



Accumulate
The Art School for The Homeless

Creative Futures July 2022 Report

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Project outline and aims

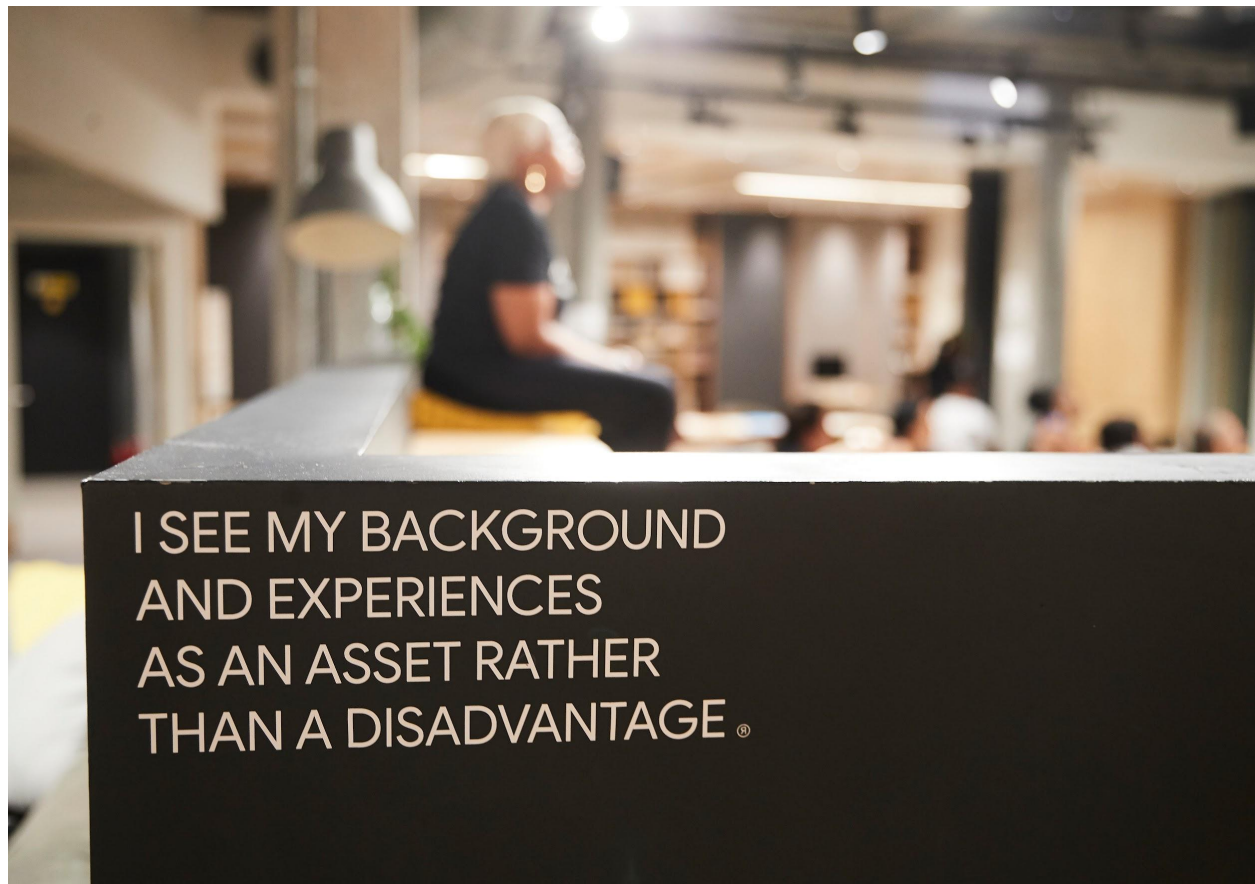
Creative Futures, funded by Adobe, was a free 2-day “Entry to Creative Industries Employment” workshop taking place at D&AD offices in Shoreditch on 20 July and 27 July 2022.



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.

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

At the planning stage we asked ourselves what would be the essentials needed to enter the creative industry that could be delivered in a 2-day workshop? In order to do this, we honed in our focus on particular areas of the creative industry: Design, Branding, Advertising, Podcasting and Content Creation.



We also asked Accumulate participants 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 .

The Accumulate participants (all people with experience on homelessness) have aspirations of entering creative industries. Many of these people suffer from a range of issues which act as a barrier to employment. Poor mental and physical health is common amongst homeless people; 73% of homeless people report physical health problems and 80 % report some form of mental health condition. Other problems include substance misuse, poor education, lack of qualifications, experiences within the criminal justice system and being a victim of violent crime.

After listening to the feedback from the Accumulate participants we devised a 2 day programme giving participants skills in confidence building led by 20Something's Elliott

Starr (Head of Copy), and a session on how to network led by Scarlett Montanaro, Creative Director at Amplify. Creative Futures took place at D&AD offices in Shoreditch.

Day One:

- Elliott Starr (20Something) began the day with a session on confidence and self belief; one of the major barriers for our group in entering the creative industries. This was followed by a how to network session by Scarlett Montanaro (Amplify).
- We held a session on how to build an online portfolio, led by Accumulate Trustee, Tori Taiwo. This also involved 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. These reviewers were from businesses such as Bulletproof, Amplify, Shoot The Moon, Page and Page, Signal Theory, Grand Matter and more.





Day Two

- On Day 2 we held a session on building an Instagram page, led by Tori Taiwo. This helped participants understand how to set up 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.
- We also had a photography station on both days to photograph hard copies of participants' creative work so that participants had digital copies of their work to upload to their online portfolios and Instagram.
- All of this activity led to an afternoon of speed networking with creative businesses so that participants could not only put into practice the skills they had learnt but to also help them meet people in the industry and have access to their expertise. They met people from Adobe, Audible, Design Bridge, Bulletproof, Wilderness, JKR, Portas Agency, GEM Creative Studio, Claire Cheung Design, and 20Something. Every single participant was offered at least one work opportunity from these businesses. This ranged from in-house workshops to job shadowing and paid work experience placements. Some were offered as many as 5 or 6 opportunities, all of which they could take and gain valuable insight from.



Creative business involved on Day 1: Portfolio Reviewers

On Day 1 we had a total of 21 Portfolio Reviewers attending (with 48 industry professionals having registered their interest), offering their expertise in portfolio building, editing imagery and creative writing for artist biographies. On the day we had representation from businesses including Bulletproof, Shoot The Moon, Grand Matters, Page and Page, We Are Unknown, VCCP, Kind Studio and more.

After a tutorial on how to use Crevado, a free online portfolio creator, our 15 participants uploaded their artwork to the site. For those who did not have digital copies of their work, we had an onsite station where Accumulate staff digitally photographed their work. We then invited our Portfolio Reviewers to pair themselves with participants and provide 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.



Creative Business involved on Day 2 & opportunities provided

On Day 2 we held a speed networking session with our 18 participants and creative businesses that included Adobe, Design Bridge, JKR, Wilderness, Audible, Bulletproof, Portas Agency, 20 Something, Claire Cheung Design, Gem Studios. This involved 5 min sessions per person with representatives from these businesses, putting into practice what they learn on Day 1, and provide 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.

Project Outcomes

One of the criteria we set for companies who wanted to be involved in Creative Futures was that they had to come with an opportunity to offer. Creative Futures definitely was not “Diversity Training” it really was a case of “putting your money where your mouth is” and giving a very excluded audience the chance to get work experience in a very exclusive industry. We wanted something tangible to be able to give our participants as part of Creative Futures, something that gave them an insight into the creative industry of Design, Branding, Advertising, Podcasting and Content Creation.

As a result of Creative Futures, participants have been offered places on in-house creative workshops, as well as job shadowing opportunities and work experience lasting from a day to one week. In total there were 55 opportunities offered to participants - with some participants being offered up to 6 opportunities each.

These opportunities include:

Creative Businesses involved on 27 July:		
Name	Opportunity	No of opportunities
Adobe	18 participants to join us for an afternoon of workshops, talks, a team project and team presentations hosted in the Adobe office. Depending on hardware caveat, they could make it more of an inspiration afternoon where they get to come to the offices – meet the team – hear about different career paths	15
Design Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to 4x 1 week placements• £85 p/day (London living wage)• Starting estimate mid-October	4

JKR	In-house workshop for up to 16 people, half day or 1 day (tbc). Based on participants' skill levels	16
Wilderness	A workshop responding to a client brief (this may be a mock brief) at the end of August Long term goal is to offer an internship to one of your students and if we were able to do this at the tail end of this workshop	
Audible	1x formal opportunity for a day's work shadowing on one of our audiobook records Informal opportunities for 5 participants to take part in open casting calls. These are hour sessions where people who are keen to get into voice over work can work with a director and try out recording. Informal opportunities for 2 participants interested in music production.	1
Bulletproof	2x 4 week paid placements (London living wage £380 pw) over the coming months.	2
Portas Agency	4 x candidates: Up to 3 x days in our office (needs to be Tues, Wed and Thurs), london living wage.	4
20 Something	In-house workshop on 04/08 at 6-9pm for up to 24 people.	8
Claire Cheung Design	Creative opportunity for 3 small group: working to a set project and learning how to fulfill a brief.	3
Gem Studios	In house work experience for 1 day for up to 2 people	2
	Total	55

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.

In the long term, the gains for our participants are significant and possibly life-changing: they will gain insight into creative industries, meet new contacts, see what a day in the office could look like, and get experience in following a work routine and organising their time. Just as importantly, this experience will help them gain confidence, help them believe that they do belong in this industry and experience what it is like to have people believe in them. It could just be this that pivots someone from being excluded into being part of the creative industries and also gaining longer term employment opportunities. - Something which would have been unrealistic before participating in Creative Futures.

Through this project it was also clear that there is a desire amongst creative professionals for their industry to be more inclusive. The impact of this experience on industry folk involved in Creative Futures was huge. This can be seen in the feedback below.

Feedback from Portfolio Reviewers and the Creative Business involved

"An absolutely fulfilling day of doing Portfolio reviews for Accumulate London at D&AD office in Shoreditch yesterday. Being given the privilege to talk to young people effected by homelessness, I am absolutely humbled at not only the humility and openness to learn but also the inspiring creativity and ideas of the group of disadvantaged youths there. " - Aysha Khalid, Cision

"I had a really inspiring and humbling experience doing some portfolio reviews for Accumulate London at D&AD headquarters yesterday. I talked with talented, open and inspiring young people, from all walks of life, effected by homelessness, and I was blown away by the creativity and freedom of their ideas. Loved it." - Paul Rider, Shoot The Moon

"I had the pleasure and opportunity to meet some phenomenally talented people, with untapped fountains of creativity. Very much excited to see what we'll produce when we work together" - Sunil Rajput, Bulletproof

“Brilliant meeting people, and seeing some wonderful impressive work.” - Louise Organ, VCCP

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

“I really enjoyed meeting different people, and seeing where they were at in their creative journeys. It was really rewarding and a lovely thing to be involved in”. - Alex Cooper, Mid-Brow

“Congrats on a great day yesterday, I have so much respect for you and the whole team as it’s not easy to manage that and I think it ran really well! 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

“It was truly amazing to meet such keen and creative individuals and be around such a positive and uplifting vibe...The diversity within the types of organisations and brands was amazing to see, especially the types of opportunities that were being offered. As well as this, your team stood out to us! Chez and co were so great to chat with, and watch.” - Ayesha Fatima, Wilderness.

“Thank YOU so, so much for letting us borrow the brilliant Accumulators yesterday! It was truly magical hosting the 11 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.

Feedback from Participants

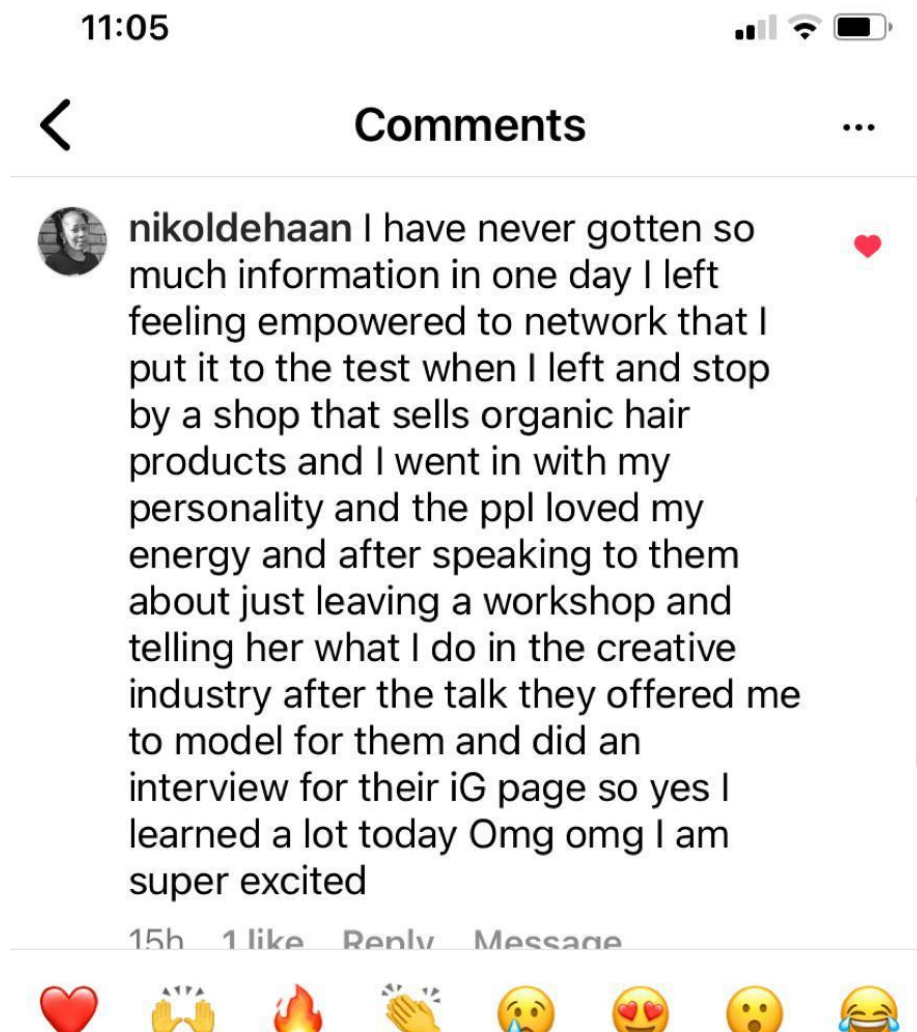
“Thank you for organising this fantastic event. Also, I would like to thank the team, i.e. Tori, Fiona, Ben, Tiana and those whose names cannot recall, for their assistance. I thoroughly enjoyed attending both days. I was able to learn how best to improve on my weakness.” - Crystal participant

“Even without the outcomes/opportunities it was a great way to learn how to present yourself and your work digitally and in person. These are things I have really struggled with so just the volume of people we spoke to meant I feel much more comfortable about it now. 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

“Thank you for organising really! It was exhausting yes, but real fun too!! Practicing might lead to perfection. Self-induction isn't easy but I am getting the sense of what businesses want to know about me! (what can i offer to their benefits!)” - Cei Ling, Participant

“Thanks so much for letting me know about all these great potential connections. I better clear my calendar!!!” - Mitchel, Participant





Feedback from Luke, Creative Futures participant:



Feedback from Anna, Creative Futures participant after their workshop with Elliott Starr at 20Something. An opportunity resulting from Creative Futures:



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.
- Almost all participants (89%) said they would recommend Creative Futures to others.
- There is an appetite for this project amongst Creative Industry professionals. We had a great amount of interest from creative businesses 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 35 register to take part in Creative Futures; 15 participants attended day 1 and 18 attended day 2.
- For those offered paid opportunities, the issue of how this will affect their benefits is a potential barrier to participants taking on these opportunities. As such we are devising a Money & Benefits session with 1:1 advice for participants.
- The timings and duration of the workshops will be adjusted as delivering a large amount of information in 2 days was, at points, overwhelming for some of the participants. As such we will make Creative Futures a 3 day workshop, over 2 weeks.
- It is apparent that participants would hugely benefit from being involved in a pre-Creative Futures course: a 10 week learning and personal development programme to support participants in building confidence and networks, and providing knowledge and skills on how to enter employment. This would prepare participants for our Creative Futures events and enable them to get the most of it.
- In order to reach more people and build on the success of Creative Futures, we need to share best practice with regional arts and homelessness organisations and show how to deliver their own Creative Futures programme.

Next steps

Accumulate plans to build on the successes of Creative Futures and enhance the project through our learnings, by delivering a second Creative Futures in 2023. This will take place on 18, 23 and 25 January at D&AD offices and is funded by the National Lottery.

We also plan to develop a 10 week learning programme to prepare participants for Creative Futures, instilling confidence and providing a shared learning experience, enabling success in participants' lives and creative careers. 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.