - Alex Curran, Audible

“It was great to meet so many participants and loved the format and have told a few colleagues at different agencies about the initiative so will be sharing this far and wide. So please do keep me posted on future happenings as we’d love to be involved” - Grace Tankard, Portas Agency.

“Thank YOU so, so much for letting us borrow the brilliant Accumulators yesterday! It was truly magical hosting the attendees that came to the workshop and the day was just filled to the brim with laughter, creativity, fabulous ideas, new editing skills, and lots of Tiktok videos. Me, Celeste and the entire Adobe gang truly enjoyed sharing the afternoon with the group, and really hope they got the most out of the day and learnt some new tips and tricks” - Malin Persson, Adobe, after leading their Creative Futures opportunity: a session on using Tik Tok with Adobe software.



Our Learnings: How Creative Futures July 2022 informed our project.

- We initially held a focus group of Accumulate participants (all people with experience on homelessness). We asked what they would like to see from Creative Futures - this was essential as it prevented us from making assumptions and also ensured that Creative Futures was user led. How to present themselves, how to talk about themselves and their work were areas they highlighted, as well as actually having the opportunity to meet people working in the creative industries. These barriers to progression - lack of confidence to lack of networks pivoted into the tangible objectives of Creative Futures - increase in employability confidence and increase in proactive networks
- Used feedback from Creative Futures participants and creative industry professionals involved in the workshops to evaluate Creative Futures 1. As a result we decided we would extend the duration of Creative Futures from 2 days to 3. This allowed us more time to inform and prepare participants of the running of the day, gave us more time for deeper engagement with creative industry professionals on the days and gave more opportunities for participants to break to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

Our Creative Futures January 2023 Programme

Day One:

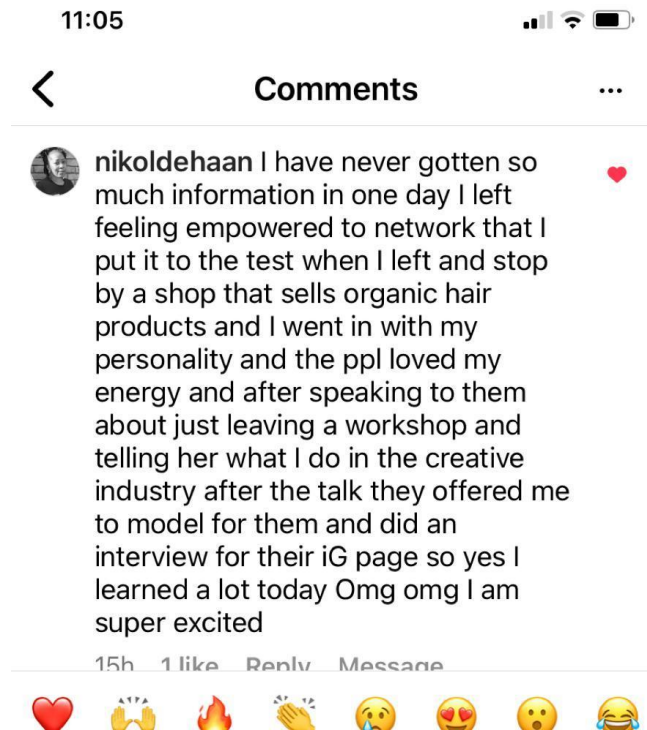
We began the day with a talk on **Confidence Building** from **Emma Mann, founder of the clothing label, No Fixed Abode**. Emma reached out to Accumulate after seeing the PR coverage from our first Creative Futures and wanted to be involved. Her lived experience of homelessness and her story of how she was able to build her own clothing brand was an engaging session for participants. Several participants said it was “authentic” and “real”.



In the afternoon of Day 1, we held a session on how to build an online portfolio using the free platform, Crevado. This session was led by Accumulate Trustee, Tori Taiwo. Tori also has experience of homelessness. We had asked in advance for participants to bring digital copies of their art work to upload to Crevado, as well as any hard copy works they would like digitised. We had a photography station on Days 1 & 2, to photograph and digitise hard copies of participants' creative work.

Accumulate scholarship recipient and participant in Creative Futures (July 2022), Nikol also spoke to the group about her Creative Futures experience. After Day 1 of Creative Futures in July, Nikol used her newly gained networking skills and confidence to network with an organic hair company and she was offered to create one-off social media content for them. This has now turned into a monthly paid retainer for Nikol who

has become the company's social media officer. This is all a result of Creative Futures and the impact it has made.



Above: Nikol's feedback after Day 1 of Creative Futures in July 2022.



Above: Nikol presenting at Creative Futures January 2023, telling her story to participants.

Day Two

On Day 2 we held a session on 'How to Network' by Scarlett Montanaro, Creative Director at Amplify. Scarlett's session involved a presentation and activities enabling participants to develop and practice their networking skills, and to tell their stories.



In the afternoon, we held a Portfolio Review session with industry professionals present to offer participants advice and know-how on editing, curating a portfolio and how to talk about themselves and their work.

After their tutorial on Day 1 on how to use Crevado, our participants had uploaded their artwork to the site and created their digital portfolio. We then invited our Portfolio Reviewers to introduce themselves and had colour coded their name badges to indicate whether they specialised in visuals or words (or both). Based on participants' needs, we paired them with reviewers who provided 1:1 editorial support for their portfolio. This could take the form of helping them curate their strongest images, write about themselves and their art, and to generally reflect and ask why they chose to include the work they did in their portfolio. Portfolio Reviewers circulated the room and spoke with several participants during the session.

Our 7 Portfolio Reviewers: the Creative Industry Professionals involved:

- Arena Illustration
- Grey Agency
- Handsome Frank
- Jacky Winter
- Mother London
- Various freelancers in Design, Illustration and Creative Content



Day Three:

We began Day 3 with a session on building an Instagram page, led by Tori Taiwo. This session taught participants how to use social media to engage professionally with an audience in order to secure possible freelance and work related opportunities, build and maintain a brand and develop creative content that is engaging and productive. (and engage with an audience for possible employment and freelance opportunities. Instagram accounts, how to curate their grid, and how to connect with others and build an audience, as well as the evolving Instagram algorithms and the use of video.)

All of this activity led to an afternoon of speed networking with creative businesses. This involved 5 min sessions per person with representatives from these businesses, putting into practice what they learn on Days 1 and 2, and provided an opportunity to talk about their artwork and to meet people in the industry. It was also a chance for industry professionals to meet participants, see new talent and gauge who would be an ideal fit for their opportunity.

The 10 creative industry businesses involved:

- Adobe
- GEM Creative Design
- Grazia
- JKR Agency
- Kurt Geiger Kindness Foundation
- No Fixed Abode
- On the One PR Agency
- Page and Page Advertising
- Penguin Publishing
- The Digital Fairy



Project Outcomes

As we did for our first Creative Futures, the criteria we set for companies who wanted to be involved was that they had to come with an opportunity to offer. This could include an in house workshop (for example about branding or fulfilling a client brief), job shadowing, mentoring or work experience. As a result of Creative Futures, a total of 51 opportunities were offered to our 15 participants. These opportunities include:

Name	Opportunity	No. of opportunities
Adobe	Adobe Express and enable everyone to confidently understand what components make up a successful brand	15
GEM Creative Design	1-week internship/mentorship for 1 participant.	1
Grazia	1 day job shadowing (travel and lunch paid)	TBC
JKR	In-house workshop on personal branding.	10
Kurt Geiger	Job-shadowing for 3-4 days at KG head office, with their Design team and Visual Merchandising team.	4
No Fixed Abode	5 x 1 hr personalised mentorship session on creating your own brand	1
On the One	<p>Opportunity to experience the creative spectrum of a major sporting tournament - the Women's Six Nations beginning in late March. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Photography shoot attendance - Interviews / shadowing with social media team - Event production and / or filming - Experience in working with media / digital publishing teams 	1

Page and Page	Work experience for a week at Page and Page offices.	1
Penguin Publishing	<p>A day of job shadowing at Penguin Publishing.</p> <p>An overarching look at the publishing process and how to get into the industry, job shadow a photoshoot at Penguin studio with their Creative team, CV and application session with our recruitment team, and a portfolio and book advice with the design team.</p>	3
The Digital Fairy	In-house workshop on “Brand Briefs + The Creative Process” at Digital Fairy.	15
	Total opportunities offered	51



Project Impact

The immediate impacts of Creative Futures for participants include:

- Increased confidence
- Professional input and advice on their artwork
- Practical steps on how to network and how to create a portfolio
- Meet networks in the creative industry
- Understand more about the industry and that it is not closed to them.

The long term gains for participants are significant and include:

- Gaining an insight into creative industries
- Meeting new contacts which could lead to future opportunities.
This can be seen with participant, Amalia who after taking part in job shadowing at Penguin Publishing was encouraged by staff to apply for their internship programme. Amalia has applied and is awaiting the outcome.
- Experience what a day in the office could look like, and get experience in following a work routine
- Planning and organising their time.
- Provide a sense of belonging with fellow participants as well as belonging in the creative industry

These gains can be life changing - having others believe in you and believing in yourself is huge for our group of participants. This experience could be the catalyst that leads to future employment opportunities or skills uptake, eventually leading to an increased independence.

As well as this, it is clear from our conversations with Creative Industry professionals involved in Creative Futures, they want change in their sector. When asked what they learnt from Creative Futures as part of post event feedback, Rob from On the One Agency said, "*The industry needs to do more to bring opportunities on a larger scale for homeless*". The impact that Creative Futures 2 had on the industry folk involved can be seen in their feedback below:

Feedback from Portfolio Reviewers and the Creative Business involved

"What an amazing experience that will stick with me for a long time" - Rob Mathie, Founder of On the One Agency.

"Jumi [Creative Futures participant] got on great thanks! She ended up being really involved with the event and we actually paid her for a day's work as she definitely earned it. She even got interviewed in the writeup of the event which you can read [here](#)...Hopefully she will be working with us again at Twickenham at the end of the month too. Watch this space..."- Rob Mathie, On the One Agency.

“I had such a great time chatting to the participants. Everyone I spoke to was so talented and great at speaking about their work, goals and inspiration. It's so clear to see how much they've valued their time with Accumulate.

If there's ever anything else I can do to help out in any capacity, please do let me know.”
Clara Marcus (Portfolio Reviewer), Jacky Winter Agency

“Yesterday was really good, thank you for putting it together. We're having conversations in our company about how we can do more with you.”, Charles, Page and Page Advertising.

“So great to have your fabulous co-hort with us last Friday! We had so much fun and what a great bunch of awesome superstars they are 😊”, Malin, Adobe.



Above: Creative Futures participants at Penguin Publishing with Penguin staff. Their day of job shadowing at Penguin offices was a result of Creative Futures.

Photo credit: Stuart Simpson.

Feedback from Participants

"A big big thank you to the entire team of Accumulate for organizing this Creative Futures event...So much great energy and extremely valuable feedback from the professionals who were there...Thank you for this, this is priceless!" - Creative Futures participant.

"Thank you infinitely for the incredible opportunity, it has helped me grow greatly...", Theresa.

"The chance to speak with all the guests was absolutely amazing!...Talking to people from creative industries helped me gain ideas of how I can improve my work", Julia.

"Thank you for today - amazing!", Nashwa.

"Thank you for accepting us!", Amalia.

"I got a lot of good feedback. They gave some good advice", Lionel.

Feedback from participants about their work related opportunities resulting from Creative Futures:

Penguin Publishing job shadowing: "What a day!...I learnt so much...It was such a good opportunity and it instilled me with so much confidence", Amalia.

"Yesterday's day with Penguin was amazing!...A great long day with them! I'm thankful for the opportunity to be there", Julia.

Participants said the day was "encouraging", "fun, introspective, social" and there was lots of "discovery".

JKR branding workshop: "I found the session inspirational", Julia.

"I am grateful for all the [Creative Futures] opportunities from Accumulate. All workshops were amazing!", Julia.

On the One work experience: "It went so well. Rob was/is really great. It was and has been a pretty good pairing in a number of ways...", Jumi.



Kurt Geiger 3 day job shadowing: “It’s been AMAZING”, Amalia.



accumulate_ldn
London, United Kingdom



Liked by **heather_mears_** and **35 others**

accumulate_ldn Amalia is just glowing after her @kurtgeiger work experience that she secured through Accumulate's Creative Futures project. She said:

'I loved the team, at Kurt Geiger! Amber, Grace, Niamh, Flo, Vivian, Madison & Daniella – they made each question I asked not seem a burden and were keen to teach me all the details of the way the brand works. Secondly, I loved being in a creative environment and feeling like part of the team and at the end I felt accomplished!'

Huge thanks to the wonderful team and @kurtgeiger Kindness Foundation for making this possible.

#accumulatelondon #creativefutures
#workexperience #kurtgeiger
#kurtgeigerkindnessfoundation #opportunityawaits
#thepowerofcreativity #futuregoals
#fashionworkexperience #socialenterprise
#smallcharity #notforprofit #homelessness
#youthhomelessness #artschoolforthehomeless

Adobe workshop:

“The Adobe workshop was INCREDIBLE...What we learnt in such a small amount of time was just so handy. Lovely staff, just a great day!”, Gabriella.



Liked by **heather_mears_** and **18 others**

accumulate_idn Accumulate Creative Futures participant Julia took part in workshop with [@adobeuk](#) last week. Such a brilliant opportunity to secure!

Julia said ‘The Adobe crew was very kind and supportive. We had a great time creating our brand's logo using Adobe's website. We learned how we can make projects using different creative online tools.

It was fun and a great lesson about endless creative options Adobe offers in their easy to learn software.’

Well done Julia!

Learnings

What we learnt:

- Participants left feeling they had gained from the workshops. The majority of participants felt their capabilities and knowledge of employment in the creative industries had increased, as had their confidence in networking, as a result of Creative Futures.
- Highlights of useful skills and knowledge participants gained include:
 - “Learning how to build a portfolio.”
 - “The advice and opportunities.”
 - “Listening to the backstory of another artist.”
 - “Creating portfolio and describing myself and the art I create.”
 - “Speaking one on one with industry professionals and receiving real time advice and pointers on what to do.”
 - “Tips on presenting and improving portfolio work.”
 - “Engaging with new people and professionals from different sectors.”
 - “Speaking to the experts.”
- On Day 1 of Creative Futures, 85% of participants rated the day overall at 4 and above out of 5. This figure grew to 94% on Day 2 and to 100% on Day 3.
- There is an appetite for this project amongst Creative Industry professionals. We had a great amount of interest from creative businesses offering opportunities and industry professionals volunteering as Portfolio Reviewers.
- The lack of confidence and self worth, as well as mental health of some of the participants continues to be a barrier. We had 33 register to take part in Creative Futures and 15 participants took part in at least 2 days of workshops.
- The size of the group - 15 participants - suited the venue size and ensured quality and 1 to 1 support for participants where needed.
- Changing Creative Futures to a 3 day workshop was hugely beneficial and will be continued in future.
- Our participants require a great deal of aftercare - in terms of scheduling in opportunities, reminders and in some cases, help with organisation and logistics. This is time consuming for Accumulate staff and will be built into planning for next Creative Futures.
- Some participants found the sheer amount of opportunities offered to them overwhelming and could not attend all opportunities. As such we will limit the amount of opportunities offered to participants in our next Creative Futures.

Next steps

Accumulate plans to develop a 10 week course titled Be Creative Futures Ready - a longer term preparatory course that equips participants with the tools and support needed to take part in Creative Futures. As part of this we will also share best practice with other arts organisations and hostels, showing them how to deliver their own Creative Futures Programme, including a 10 week preparation programme followed by a 2 day workshop to connect participants with creative industry professionals for expertise and work opportunities. Edit: since writing this report, Accumulate has been successful in receiving Adobe funding to deliver this course

We also plan to deliver another Creative Futures workshop, taking into account what we have learnt from Creative Futures 1 and 2. The longer duration of 3 days worked well and we plan to continue this. With 'Be Creative Futures Ready', serving as an additional source of support for participants, we believe our next Creative Futures will provide even greater impacts and gains for our community.