

# Creativity: The Commercial Superpower

## An evidence base



## Creativity is a commercial superpower.

It enables innovation, attracts talent and supports wellbeing. It increases staff productivity, engages clients and can lead to organisational transformation. The benefits are far-reaching and businesses of all types prosper from unleashing its potential through collaboration across the corporate and creative sectors.

Culture Mile is in a unique position to maximise creativity across the multiple industries that make up the area. Through facilitating cross-sector collaboration, Culture Mile can bring creative and commercial industries together in pioneering partnerships, working together to ensure its creative energy and competitive strengths secure the City of London as a vibrant and thriving city in which to live, work, learn and invest.



**CREATIVITY: THE COMMERCIAL SUPERPOWER**  
Published April 2021

This document is an Executive Summary  
of a full report prepared by Barker Langham  
in 2019/20.



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**Alderman William Russell**

The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of London

**Creativity: the Commercial Superpower** was commissioned by Culture Mile to help uncover the impact that creativity has on business function, regardless of the industry or sector in which a business operates. The timing of this report is such that the research was undertaken in a pre-COVID-19 world and the written report was completed as the pandemic broke out. A year into the pandemic, with the hope of a return to 'normality' soon, is this report still relevant? Yes. In fact, given how much organisations continually have had to adapt, pivot and evolve, there has never been a greater need for innovation, transformation and attention to well-being, all of which are catalysed by creativity.

Art and culture are needed as people look to adjust and make sense of the new ways in which they are living their lives. At the same time, the creative sector is at risk. Restrictions have required a complete step change for some creative organisations in how they interact with their audiences, what they can offer their clients or indeed how they may make, create and find inspiration, let alone finance it. Quite practically, cultural organisations and the creative industries are looking towards different business models, demonstrating their ongoing relevance and searching out new ways to monetise what they do. With that comes opportunity – opportunity for new and unexpected partnerships, collaboration and transfer

of the skills and imagination inherent in the work that the creative sector so masterfully undertakes. These opportunities have been set out in the report of our [Culture and Commerce Taskforce](#), which suggests how culture can support our economic recovery from the pandemic, and how commerce can ensure that culture continues to thrive in our city.

And business? Business as 'unusual' is now the norm. Corporate businesses have had to rethink how they operate and review their functions - aligning to the needs of their clients and navigating a host of new conditions. Across the corporate sector companies have had to re-imagine how they do what they do, whether it be through flexible working, new outputs or re-calibrating long term strategy. Innovation, transformation, employee well-being, new skills, the bottom line – these are phrases that continue to fill the headlines. How are companies most successfully adapting and navigating this uncertainty? Creatively.

Creativity has become a key element in every business. Collaboration across sectors, particularly the commercial and creative industries, can unlock that creativity and unleash further innovation and productivity. Within the City of London, culture and creativity sit alongside financial and professional services and other businesses. Culture Mile, led by the City

of London Corporation, strives to weave these together through partnership and imagination, optimising opportunity and impact from one sector to another. Whatever the business, it is time to be creative and work together, inviting new ways of working and collaborating across sectors.

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**'Creativity is critical and the cultural and creative industries can help to ignite the innovation, staff wellbeing and cutting-edge transformation that businesses seek. Imaginative workforces, enhanced corporate identities and creative business environments will reinvigorate the City of London as a powerhouse of professional ingenuity and creative alliance.'**

**Alderman William Russell**

The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of London

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# Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our world in ways that we could not have imagined. It has brought unexpected challenges and adaptation to our lives, whether at home or at work. The economy continues to fluctuate as some companies focus on survival, whilst others find opportunity in new ways of working. Customer demands are evolving whilst technology is advancing faster than might have been expected. Even prior to the pandemic these trends were becoming clear.

Already in the US the average lifespan of a company listed on the S&P 500 (a stock market index of 500 large U.S. publicly traded companies) had fallen from almost 60 years in the 1950s to under 20 years in 2017, while in the UK almost 50% of SMEs do not last 5 years.<sup>1</sup> This volatility also reflects in employment, with over a third of the UK workforce susceptible to automation.<sup>2</sup>

Creativity is integral to the future of business, now more than ever before.

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**‘New attitudes and behaviours will be needed by individuals and businesses founded on flexibility, resilience, collaboration, entrepreneurship and creativity.’**

*The Future of work: Jobs and Skills in 2030, UKCES<sup>3</sup>*

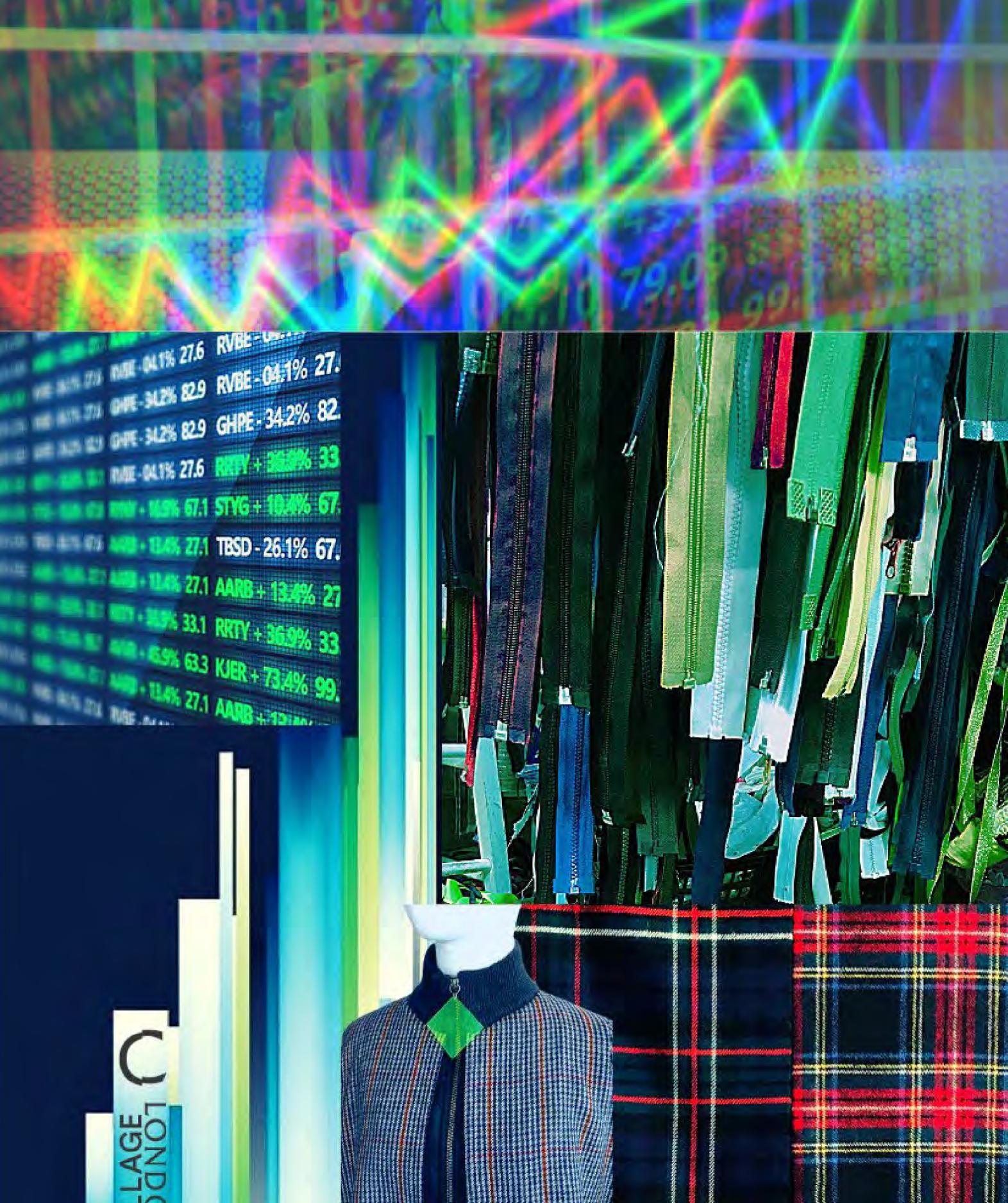
- 1 Michael Sheetz, [‘Technology killing off corporate America: Average life span of companies under 20 years,’](#) CNBC, 24 August 2017; Richard Watson, [‘Why Companies Die,’](#) Imperial College Business School, 18 January 2017.
- 2 [‘From Brawn to Brains: The Impact of Technology on Jobs in the UK,’](#) Deloitte, 2015.
- 3 [‘The Future of Work: Jobs and Skills in 2030,’](#) UK Commission for Employment and Skills, February 2014.

## Why this report?

**Culture Mile is committed to sparking new and bold initiatives focused on innovation and cross-sector connections, built on the added value creativity and culture bring to corporate businesses located in the City of London.**

In 2019, the City of London Corporation, on behalf of the Culture Mile Creativity in Business Working Group, commissioned Barker Langham to analyse the role of creativity within the corporate sector, and opportunities for cross-sector collaboration within Culture Mile. The purpose of this research is to more clearly understand the role of creativity in corporate business and to understand what a more mutually beneficial relationship between the creative and corporate sectors might look like.

This report sets out to interrogate the real and perceived value and benefits of creativity in the corporate world, to establish the evidence that can be used to support this, and to gauge if there is an appetite and potential market for collaboration and cross-pollination within Culture Mile and across the City. It outlines the way in which creative and corporate businesses can collaborate, and how to overcome the barriers currently hindering such projects.



## Methodology

Barker Langham researched this report over a period of c. 6 months in 2019/20, in two distinct phases: a period of thorough desk-based research, to scope the existing evidence of the benefits of creativity in business, followed by extensive stakeholder engagement, to test these findings and ascertain the current landscape of cross-sector collaboration in Culture Mile and the City more broadly. The stakeholder engagement exercise was designed to capture the existing projects and networks of cross-sector collaborative projects that involved creative organisations and corporate businesses; to understand the perceived barriers and benefits to engaging with such projects; and to test the appetite for Culture Mile to play a role in facilitating cross-pollination. In addition, Culture Mile captured further case studies of activity taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic prior to publishing this report.

## Definitions

This report uses a definition of creativity as a process of originality, enquiry, fluency of ideas, testing and creation. Creativity embodies a variety of activities, and is not a distinct, discrete concept.

The report encompasses both the act of being creative and that of cultural engagement, acknowledging that both bring perceived benefit to corporate businesses and cultural organisations. The act of being creative involves active participation in creativity as a process, mindset or interaction. Engagement with culture and the arts often takes place in an external environment and as a discrete event, which one can creatively experience, observe or take inspiration from.

This report focuses on collaborations between organisations in different sectors: one with a creative and / or cultural remit, and the other a for-profit organisation that is non-cultural in its remit. For the purposes of this report, the organisations with a creative and / or cultural remit are referred to as cultural organisations or creative organisations interchangeably.

All for-profit businesses that are non-cultural in their remit are called corporate businesses throughout this report, which when considered generically can be defined by having clear organisational or hierarchical structure, a focus on profit and linear processes.

These labels are used for ease of reference to describe cross-sector collaboration, though do not encapsulate the huge diversity (in terms of size, set-up and scope) of organisations within each sector.

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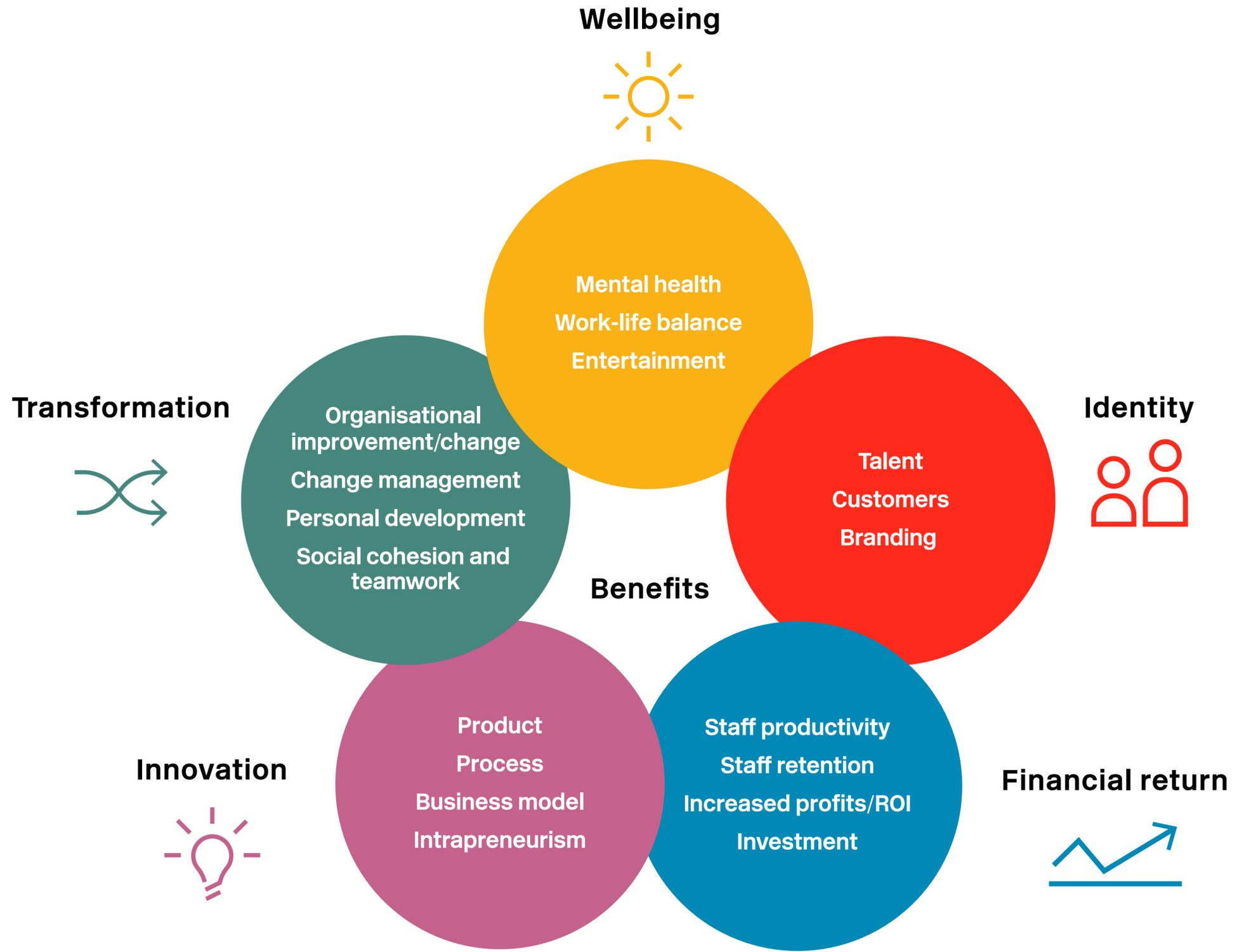
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# Key findings

# The benefits of creativity

Our research has found that creativity can help tackle five key challenges facing businesses today. Each of these benefits will be looked at in more detail within this report in Section 5, [p16](#).



# Cross-sector collaboration

As corporate businesses increasingly recognise the importance of creativity, they can look to cross-sector collaboration with the creative and cultural sectors to unlock this creativity and exchange skills. These collaborations may take many different forms, but largely divide into three categories based on engagement and intended outcomes.

Examples of these different models of collaboration can be found in the accompanying case studies on [p36](#).

## Three Models of Collaboration

	1. Facilitation of cultural engagement	2. Creative intervention	3. Inter-sectoral collaboration
What	Projects that enable engagement with creativity, arts and culture, often in an external environment or as a discrete event.	Creative and cultural organisations that undertake projects in the workplace of a partnering business.	Collaborations set up specifically to enable knowledge exchange and skill-sharing between organisations from different sectors or partnerships between creative and commercial departments within the same business, for mutual benefit.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing tickets for arts events</li> <li>• Organising and / or sponsoring art events, competitions, artists or art institutions</li> <li>• Buying, collecting and commissioning artworks</li> <li>• Offering seminars or insight into art and culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employing artists as designers or consultants</li> <li>• Artist-in-residency programmes</li> <li>• Holding creative workshops</li> <li>• Playing social games</li> <li>• Offering creative art therapy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of new products / ideas businesses through collaborative working methods</li> <li>• Mentoring and skill-sharing of artists / creative communities / professionals</li> </ul>
Targeting	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Identity</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Wellbeing</p> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <p>Financial Return</p> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Transformation</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Wellbeing</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Innovation</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Identity</p> </div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Innovation</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Identity</p> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <p>Transformation</p> </div>

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# Businesses face vast challenges

Corporate businesses face vast challenges in meeting their long-term objectives and targets, alongside day to day business function. The following are key pain points identified through our research that need to be addressed if corporates are to maintain their profitability and success.



## Innovation

In the context of so many changes across the economy and society, businesses must adapt to survive. It is a 'prerequisite for progress,' with innovative companies having a 'head-start advantage' over their competitors.<sup>4</sup> Future success and sustainability is highly dependent on innovation, according to 84% of executives in a 2010 study, and the significance of innovation has only increased in the intervening years.<sup>5</sup>

Companies have to adopt new strategies and processes in order to remain relevant. Innovation is also interwoven with reputation and consumer preference: 56% of customers actively seek to buy from the most innovative companies.<sup>6</sup>

# 84%

of executives believe future success and sustainability is highly dependent on innovation.<sup>5</sup>

# 56%

of customers actively seek to buy from the most innovative companies.<sup>6</sup>



## Identity

Reputation can be a decisive factor for employees and potential customers: 84% of job seekers say the reputation of a company is important when applying for a job, and a strong employer brand can lead to a 28% increase in staff retention.<sup>7</sup> The expectations of job seekers in recent years has shifted, and there is greater emphasis on a company's social impact; two-thirds of millennials say that an organisation's purpose is the reason they chose their employer.<sup>8</sup>

Consumers also invest in a company because of its public profile. Purchase decisions are based on company reputation as well as the reputation of the product or services on offer: 70% of customers avoid buying a product if they do not like the company, while 56% research the business to learn more about their wider activities.<sup>9</sup>

# 84%

of job seekers say the reputation of a company is important when applying for a job.<sup>7</sup>

# 70%

of customers avoid buying a product if they do not like the company.<sup>9</sup>

- 4 Aaron Dalton, 'Foster Critical Thinking: The pARTnership Movement,' 2015.
- 5 'Innovation and commercialization, 2010: McKinsey Global Survey results,' McKinsey, August 2010.
- 6 State of the Connected Customer, 2nd edition,' Salesforce.
- 7 '65 HR and Recruiting Stats for 2018,' Glassdoor, 2018; Lars Schmidt, 'Three Days, Three Key Themes: My Review of Talent Connect 2012,' LinkedIn Talent Blog, 2012.
- 8 'Predictions for 2017 – Everything is Becoming Digital,' Bersin by Deloitte, 2016.
- 9 'The Company Behind the Brand: In Reputation We Trust,' Weber Shandwick, 2012.



## Financial return

### Productivity

According to a 2016 analysis by Gallup, teams with high employee engagement rates are 17% more productive – and only 13% of workers feel highly engaged.<sup>10</sup> Productivity in the UK workforce is declining, despite logging the longest working week in Europe with an average of 42.3 hours per week.<sup>11</sup>

Labour productivity for the second quarter of 2019 fell by 0.5% compared with the same quarter of 2018, following two years of zero growth.<sup>12</sup> This low productivity can partly be attributed to a lack of engagement.

**17%**

more productivity in teams with high engagement rates.<sup>10</sup>

Only **13%**

of workers feel highly engaged in their job.<sup>10</sup>



## Transformation

### Skills

Creativity is a cross-industry, transferable skill being increasingly recognised by the wider economy. Around 35% of current jobs in the UK are at high risk of automation over the next 15 years; however, 87% of those who work in the creative industries<sup>13</sup> are at low or no risk of automation.<sup>14</sup>

The World Economic Forum identified creativity as one of the top three skills for employees from 2020, as innovative practices are becoming ever more crucial to economic success.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, 94% of hiring managers say it is important to consider creativity when recruiting a candidate.<sup>16</sup> This is also evident at a managerial level: in a study of 1,500 global CEOs, IBM found that ‘chief executives believe that successfully navigating an increasingly complex world will require creativity.’<sup>17</sup>

**Creativity is 1 of the top 3 skills for employees, as identified by the World Economic Forum<sup>15</sup>**

**35%**

of current jobs in the UK are at high risk of automation over the next 15 years.<sup>14</sup>

**87%**

of those who work in the creative industries are at low or no risk of automation.<sup>14</sup>

10 James Harter, Frank Schmidt, Sangeeta Agrawal, Stephanie Plowman, and Anthony Blue, ‘[The Relationship Between Engagement at Work and Organizational Outcomes - 2016 Q12 Meta-Analysis: Ninth Edition.](#)’ Gallup, April 2016; ‘[Engagement and the Global Workplace.](#)’ Steelcase Global Report, 2016.

11 Rob Smith, ‘This country works the longest hours in Europe,’ World Economic Forum, 20 February 2018

12 ‘[Labour productivity, UK: April to June 2019.](#)’ Office of National Statistics, 8 October 2019.

13 [Creative Industries Federation defines the creative industries as advertising and marketing, architecture, crafts, design, film, tv, video, animation, VFX/SFX, radio, photography, creative tech, museums, galleries, libraries and heritage, music, performing and visual arts, publishing.](#)

14 ‘From Brawn to Brains,’ Deloitte; Evy Cauldwell-French and Annie Lydford, ‘[Public Investment, Public Gain: How public investment in the arts generates economic value across the creative industries and beyond.](#)’ Creative Industries Federation and Arts Council England, 2019.

15 Itai Palti, ‘[Could creativity drive the next industrial revolution?](#)’, World Economic Forum, April 2017.

16 Findings from the study ‘[Seeking Creative Candidates: Hiring for the Future.](#)’ Adobe, 2014.

17 ‘[IBM 2010 Global CEO Study: Creativity Selected as Most Crucial Factor for Future Success.](#)’ IBM, 18 May 2010.



## Wellbeing

Mental ill health is one of the world's most pronounced health risks, and approximately one in four people in the UK experience a mental health issue each year.<sup>18</sup> Among the UK workforce, 61% of people have experienced a mental health issue over their career due to work, or where work was a related factor.<sup>19</sup> In addition, 51% of full-time employees in the UK have experienced anxiety or burnout in their current job.<sup>20</sup> According to the London Mental Health Report the adult population of the capital has the highest levels of anxiety in proportion to the rest of the UK.<sup>21</sup>

Mental health can have profound ramifications on the wider economy. In 2018/19, 12.8 million working days were lost as a result of work-related stress, depression or anxiety, while 300,000 people with long-term mental health problems lose their jobs each year.<sup>22</sup> As a result, poor staff retention and low productivity due to poor mental health, sickness and staff turnover costs employers up to £42 billion annually.<sup>23</sup> Staff wellbeing is increasingly becoming a priority for employers and this has only been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fujitsu's Success Report 2018 found that 60% of business leaders feel duty-bound to improve the lives of employees, above both customers and society.<sup>24</sup>

# 61%

of the UK workforce have experienced a mental health issue over the course of their career due to work.<sup>19</sup>

**'Bringing art into people's lives through activities including dancing, singing, and going to museums and concerts offers an added dimension to how we can improve physical and mental health.'**

*Dr Piroska Östlin WHO Regional Director for Europe<sup>25</sup>*

18 ['Adult psychiatric morbidity in England, 2007 – Results of a household survey.'](#) The NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care, 2009.

19 ['Mental Health at Work 2018 Summary Report – Seizing the Momentum.'](#) Business in the Community, October 2018.

20 Alison Coleman, ['Over half of UK workers have experienced 'burnout' in their job.'](#) Virgin, 15 April 2015.

21 ['The London Mental Health Report: The Invisible Costs of Mental Ill Health'](#). Greater London Authority, January 2014.

22 ['Work-related stress, anxiety or depression statistics in Great Britain, 2019.'](#) Health and Safety Executive, 30 October 2019; Paul Farmer and Dennis Stevenson, ['Thriving at work: the Stevenson/Farmer review of mental health and employees.'](#) UK Government, October 2017.

23 Farmer and Stevenson, ['Thriving at work: the Stevenson/Farmer review of mental health and employees.'](#)

24 ['Unlocking Creativity, Knowledge & Innovation.'](#) Fujitsu, 2018.

25 World Health Organisation report, ['What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review \(2019\).'](#)

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# Creativity can help tackle business challenges

Creativity can help address the challenges corporate businesses face and catalyse a wide variety of benefits, for both corporate and creative organisations. Our research found that the outcomes and benefits can largely be grouped according to five main themes. These can be at an individual or collective level: for employees, for teams and for the business itself, with the effects short or long-term, depending on the nature and duration of the project.

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'It may well be that creativity is the last unfair advantage we're legally allowed to take over our competitors.'<sup>26</sup>

*Bill Bernbach*

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/avidan/2019/06/10/when-advertising-was-transformed-forever-and-became-the-art-of-persuasion/?sh=378b65835ef7>



# 1. Wellbeing

## Mental health

Arts interventions and creative art therapies have been shown to reduce stress in employees by 81%.<sup>27</sup> Creativity can also improve mental health by ensuring staff are working in a pleasant, well-designed environment. In a study by Cass Business School, 80% felt that art in the workplace improved their sense of wellbeing.<sup>28</sup>

In addition, projects with a particular focus on mentoring and skill-sharing can improve the mental health of participating individuals from creative organisations, as revealed through consultation with a variety of creative organisations in the City of London.

## Work-life balance

Facilitating access to creative or cultural activities can reduce the risk of burnout: participatory art and art therapy 'addresses [burnout] by engaging the creative process to re-energize people while identifying commonalities and empathy with co-workers.'<sup>29</sup>

## Entertainment

Creative activities can be an important way to keep staff happy and entertained. According to a recent study, engaging in creative activities can lead to an 'upward spiral' of positive emotion and psychological wellbeing.<sup>30</sup> This can lead to greater job and personal satisfaction. Happiness is key to a productive, healthy workforce, and has been shown to raise sales by 37% and accuracy on tasks by 19%.<sup>31</sup>

# 80%

of employees felt that art in the workplace improved their sense of wellbeing.<sup>28</sup>



- 27 Lily Martin et al., 'Creative Arts Interventions for Stress Management and Prevention - A Systematic Review,' Behavioural Sciences 8: 28 (2018).
- 28 Edmund Ingham, 'Say Hello to the Online Art Rental Market: can it make a dent in a \$50bn industry?' Forbes, 23 April 2015.
- 29 'Can Art Therapy Defuse Teacher Burnout?' Columbian College of Arts & Sciences, George Washington University, 9 May 2018.
- 30 Tamlin Conner, Colin DeYoung and Paul Silvia, 'Everyday creative activity as a path to flourishing,' The Journal of Positive Psychology, 13:2, 2018.
- 31 Shawn Achor, 'The Happiness Dividend,' Harvard Business Review, 23 June 2011.

## 2. Identity

### Attracting talent

Focusing on culture and creativity in particular can lead to a 'creative dividend': businesses that integrate creativity in workplace culture are more attractive to talent.<sup>32</sup> Of companies that cultivate creativity in the workplace, 69% reported winning awards and recognition as a 'best place to work' - as opposed to 27% of companies surveyed who did not embed creative practices.<sup>33</sup>

Cultivating an attractive working culture through integrating creativity in organisational strategy, daily practices and management processes help make a company an inviting proposition for the best potential employees. The World's Most Attractive Employers (WMAE) 2019 list demonstrates 'the growing need for flexibility at work, work-life balance, and celebrating fun at work... as key element of [company] culture.'<sup>34</sup>

### Connecting with communities and customers

Cultural projects can help an organisation strengthen ties with the local community or consumers and bolster their public profile and connection: 'a [cultural] partnership serves to strengthen relationships with key

clients by establishing cultural bonds and demonstrating shared values.'<sup>35</sup> Creative collaborative projects can also be used to explore ways in which companies interact with customers and communities and understand their values.

### Public profile / branding

Creativity can directly impact a company's brand through the generation of new ideas for marketing, that promote a particular identity. Indeed, 45% of customers expect great design across marketing and sales collateral.<sup>36</sup> By investing more in a creative approach to branding, companies can achieve success. In addition, sponsorship of the arts can reflect a positive public image as a multifaceted and philanthropic patron of culture.

Of companies that cultivate creativity in the workplace...

# 69%

...reported winning awards and recognition as a 'best place to work.'<sup>33</sup>



32 Marc Brodherson, Jason Heller, Jesko Perrey, and David Remley, '[Creativity's bottom line: How winning companies turn creativity into business value and growth.](#)' McKinsey, June 2017.

33 Forrester Consulting, '[The Creative Dividend: How Creativity Impacts Business Results.](#)' August 2014, accessed online May-June, 2019.

34 '[World's Most Attractive Employers 2019.](#)' Universum, October 2019.

35 Ragnar Lund and Stephen Greyser, '[Corporate Sponsorship in Culture - A Case of Partnership in Relationship Building and Collaborative Marketing by a Global Financial Institution and a Major Art Museum.](#)' Harvard Business School Working Paper, 2015.

36 Hannah Hagee, '[30 branding stats and facts.](#)' Lucidpress, 19 November 2019.



## 3. Financial return

### Staff productivity

Creative activities are an effective way of engaging staff and have a positive impact on workplace culture. They can help reduce stress among employees, a significant cause of work absenteeism: a study has shown that 'art making can lower cortisol levels regardless of prior experience with art, media type, or demographics.'<sup>37</sup> By ensuring staff are happy at work, businesses can see an increase in productivity by up to 20%.<sup>38</sup> Art in the workplace specifically can influence productivity among employees, with a 17% increase.<sup>39</sup> In a study by Cass Business School, 64% of employees agreed that art in the workplace made them feel more motivated.<sup>40</sup>

### Staff retention

Providing staff with opportunities and space to focus on themselves can lead to a happier workforce through triggering an 'upward spiral' of wellbeing, meaning businesses will be less likely to lose staff to alternative employment.<sup>41</sup> As identified in the World's Most Attractive Employers list, a strong brand can be enhanced through creative activity; this can also lead to a 28% increase in staff retention.<sup>42</sup>

### Increased profits / ROI

A study by McKinsey has shown that companies who place greater emphasis on creativity perform better financially: 'creativity is strongly correlated with superior business performance.'<sup>43</sup> Creativity needs to be evident in daily practices and in the agility and adaptability of staff - skills that can be enhanced through creative activities. The productivity and retention of staff, as described above, can lead to a tangible return on investment.

### Investment

With the uncertainty of the stock market, organisations can make relatively stable investments through building up an art collection. Collecting and commissioning artworks could also bring in future profits: fine art pieces grow in value over time, while investing in rising artists is relatively low risk.<sup>44</sup>

# 17%

increase in productivity among employees who have art in their workplace.<sup>39</sup>



- 37 Girija Kaimal, Kendra Ray and Juan Muniz, 'Reduction of Cortisol Levels and Participants' Responses Following Art Making,' Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 33:2 2016.
- 38 Daniel Sgroi, 'Happiness and Productivity: Understanding the Happy-Productive Worker,' SMF-CAGE Global Perspective Series, October 2015
- 39 'Designing your own workspace,' University of Exeter.
- 40 'Designing your own workspace improves health, happiness and productivity,' University of Exeter News, 7 September 2010.
- 41 Conner, DeYoung and Silvia, 'Everyday creative activity as a path to flourishing.'
- 42 '65 HR and Recruiting Stats for 2018,' Glassdoor.
- 43 Brodherson, Heller, Perrey and Remley, 'Creativity's bottom line.'
- 44 Katie Hope, 'Could buying paintings make you rich?' BBC, 16 November 2017.



## 4. Innovation

### Product Research & Development

Creativity can help employees be more inventive and daring in the development of new products for markets. A study found that groups with even a minimum of training in creative principles and tools generated 350% as many ideas as their untrained counterparts, and the ideas were 415% more original.<sup>45</sup> Collaborative projects or interventions are often concentrated in Research and Development departments specifically with the aim to improve goods or services. Bosch runs an artist-in-residency programme at their research centre whereby artists work among and with researchers 'to exchange ideas and engage in dialogue.'<sup>46</sup>

### Process

Thinking in new ways is essential as businesses adapt their organisational processes to ensure future sustainability. By implementing a new or improved production or delivery method - be it a technique, equipment or software - businesses can become more resilient. Harvey Seifter notes that 'more than 400 of America's Fortune 500 companies use artistic skills, processes and experiences to foster creative thinking and innovation processes.'<sup>47</sup>

### Business Model

When applied at a strategic level, creativity can have the greatest impact on profit margins: in the US, design-driven companies have outperformed the S&P 500 Index by 211% over 10 years to 2015.<sup>48</sup> Reconceptualising organisational structures, challenging linear processes and adapting to customer needs can lead to innovative and future-proof business models. Airbnb integrated design thinking to turn around their fortunes, positioning themselves as the customer and developing their product accordingly.<sup>49</sup>

### Intrapreneurship

When radical ideas and innovative thinking can be integrated in a pre-existing working environment, employees are encouraged to develop novel products and/or services in-house. Google encourages intrapreneurship among employees by offering their workforce to spend 20% of their contracted time on personal projects relating to the business; Gmail was one such project that today drives key traffic to other Google products.<sup>50</sup>

**'Innovation isn't just one thing. There are a lot of competencies that go into realising an innovation. Creativity is different because creativity is a mechanism to being innovative.'**<sup>51</sup>

*Tucker Marion, Associate Professor at Northeastern University*



45 Gerard J. Puccio et al., 'Creative Problem Solving in Small Groups: The Effects of Creativity Training on Idea Generation, Solution Creativity and Leadership Effectiveness,' *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, 24 September 2018.

46 'Wanted: lateral thinkers - Creative spaces for innovative minds at Bosch Renningen,' Bosch.

47 Harvey Seifter, 'Artists Help Empower Corporate America,' *Arts & Business Quarterly Online*, Spring 2004.

48 Jeanne Rae, '2015 dmi: Design Value Index Results and Commentary,' *Design Management Institute*, December 2016.

49 'Airbnb, a Design Thinking success story,' BBVA.

50 Stuart Thomas, 'How Google encourages innovation among its employees,' *Engage Me*, 13 September 2017.

51 Tucker Marion, Associate Professor at Northeastern University's D'Amore-McKim School of Business and director of the Master of Science in Innovation programme, quoted in Lauren Landry, 'The Importance of Creativity in Business,' blog for Northeastern University, November 2017.



## 5. Transformation

### Organisational change

McKinsey have estimated that 70% of change programmes fail to achieve their goal, in large part due to employee resistance.<sup>52</sup> By challenging linear processes and the status quo, creative thinking can help streamline methodologies, procedures, hierarchies and management processes. Lego developed an online co-creation platform in a creative approach to improve communication; initially made for customers, the platform became a fundamental asset to co-producing organisational change with their employees.<sup>53</sup>

### Change management

Implementing the transformations described above requires effective change management. The creative, people-focused techniques required to help make these transitions can be improved among staff through creative collaboration. Arts-based learning is increasingly used in the United States to enhance employee skills in change management.<sup>54</sup>

### Personal development

Transformation can also take place on an individual level. Creativity, made manifest in dedicated activities or in the workplace, can enable employees to develop their

soft skills, cognitive skills, competencies and confidence: the neuroscientist Aracelli Camargo notes that working spaces that 'use art to keep constant change' are neurologically stimulating, improving performance 'in hippocampus-dependent learning tasks such as problem solving, idea generation and cognitive flexibility.'<sup>55</sup> Personal development can improve the intellectual capital of the business, leading to a stronger talent pool.

### Social cohesion and teamwork

Creativity as an enabler of social cohesion has been studied in an urban context, and the findings can be translated into a business environment.<sup>56</sup> Companies use arts-based learning programmes to 'strengthen employee skills in collaboration and conflict resolution.'<sup>57</sup> Working together creatively can help overcome challenges, resolve conflicts and strengthen relationships, which can lead to more effective teamwork on a daily basis.

**By challenging linear processes and the status quo, creative thinking can help streamline methodologies, procedures, hierarchies and management processes.**



52 Boris Ewenstein, Wesley Smith and Ashvin Sologar, '[Changing Change Management](#),' McKinsey, July 2015.

53 Carsten Tams, '[The Co-Creation Imperative: How to Make Organizational Change Collaborative](#),' Forbes, 11 February 2018.

54 Seifter, '[Artists Help Empower Corporate America](#).'

55 Ingham, '[Say Hello to the Online Art Rental Market](#).'

56 Teresa Garcia Alcaez, '[Creativity: A Driver and Enabler of Social Cohesion](#),' kult-ur revista interdisciplinària sobre la cultura de la ciutat, 4: 307-324 (2018).

57 Seifter, '[Artists Help Empower Corporate America](#).'

## Priority benefits

Our research and consultation found that while these benefits are interlinked, and all bring value, some are of a greater priority than others.

For corporate businesses, **wellbeing** is one of the highest priorities. For many, a transformation in workplace culture is needed. Businesses are keen to look at different strategies and methods to support wellbeing.<sup>58</sup> Through collaborations that seek to improve mental health and work-life balance, staff are likely to become happier, resulting in a more productive workforce and lower turnover rate.

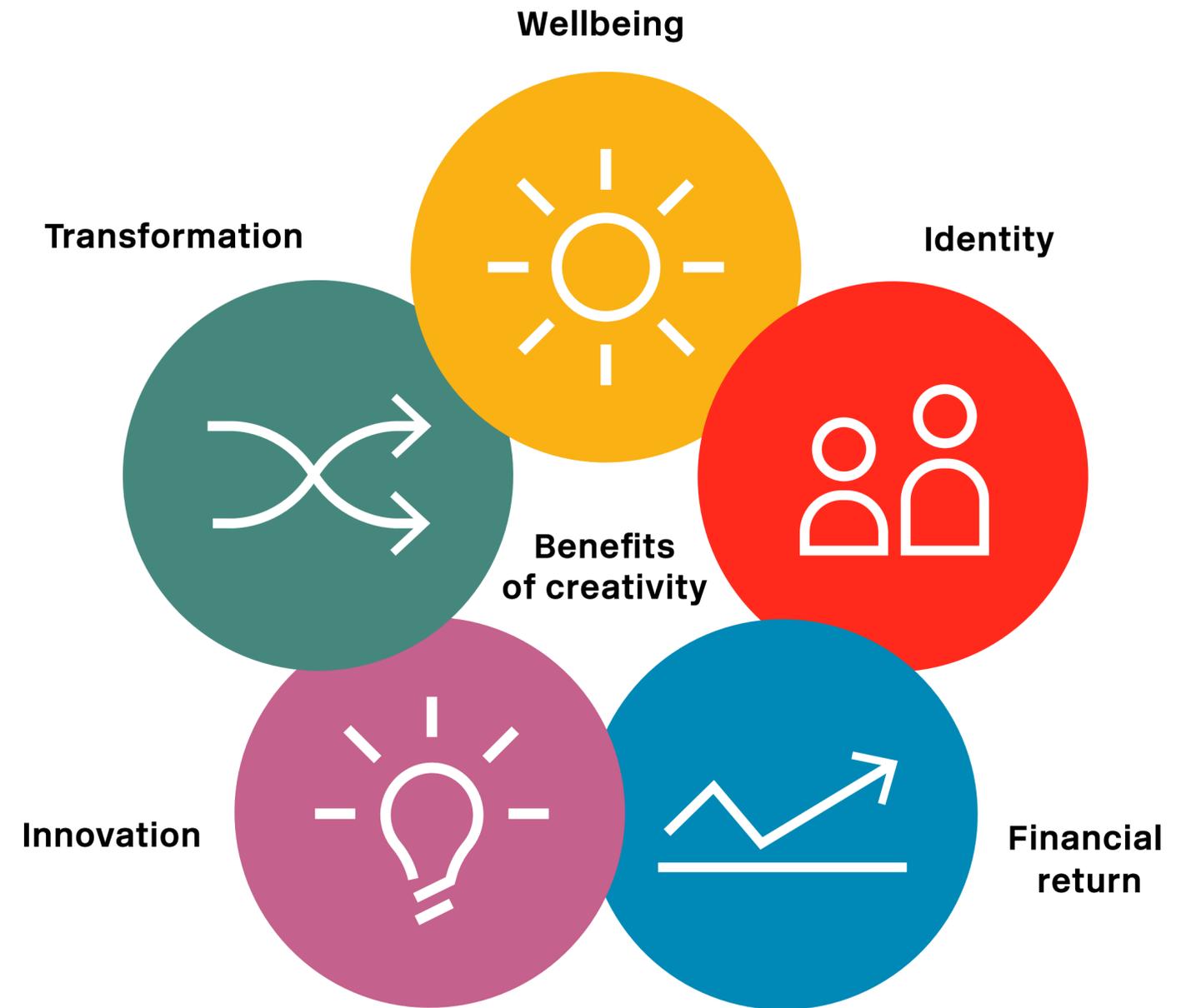
Participating in cross-sectoral collaboration can also enhance a company's reputation: an **identity** that integrates creativity, be it internally through design thinking or externally through branding, is becoming essential for all businesses to make themselves more attractive to both employee talent and clients. The next generations of employees have increasing expectations of their employers, who need to provide opportunities for developing and diversifying their skills, including creativity. This can have positive ramifications across the board, from wellbeing to **innovation**.

For creative organisations, the **financial** reward of cross-sector collaborative

projects is essential. A strong ecosystem of collaboration helps support the financial security of creative organisations, many of which work on a small scale with low profit margins. **Identity** and **transformation** are also high priorities.

By collaborating with new corporate businesses, creative organisations can increase their visibility and become more widely known, generating potential future business. Enabling the creative sector to become more resilient can also positively affect the mental health and **wellbeing** of employees, whose skills and talent are valued and nourished through collaborative projects.

<sup>58</sup> Farmer and Stevenson, 'Thriving at work: the Stevenson/Farmer review'.



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# Cross-sector collaboration is evolving

## Cross-sector collaboration in its traditional form

Recognising the economic weight of creativity as an increasingly significant practice, the cultural and corporate sectors benefit from working together in cross-sector collaborations to harness creativity and exchange skills. These collaborations most frequently have taken place in the form of Corporate and Social Responsibility or as a transaction for creative services.



### Corporate and Social Responsibility

Corporate businesses often develop collaborations with other sectors to fulfil objectives set out as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes. CSR activities can positively impact employees, improving wellbeing, improving the business's identity and nurturing connections with local communities.

Companies usually have well-articulated objectives aimed at tackling specific social issues and providing philanthropic support for certain causes, particular to each business. Nevertheless, our research found that there are several broad themes that are generally of interest to businesses:

- Environment and sustainability
- Arts and culture
- Community benefit
- Diversity and inclusion
- Wellbeing

Many leading businesses have been moving away from discrete CSR in recent years, integrating these values directly into their business model. Companies are beginning to define themselves with a social purpose that underpins their existence.

### Creative Services

The creative sector has tended to benefit from working with other sectors in a few ways. In a transactional process, services are offered in the form of projects or interventions for which creative organisations receive payment. This contributes to their financial sustainability, as well as increasing their customer base and marketing capabilities.

However, partnerships can go beyond this transactional model. A study in 2017 identified certain skills gaps among the creative and cultural sector workforce, which included fundraising, digital, business marketing, strategy and operational skills.<sup>59</sup> Cross-sector collaborative projects can provide the opportunity for employees in creative organisations to address skills gaps through exchange and development of new skills that will help make their organisation more sustainable.

<sup>59</sup> [Building a Creative Nation: Current and Future Skills Needs](#), Creative and Cultural Skills, 2019.

## Enriching cross-sector collaboration

A number of projects have been devised and implemented by the business world in order to foster creativity through a deeper type of exchange. Artist-in-residencies, for example, have a long history in industrial and corporate settings. In the 1960s, companies such as Hewlett Packard and IBM hosted artists to work in their research centres and produce original artworks.<sup>60</sup> Businesses have continuously returned to residencies as a means of bringing creativity into their sphere: Facebook runs a low-key residency programme, whilst Siemens offers a residency for musicians.<sup>61</sup>

The way in which companies engage with creativity continues to evolve and a wealth of richer, more meaningful cross-sector collaborative projects are taking place worldwide. These range in scale from innovative business ideas or placemaking initiatives to teambuilding. However, there has been no comprehensive analysis or attempt to categorise the different types of collaboration.

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**'A business has to be involving, it has to be fun, and it has to exercise your creative instincts.'**<sup>62</sup>

*Richard Branson*

<sup>60</sup> Lucy Hunter, '[Decades Before Facebook and Google, American Corporations Sought Out Artists to Tap Their Creativity](#),' Artsy, 6 July 2018.

<sup>61</sup> Elizabeth Segran, '[Welcome to the Brave New World of the Corporate-Sponsored Artist](#),' Fast Company, 10 March 2015.

<sup>62</sup> Twitter



# Cross-sector collaboration

Examples of these different models of collaboration can be found in the accompanying case studies on [p36](#).

## Three Models of Collaboration

	1. Facilitation of cultural engagement	2. Creative intervention	3. Inter-sectoral collaboration
<b>What</b>	Projects that enable engagement with creativity, arts and culture, often in an external environment or as a discrete event.	Creative and cultural organisations that undertake projects in the workplace of a partnering business.	Collaborations set up specifically to enable knowledge exchange and skill-sharing between organisations from different sectors or partnerships between creative and commercial departments within the same business, for mutual benefit.
<b>Examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing tickets for arts events</li> <li>• Organising and / or sponsoring art events, competitions, artists or art institutions</li> <li>• Buying, collecting and commissioning artworks</li> <li>• Offering seminars or insight into art and culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employing artists as designers or consultants</li> <li>• Artist-in-residency programmes</li> <li>• Holding creative workshops</li> <li>• Playing social games</li> <li>• Offering creative art therapy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of new products / ideas businesses through collaborative working methods</li> <li>• Mentoring and skill-sharing of artists / creative communities / professionals</li> </ul>
<b>Targeting</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Identity             </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Wellbeing             </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  Financial Return         </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Transformation             </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Wellbeing             </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Innovation             </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Identity             </div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Innovation             </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Identity             </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  Transformation         </div>

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# Key barriers to address

Whilst evidence suggests many benefits of cross-sector collaboration, partnerships can also face obstacles, even if all parties are invested in the opportunity. Our research found four key barriers:

### 1. Benefits of cross-sector collaboration are not valued

Cross-sector collaborative projects require a significant input of time and money, on both the corporate and creative side. As such, the participating organisations need to appreciate the value of the collaboration to invest the necessary resources. Particularly for corporate businesses, projects that take place during office hours can be seen to encroach upon work time; the tangible benefit of employees spending their contracted hours on creative endeavours needs to be better understood.

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**‘No cultural/creative activities are organised for the in-house team specifically. The main barrier to this is the lack of time, as these projects would take place during office hours.’**

### 2. Lack of evaluation methodology

The benefits of creativity can be wide-ranging and transformative. Yet evaluation of cross-sector collaboration has not been consistent or coherent; there is no methodology for such evaluation, and consequently there is little data to prove the benefits. Creative organisations often find it difficult to express the value of their work in a quantifiable way for a corporate audience. With tangible, compelling data, senior stakeholders within corporate organisations would more easily perceive the value of cross-sector collaboration, and more readily support these initiatives.

How might evaluation be effective? As creativity is an intangible characteristic, qualitative evaluation is the most effective method of assessment. However, proxies can be identified to quantitatively measure the qualitative impacts of creativity. A series of qualitative and quantitative indicators for each benefit can produce a standardised and comparable dataset; this can have an even greater impact if the indicators are tailored to a company’s specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). An example of related, common KPIs within a company are the staff retention rate (which has a financial and reputational benefit), the number of intrapreneurial initiatives by employees (with the benefit linked to innovation and reputation) and the rating of work-life balance by employees (which indicates the level of wellbeing of staff).




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**‘In the current economic climate, it [evaluation] is a way to make a statement and say that culture is powerful.’**

### 3. Need for senior management champions

As with all business activities, decisions about creative or cultural engagement are made by senior management. Thus, if the senior team is unconvinced about the benefits of creativity, the entire company will probably not participate in collaborative projects. The buy-in and support of senior management has a profound impact on broader company policy, and a trickle-down effect on the daily lives of employees. Senior champions therefore need to be identified in order for collaborative projects to take place.

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**‘One of the hardest things is that you have to have the support and engagement of people at a high level.’**

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**‘You need to find somebody in a position of authority [at the partner organisation]. As a small organisation we don’t have the resources to do that.’**

### 4. Lack of communication and understanding between sectors

While corporate businesses may not be aware of the value of working with creative organisations, for some cultural organisations, corporate businesses can at times appear to be monolithic and inflexible, and not a setting that would be receptive to their offer or relevant to their creative practice. This mutual lack of understanding between different sectors inhibits the potential for effective collaboration.

Establishing relationships with other organisations can be challenging. Prior to developing a collaborative project, it can be difficult to identify the relevant individual, communicate with, and gain traction at a partner company. This is particularly an issue for creative organisations, who can feel they encounter a "glass facade" when approaching corporate businesses. It is impossible to apply a standardised methodology when seeking out contacts in corporate businesses, as the appropriate individuals to speak with can work in a wide range of positions across different departments. Many smaller creative organisations do not have sufficient staffing resources to nurture the personal relationships required to initiate these partnerships. Even if lines of communication can be established, the two parties often lack a shared language across sectors, making it difficult to articulate processes and desired outcomes in mutually understandable terms.



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# **Culture Mile: Building a new relationship for culture and commerce**



## Culture Mile: Building a new relationship for culture and commerce

Culture Mile is an emerging cultural district in the City of London, stretching from Farringdon to Moorgate and with a vision to create a world class destination for culture and learning in the heart of London over the next 10-15 years. It was launched in 2017 through a partnership between the City of London Corporation and four world class cultural institutions – the Barbican Centre, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Museum of London.

As a cultural district based in the City of London, Culture Mile is in a unique position to unite its constituent organisations through cross-sector collaboration. It is an area where multiple industries co-exist – however they do not yet fully interact.

By coordinating collaborative projects on a geographical scale, Culture Mile can become a unique hub in London and on the international stage, facilitating creative transformations that can have impact at an individual and organisational level, and over time, geographical scale.

Culture Mile complements concurrent developments in the area – significant investment is focused around public and cultural spaces, while Crossrail will make the area more accessible, diverse and populated. Culture Mile will become a vital locus of activity; enhancing the cultural offer and potential to collaborate will contribute to the capital's economic resilience. Cultural vibrancy is a crucial factor in ensuring the City of London remains a destination for all types of people and businesses.

Ultimately this could transform the City and more broadly, London, redefining what it means to be a cultural district. By harnessing the wealth of local assets that shape the urban, social, cultural and economic fabric of the area, Culture Mile can create value for businesses, residents, cultural organisations and visitors through cross-sector collaboration, making it a more attractive place for people to work, live and visit.

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# Recommended actions

We finish this report with a series of recommendations that will strengthen the resilience of corporate and creative organisations. These can be applied to cultural districts such as Culture Mile, or to other organisations who are seeking cross-sector collaboration in environments located elsewhere.

## 1.

### **Establish an intermediary organisation that helps facilitate cross-sector collaboration.**

Projects between different sectors are often hindered by difficulties with contacts, resources and language. Brokerage can help overcome these barriers, streamlining the collaborative process by identifying potential partners, making connections and evaluating shared outcomes.

## 2.

### **Produce a prospectus to initiate conversations around the benefits of creativity.**

Developing a prospectus will provide a tangible document that can be used as a basis for discussion with organisations. By outlining the benefits of creativity and sharing examples of cross-sector collaboration, alongside recommended formats, evaluation frameworks and costings, a prospectus can be used to test the appetite for future collaborative projects and each partner's potential role.

## 3.

### **Map existing programmes provided by creative organisations.**

Identifying creative organisations, as defined earlier in this report, that can align their current activities with any of the five benefits outlined in this report will provide the basis for initial collaborations that can be undertaken in the area.

## 4.

### **Strengthen relationships with key individuals in creative and corporate organisations.**

Establishing contacts with new organisations and nurturing relationships that already exist is an important first step in developing a network of engaged, willing organisations who are open to cross-sector collaboration.

## 5.

### **Develop pilot projects that target a specific benefit.**

By devising pilot projects that have a predetermined intention with carefully selected organisations, a brokerage model can be tested, establishing price points, ascertaining the projected staffing resource required, and measuring the outcomes for both sectors.

## 6.

### **Ensure cross-sector collaborative projects cater to the strategic priorities of all participating organisations.**

Tailoring a project to an organisation's strategic aims will likely ensure greater buy-in and uptake among senior stakeholders. This may lead to more significant resources being allocated to creative collaborations.

## 7.

### **Target wellbeing and identity, the most important benefits for corporate businesses.**

Collaborative projects should seek to target at least one of the five benefits outlined in this report. Currently, wellbeing and identity are areas of significant investment for corporate businesses. However, developing projects for transformation, financial return and innovation benefits can also positively influence an organisation's future operation and sustainability.

## 8.

### **Integrate transformation, financial return and identity, the most important benefits for creative organisations.**

In addition to the revenue generated by collaborative projects, creative organisations can benefit from working with a corporate business to increase their visibility, credibility and unlock future corporate partnerships. Staff can also benefit from skill-sharing and professional development.

## 9.

### **Develop an agreed evaluation methodology and impact assessment.**

Evaluation methods need to be agreed by all parties when devising a collaboration. Aligning an evaluation framework to the specific Key Performance Indicators of participating organisations ensures the impact is widely relevant and understood. This could be developed into an evaluation database that sets a new standard of best practice.

## 10.

### **Undertake a comprehensive, longitudinal study of the benefits of creativity in business.**

Assessing the social and economic impact of cross-sector collaborations through a sustained longitudinal study of pilot projects is fundamental to establishing the importance of creativity for workplace culture. A Higher Education institution should be considered as a partner for this study, to ensure it is undertaken with academic rigour and sufficient resources.

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# Case studies

Collaboration between corporate businesses and cultural / creative organisations can take many different forms. The following case studies are categorised against the three models of collaboration previously outlined in this report on [p27](#) and demonstrate how these can work in practice.

The case studies here present activity from before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Corporate businesses and creative organisations have continued to use creativity to address their challenges, both previous and new, within the pandemic's largely unknown and unanticipated context.

# 1 Facilitation of cultural engagement

Collaborative projects that enable engagement with creativity, arts and culture, often in an external environment or as discrete events.

# Linklaters & University of East London

Location: London  
Duration: Annually

## Ambition

Linklaters LLP is a multinational law firm headquarters in London. It is a long-term supporter of the arts and aims to provide a culturally stimulating environment for employees and visitors in its London offices.

Linklaters Art Collection supports artists, galleries and the neighbouring art market as it builds its collection of Modern and Contemporary artworks. It has a strong representation of women artists and values the range and breadth of artists included in its collection.

## Project

Linklaters sponsors an annual art prize at the University of East London. A judging committee selects a shortlist of artists at their degree show, and every Linklaters employee is able to vote for the winning student. The winning artwork becomes part of the Linklaters Art Collection. Past winners include Aaron Doig and Joban Gill.

## Outcome

A key factor in Linklaters' collaboration with the University of East London is its support of a diverse range of students, from a wide variety of backgrounds and situations. The path to success for a professional artist is notoriously difficult, and a prize at an early stage in their career is not only a financial reward but can provide a valuable boost to both their CV and collection history.

The prize and its selection provoke lively debate amongst Linklaters employees, encouraging creative discussion. Not only are they involved in the development of the art collection, but the inclusion of the winning work in their workplace adds to a cultural environment that can engage and inspire them.

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**'...when I actually won the prize. I couldn't believe it. I was worried about moving out of the studio at UEL and this is so helpful, I can rent a studio now.'**

*Joban Gill, Artist*



*Comprehend* (2019) by Joban Gill [Format: Mixed media on canvas / 140cm x 160cm]

# Culture Mile & Brookfield Properties

Location: City of London

Duration: September-November 2020

## Ambition

Culture Mile programmed a series of outdoor concerts in partnership with Brookfield Properties, in locations across the City of London for Autumn 2020. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these events had to be cancelled.

Brookfield Properties is an established collaborator with Culture Mile and believes in the unique ability of culture to transform City locations from places we rush through to places we linger, gather and come together.

The ambition was to continue this partnership by seeking alternative proposals that would highlight the resilience of the City during such difficult times, whilst fostering creative collaboration to support and showcase creatives and artists who were impacted by the restrictions.

## Project

Culture Mile co-commissioned a pair of short films, under the name PLAY, with Brookfield Properties and the London Symphony Orchestra. The films, inspired by place

and space, highlighted the incredible creative energy of the Square Mile, which remained undiminished despite lockdown restrictions.

Working alongside content creation agency The Smalls, Culture Mile and Brookfield Properties selected two up-and-coming filmmakers from an open call to collaborate with new classical composers championed by the LSO and LSO musicians.

## Outcome

The delivery of cultural events is an important placemaking exercise. This was achieved through a new format, rather than as originally intended with a live concert series. Existing creative and commercial partnerships were nourished and the public's awareness of Brookfield Properties and their locations was positively influenced.

The collaboration provided a virtual platform for creative talent to collaborate across disciplines, creating two new pieces of artwork. In addition, freelance artistic talent was supported, with over 20 freelance artists employed at a time when work was scarce.

The films proved to be successful with features in The Guardian and a combined 18,000 views on YouTube. PLAY became the highest performing Culture Mile content of 2020 and demonstrated the connection that Culture Mile's audience has to the City as a place.



**'Previously I could walk around the City hearing musicians practising in Guildhall School, cars zooming by and the general chatter from people spilling out of office buildings or cafes. This beautiful five-minute film perfectly encapsulates the loneliness of a performer in lockdown with no audience, tentatively making the first steps in rediscovering their voice.'**

*Maxine Kwok, First Violinist, London Symphony Orchestra*

# DLA Piper & Employees

Location: London  
Duration: 6 weeks

## Ambition

To bring company values to life, even whilst working remotely from home.

The four key values of the firm include:

- Be Bold
- Be Supportive
- Be Collaborative
- Be Exceptional

## Project

A London office photography competition took place over a period of six weeks during the first Coronavirus lockdown.

The competition asked for photographs which illustrated one of the four key values of the firm.

Each week the best photographs were selected and at the end there were prizes in certain categories.

## Outcome

The competition engaged a gratifyingly large number of people from across the firm and from all areas of the business.

The winning entries and weekly winners were all displayed in the ground floor reception area of the firm's London offices for several weeks in the summer of 2020, as people were returning to the office.

The staff response reflected a desire for creative activity during a time of isolation. The competition inspired employees to reflect on the firm's values, which are integral to the business - whether working in the office or working remotely. It also brought connection between employees who were not able to interact in their usual ways.



Be Collaborative by Tabitha Norris, Associate (IPT)



Be Supportive by Laura Ford, Partner (Lit & Reg)

**'In a time where we were forced to be apart from our colleagues, we found that the photography competition allowed our people to express themselves creatively and share in each other's experiences through lockdown, reinforcing both our Values and the sense of community that is so important to us.'**

*Chloe Forster, Partner, DLA Piper*

# 2 Creative Intervention

Creative and cultural organisations that undertake projects in the workplace of the partnering business.

# ARTIQ & Mayer Brown

Location: London  
Duration: Ongoing

## Ambition

Art Consultancy ARTIQ were appointed by international law firm Mayer Brown LLP to enhance their workspace through the development of rotating art collections and to establish a cultural engagement strategy for their team.

Mayer Brown aspires to democratise their artwork as a visual representation of the firm's values. ARTIQ brought together an art committee drawn from a cross-section of staff across the business to work with ARTIQ's consultants to curate artwork for display within their office.

Building upon their research into the benefits of having art in the workplace, ARTIQ views artwork as a tool to be used in the office. The collections at Mayer Brown focus on promoting employee wellness, boosting productivity, invigorating team building and providing creative inspiration.

## Project

Initial meetings with the art committee established a unanimous consensus that

the rotating collections should encourage interaction between guests and staff, and actively represent their values as an organisation, with a particular focus on diversity and inclusion.

A recent curation, in collaboration with the art committee and women's association, demonstrated this commitment through purposefully emphasising artwork made by women and non-binary artists. This reflects Mayer Brown's dedication to closing the gender gap within the sector. With this focus on empowering women and diversity, ARTIQ carefully curated the collection to feature emerging and established artists, such as Carolina Khouri, Dragica Carlin and ARTIQ's Graduate Art Prize winner, Charlotte Aiken.

The committee decided to use art to reinforce the firm's identity in the entrance to the office, as well. ARTIQ commissioned in-house studio artist, Jessie Gardiner to create a bespoke architectural installation, deconstructing their brand colours to reference street art found nearby on Brick Lane.

## Outcome

The collaboration is a continuing success. Rotating collections on a semi-annual basis, the firm's space feels constantly refreshed, dynamic and infused with colour, creating a vibrant space to work, meet and collaborate.

The creation of Mayer Brown's art committee is having a sustained benefit on the



wellbeing of the staff, using art to open up conversations on corporate values, purpose, diversity and social responsibility across the organisation.

In addition, ARTIQ has facilitated a company-wide art engagement strategy, including offering curator-led tours of the art collection to the partners, employees, and visitors of the firm, improving staff satisfaction and participation in company culture.

Through ARTIQ's leasing model, the artists patronised by Mayer Brown receive a regular income, ensuring that their creative practice can continue.

**'Our recently refurbished second floor is more than a meeting area; it is a vibrant hub for networking and engagement. To reflect this, we wanted the art in this space to do more than just inject colour on the walls. Our rotating collections, curated through our art committee, are intentionally put together to reflect our values. Diversity was the focus of our most recent display of work by female artists and it was a real talking point for our people, visitors, and clients alike. It is great to be able to use art in a flexible, sustainable way that connects with who we are, stimulates discussion and introduces a greater variety of art and artists to our space.'**

*Jim Oulton, Partner, Chair of the London CSR Committee, and member of the art committee*

# Music in Offices & Corporate Businesses

Location: Online  
Duration: Ongoing

## Ambition

Through instrumental and singing lessons, choirs in the workplace and musical events, Music in Offices uses music to promote collaboration, creative thinking and better wellbeing in the workplace.

Singing and playing together promotes confidence, listening skills and creativity whilst increasing the collective wellbeing of any team and organisation.

## Project

During a difficult period of isolation in lockdown, music-making remained an important activity to punctuate people's time with a positive moment and to build togetherness.

Music in Offices' workplace choirs and instrumental lessons happily repositioned online and virtual events increased as people and companies valued the positive impact they were having on individuals and collectively.

## Outcome

Online concerts and events for pupils and choirs have been popular and surprisingly maintained the intimacy and informality that the live concerts are known for.

An additional benefit is how quickly they went global, allowing for friends, colleagues and family members to join in from around the world. New collaborations with workshop leaders in Turkey led to a singing workshop live from Istanbul.

The benefits of in-person sessions translate to those online, whilst reaching new audiences, raising money for local charities and building communities.



**'Now, more than ever, my lessons provide an escape and time to focus on something totally removed from the ongoing worries and concerns of day-to-day life. Additionally, these lessons help to support talented musicians who will have seen a reduction in their income owing to the lockdown.'**

*Charlotte Youngs, Senior Solicitor, Macfarlanes*

# Play to Innovate® Yesim Kunter & University of Warwick, Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG)

Location: Warwick  
Duration: Since 2013

## Ambition

Play to Innovate's approach is to encourage participants to 'think like a pre-schooler': to question, explore and re-create meanings. It has been used to understand behaviours, generate visions and leverage creative thinking, as well as develop creative skills.

## Project

Play to Innovate® has been collaborating with WMG since 2013. WMG's Masters module on Service Design Delivery's participants have strong engineering backgrounds, knowledge and skills.

It was identified, however, that they need new ways of thinking and being challenged. As such, Play Workshops have become a daily activity aimed at expanding the

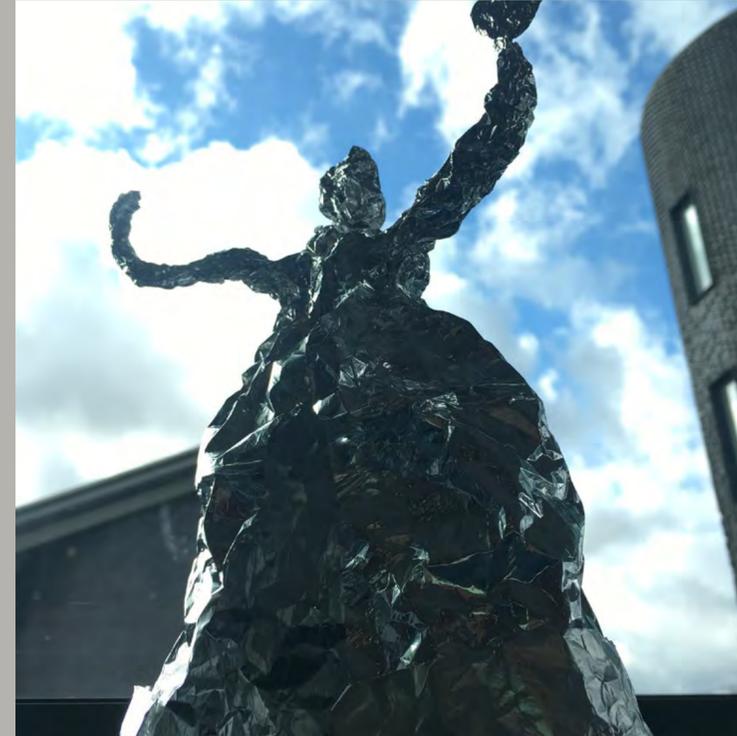
students' imagination, creativity and flexible thinking.

## Outcome

Play Workshops are a safe space where the participants feel welcome to collaborate with an open mind. They are offered structure, tools and guidance to be imaginative, exploratory, adaptable and intuitively creative.

Through the activity, participants enhance communication, empathy and observational skills. Students have gained confidence in their creativity, are less risk-averse and more able to push their limits in applying new business ideas.

Through training WMG MSc Service Management and Design Director, Mairi Macintyre, to deliver Play Workshops, these methods have been taken beyond WMG into other sectors and locations internationally; namely Hong Kong and Thailand.



**'This was first time we ran the Play workshop before the digital innovation workshop. I was concerned that the transition from relaxed, free-flowing play to more formal, structured, process-driven activity might have been an issue for the students. However, I was very pleasantly surprised to see that not only did the students jump straight into the activity with no delay, but the resulting business ideas were some of the best I have ever seen as part of this exercise. I asked the students if they felt the play session had been a help or hindrance, and they said that they felt being taken out of their comfort zone and encouraged to think without limits had aided their creativity and given them the confidence to suggest ideas they might not have considered as viable business ideas otherwise.'**

*David Reynolds, Research Associate at WMG, University of Warwick, 2017*

# 3 Inter-sectoral collaboration

Collaborations that are set up specifically to enable knowledge exchange and skill-sharing between organisations from different sectors or partnerships between creative and commercial departments within the same business, for mutual benefit.

# Guildhall School of Music & Drama & Eversheds Sutherland

Location: London  
Duration: Ongoing

## Ambition

In 2017, Eversheds Sutherland, a global law firm, launched three corporate partnerships with cultural organisations based in London, one of which was with Guildhall School of Music & Drama. All partnerships were aimed to ensure broad client and staff engagement, shared exploration of key topics and alignment of organisational values.

## Project

The law firm was looking for a cultural partner to share a passion for innovation and contemporary thinking.

The corporate partnership entails client / staff engagement, financial and pro-bono support and the opportunity to discuss areas of shared interest, such as diversity and inclusion, sustaining high performance and social mobility.

## Outcome

Through the partnership, both the School and Eversheds Sutherland have built mutually beneficial relationships centred on knowledge exchange between practitioners at the very top of their respective fields. As well as regular opportunities for client and staff entertaining, there has also been opportunities for high-level volunteering including the School's Creative Entrepreneurs network.

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**'Our partnership with Guildhall School is based on a shared passion for seeing world-class talent fulfil its potential. The School brings cognitive diversity to our thinking on key issues such as diversity and inclusion, social mobility and sustainable high performance, and as an organisation we are deeply enriched as a result.'**

*Matthew Allen, London Senior Office Partner,  
Eversheds Sutherland*



Guildhall School of Music & Drama: A Midsummer Night's Dream

# Bank of America & Create London

Location: London  
Duration: Ongoing

## Ambition

Bank of America believes in the power of the arts to help economies thrive, educate and enrich societies, and create greater cultural understanding.

The company has a steadfast programme of support for cultural institutions. Including exhibition sponsorship, art conservation, loan of its art collection, and education programmes designed to reach a truly diverse audience.

In a multitude of ways, Bank of America supports visual and performing arts organisations worldwide working to anchor communities and create jobs.

## Project

In partnership with Create London – an arts organisation that develops sustainable, long term projects that engage with local communities in east London – Bank of America supported the development of a ceramic sculpture studio in Hoxton.

It provides free assisted residencies for artists and training for young Londoners. Offering both financial support as well as

transferring professional skills, Bank of America and Create London were eager to ensure a long-lasting impact through the partnership.

## Outcome

Young people in east London were trained and employed at the ceramic studio, providing experience in both making and setting up a small enterprise: Hoxton Gardenware. The studio's first gardenware range sold out due to popular demand. Bank of America employees volunteered their time and their expertise, giving employees a sense of pride in their work and in their company. Meanwhile enabling them to have a direct impact on the collaborative project.

**'We have worked with Bank of America for ten years. This long-term partnership has seen the realisation of some of our organisation's most ambitious artist-led projects and opportunities for thousands of east London residents. These have included the first public commission by the 2015 Turner Prize winners Assemble, the development of a community drinks enterprise led by the artist Kathrin Böhm and a mass-participation project, Dominoes, by Station House Opera that has now travelled to cities across the UK and internationally.'**

*Hadrian Garrard, Director of Create London*



Hoxton Gardenware at Troy Town Pottery

# Linklaters PLC & Employees

Location: London

Duration: 2020

## Ambition

Catherine Shearn is the Curator of Linklaters art collection, housed mainly in their Silk Street headquarters. The art collection aims not only to fill the walls and provide a culturally interesting environment, but also to stimulate creative thinking and engagement in the viewer.

## Project

With the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting need to work from home, the usual physical art collection was no longer able to be experienced by the staff.

Catherine didn't want the interest and creative stimulation provided by the collection to disappear over lockdown, so she encouraged staff to send in examples of artworks they had created at home.

These were published on the internal Linklaters site, where staff members were able to enjoy each other's artwork and engage in discussion about them.

## Outcome

An impressive range of artworks, from painting to embroidery, were sent in, revealing an enormous amount of creativity within the Linklaters workforce.

Staff became intrigued by the artists, and a positive and mutually encouraging sense of community emerged within the network.

Even remotely, staff can be stimulated and engaged creatively, positively affecting their work, their wellbeing, and their communal spirit.

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**'I started painting for the first time in about 20 odd years in November last year during lockdown for a number of reasons, mainly because my mental health was suffering and I find that painting is a great way to get some feelings and emotions out from my head and turn them into something beautiful on canvas instead.'**

**I have found that being creative in whatever form is tremendously therapeutic and has a cathartic effect, I absolutely love looking back at something I've created, knowing that it is something unique to you, it holds special meaning and beauty and it should last forever, this makes me feel proud, and gives me a great confidence boost in these tough times.'**

*Lewis Bishop, Reprographics Supervisor, Linklaters*



*Good Night Out - 3am* by Lewis Bishop [Format: Acrylic on canvas, 42 x 60cm]

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# Credits

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We thank the following people for their contributions to the development of this report.

## Commissioned by

- Culture Mile
- Guildhall School of Music & Drama

## Creativity in Business Working Group

A Culture Mile collaboration including representatives from:

- Culture Mile
- Guildhall School of Music & Drama
- Barbican Centre
- Museum of London
- Corporation of London
- Linklaters
- Play to Innovate: Yesim Kunter
- ARTIQ

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- Bank of America
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- Culture Mile
- DLA Piper
- Guildhall School of Music & Drama
- Linklaters PLC
- Music in Offices
- Play to Innovate: Yesim Kunter

## Further Contributors

With thanks to the many stakeholders who confidentially participated in surveys and interviews with Barker Langham, across the corporate and creative sectors.

## Quotes

Quotes without attribution are from anonymous stakeholders consulted during research for this report.

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## Further Culture Mile Publications

- Culture and Commerce Taskforce: Fuelling Creative Renewal
- Creative Enterprise and Innovation Report

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# Fast facts

## A4 print-out

# Creativity: The Commercial Superpower

## Fast facts

**Creativity is integral to tackling the broad range of challenges that businesses face, whilst opening up new possibilities. By improving staff wellbeing, enhancing workplace culture, sparking innovation, increasing productivity and attracting both employee talent and new clients, creativity can help future-proof organisations.**

### The Benefits of Creativity

Corporate businesses can use cross-sector collaboration with the creative and cultural sectors to unlock creativity and exchange skills. Benefits include improved wellbeing, identity, innovation, financial return and transformation.

Within Culture Mile, organisations are already harnessing the benefits. To find out more, visit [www.culturemile.london](http://www.culturemile.london), or contact [cmcreativity@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:cmcreativity@cityoflondon.gov.uk).



	 Financial return	 Wellbeing	 Identity	 Innovation	 Transformation
<b>Challenge</b>	<b>13%</b> Only 13% of workers feel highly engaged in their job and productivity in the UK workforce is in decline.	<b>61%</b> 61% of people among the UK workforce have experienced a mental health issue over their career due to work or where work was a related factor.	<b>84%</b> 84% of job seekers say the reputation of a company is important when applying for a job.	<b>84%</b> 84% of executives believe future success and sustainability is highly dependent on innovation.	<b>1,500</b> In a study of 1,500 global CEOs, IBM found that 'chief executives believe that successfully navigating an increasingly complex world will require creativity.'
<b>Creativity as a solution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A study by McKinsey has shown that companies who place greater emphasis on creativity perform better financially: 'creativity is strongly correlated with superior business performance.'</li> <li>Art in the workplace specifically can influence productivity among employees, with a 17% increase.</li> <li>The World's Most Attractive Employers list identifies a strong brand can be enhanced through creative activity; this can also lead to a 28% increase in staff retention.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arts interventions and creative art therapies have been shown to reduce stress in employees by 81%.</li> <li>In a study by Cass Business School, 80% felt that art in the workplace improved their sense of wellbeing.</li> <li>Participatory art and art therapy 'addresses [burnout] by engaging the creative process to re-energize people while identifying commonalities and empathy with co-workers.'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focusing on culture and creativity in particular can lead to a 'creative dividend': businesses that integrate creativity in workplace culture are more attractive to talent. (McKinsey)</li> <li>69% of companies that cultivate creativity in the workplace reported winning awards and recognition as a 'best place to work' - as opposed to 27% of companies surveyed who did not embed creative practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groups with even a minimum of training in creative principles and tools generated 350% as many ideas as their untrained counterparts, and the ideas were 415% more original.</li> <li>Over 400 of America's Fortune 500 companies use artistic skills, processes and experiences to foster creative thinking and innovation processes.</li> <li>'Creativity is a mechanism to being innovative.'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The World Economic Forum identified creativity as one of the three top skills for employees from 2020.</li> <li>New attitudes and behaviours will be needed by individuals and businesses founded on flexibility, resilience, collaboration, entrepreneurship, and creativity. (The Future of Work: Jobs and Skills in 2030, UKCES.)</li> </ul>

