

Understanding the role of Gender in the Creative Workforce: A study of artists

QUESTIONS/AIMS

1. The development and impact of *gendered creativities* in the creative industries: assessing the effects of gender relations on the aspirational careers and mobility of artists at national, regional and urban levels of the creative labour market
2. Understanding the creative workforce: an international study of artists and the role of diverse *creative human capitals* (particularly aspirational creativity) in the Creative Industries and creative labour market in 3 cultural industries
3. With a focus on career decisions and choices at transitions between secondary schooling and HE, HE and employment, what is the effect of gender on the creative workforce (and challenges experienced by)d

Girls are taking more arts and humanities subjects than boys, and performing better when they do, but this gender bias in schools is reversed when we see the employment trajectories of those working in the creative economy. Recent DCMS data shows that the creative economy contributes around 9% of GDP in the UK annually, but just 35% of jobs are filled by women. In order to maximise the potential of an expanding (and non-automatable) workforce in the creative economy, NESTA recently published a call for 1 million new creative jobs by 2030. However little research exists on why and *how young women are less represented in this sector overall, and are almost invisible in some fields* (e.g. technology, production, performance). The floor becomes increasingly sticky for young women entering certain creative fields somewhere along the line, and we need to understand why.

Empirical research in the UK has demonstrated *clear gender differences across music education, training and employment* (Green, Armstrong, Burnard, Dylan Smith), findings that have been replicated around the world (Bennett, Pliego, Ruthmann, Balfour). However, this has not extended to a full exploration of how gender functions in the opportunities for individuals to develop and progress within and between the institutional structures of education, training and industry. We know there are clear gender gaps, but we have not worked with representatives from these institutions to further explore these findings, or make the required changes.

This research seeks to *explore how gender is perceived, valued and experienced by individuals, educators and employers operating in distinct fields of the creative economy*. The study will focus initially on the analysis of existing data, the development of a national survey and the creative arts/media subject choice and career paths into creative workforce working towards understanding the role and function of gendered identities in broader education, training and industry.

In order to activate change in the perceptions and practices of certain fields it is necessary to explore how and why people become trapped in limited

versions of themselves or the imposed limitations of others based on gendered creativities (i.e. the various ways people engage in creative practices and enact their creative identities). The research will explore the individual, institutional and global structures that determine gendered participation in the creative economy and will be conducted with full involvement of applied settings to create real world impact throughout.

- issues of 'Gender blindness'

- how gender differences influence the experiences of students transitioning from school to HE and HE into creative workforce employment