

Signature pedagogy in entrepreneurship education for the creative industries and cultural sectors: a case study.

CHARLES, S. and NICOLL, H.

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Signature Pedagogy in Entrepreneurship Education for the Creative Industries and Cultural Sectors – A Case Study

Sally Charles¹ and Hilary Nicoll²

Introduction and context

In our contribution to this special issue theme of Curriculum and Pedagogy in Creative Higher Education (CHE) we reflect upon our development and delivery of a Creative Entrepreneurship course since 2019. Our aim is not to contribute to the long running Art School debate around whether commercial aspects of cultural production should be addressed in the syllabus, these familiar tensions are addressed elsewhere (Beckman, 2007; Bridgstock, 2019). In deciding to develop our Creative Entrepreneurship course we have taken the next step and our aim here is to explore the question of pedagogy and how entrepreneurial education (EE) should be adapted to best meet the needs of art school and creative industries students.

In 2018, Robert Gordon University (RGU), in Aberdeen, established a new team: the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Group (EIG), and brought an external Arts Festival team, Look Again, into Gray's School of Art (Gray's), part of the University. These actions highlighted the importance of Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Creativity and Creative Practice at the university. EIG were established as a small stand-alone unit, rather than being part of the business school, to support a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship across all schools. This led to discussions about what innovation and entrepreneurship meant to the various schools and one of these conversations, with the Look Again team, turned into the development of the Creative Entrepreneurship short-course which is the subject of this paper. The Look Again team had just completed research (Cultivate, 2018) into the needs of small creative businesses in the region as part of a wider creative sector development programme, and the survey and other qualitative conversations that they had conducted told them that those businesses were keen for business training but felt that what was available didn't meet their needs which required a more bespoke approach. Look Again and EIG explored what 'bespoke' meant in this context, and resolved to address the gaps in business support that were problematic for creative businesses.

¹ Sally Charles is Innovation Learning Manager with the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Group (EIG) at Robert Gordon University (RGU), Aberdeen, Scotland. Before joining the University in 2016 she worked in several sectors and ran her own creative business for eight years bringing coal-face experience and empathy to her work with early-stage entrepreneurs. Her research interests lie in Entrepreneurship Education Pedagogy, particularly for 'non-business' disciplines.

² Hilary Nicoll is a Senior Lecturer at Gray's School of Art, RGU, and Co-Director of Look Again, a unit within the school that supports and promotes the creative sector through exhibitions, events and learning programmes. She has a particular interest in organisational and creative sector development and support strategies for creative practitioners. Prior to joining Academia, she worked for key institutions in the UK cultural and creative sector, including The Arts Council of England and Creative Scotland.

The issues, research questions, and methodology

Key issues arise from creative practitioner perceptions of business and business practices and result in a mismatch in culture and identity. We termed these the 'Gnarly Bits' both as a short-hand way to communicate the issues to our students, and as a way to encapsulate what Naudin and Agusita have identified as 'the tension between learning about entrepreneurship and critical questioning of its paradigm'. (2021, p. 628). From the outset we wanted to create space within the programme to explore the paradigm and allow students to question it.

By addressing these issues over the three years of development and delivery of the course, we have sought to create EE that is more aligned to creative sector contexts and identities and that has a better cultural fit for CCI learners.

The 'Gnarly Bits'

- i. **Culture:** the foregrounding of rapid growth and the goal of 'Unicorn' status (Lee, 2013) presents a divergence to the aspirations and values for many CCI students, raising the concern that "selling is selling out" and that quality, integrity, and individual work would have to be compromised.

Another aspect of the culture of Entrepreneurship is that it is predominantly male – in the UK the ratio of male to female founders is 10:4.6 (Rose, 2019) whereas the ratio on the Creative Entrepreneurship course has been 2.2:10. Whilst this is an aspect of some of the issues discussed in this paper, we have deliberately avoided deeper enquiry as it would distract from the main focus here and is well documented elsewhere.

- ii. **Identity:** The perception of divergent cultures leads to a rejection of the identity of 'business-person' or 'entrepreneur' and in turn a rejection of EE for CCI practitioners, who fear becoming an entrepreneur would either necessitate the adoption of an alien identity or lead to a gradual corruption of their established identity. Stereotypes of Entrepreneurs as self-centred and aggressively profit driven at the exclusion of other more social and value related concerns, cement the view. The diametrically opposed myth of the 'starving artist' provides a validating martyr for the cause.

The research questions

After three years of iterative design in pursuit of EE with greater cultural and identity alignment for CCI students and a more relevant pedagogic approach it was time to test our findings and assumptions and create a framework against which to analyse the results. We formulated our research questions:

RQ1 Were our perceptions about general Entrepreneurship Education (EE) valid?

RQ2 What were other CHE educators doing in the field of EE?

Methodology

For RQ1 and RQ2 we conducted a review of the research literature, our methodology for each is set out below. Our findings for RQ1 are set out in the section “RQ1 Literature Review and Findings” which provides a general overview of the literature regarding pedagogy in EE and features literature which addresses the issues that we encountered. The findings for RQ2 are included in the section “Creative Entrepreneurship course analysis with RQ2 References”.

RQ1 There is a significant body of research regarding EE: a Scopus search using “Entrepreneur* Education” elicited 4,747 results (11/9/22) with a timeline profile that shows a considerable increase in these publications over the past 20 years. Searches were based on the field [Article title, Abstract, Keywords] unless otherwise stated. To make the review most relevant and more manageable we created some sub-searches:

- i. **The latest research:** To gain the most up to date view of the literature we limited our search to publications from 2022 only (356 documents). To obtain the broadest view of EE we focused on systematic literature reviews (SLR) and bibliometric analysis, adding these as secondary search fields which reduced the result to 10 documents, of which three were most relevant: (Banha, Coelho and Flores, 2022; Deveci, 2022; Tiberius and Weyland, 2022).
- ii. **Themed research – ‘pedagogy’, ‘signature pedagogy’, ‘context’, ‘identity’, and ‘stereotype’**

To explore our particular areas of interest within EE, we added a series of secondary searches and where necessary took further action to refine our search, as shown in the table below.

Table 1: EE Research sub-categories investigated, results and citations

Term	No.	Limitation	No.	Citations
Pedagogy	261	combining the terms to create a single search “Pedagogy in Entrepreneur* Education” produced 5 documents of which 1 was selected	1	Hagg and Gabrielsson, 2020
Signature Pedagogy	4	One of the documents was a book by the same author as another of the documents, limited to 3 documents	3	Ramsgaard and Blenker, 2022 Peschl, Deng and Larson, 2021 Jones, 2019
Context	805	[Titles only] for the years 2020 – 2022 resulted in 17 from which one SLR was selected	1	Thomassen et al, 2020
Identity	107	[Titles only] resulted in 9 of which 3 selected	3	Donoso-González, Pedraza-Navarro and Palferro-Fernández, 2022 Frederiksen and Berglund, 2020 Liñán, Ceresia and Bernal, 2018
Stereotype	20	Of which 2 were selected	2	Loi et al, 2022 Raible and Williams-Middleton, 2021

RQ2 The diverse nature of the umbrella term CI leads to some difficulty in conducting a SLR: what terms to use and what should be included or excluded. Additionally, ‘creative’ is

frequently used in connection with ‘innovation’ and ‘entrepreneurship’ with no connection to CI. If one considers the UK Department of Culture Media & Sport (DCMS) definition of CI it includes 9 categories (DCMS, 2011) and the Scottish Government’s definition contains 16 categories (ScotGov). Another term frequently used is ‘Creative and Cultural Industries’ (CCI), UNESCO’s definition of CCI includes 11 categories of activity (UNESCO, 2015). Many are uncomfortable with the word “industries” and prefer ‘Creative and Cultural Sector’ (CCS), the sentiment of the European Union definition: “all sectors whose activities are based on cultural values, or other artistic individual or collective creative expression” (European Union) may feel right but doesn’t aid keyword searches. As our own experience and group of students are primarily from Fine Art and Design disciplines possibly ‘Arts Entrepreneurship Education’ provides a better category. In practice we have conducted searches based on all these categories and all have yielded some items of interest. Added to this our specific interest in ‘Pedagogy’ expanded the search. What we discovered was some key authors working in areas that aligned with our interest and therefore shed light on our desire to better understand what others in the field were doing: Emma Agusita, Ruth Bridgstock, Lauren England and Annette Naudin.

Background and course development

Before reviewing the case study and research this section provides some further background and course development details for additional context. In 2013 Aberdeen’s unsuccessful bid for City of Culture, reported to be ‘shallow’ and criticised for its lack of engagement with grass roots creatives in the city (BBC, 2013), created a re-grouping of interest in the CI and culture of the region. In 2014 an analysis of the CCI in Northeast Scotland (Ekos, 2014) was published and two reports and a conference outlined a new vision for a creative North (RGU, 2014a; RGU, 2014b). In 2015 RGU went on to establish the Look Again Festival of Art and Design, to challenge the predominantly negative narrative about Aberdeen and creativity and fill a gap identified in the roster of public cultural events in the city of Aberdeen (Williams, 2019). Encouraging the public to ‘be a tourist in your own city’, the festival featured work by local artists working alongside established names through new commissioned works in public space. Over the period of the five annual festivals that ran between 2015 and 2019 the Look Again team became aware of gaps in support for the creative business sector in the region. Supported by Creative Scotland, they extended their activities to introduce interventions to support small and micro creative businesses and conducted a series of consultations and a survey to identify sectoral needs, map existing support and identify gaps. Findings from the research (Cultivate, 2018) showed creative practitioners wanted tailor-made business support as they found the existing offers ill-fitted to their needs. Rather than creatives showing a lack of interest in business training the data cemented anecdotal accounts of creative graduates and practitioners having an appetite for the right offer but having poor experiences with existing business courses. Look Again then delivered a programme that included networking events, one-to-one business mentoring, and a programme of incubator talks, all tailored to support creative practitioners to build sustainable careers. Over this time the team built a strong identity in the city, and a reputation for supporting grass roots creative activity and emerging talent that extended beyond the region.

By 2018 Look Again, still a Robert Gordon University project, had become much more than an annual festival event and the team were invited to join Gray's School of Art as permanent staff. This facilitated a paradigm shift for the project and opened-up opportunities with the university, such as developing work with EIG.

Course development

Based on the Cultivate research, we adopted a Design Thinking approach to creating the bespoke solution that the sector sought. Look Again and EIG joined forces to co-create a pilot "Creative Accelerator Programme" that ran for 12 weeks in the summer of 2019 with ten creatives representing a range of disciplines and culminated in a show case of the creative work of the participants.

Crucially, we addressed the potential issues of culture and identity mismatch by branding the programme as a Look Again initiative from the outset, locating it firmly within the creative and cultural sector. Applicants were targeted through Look Again networks, mailing lists and social media creating a clear and relevant value-led identity. Both the Accelerator and the showcase exhibition were well received by participants, press and the wider creative networks.

In late 2019 an opportunity arose to validate a version of the programme as a 15-credit post-graduate short-course. Using the same marketing strategy ensured that the creative identity and perceived culture and values were retained, and the course was over-subscribed. In March 2020 the first cohort was ready to start. The Pandemic necessitated a swift pivot to online delivery which created the opportunity for a second 2020 cohort to open its intake Scotland-wide. In 2021 another two online cohorts ran with participants from across Scotland, taking overall participation to 100. In 2022 the easing of covid restrictions allowed a blended format; opening and closing with in-person sessions that were supported by weekly sessions online.

Addressing the 'Gnarly Bits'

Before the Creative Accelerator pilot the EIG team had run a general start up 'Accelerator' in the spring of 2019. Based on this experience and the Creative Accelerator we had confidence that tools such as the Business Model Canvas (BMC), Value Proposition Canvas (VPC), Lean Startup methodologies and Design Thinking were of significant transferrable value and could be used effectively as long as they were contextualised for a creative business audience. The Cultivate (2018) research and subsequent conversations had highlighted issues with business language and there was a consensus that attention needed to be paid to the introduction of types of business terminology and the business case studies used. Issues of business culture and identity had to be addressed up front. It was agreed that introducing aspects of personal as well as business development and encouraging a social model of learning would provide a better fit for the learning needs of the group. Allied to this would be the creation of a 'safe space' where like-minded individuals would feel comfortable to voice questions, discuss their goals, and support each other with constructive feedback. The next step was to prototype and

test. It was considered essential that we create activities and dedicate time so that these issues could be aired, discussed, and resolved.

Course structure

The course begins with an introduction to Look Again and the story of the development of the Creative Entrepreneurship programmes. This situates the work within art and design practice that is familiar to students and embeds it into a wider narrative about support for the creative sector across a range of cultural and creative initiatives. This provides sectoral contextualisation for creative practitioners. The 'Gnarly Issues' of quality, authenticity, selling and selling out are addressed and discussed in the first sessions, and case studies of businesses that retain creative credibility and authenticity are cited.

An overview of the Creative Industries is also presented, providing further critical context including the current Scottish Government Creative Industries policy statement (ScotGov, 2019). This references Elkington's triple bottom line (2018) and expands the narrative beyond purely economic impact to something of intrinsic social and cultural value.

Next we introduce a section called 'COMPASS', where we explore values and their impact on how business is done and what decisions are taken. The next section of the course: 'MAPS' takes its structure from the three lenses that can be applied to the BMC: 'Desirability', 'Feasibility' and 'Viability' as seen in figures 1a and 1b. We finish with a section on 'STORY' which unites personal identity, interactions with customers, brand identity, marketing and potentially pitching to investors or completing grant or funding applications. Cohorts in 2020 and 2021 were based on six full-day sessions (36 contact hours) as shown in figure 2. The session on Feasibility is illustrated with specific case studies from cultural organisations, reinforcing sectoral context and identity.

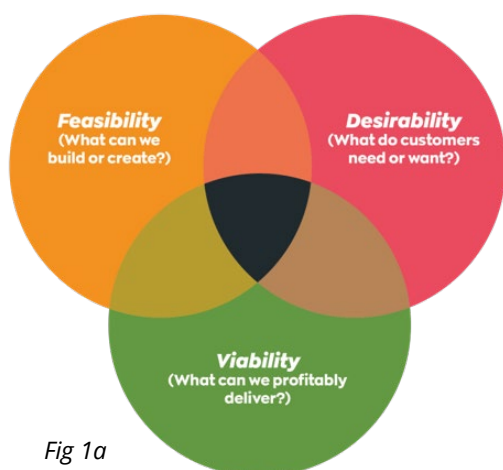


Fig 1a

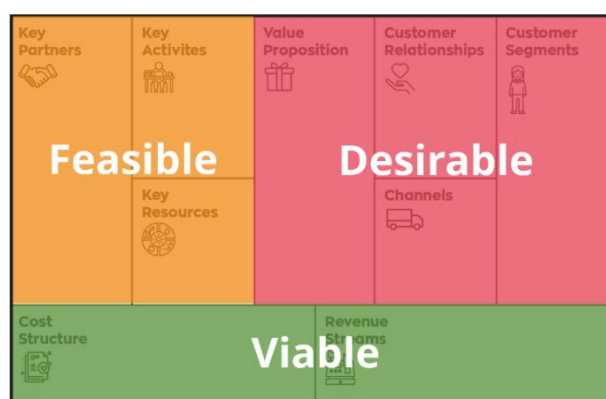


Fig 1b

Figure 1: The lenses of Desirability, Feasibility, Viability

Workshop 1	Introduction: Toolkit - COMPASS
Workshop 2	Context: 21st Century Creative Industries (discussion of the gnarly bits)
Workshop 3	Toolkit – MAPS: DESIRABILITY (customers)
	Customer Discovery Exercise
Workshop 4	Toolkit – MAPS: FEASIBILITY (business operation)
Workshop 5	Toolkit – MAPS: VIABILITY (taking an income)
Workshop 6	STORY: PITCHING (communicating your message)

Figure 2: RGU Creative Entrepreneurship short-course structure

RQ1 Literature Review and Findings

The latest research

The 2022 literature reviews and bibliometric analyses on the topic of EE provide a sense of the escalating interest in the topic although Tiberius and Weyland note their surprise at “the late emergency of EE” given the long history of trade. They also note that the research focuses on the outcomes of EE rather than its pedagogy which they state: “is still mainly a black box” (2022, p. 1). Their final point of interest to us is that they question ‘venture creation’ as the often-used metric for the outcome of EE and instead state that “entrepreneurship programmes should produce competent entrepreneurs” (2022, p. 11) making the analogy that engineering programmes are not measured on the machines that they create, but on their competency to create them.

Regarding competency, Banha, Coelho and Flores remind us of the European Competency Framework (EntreComp) and its use in supporting EE. They also assert “a proven correlation between EE and the promise of job creation and economic development” (2022, p. 5) and they note that the works analysed in their SLR “were unanimous in supporting the idea that entrepreneurship is fundamental to the progress and evolution of countries and their regions” (2022, p. 15). Their SLR looked at the nexus of EE and public policy making, and they quote the European Council as saying (in 2012) “the lack of EE remains a significant bottleneck to stimulating self-employment and entrepreneurship” (2022, p. 3).

One benefit of a review of SLR and bibliometric analyses is that as well as providing an overview and trends they can uncover papers that include variations on the key-words and therefore have not been found by the searches that we used: Deveci (2022) included an article by Clark, Cornes and Ferry (2020) that has provided some useful insight for us which is referenced in the section "Commonality with the 'Gnarly Bits'.

Themed research

- i. **Pedagogy and signature pedagogy:** Jones states that there seemed to be "no widely accepted and concise philosophy of enterprise/EE" (2019, p. 244) and set out what he offered as a "simple philosophy" (2019, p. 245). Ramsgaard and Blenker explore this further presenting the argument that for Shulman's premise for a signature pedagogy to be possible, Entrepreneurship would have to be considered as a standalone profession. They analyse four 'positions' in pursuit of a signature pedagogy highlighting what they see as problematic: "contemporary research on EE tends to see the field as decontextualized" (2022, p. 189). They perceive dilemmas in prioritising discipline and EE stating that "EE can become a contradiction to the professional knowledge base already present in education" (2022, p. 193). They propose a "position that reconstructs how signature pedagogy is contextualized" because "contextualization enables the educator(s) to establish relevance for the entrepreneurship students" (2022, p. 194) which they believe leads to deeper learning.

Peschl, Deng and Larson present EE as a pedagogy for the 21st century as an approach to skills development in uncertain times when the future of work necessitates a skillset that is agile, flexible, and equips individuals with meta-skills to self-manage their development and value to employers, what has become known as 'employability'. They set out a signature pedagogy for EE with useful tools like "flipped classroom and experiential learning activities" (2021, p. 9) and "seven teachable entrepreneurial skills" (2021, p. 11) but like Ramsgaard and Blenker we view EE without the contextualization of discipline problematic in establishing a signature pedagogy.

Hagg and Gabrielsson SLR focusing on pedagogy in EE provides a useful overview and catalogue of research that tracks the developing interests in the field. They identify a move to "more constructivist perspectives" (2020, p. 829) which chimes with our own philosophy and practice. They also present EE as a personal development tool for enabling individuals to "cope more readily with non-routine tasks and continuous change" (2020, p. 842). They call for more research into the "what" of EE when it comes to programme design and implementation" (2020, p.844) which we hope this paper contributes to. They also highlight the tensions between "a narrow start-up view and a broad enterprising view" (2020, p. 845) which underpin educational differences in approach to the subject and practice of EE.

- ii. **Context in EE:** Thomassen et al note "there is limited focus on context" and "less agreement on what constitutes context" (2020, p. 864). In their analysis they identified 20 different contexts that are considered in the research. One of these is 'discipline' and only four of the papers they reviewed looked at this. They note that context was

often considered to be imposed, “the setting” in which EE takes place rather than “something that can be designed” (2020, p. 868). We look at this again when considering culture.

- iii. **Identity and stereotypes:** The searches on EE + Identity and EE + Stereotype produced a wealth of material that we are unable to explore here fully and much that presents a wider picture that affects EE in non-business disciplines across HE and clearly deserves further investigation. From the documents identified we selected five which covered aspects that aligned with our interest and were able to provide a perspective from research literature, these are covered in the next section.

Commonality with the ‘Gnarly Bits’

- i. **Culture:** Clarke, Cornes and Ferry looked at making EE “more relevant to non-business students” and how teaching practice should be “tailored to ensure relevance to the students who were from a variety of subject disciplines” (2020, p. 581). They cite a study where “numerous barriers to successful entrepreneurship in universities were identified, including: the prevailing culture and expectation of entrepreneurship; the negative image of entrepreneurs in society” (2020, p. 583). They focus on the need to engage students and the place of motivation, interaction and learning-by-doing in EE. They talk about science students seeking certainty and rules through their studies which is at odds with the uncertainty and perceived risk taking of EE. Like our CCI students there is tension between their subject and EE that without context creates a distancing from engagement with the learning and a dislocation from identifying as an entrepreneur.
- ii. **Identity and stereotypes:** “stereotypes are strong and limiting ... involving identity work in EE can expose the limitations that stereotypes impose on students aspiring to be entrepreneurs” (Raible and Williams-Middleton, 2021, p. 293). They suggest ‘identity work’, ‘identity management’ and ‘narrative as a pedagogical tool’ as solutions which allow learners to explore future possible identities, assimilation, and pathways to a chosen identity. They position social construction as an EE identity tool: “The community of students in a like-minded learning space becomes an ‘identity workspace’ in which to build a legitimized self-narrative through practiced re-storying” (2021, p. 296).

Liñán, Ceresia and Bernal (2018) explore the concept of self-identity in the role of self-selection for participation in EE which has serious implications if an increasing role of EE is to develop a 21st century employability skill-set rather than the more limited venture creation goal. Frederiksen and Berglund explore identity work in EE and offer three strategies for addressing and developing entrepreneurial identity in learners. They point out the pitfalls of “the teacher’s ambition to stimulate students to adopt a particular form of authentic entrepreneurial self” (2020, p. 287) something we have been particularly aware of in our encouragement of non-traditional entrepreneurial identity formation, that we might just encourage the creation of new tropes.

Papers from 2022 (Loi et al; Donoso-González, Pedraza-Navarro and Palferro-Fernández) present interesting views of the future of Entrepreneurship (and implicitly EE) that we return to in our conclusions.

Creative Entrepreneurship course analysis with RQ2 references

Our perception was that EE had evolved a signature pedagogy that is reliant on a narrow definition of 'the entrepreneur' that exists without context. This results in CCI students feeling excluded or suffering from Imposter Syndrome. Our second research enquiry was to examine what other educators in our field were doing and analyse how our own experience was mirrored (or not) in the literature.

Culture

In the previous section we looked at the culture of EE, arising from the history and purpose of its development to further a capitalist commercial system. Here we confront one of our biggest 'gnarly' issues, referenced above, Naudin and Agusita's 'tension' (2021). There is a need to acknowledge the prevailing EE paradigm and to provide space within contextualised EE learning programmes to critique it, thus allowing learners to develop their own critical understanding of it. More recent research has begun to acknowledge this, identifying a continuum of diverse entrepreneurial types and acknowledging that entrepreneurship takes many shapes and forms.

Beckman refers to "transitioning entrepreneurship", acknowledging the need for sustainable self-employment models, rather than "new venture creation" (2007, p. 91). Bridgstock calls it "career development learning", (2019, p. 119) and Naudin and Agusita note that these individuals are "effectively 'pushed' into entrepreneurship ... as a vehicle for continuing their creative practice" (2021, p. 630).

Dealing with this tension at the outset was imperative for the students to be able to understand what they were learning as being sensitive to context, relevant and authentic. The 'COMPASS' explores values, purpose, and aspirations through individually developed worksheets which are then discussed with peers. It also creates a platform for peer bonding as well as self-exploration and development. We invite the students to use this Compass to navigate the 'MAPS' component of the toolkit to create a Value Proposition and Business Model that align with their values, purpose, and aspirations. Approaching the 'MAPS' with the aid of a personal compass and in discussion with like-minded peers a process of legitimisation takes place, which is important for identity creation (Raible and Williams-Middleton, 2021).

This legitimacy for having different aspirations and doing business differently begins to address another aspect of the culture of EE which has created tensions for CCI students: the purpose of business is to sell – but is 'selling is selling out'? Creatives who have studied to develop a graduate level practice, are not motivated to 'pivot' to a mass market, test their product and if it fails, to re-design it; the standard accelerator route to success. They want to find a way to support the practice they have developed over this time. Conventional EE tells the student that market forces define the product or service. The pursuit of mass markets

requires a large customer base: if your Total Addressable Market (TAM) is not big enough then conventional EE indicates that the concept should be reconsidered. Mass-production is entirely at odds with our experience of the aspirations of CCI students who are more likely to be driven by ideas of quality, integrity, and authenticity and who are focused on exploring unique expression or producing small batches. CCI practitioners do not want to pursue mass markets and compromise quality in the pursuit of profit, which is in direct contradiction to the values and ethos shaped during their prior education.

Removing the expectation of rapid growth removes the requirement for mass-markets and allows a different perspective when utilising the Toolkit. The purpose of the VPC is to bring together the right product/service with the right customer. This need not be confined to a mass market setting and is equally applicable to niche markets. Fifty years ago, business was more restricted by geography and it would have been difficult to serve dispersed niche markets but the internet has changed that and niche-communities now flourish. The RSA, as part of their “The Power of Small” research (Dellot, 2014), highlight that online-marketplaces are showing not only new ways of buying and selling, but also how these activities can create new experiences for buyers, allowing extremely niche products to find a market, and supporting lean business models that work ‘on demand’. The external environment has changed such that business models can be designed that allow Creative Entrepreneurs to offer high-quality low-volume products and services to customers that are happy to pay a premium price; the definition of ‘Product Market Fit’. The relationship between the business and the customer is direct and personal resulting in a collaborative co-creation approach that helps to retain the Creative’s sense of agency in the process. Indeed, the tendency of sellers on online-marketplaces to start up for creative reasons, offer customised and niche products, have deep interactions with customers and provide subtle peer support may provide new templates for the wider world of business. There are additional environmental and societal benefits to such business models which produce less waste and promote greater mental wellbeing. The RSA report goes on to recommend that government pay attention to this sector, find ways to measure and value it, and that business support should be recalibrated to encourage these new models which could offer a new perspective on what society considers the very *purpose* of running a business to be.

Providing tools that feel relevant to CCI students can support them to navigate the concerns about compromising their work, personal values, and aspirations that the need to generate an income often creates. As a result of the concern over ‘selling out’ they are often highly intimidated by the concept of selling, usually eliding it with ‘hard selling’. Presenting the ‘Value Proposition’ as a coming together of minds in an exchange of value presents to them a more achievable and comfortable scenario.

They also need to understand that serving small niche markets may affect cashflow and necessitate cashflow management techniques such as creating multiple income streams that complement each other to provide security or supporting income from other sources. England discusses the challenges of “balancing their desire for self-expression and creative authenticity with the production of more commercial work and being economically sustainable” (2020, p. 8). In a subsequent paper England puts forward five strategies to help CCI businesses to plan for this (2022). Based on this work we have created two visualisations to incorporate as worksheets in the Toolkit, these can be seen in Figure 3.

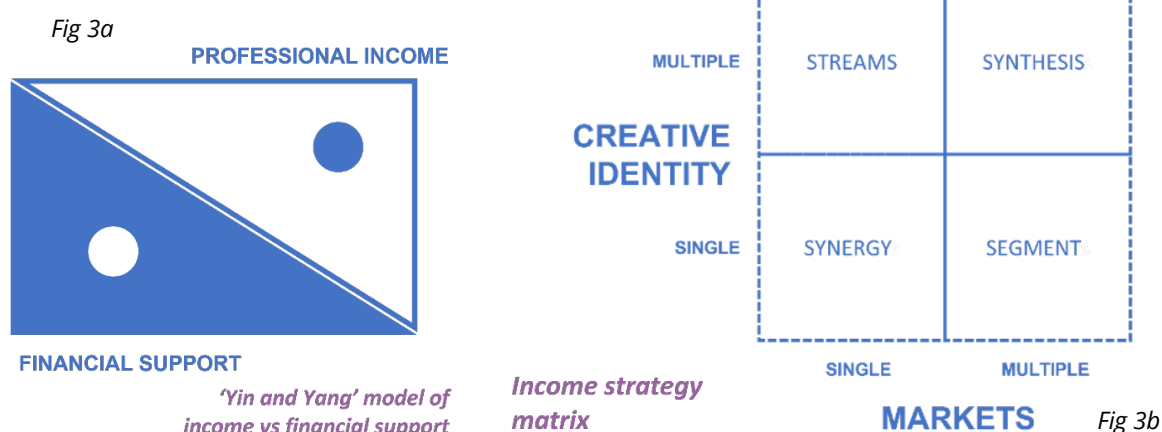


Figure 3: Visualisations of England's five income strategies for CCI businesses

Identity

Stereotypes allow us to identify with, or disassociate from, groups of people. They help us to identify our 'tribe' and fit in where we feel comfortable. In the context of EE this has led many CCI practitioners to disassociate with what is on offer because of their perceptions of entrepreneurs. "Traditional stereotypes, such as being money-motivated, self-interested, and egotistical still exist" (Devonshire, 2020). These images and the suited stereotype of the business-person are at odds with the self-perceptions of CCI students and graduates. This expresses itself in a variety of ways: they may simply not see the training as being for them or avoid it. They may feel that they must change to take on the persona of an entrepreneur or they may feel like imposters and display reduced confidence, confusion, and inauthentic behaviour. In growth motivated EE settings, the choice of 'lifestyle business' or 'salary replacement' can either exclude them from participation or be met with pejorative attitudes (Fishkin 2020) adding to their feelings that they are not a 'proper entrepreneur'.

As well as the entrepreneur stereotype the stereotypes of the 'Starving Artist' (Lafrentz, 2020) and the "myths of bohemian and artistic lifestyles" (Naudin and Agusita, 2021, p. 633) contribute to a sense of identity that is at odds with that of the entrepreneur or business-person. Another perception that we encounter: that creatives don't understand finances or figures in general, potentially stems from these stereotypes. This can create barriers to learning as both students and teachers may subconsciously accept these as the reasons behind difficulty with concepts rather than the material not being presented in a relevant and relatable way. It was interesting to note that articles seeking to dispel these negative stereotypes of artists and entrepreneurs were both published in November 2020.

A sense of legitimacy and inclusivity is required to support CCI practitioners to take up and engage with training that will support them in their entrepreneurial ambitions. Enabling them to see that they can be both entrepreneurs and CCI practitioners without compromise is essential to them developing the confidence that they need to establish their business practices and utilise business tools in a way that is authentic for them. During the course we invite a range of guest speakers to present their experience and provide role models. They may talk about their businesses as 'practices', and question the capitalist paradigm, whilst

others present the view that there is a customer for the work, rather than a need to change the work for the customer. Confidence building through addressing issues with identity has been key to the philosophy and purpose of the course and rewarded by feedback from learners such as:

“a real wow moment of ‘NO! We don't have to wear that suit we can just be ourselves’. Everybody's creative business has to take a form that it needs to take, nobody can dictate that form except yourself.”

Conclusions

Our aim at the outset of developing the course was to empower CCI learners by locating it within a context that foregrounds their values, removes barriers and challenges stereotypes. The legitimising of mindsets, choices and aspirations were all key to the instigation of the Creative Entrepreneurship course and have developed in strength from cohort to cohort. The creation of a broader and more contextualised and inclusive model and vision of EE was at the very root of the need that drove the creation of the course and the development of its philosophy and delivery. The creation of an interdisciplinary team that has united to design, deliver, develop, and champion the course has led to an ongoing dialogue in search of consensus that has contributed to the dynamic nature of the course as well as developing the views of those involved. Creativity and innovation are key drivers for all in the collaboration and ensuring that there is space and prompts for these within the course is a key concern of all involved.

Culture relies on the past: “the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society” (Oxford Language). Culture reflects what has become established. With profit as the goal of capitalist business it is inevitable that the culture of EE is one where the ideas, customs and behaviours are in pursuit of the optimisation of profit at scale. We have seen that small changes in approach to the pedagogy and language (culture) encourages Creative Entrepreneurs to find their own business model. What has emerged is a more robust, agile, and collaborative model that better serves the needs of the creative practitioner. Naudin and Agusita refer to their reimagining of EE pedagogy for CCI as a “remix” and express a concern that it might be “perceived as reinventing the wheel, which may not be welcome” (2021). Banha, Coelho and Flores also call for a “critical ‘reboot’” and call on policy makers to “rethink the old paradigm” saying that “to include entrepreneurship values and openness to innovation in the educative offering requires new models, frameworks, and paradigms” (2022, p. 4).

Our view is that we live in a world that is increasingly recognising the need for creativity and is beginning to understand that diversity and inclusivity are required to encourage those who have previously been excluded or suppressed, therefore new approaches to pedagogy are necessary. The cultures of entrepreneurship, business and commerce are changing and therefore the culture (pedagogy) of EE must follow suit. Rather than reinventing the wheel we look at an expanded definition of what it is, where it can be situated and what we need it to do. Given legitimacy and time the new business models and practices that emerge may offer new models for other businesses and the culture will evolve.

Indications in the most recent literature are that even in mainstream discussions of EE new approaches and pedagogies are being sought: “What would EE look like in a cultural context where policies and culture promote simple living and contentment and seek to constrain individual wealth accumulation? ... The economic advancement process is considered to lead to happiness when guided by moral and ethical values” (Loi et al, 2022, p. 125). Change is afoot and “Entrepreneurship is a concept that is becoming dynamic, plural and open, gradually allowing it to transcend the boundaries of the economic context and open up a new and valuable range of possibilities linked to it” (Donoso-González, Pedraza-Navarro and Palferro-Fernández, 2022, p. 2). With a unanimous demand for EE as an approach to 21st Century HE and a vast array of contexts and disciplines to be satisfied maybe the CCI can take a lead in demonstrating effective new pedagogies that tackle the barriers of stereotyped identities and unwelcoming cultures.

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