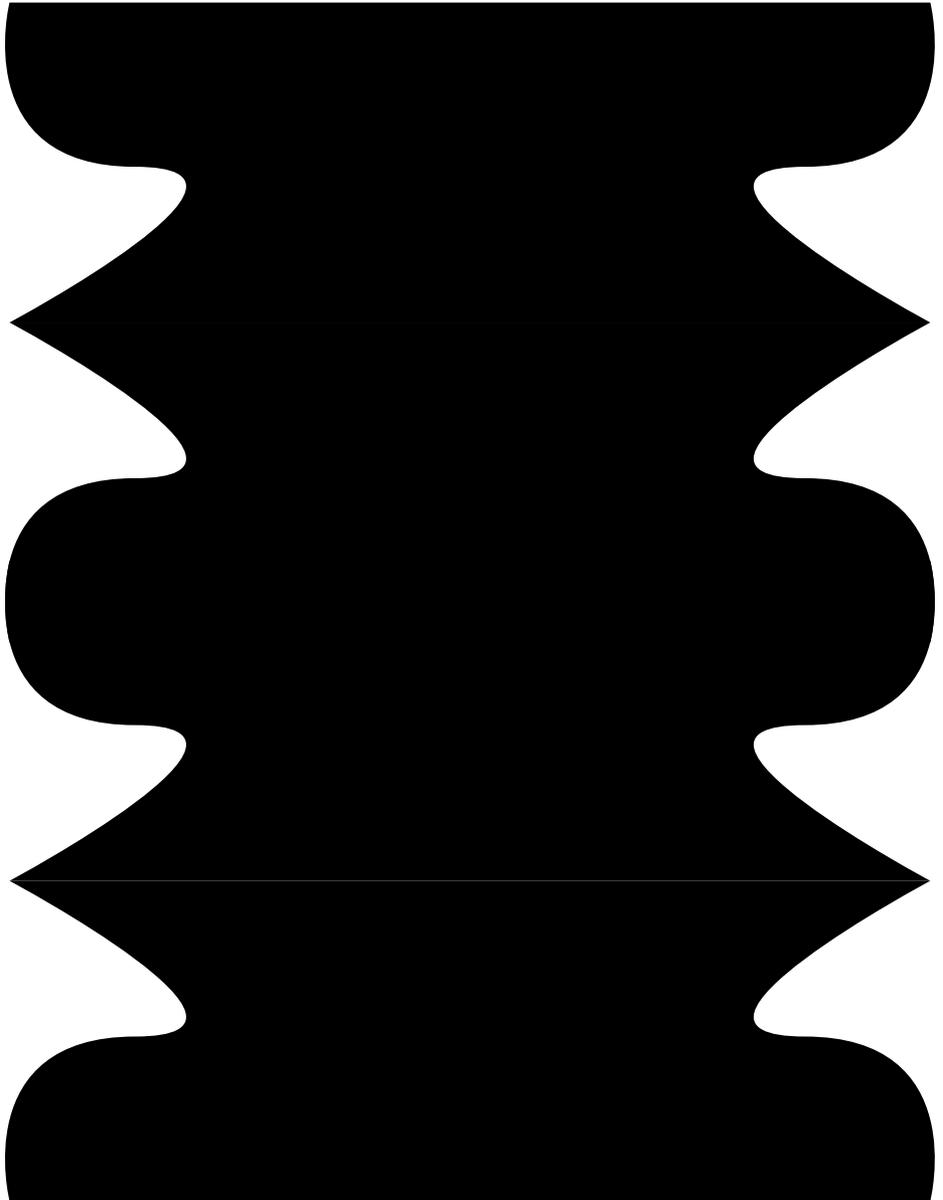


# LECTURE IN PROGRESS



# THE STATE OF WORK

Insight Report: Issues Affecting Creative Careers in 2019

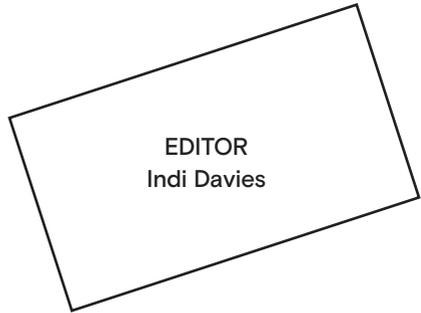
Lecture in Progress

**The State of Work**  
**Issues Affecting Creative**  
**Careers in 2019**

Insight Report



**DIRECTORS**  
Will Hudson and Alex Bec



**EDITOR**  
Indi Davies



**DEPUTY EDITOR**  
Marianne Hanoun



**PROJECT AND  
MARKETING MANAGER**  
Anna Trotter



**WRITER AND  
RESEARCHER**  
Laura Snoad

# ISSUES AFFECTING CREATIVE CAREERS IN 2019

At Lecture in Progress we believe in inspiring and informing the next generation of talent by providing insight into the creative industries and advice on how to get there.

Every six months we publish an insight report that aims to shed light on some of the big issues affecting students, early-years creatives and their employers. For this, our fourth report, we've decided to take a closer look at a number of factors

influencing creative careers, pulling out the ideas, campaigns and policy changes you need to know about. Inside you'll find statistics that help unpack the current state of the industries, an overview of the top creative-careers news stories from the past few months, as well as interviews with a range of experts on some of the most important issues, exploring how they are impacting emerging creatives.

## ABOUT LECTURE IN PROGRESS

...

Lecture in Progress aims to help emerging talent understand the world of creative work, find opportunities and grow fulfilling careers. By focusing on the people, projects and places making the creative industries thrive, we provide insight into how work unfolds, where it happens and the breadth of roles that exist.

Alongside original editorial, our Feed, Watch and Directory keep you in the loop on important conversations from around the web, with a curation of

articles, videos and podcasts.

Initially covering design, illustration, photography, film, animation and advertising across the UK, we intend to expand and develop our coverage as we grow.

Lecture in Progress is part of The HudsonBec Group, alongside It's Nice That, Anyways Creative and If You Could Jobs. It is made possible with the support of brand partners including the Paul Smith Foundation, G . F Smith, Sky Creative Agency, Google, Colophon Foundry, giffgaff and Hoefler&Co.

# INTRODUCTION

In our second investigation into the landscape of creative careers, we've gone deep into the most important news stories of the past year, to bring you some of the vital conversations happening in the world of work. These are grouped into three main themes: Money (focusing on late payments and how they affect UK creatives, along with the state of the gender pay gap); Working Culture (exploring the rise of remote working, and a case for a four-day week); Skills (looking at rapid re-skilling in the age of automation, as well as alternatives to the creative degree).

In many areas there's scope for optimism. In our Money section, you'll read interviews with Paul Uppal MP (the government's Small Business Commissioner) and Freelancer Club's Matt Dowling about how industry professionals and politicians are coming together to challenge some of the worst payment practices and fighting for the rights of new graduates, freelancers and SMEs [small and medium-sized enterprises] alike. While the gender pay gap prevails, some leading creative businesses have made huge advances, as you'll see in our case study with digital studio ustwo, which reduced its gap from 13% to -4.28%.

In our Working Culture section, you can find a discussion on one of the most talked-about topics of the year: the four-day week. The 4 Day Week Campaign's Aidan Harper fills us in on the philosophical

thinking behind the growing movement, as well as

7

answering some criticism; while Ellen Rhodes of London studio Normally reveals the practical side of implementing shorter working hours, and its effect on young creatives. Further afield, Elisabeth Schulze of Berlin design agency Colors And The Kids talks to us about how plans to make the option to work from home mandatory in Germany will affect their business, while from New York, FKTRY founder Jules Ehrhardt talks about the potentially detrimental effects of the rise in remote working – especially for those just starting out.

The promise and threat of automation looms large over recent discussions around skills, but according to a new report, 87% of creative jobs will remain unscathed by advances in technology. In our Skills section, the Creative Industries Federation's Lydia Wakefield talks to us about how students and graduates can prepare for this unpredictable future, and Partnership for Young London's Matthew Walsham discusses how we can open up routes into creative work, increasing diversity and broadening reach.

Each of our three sections begins with a summary of the top stories from this year, before moving on to the interviews. You'll also find our key recommendations as to where we think the creative industries should go next, based on the conversations and research carried out for this report.

# CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

94.8% of creative businesses are micro-businesses of less than 10 employees

87% of creative occupations are at low or no risk of automation

33% of people working in the creative industries are self-employed

An overview of the current creative landscape in the UK, through the numbers that matter.

The number of jobs in the creative sector exceeds two million, up by 30.6% since 2011

The creative industries contributed £101.5 billion to the UK economy in 2017, an increase of 53.1% since 2010

In 2017, entries for GCSEs in creative subjects fell by 47,000

The creative economy accounts for one in ten jobs across the UK

# MONEY

From the gender pay gap to late payment fees, in this section you'll find some of the most important issues around earning as a creative.

# KEY FINDINGS

The arts and culture industry grew by £390 million last year and now contributes £10.8 billion a year to the UK economy.

Despite new legislation requiring companies of over 250 people to declare their gender pay gap, the problem is still rife, with many companies reporting an increase in the gap since 2018.

A number of high-profile campaigns have launched to fight the culture of late payments within the creative industries, with increasing support from government.

**MONEY**

**THIS YEAR'S TOP STORIES**

- 1 Harvard Business Review → Nine Out of Ten People Are Willing to Earn Less Money to Do Meaningful Work
- 2 Twitter → @Annacod
- 3 Medium → The Real Reason Women Quit Tech (and How to Address It)
- 4 Business Insider → Iceland Has Made It Illegal To Pay Women Less Than Men

12

1

## NINE OUT OF TEN PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO EARN LESS TO DO MEANINGFUL WORK

According to a study undertaken by US-based workplace consultancy BetterUp, nine out of ten employees were willing to trade a percentage of their lifetime earnings for greater meaning at work, the Harvard Business Review reports. On average, US workers said they'd be willing to forego 23% of their entire future lifetime earnings in order to have a job that was always meaningful. Employees with very meaningful work, the study found, spend one additional hour per week working, take two fewer days of paid leave per year and are more productive – to the tune of \$9,078 (£7,272) per worker, per year.

2

## #FAIRPAYFORFREELANCERS CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES TO LOBBY THE MEDIA INDUSTRY TO PAY BETTER AND FASTER

In February, journalist Anna Codrea-Rado and a group of supporters launched the #FairPayForFreelancers campaign, which called on the media industry to end unfair payment practices. The initiative insisted that all freelancers working in media – including illustrators, photographers and filmmakers – be treated as an integral part of the media ecosystem. Its demands

13

are to end payment on publication (a process where contributors are only paid when their piece appears regardless of when they wrote it), the honouring of late payment fees and an update to unfit payment services and practices.

## WOMEN ARE MORE THAN TWICE AS LIKELY TO QUIT THE TECH INDUSTRY THAN MEN, CITING LACK OF OPPORTUNITY

3

According to a study conducted by LinkedIn, the top reason women leave jobs is because of a “concern for the lack of advancement opportunity”. Another concludes that women leave the tech industry because “they’re treated unfairly; underpaid, less likely to be fast-tracked than their male colleagues, and unable to advance.” Women receive more vague feedback and personality criticism in performance evaluations, and are less likely to get their ideas green-lit for development than men (30% vs 37%).

## ICELAND INTRODUCES FINES FOR COMPANIES PAYING WOMEN LESS THAN MEN.

4

In January, the Icelandic government brought in a new law to enforce equal pay between genders, requiring companies of over 25 people to obtain certification demonstrating

equal pay or face fines. Although pay equity is already part of legislation, it is thought that the certification will help completely eradicate Iceland's small (but existent) pay gap. Iceland has been ranked best in the world for pay equality for nine years in a row. Nearly 50% of its law makers are women.

5

### WOMEN WITH MASTER'S DEGREES ARE PAID LESS THAN MEN WITHOUT THEM

Women in England with postgraduate degrees still earn less (£37,000 on average) than men with only BA degrees (£38,500), according to the Department for Education's graduate labour market statistics. Men with postgraduate degrees were paid £43,000. The report also shows that graduates still earn on average £10,000 more than non-graduates, but black graduates earn more than £9,000 less than their white peers on average. Interestingly, grads with a first class degree on the whole earned less than those with a 2:1, although this is thought to be because they went into low-paid but high-status jobs like academia and politics.

6

### AVERAGE SALARIES IN GLASGOW AND BIRMINGHAM TO RISE THE MOST IN THE COUNTRY

According to a report issued by recruitment agency Social Talent,

the five top cities to receive a pay rise in 2019 will be Glasgow (at 11.3%), Birmingham (9.7%), Liverpool (6.6%), Portsmouth (5%) and Southampton (4.5%). The study, which predicted recruitment trends for 2019, also found that hiring managers wanted new data-driven recruitment software to better assess soft skills, and that many companies now see a smooth and enjoyable application processes as a way of creating future brand ambassadors, even if their application is unsuccessful. The report also found that future leaders are being earmarked as early as entry level recruitment.

7

### ARTS AND CULTURE ARE BOOSTING THE UK ECONOMY, REPORT FINDS

In April, a study penned by the Centre for Economics and Business Research and the Arts Council found that the arts and culture industry grew £390 million last year and now contributes £10.8 billion a year to the UK economy. The estimated contribution of the sector to the exchequer in 2016 stood at over £2.8 billion, and over the period 2006 to 2016, the average weekly spend on recreation and culture rose from £59.70 to £73.35, an increase of 22.9%. Interestingly, workers in the arts and culture sector are more (financially) productive than the national average, generating £62,000 GVA [gross value added] per worker, as opposed to the £47,600 average.

8

## THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IS WAITING FOR £1 BILLION IN LATE PAYMENTS AT ANY POINT

According to a report launched in March by MarketInvoice Business Insights research, 48% of businesses in the creative industries were paid late in 2018. A typical invoice worth £38,137 was being settled 13 days beyond payment terms leaving the industries £1.1 billion out of pocket at any given time. Larger companies were more likely (51%) to pay the creative industries later than smaller businesses (41%). Late payments hinder the growth of small creative business and increase the risk of them folding, as well as damaging the economy as a whole.

9

## D&AD COMES UNDER FIRE FOR PAYING SOME SPEAKERS AND NOT OTHERS

Non-profit D&AD was met with controversy in May when it emerged that some of its festival speakers were paid when others were not. Gal-dem founder Liv Little pulled out of speaking when she discovered that others were taking a fee, while she hadn't been offered one. In support, co-founders of Black Girl Festival, Nicole Krystal Crentsil and Paula Akpan, also refused to take part. D&AD responded to the

15

revelations with an online statement, sharing that they planned to review the speaker fees policy. In comments to Design Week, CEO Tim Lindsay added that there needed to be more transparency with the fees.

10

## MUSEUM WORKERS SHARE THEIR SALARIES TO CALL FOR INDUSTRY-WIDE REFORM

In June more than 600 US museum workers contributed to a Google Sheets spreadsheet, documenting their place of employment, salary rates, and demographic details like race and gender, with the aim of highlighting poor payment within certain institutions. Set up by Michelle Millar Fisher, an assistant curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the spreadsheet shows how more and more museums are relying on contingent labour, in the form of fixed-term positions or fellowships. It is hoped that the radical transparency of those involved will help show how little curators get paid, and inspire reform.

- The Guardian → Women With Master's Degrees Paid Less Than Men Without Them in England
- Social Talent → The Biggest Recruitment Trends 2019
- Arts Council → Contribution of the Arts and Culture Industry to the UK Economy
- MarketInvoice → Creative Industries on Ice: Waiting for £1 billion in Late Payments
- Design Week → Should People Get Paid to Speak at Design Festivals?
- Hyperallergic → Museum Workers Share Their Salaries and Urge Industry-Wide Reform

**THANK YOU**

**NOW**

**PAY ME**

Late payments are threatening creative businesses and the wider economy. But what can we do about it?

As you read in our news section, at any one point the creative industries are owed a staggering £1.1 billion in late payments. “For far too long, large businesses have [paid late], because they’ve always done it and gotten away with it,” Small Businesses Commissioner Paul Uppal MP tells us in the interview you’ll read in the next few pages. For grads, freelancers and emerging businesses, late payments can eat away at much needed contingency and inhibit growth, but also, as Paul tells us, the issue seriously undermines the economy as a whole.

But why focus on this now? Firstly, the Office of the Small Business Commissioner was only launched in December 2017, as part of a new set of policies helping SMEs to grow. In the same year, New York introduced a new law (and the first of its kind in the US), which made not paying freelancers a crime, with guilty parties forking out double damages, attorney’s fees and civil penalties. There is change afoot.

This past year has also seen the launch of two high profile campaigns in the UK, which have drawn attention to the issue. The first, started by journalist Anna Codrea-Rado, demanded an end to payment on publication (which means people can wait months to get their cash), for late payment fees to be honoured and for out-of-date accounting systems to be updated, so that finance departments have no decrepit tech to hide their excuses behind. The second,

spearheaded by Freelancer Club’s Matt Dowling, has called for policy changes that would require every commission over £250 to have a formal contract, the introduction of a standardised procedure for lodging complaints, and the right to sue for double an unpaid amount. Matt has also spoken to us for this report.

FIRST  
HAND  
OBSERVATIONS

Paul Uppal MP

The Small Business Commissioner on  
how the government is naming and  
shaming poor payers.

Since the Enterprise Act 2016, large businesses are required to publicly report the average time they take to pay their suppliers, allowing small businesses to make informed decisions about who they do business with. But bad practices still persist. The Office of the Small Business Commissioner was launched in December 2017 to tackle late payment and what it terms “supply chain bullying”, by naming and shaming the worst offenders (G4S, BT Plc and Centrica, for example), resolving disputes and providing detailed advice about the law and how to take action if a payment is overdue. We talk to its head, the Small Business Commissioner Paul Uppal, MP for Wolverhampton South West.

LIP

YOUR ROLE HAS INCLUDED CREATING A SHIFT IN THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS SMALL BUSINESSES, AS WELL AS PROVIDING HELP WITH DISPUTES. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE “CULTURE CHANGE” NEEDED AND HOW HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING TOWARDS THAT?

PU

I came to this role after being in construction for 20 years, so I've seen the practice, man and boy, in terms of my own business background. For far too long, large businesses have just fundamentally done this [pay late], because they've always done it, and gotten away with it. There's never been anything balancing it from a small business or freelancer's perspective. Yes, there's an ethical argument but there's also an economic one. If you look at Scandinavia and particularly in Germany, where prompt payment is much more fastidiously adhered to, there's an economic win for everybody involved. Unpredictable cash flow is the number one reason you will not expand your business, you will not increase turnover, you won't take on staff. The final point is about mental wellbeing. If you're running your own small business, late payments can be an incredible point of stress. It's very lonely, and you can feel quite isolated. So we're trying to tackle all three aspects.

**If you're running your own small business, late payments can be an incredible point of stress.**

LIP

YOU'VE MENTIONED THAT LATE PAYMENTS ARE DETRIMENTAL. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS DRIVING POOR PAYMENT CULTURE IN THE UK?

PU

The reasons vary from sector to sector. The vast majority of businesses have never had anybody challenge them. Through our website, we want small businesses to feel that we can level the playing field for them and give them that confidence to negotiate better terms. I think there is a small group that pay late perniciously, because it massages their figures. It's the easiest, quickest way to get access to finance by pushing your supply chain harder and longer in terms of payments. Some of it is just poor payment systems. I don't think that washes because technology can provide a solution for that.

LIP

THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SEEM TO BE PLAGUED BY LATE PAYMENT FEES, WITH 48% OF BUSINESSES AFFECTED, COMPARED TO 30% ON AVERAGE. WHICH INDUSTRIES ARE DOING THINGS WELL, AND WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THEM?

PU

There isn't a particular industry, it's far more business to business. We see wide variations. I sit on the operational board of the Prompt Payment Code (if you're a signatory it's a sign of good payment practice) and what we find is that large businesses with good practices are often very reluctant to take credit. They feel that if anything ever does go wrong, they'll be on the front page of The Daily Mail. But it's really important to highlight good payment practices – it's crucial for changing the wider culture. We write a lot of reports, so if you're in the creative sector please do call out good payment practices as well as bad ones.

LIP

MANY CREATIVE GRADUATES SET UP THEIR OWN SMALL BUSINESSES – ESPECIALLY IN THE CURRENT CLIMATE. GIVEN CREATIVITY IS A HUGE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY, WHAT ASSISTANCE IS OUT THERE TO HELP EMERGING CREATIVES GO INTO BUSINESS, THRIVE AND GET PAID?

PU

When you start up a new business, thinking about finances tends to get pushed quite low down. Be mindful of this. Cash flow is going to be absolutely key

20

for your business. On our website, we provide some basic tips in terms of invoicing and chasing your money. Don't be afraid to go out and speak to established businesses in your sector about your model or future plans. They are a wealth of information, and will be quite flattered. We're also working with The Collective and Freelancer Club. We're going into consultation right now about expansion of our powers and we'd be happy for anybody within the creative industries to contribute to that process.

FIRST  
HAND  
OBSERVATIONS

Matt Dowling

The Freelancer Club founder on how to  
get paid on time.

Freelance photographer Matt Dowling set up Freelancer Club after a client pulled out of an £11,000 project, leaving him heavily in debt. Now the organisation provides legal and business advice to its 34,000 members in the UK, as well as connecting them with clients who need their services. More recently, Matt has been a vocal advocate for freelancers' rights, launching the No Free Work campaign and lobbying the government to change the law. At present, UK freelancers are entitled to claim interest on late payments under the Late Payment Act (1998). But the court process is arduous, expensive and most don't know it exists or can't afford to fight. We spoke to Matt about his campaign to better protect small businesses and freelancers.

LIP

WHY DO YOU THINK POOR PAYMENT IS RIFE IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES?

MD

It's around culture and how a lot of companies treat the creative industries. Particularly within VR, fashion or music – anything where there's a sense of glamour – there seems to be a mentality that the creative space is almost like a hobby or passion. Interestingly, certain sectors, such as freelance web design, are valued more because there seems to be a better understanding of how it could benefit a company.

LIP

WHAT POLICIES OR CHANGES ARE NEEDED TO SHIFT THE CULTURE SO THAT CREATIVE FREELANCERS ARE PAID ON TIME? AND HOW CAN CREATIVES ADVOCATE FOR THIS?

MD

For over five years, we've been working on a campaign called No Free Work. Its objective is to eradicate exploitative unpaid work from the freelance and creative industries. That led to setting up something called The Collective, which is a group of very influential leaders in a variety of sectors (education, fashion, acting, unions) to discuss this exact issue. So far we've assessed that we need to educate three different sectors. First we need to get in front of students, and talk about their worth and how valuable they are to the economy. The second group is the freelancers already out there working.

We need to encourage them to rethink working for free or underbidding fellow freelancers. By undervaluing their services they do a huge amount of harm to their career, their reputation, but also the wider industry. Then we need to educate the clients. Sometimes bad practice is quite

**We want to encourage companies to make sure they're treating freelancers with respect from start to finish.**

calculated and exploitative, at other times not. We want to encourage companies to make sure they're treating freelancers with respect from start to finish, that includes paying them a fair wage, paying them on time and involving them in the company, so they're not treated just as a blow-in. But we recognise

that it's not enough for it just to be the right thing to do morally. We want to go in and prove to companies that it's better for their bottom line, too.

We're also trying to change the legislation to give freelancers a lot more legal protection when it comes to late payments. We're looking at double damages, whereby if a company is found wanting in small claims court, they'll need to pay double the amount of the contract. And we'd like to make contracts mandatory above a certain amount of value, around £200. There was a very successful bill that was passed in New York, and the group that pushed that over the line contributed to a round table and offered us advice on putting a UK version together. Brexit isn't helping, but we're still very determined.

LIP

HOW DOES IT BENEFIT COMPANIES TO PAY FREELANCERS ON TIME?

MD

Freelancers talk to each other. It's not as big a community as one might think – there are close to five million self-employed individuals in the UK, and each of those sectors has little tribes. If you start to build up a bad reputation, it becomes more and more difficult to hire the best talent. Also you can maximise a freelance hire if you pay on time, as you'll get to use them again. Most of the freelancers that we support are multi-skilled and, if you integrate them into your set-up, can often bring a lot of value to a company. Freelancers are quite vocal and have influence, they can be ambassadors for your

24

company. They'll often post work to social media, if it's allowed in the contract. Again, that can either be a positive or a negative post.

LIP

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO EARLY YEARS CREATIVES TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AGAINST LATE PAYMENTS?

MD

There are some simple ones, like invoicing on the day of the job, so it's fresh; finding out who will make that payment prior to signing the contract; ensuring there is a contract to begin with, even if the job is just a couple of hundred quid. Freelancers sometimes find this a little awkward but it dramatically decreases the likelihood of late payment or no payment.

Technology can play its part too. Having a third party do the chasing for you through an invoicing app or software can be invaluable. The main issue is that freelancers don't want to jeopardise their relationship with the client by being pushy, or asking to be paid. You know, God forbid you actually get paid on time! But by having an automated email go from a third party app, it removes that awkwardness. You can always blame the angry robot. We also have template emails on our website that you ramp up, from a soft reminder right through to a notification of impending legal action.

Get used to creating contracts for every job, so that you do have some protection. In an ideal scenario you would tailor every contract. When you're starting out you won't have the finances to pay a lawyer to do that every time, but there are loads of really good contract templates available. We've got one on our site, which is free to download. You can put a line in a contract asking for a deposit upfront or stating that the raw files won't be delivered until the client has paid the final amount. Don't be too fearful that there will be backlash. Knowing your value, speaking about money with confidence and acting professionally will dramatically increase your chances of a successful freelance career.

**NOTES**

**FOR**

**WOMEN**

How far have we come in reducing the gender pay gap?

In 2017, London School of Economics researcher Daniel Laurison found that female employees working in the cultural industries earn £12,000 a year less on average than men with similar class backgrounds. The biggest disparities were found in architecture, TV, radio and film – with women in the latter earning on average £15,000 less than their colleagues.

Last year, for the very first time, every company employing more than 250 people had to declare their gender pay gap. The reports were damning; 78% of the 9,000+ companies that were required to report had a gender pay gap in favour of male employees. What was going wrong? First of all, the gender pay gap is complex, and it's not the same as equal pay – it's been illegal to pay men and women differently for the same job since the Equal Pay Act in 1970. Instead, the pay gap highlights more subtle forms of gender inequality and discrimination. A company may have a big pay gap if, for example, the majority of its male employees are in the top jobs, while its female employees are in roles lower down in the company.

But why has the gender pay gap been back in the news in 2019? In April this year, companies reported their pay gap for the second year running. You'd think that, given the naming and shaming of the worst offenders in 2018, we'd have seen a marked improvement; but instead,

more than 45% of companies reported a widening gap

in favour of their male employees. Transparency around pay didn't seem to be having the desired effect. Also this year, the government rejected a recommendation to extend the regulations to companies with 50 employees – a policy that would have had huge ramifications for the design industry.

In this section, however, we've decided not to descend into doom and gloom, and instead take a look at one of the companies making progress, with a concerted effort to narrow their gap. Read on to discover how one studio decreased their gap from 13% to -4.2%, with tangible approaches that other companies can follow.

# CASE STUDY

## USTWO

How digital design studio ustwo is narrowing  
its gender pay gap.

ustwo is an agency partner to Lecture in Progress. This case study has been selected solely based on the company's progress in this area.

28

When London digital studio ustwo first reported its gender pay gap back in 2016 (long before it was made a requirement), it stood at a significant 13%. Although this figure isn't as eye-watering as some of the biggest gaps in the industry (think Channel 4 at 23.3%, MPC at 33.3% or The Mill at 31%), it spurred senior management to introduce some radical policies.

Incredibly, this year ustwo reported a pay gap of -4.28%, moving down from 2.46% in 2018. This compares to an overall median gender pay gap in the UK of 9.6%, down fractionally from 9.7% in 2018. So how did ustwo do it? A first step was to address the gender split of the company. While back in 2012 the London studio was 17% women and 83% men (with a beer and football-loving culture to match), today it has a 50/50 gender split. ustwo London is led by a woman and four out of six of its leadership team are now female – something of a rarity in the world of digital.

This shift – observed at both entry level and throughout management – has been achieved through a radical change in ustwo's recruitment policy. The company pushes for 50/50 shortlists, especially from recruiters, and in 2018 it introduced company-wide bias training for all managers. This was integral to informing people about how they could better support the progression of all employees. ustwo also piloted a training scheme with leadership expert Harriet Minter, which coached people from underrepresented groups (including women) to achieve their goals and rise through the business.

But what's next? Having closed the gender pay gap at the top and bottom of the company, the next step is to focus on the upper-middle quartile of its workforce, which is currently 70% male. The studio also intends to encourage better representation in terms of ethnicity, age, disability and socio-economic status.

As well as starting to use intelligent recruiting platform Greenhouse (which has been designed to remove bias), it's also in the second year of Flipside, a training and development programme for unemployed and underemployed east Londoners, which aims to broaden the demographic of people coming into tech.

# WORKING CULTURE

In this section we explore vital conversations surrounding working culture, from weekly hours to where work is taking place.

# KEY FINDINGS

The total number of businesses operating in the UK design industry has increased by 70% since 2010.

The four-day week has been the story of the year in terms of workplace culture, with 70% of workers keen to make the switch but less certainty among employers.

Remote working is on the rise, with a report finding that only 25% of creatives imagine themselves working in an office in the next five to ten years. Alongside this, the German Labour Ministry has announced plans to make the option to work from home mandatory for all companies.

**WORKING CULTURE**

**THIS YEAR'S TOP STORIES**

- ① Dezeen → Number of UK Design Businesses Has increased by 70%
- ② BBC → UK Employment Total Hits Record High
- ③ 99U → The Creative Future Report
- ④ DW → A German Right to Work From Home in Your Pajamas?

1

**DESIGN MUSEUM RESEARCH REVEALS A 70% INCREASE IN DESIGN-RELATED BUSINESSES SINCE 2010**

The total number of businesses operating in the UK design industry increased by 70%, compared to a 27% national average, found research conducted by the Design Museum using the Office for National Statistics data. London saw design-led businesses more than double, growing from 11,400 in 2010 to 23,700 in 2018. Design jobs in the north east of England grew by more than 50% and by 40% in the south west. In contrast, Northern Ireland only saw an increase of 1% in jobs.

2

**UK EMPLOYMENT TOTAL HITS RECORD HIGH, SHOW OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS FIGURES**

In January, it was reported that the number of people in employment in the UK reached a record high of 32.54 million, with the share of the population in work at the highest on record. Average earnings (excluding bonuses) also increased by 3.3% in the year to November, outpacing inflation. While the then-employment minister Alok Sharma attributed the figures to pro-business policies that boosted private sector employment, BBC economics correspondent Andy Verity

remarked that we would have to wait a while (until summer) to find out whether the uncertainty surrounding Brexit had hit the jobs market or not.

**ONLY 25% OF CREATIVES THINK THEY'LL WORK IN AN OFFICE FULL-TIME IN FIVE TO TEN YEARS**

3

According to a survey conducted by US-based publication 99U, many creatives feel that there is a shift towards remote working in their future. Only 25% said they imagine themselves working in an office in five to ten years, with 27% saying home is the more likely option, 11% in co-working spaces and 40% responding anywhere with wifi. Interestingly, 37% of those that responded to the survey also said that in-person communication would be their preferred method in the future, showing that companies that need to go remote should factor meet-ups into their structure.

**GERMANY FLOATS PLANS TO MAKE WORKING FROM HOME MANDATORY**

4

The German Labour Ministry announced plans to make the option to work from home mandatory for all companies. Ministry Secretary Björn Böhning said in an interview with Der Spiegel, that those employers that felt it wasn't possible for their

company would have to explain why. At present only 12% of people work outside of the office, although 40% would like to. As well as the human benefits – flexibility for childcare and fewer distractions – the drive was also sustainability, with significant environmental gains predicted from hundreds of thousands of fewer commutes.

disclosure of salaries. YouGov's survey, carried out for jobs website Indeed, found that 74% of workers felt that they could complete their week's work to the same standard in four days. The figure rose to 79% among millennials. Brits work some of the longest hours in Europe, but productivity growth has been one of the slowest.

### 5 AUSTRALIAN COMPANY VERSA TRIPLES PROFITS AFTER SWITCHING TO FOUR-DAY WEEK

In July, Melbourne-based digital marketing agency Versa reported that it had boosted workplace productivity by 46% since switching to a four-day week, with profits increasing threefold. The agency, which closes on Wednesdays but pays its staff for five days, also reported lower sick rates and greater employee satisfaction. Although CEO Kath Blackham was reluctant to pin the entire performance on the four-day week, she suggested low turnover and consistent teams were attractive to potential clients.

### 7 LABOUR COMMISSIONS STUDY INTO THE BENEFITS OF THE FOUR-DAY WEEK

The Labour Party commissioned a study calling for fewer working hours for millions of public-sector employees, which make up more than a fifth of the workforce. Written by economist Robert Skidelsky, the report will investigate automation in the civil service, health service and schools. Working hours had been decreasing since the start of the Industrial Revolution, but stabilised in the 1980s. Skidelsky has said that a 33 or 34-hour week would be in line with historical trends, but instead 74% of people still work closer to 40 hours.

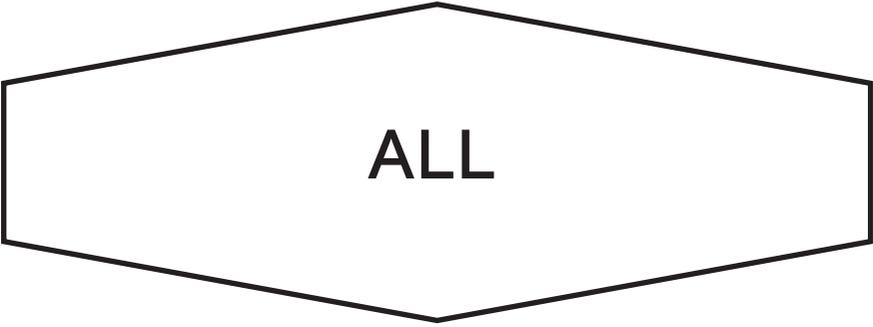
### 6 MAJORITY OF UK WORKERS SUPPORT FOUR-DAY WORKING WEEK, STUDY FINDS

Three-quarters of UK workers back a four-day working week, while a majority would support public

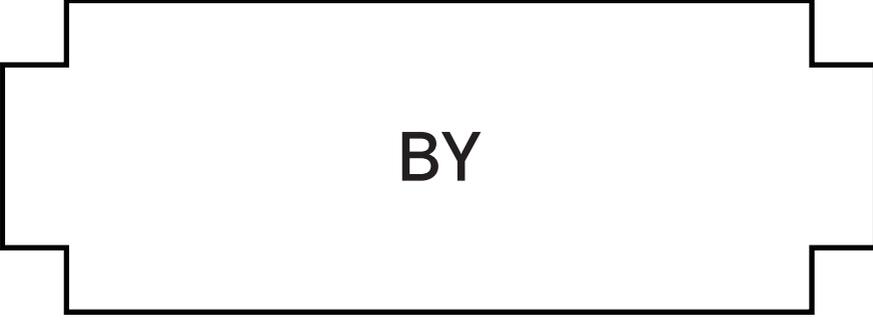
### 8 THE WELLCOME TRUST U-TURNS ON FOUR-DAY WEEK

In January, The Wellcome Trust announced that it was considering moving all

of its 800 head office staff over to a four-day week in order to boost productivity and improve work-life balance. The announcement made the £26 billion London-based science research foundation one of the largest organisations in the world to try a four-day week. In April it announced that it was scrapping plans, citing that it would be “too operationally complex to implement”.



ALL



BY



MYSELF

Remote working is on the rise, but is it the utopia it's cracked up to be?

At the beginning of the year, the German Labour Ministry shared that they were planning to make it mandatory for all companies to offer a work-from-home option. According to a study by conducted by the Labor Ministry, 40% of Germans wanted to work from home at least occasionally but only 12% were able to do so (according to the Federal Statistical Office of Germany). In an interview with Der Spiegel, ministry secretary Björn Böhning said that employers who felt they were unable to comply would need to justify why it wouldn't be possible.

In addition to benefits for workers, including flexibility for childcare and fewer distractions, the drive was also sustainability, with significant environmental gains predicted from hundreds of thousands of fewer commutes. In the following section we hear from Berlin studio Colors And The Kids to get their initial impressions on the proposals.

Elsewhere, remote work is on the rise. A growing number of tech start-ups – Basecamp, InVision, Buffer, Trello – are choosing to structure their companies so that the entire team works remotely, with research into the wants of Gen Z suggesting that this trend is only going to grow. What's more, in a report conducted by US-based publication 99U, just 25% of those surveyed said that they saw themselves working in an office in the next five to ten years. More than

37

40% of people questioned for The Creative Future

Report said they would be working anywhere with wifi, while 27% said they would work from home, and another 11% said they would set up camp in co-working spaces. Despite this, talking face-to-face was still the preferred method of workplace communication, highlighting the potential tension between the push to work out of the office and the need to share ideas and instructions in person.

Communication isn't the only issue. As well as concerns about cybersecurity, motivation and training (especially for new grads), remote working can also have a huge impact on mental health. To challenge the idea that remote working is a utopia for all, we spoke to Jules Ehrhardt, the founder of New York-based creative capital studio FKTRY, about his personal experience of having his resilience tested, and what can be done to better support people working away from the office.

FIRST  
HAND  
OBSERVATIONS

Elisabeth Schulze

The creative director of Berlin studio  
Colors And The Kids (CATK) on  
Germany's plans to make the choice to  
work from home mandatory.

Berlin studio CATK specialises in design, motion and music, working for clients like Nike, Apple, Google, IBM, Sonos, Microsoft, Issey Miyake and Kenzo. We caught up with co-founder Elisabeth Schulze to find out how new plans to make the choice to work from home mandatory for the majority of German businesses will affect the studio.

LIP

HOW WOULD THE PROPOSAL AFFECT YOUR COMPANY?

ES

I don't think there would be any significant change, since we are a relatively small company and already taking care of everyone's individual needs. So if it would be better for one of us to work from home, we probably wouldn't have an issue with it.

LIP

DO YOU SEE ANY POTENTIAL FOR NEGATIVE IMPACT?

ES

The biggest problem for us would be technical, as we often handle vast amounts of data and also use relatively immobile workstations. The technology does not yet offer sufficient flexibility.

LIP

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BENEFITS WOULD BE FOR EARLY-YEARS CREATIVES AND NEW GRADUATES?

ES

We consider it much more useful to be in the company on-site, especially for young creatives who can still learn a lot from being with the team. A mix [of both approaches] is of course conceivable, since it can also alleviate pressure for younger people, particularly if they are finding their own ways of doing things at home.

FIRST  
HAND  
OBSERVATIONS

JULES EHRHARDT

The FKTRY founder discusses the potential effects of remote working on mental health.

In March, design and tech entrepreneur Jules Ehrhardt kicked off a storm when he tweeted: “I’ve spent the best part of the last year working and planning from home. I’ve got a strong concern about the mental health impact of remote working. There are [times] I know that my resilience is being tested. Humans are social animals but I feel [the] rush to remote is dangerous.” As a previous owner of ustwo, Jules had been constantly surrounded by people, but when setting up FKTRY (a new model of creative studio that delivers creative work to start-ups in exchange for equity in the business) he was largely working remotely, and the cracks started to appear.

His words struck a nerve. Not only was the design community quick to weigh in with the challenges they’d faced working without the support of a physical office, but numerous forward-thinking policies emerged from the thread, from fitness stipends (to be spent on sports, therapy or massages) to team retreats. We caught up with Jules to find out more about his experience and what can be done to support employees working away from the fold – especially those just starting out.

LIP

## WHAT PROMPTED YOU TO TALK ABOUT THE MENTAL HEALTH IMPLICATIONS OF REMOTE WORK?

JE

I went from one extreme to the other. [At ustwo] I was often working in hyper-social studios of 50 to 100 people. Historically, in the agency space, there’s been a lot of expectation around employee presence. After selling my stake in the studio, I began building my new company, which was initially a solo effort. I spent about a year working remotely and realised how it was affecting me. I’m pretty resilient and had done some development coaching, so I was conscious of how I was feeling at any given time, and able to see which environments were good or bad for me. Remote working felt potentially risky, and dangerous. I took corrective action and built a routine that was more healthy, but it made me realise that if I did not have the benefit of a solid constitution and family life, it could be dangerous.

LIP

WHAT IMPACT DO YOU THINK REMOTE WORKING HAS ON NEW GRADS SPECIFICALLY?

JE

Three things – first, how work gets developed. Learning how to collaborate is something that should be done in person. Those of us who've been working a little longer have mostly worked in collaborative environments, before potentially shifting to a blend of in-person and remote work. Secondly, going from an environment as social as student life to suddenly spending the week on your own, and not interacting with people... to me that contrast is risky. Then, in terms of creative output, a lot of stuff happens in studios as a result of serendipity; those random collisions, joining a conversation at lunch or joining a meeting you shouldn't be in, but finding a spark in it. Taking all that away could stunt your creative development.

LIP

WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES DO YOU THINK EMPLOYERS HAVE TO STAFF THAT ARE WORKING REMOTELY?

JE

Agencies have traditionally relied on a centralised workforce, so being able to properly support remote workers has to be an 'active' project. There were plenty of ideas in that [Twitter] thread, whether that's subsidising co-working space memberships, scheduling IRL team meetings, paying for massages, and things like that. I think if you're recruiting, you have to analyse whether remote work is right for the wellbeing of the employee, and the impact it will have on the quality of the work you're going to get from that person.

LIP

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUNG CREATIVES WHO MIGHT BE WORKING REMOTELY?

JE

Definitely establish a routine. Get up, have a shower, get out the house and walk around the block. I personally plan my week to make sure I have at least three or four interactions with people that require me leaving the house. Meet up with people that provoke new thinking, challenge you or stimulate you in some way. This helps you as a human being, and as a creative. Spend in-person time with people in similar or adjacent fields and

42

talk about topics that are important to your work. Meet-ups and events are great. Eating healthily and making sure you get some exercise are also key. Unless you're conscious about it, you can easily slide into a lonely state, which isn't good for your mental health or your creativity.

LIP

DO YOU THINK THERE'S GOING TO BE A BIG PUSH TOWARDS REMOTE WORKING IN THE FUTURE?

JE

A trend I'm observing is what I call the atomisation of the creative industries. There are many talented and experienced creatives leaving agency structures to operate independently and later assembling in teams for specific projects – often several in parallel. I'm also seeing clients and brands willing to engage with these types of set-ups

now, eschewing the comfort blanket of agencies. Those are patterns that speak to the future of remote work. Remote work affords creatives an independent lifestyle and control of their own schedule – when and where they work – which is a positive, powerful thing. When I assemble teams for my new studio, I'm working with incredibly experienced people

who I know are going to get the job done without the need for guidance. Introducing junior creatives into that set-up comes with some risk. It only works because everyone's got experience.

**If you're recruiting, you have to analyse whether remote work is right for the employee.**

**FOUR FOR**

**THE PRICE**

**OF FIVE**

We investigate the politics and practicalities of the year's most talked-about work story, the four-day week.

There have been few other work-related topics that have been as persistent this year as the four-day week. The appeal for workers is clear: a day a week less in the office for the same amount of pay. But for employers, it's less straightforward. There have been a handful of high-profile success stories: Australian marketing agency Versa reported a 46% uptick in revenue after giving all employees Wednesdays off, while New Zealand's estate management company Perpetual Guardian was part of a study by Auckland University of Technology that found its productivity remained similar even after losing a day, but sick days dramatically decreased.

On the other hand, many US start-ups that made the switch have gone back to five days, following a drop in profits or increased stress. Writing in Campaign, Jonny Tooze, the founder of London-based advertising agency Lab, dissected the experience of switching his staff to a four-day week, discussing its many benefits, but also suggesting the importance of having thinking space and downtime in the working day – something that can easily be lost in a condensed working week where everyone is continually operating at full pelt.

One of the most high profile U-turns has been that of London-based scientific research foundation The Wellcome Trust. In January it revealed that it was considering switching its 800 head office staff down to four days

(which would have made it the largest UK employer to do so), hoping that it would create a healthier workforce, a reduction in sickness absence and improved sense of work-life balance. But just three months later in April, after an internal consultation process, The Wellcome Trust announced that it had scrapped the plans, stating that it would be “too operationally complex to implement”. There were concerns about the stress of condensing five days of work into four, as well as the implications on public-facing roles. The trial run, planned for autumn, was also cancelled.

Despite this change, the four-day week is a cause that refuses to die down – even Labour shadow chancellor John McDonnell has commissioned research into the benefits of a four-day week country-wide. To unpick the philosophy and the practicalities of this radical change, we spoke to one of its most ardent supporters, campaigner Aidan Harper, and to Ellen Rhodes, the operations manager at graphic design studio Normally – one London firm giving it a go.

**FIRST  
HAND  
OBSERVATIONS**

**AIDAN HARPER**

The campaigner and researcher on  
the philosophy and politics behind the  
4 Day Week campaign.

Aidan Harper is a researcher at the New Economics Foundation and heads up the 4 Day Week campaign. It champions a reduction in working time to encourage better mental health, a fairer society and a more environmentally sustainable economy.

LIP

WHAT BENEFITS DO YOU THINK A FOUR-DAY WEEK COULD HAVE ON THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES?

AH

In terms of wellbeing and mental, these could improve markedly. Within the UK last year, the Health and Safety Executive, which is the government's statistic collecting body for work-related illnesses, found that of all sick days lost in the UK last year, one in four of them was a direct result of overwork. We experience it through constantly being tired, not sleeping well and being stressed. We individualise these issues rather than seeing them as a structural problem that we need to change collectively.

Our model of working time is outdated. There is nothing natural or inevitable about the number of hours we spend in work. We can look at our history and see how much has changed in other countries to see how much it varies. The absence statistics only really address people that can't even be present in the workplace, because their mental health has deteriorated to such an extent that they stay home or go to the doctor. But there are many, many more people who are feeling the effects of overwork and yet still turn up day after day in

the workplace. This is a huge drag on the economy in terms of sick pay but also on turnover. There's lots of data to show that quality of life deteriorates rapidly as you become more tired and stressed. A creative mind needs to be well-rested, it needs to have space to breathe, to experience other things. It needs periods of thinking, imagining,

reading fiction or doing sport. Living and experiencing a fuller life feeds a higher quality of work and creates happier workers.

**There's lots of data to show that quality of life deteriorates rapidly as you become more tired and stressed.**

## WHY DO YOU THINK THERE'S SO MUCH RESISTANCE TO THE FOUR-DAY WEEK AS AN IDEA?

AH

There's often a reaction against anything new. What's interesting is actually looking at lots of historical newspaper articles critiquing the eight-hour day and the two-day weekend – the arguments haven't evolved at all. There were worries about how we would stay productive and how we could pay someone for six days' work when they were only working five days. There were concerns about staying competitive with the likes of the US and the rest of Europe. I think we can say fairly concretely that the world, with our weekend and our eight-hour day, is better than it was before that. The economy certainly hasn't collapsed, in fact it's grown in terms of productivity and GDP by many times what we could have ever imagined.

Then there's what's broadly called the Protestant work ethic, which relates how we experience work and our economy – particularly in capitalism – to religious drives. Work ethic has become this new religious drive whereby work is seen as an end in itself, rather than a means to an end. Doing work and talking about work is seen as an important moral thing.

**Our particular system of housing benefits and social security is framed around forcing people into work, because work is seen as a good thing for them.**

We see this in our society today in the way we demonise and dehumanise people who are disabled and can't work, and the unemployed. Our particular system of housing benefits and social security is framed around forcing people into work, because work is seen as a

good thing for them. The productive individual is seen as inherently worthwhile. You can see it in the way that people at the top talk about their impossible working schedules – tech CEOs saying they get up at 3am. The design is to show a certain level of self-sacrifice. As part of a world with less work, we say that work itself does have a purpose. And the purpose isn't more work forever. The purpose is to create the conditions through which we can live good lives.

If working time is getting in the way of that then we should change the structure of work.

LIP

THE WELLCOME TRUST'S HIGH PROFILE U-TURN ON INTRODUCING A FOUR-DAY WEEK SHOWS SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES FOR PUBLIC-FACING ORGANISATIONS. IS THERE A WAY TO OVERCOME THIS?

AH

The Wellcome Trust never carried out a trial. They did a preliminary study and found out that it might be hard and then made a decision among the directors. It doesn't really mean anything that they did it, or didn't – they pulled out without any data. I'd much rather we look at studies, white papers and organisations where there's useable information about what they did, what effect it had and what didn't work. It's tough changing roles which require the presence of workers, like security guards, carers, or receptionists, where you can't increase productivity in the same way that someone else might be able to – where there's more flexible edges around their work, or they can squeeze more into their day. In order to reduce working time, you would by definition have to reduce output to a degree. And in which case, that may take either redistributing tasks or hiring new people. Of course, for the economy, that's not necessarily a bad thing. We know that there are a huge amount of people in well-paid, secure work who are seriously overworked to an extent that it's making them physically and mentally ill. And although there are record low levels of unemployment, the figures conceal incredibly high levels of under-employment – people on low-paid insecure work in the gig economy. There's a rational argument that we should redistribute work across the economy by creating new, secure, well-paid jobs on shorter hours.

LIP

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

AH

Change happens on an individual level, on a firm level, on a sectoral level and on a national level. Individuals can start thinking about working time rights and the ability to choose. On a firm level, individual bosses and companies can move employees to shorter hours, which would bring

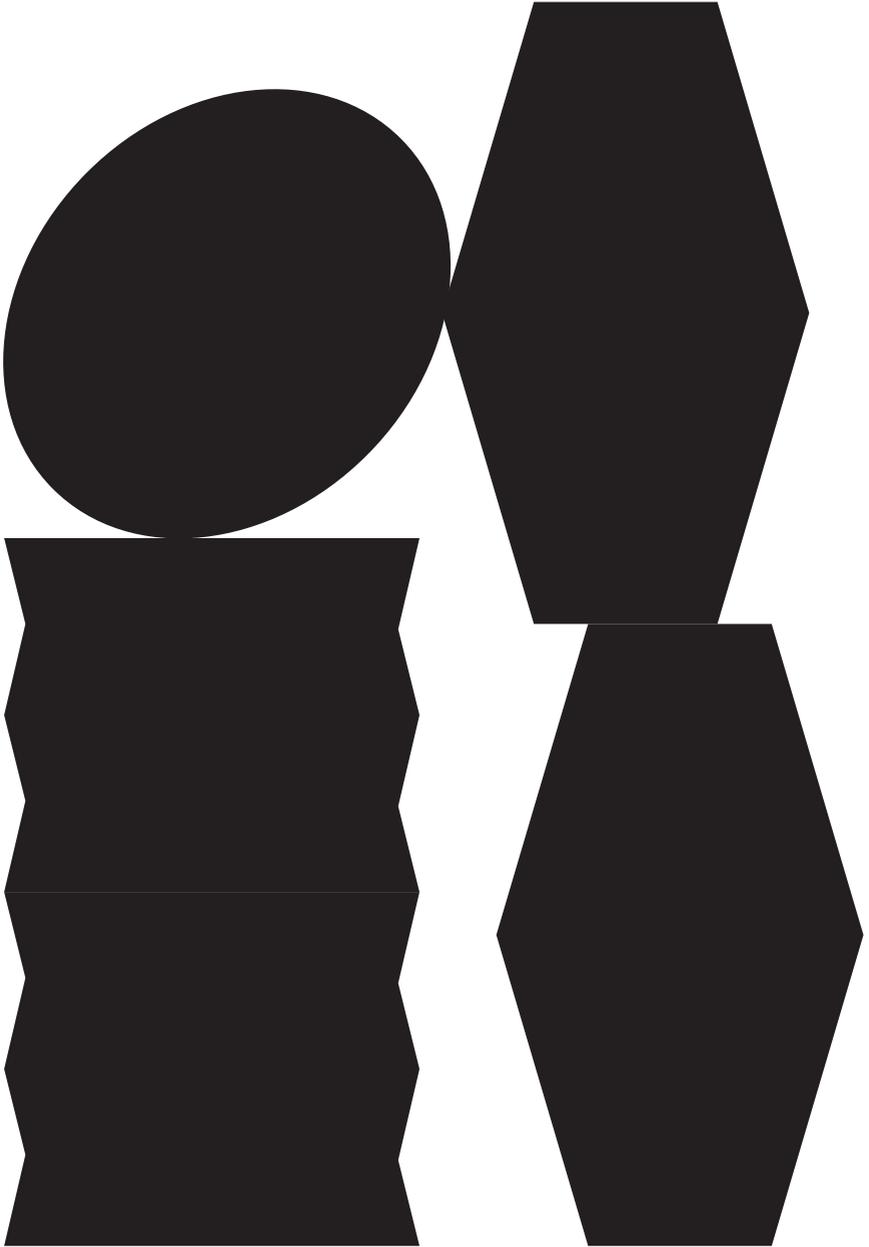
added productivity, improve staff retention and help recruit lots of talent. We're getting trade unions to sign up to the campaign, which they are increasingly doing, especially in relation to the threat (or promise) of automation in the future. The likes of Unite, CWU and PTCS are all lining up behind the call for shorter hours.

Then there's government policy, in the way that France introduced a 35-hour week, or how China moved from a six to five-day week in the 1990s. There are ways to create transitional policies, which bank productivity increases by way of reductions in working time by increasing minimum statutory annual leave, in creating bank holidays. You can

**Looking to the future, it will be interesting to see how automation can be used to benefit workers, and not just the owners of the machines.**

do things like create apprenticeship schemes and generational agreements, which have reduced working hours for older employees, and ease people into retirement while opening things up for younger people to come in to the workforce. You can improve and increase parental leave. Looking to the future, it will be interesting to see how automation can be used to benefit workers, and

not just the owners of the machines. We can't increase productivity and GDP forever – not least because we've got eleven and a half years until irreversible climate breakdown.



FIRST  
HAND  
OBSERVATIONS

ELLEN RHODES

The operations lead of London studio  
Normally on how a four-day week  
works in practice.

When London graphic design studio Normally started up five years ago, its founders questioned the norms of running a business. They all had young kids, or wanted to focus more on work-life balance, and felt it didn't make sense to work hard until they were 65; to enjoy life only at retirement. Working four days a week (and having Fridays off) started as an experiment, but it's become an integral part of company culture. We chatted to operations lead Ellen Rhodes to find out more about how it works in practice and what it can offer early-years creatives.

LIP

WAS THERE A DECISION TO PRIORITISE WORK-LIFE BALANCE OVER PROFITABILITY? OR WAS THERE A REJECTION OF THE IDEA THAT FIVE DAYS MAKES YOU MORE PRODUCTIVE?

ER

I guess in the beginning, we thought that it might affect our profit margin. But what we've found is working four days makes us more productive and more efficient. There's 14 of us now, so we're not a huge team, but everyone's very respectful of each other's time. Because we're only here for four days, we want to get the most out of the time we have together. I'm an employee, not a founder, but I want to do my very best in the four days, because I also want to enjoy the three days that I have off. I feel very privileged to have that opportunity, so I work hard.

LIP

YOU MENTIONED THE BENEFITS FOR PARENTS BUT HOW DO YOU FEEL A FOUR-DAY WEEK IS PARTICULARLY USEFUL TO NEW GRADUATES?

ER

It teaches manageable work practices from the outset. In this industry, especially in London, there's this idea that the later you work, the more productive you are, and the more important you are in the business. I would like to believe that gone are the days when you had to prove your worth through the hours you've logged rather than your output. For people fresh out of uni, a four-day week shows them that you don't have to rely on extreme work practices to succeed. You can still learn and have a fulfilling career without sleepless nights and stress. It also allows you to explore. When you come out of uni, you're excited; you still want to tinker and have a side hustle, or

things you work on with friends. A four-day week allows a day to do that. It also gives you the mental and emotional capacity to deal with going into full-time work. Burnout is such a big thing, having that extra day to decompress is really valuable.

LIP

CAN YOU FORESEE ANY ISSUES FOR YOUNG CREATIVES?

ER

We manage projects across 32 hours instead of 40 hours. And our clients are very respectful about our policy, so that automatically helps with time management. I'm not saying there's not pressure – because it's definitely there

sometimes. I think the greatest challenge is having that time off for yourself. You're so used to going 100 miles an hour, five days a week, that having a day off when most of your friends are at work can be a challenge. How do you [learn to] be by yourself and focus on what's right for you? That takes some time to get used to.

**Burnout is such a big thing, having that extra day to decompress is really valuable.**

LIP

HOW HAS A FOUR-DAY WEEK HELPED BUILD YOUR BUSINESS?

ER

It's helped us greatly from a team perspective. It's made us incredibly respectful of each other's time and also our time with our clients. And because the team has three days off, they're happier and healthier. In terms of hiring, it's amazing. Because we've been able to back it up with our work, client relationships, productivity and our profits haven't suffered.

LIP

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECTS?

ER

There can be times when getting everything done in a day can be difficult. I'm sure the bosses sometimes check their emails on Fridays. But besides that, we need to manage client expectations and relationships. We're delivering, so it's not an issue, but sometimes if I get emails on a Friday morning, and then reply to them on a Monday, it can feel like quite a long time to leave someone unanswered. So there's a bit of management

54

around communication, which can be challenging at times as everyone's used to an agency being on-call all the time.

LIP

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER BUSINESSES WANTING TO GO DOWN TO FOUR DAYS A WEEK?

ER

Change needs to come from the founders, the directors, from the top-down. Because if they're not leading by example, then it's really hard for the team to follow. Management need to believe in the benefits and trust that it will work as well. Our three directors are the biggest pioneers of the four-day week and if they knew that someone was working overtime, they'd ask questions about how we could help manage their workload. We're a small business, so it's probably easier to experiment and test things out to see if they're working. But it's a big shift in normal working behaviour and practices. So it's not only just saying have a day off, you need to rethink how the team collaborates together, how everyone communicates. Communication is the biggest thing.

This is such a cliché, but not being afraid to fail is important. Implementing any flexible work practice will need a trial, to be tweaked and changed depending on what works. But the impact not only on the business, but society as a whole and personally, is huge. It can alleviate childcare responsibilities, put less strain on the NHS, and improve your own mental health and wellbeing. I think it should be done and it can be done, but it does take a lot of leadership and really believing and trusting that it can work.



# SKILLS

From automation to diversifying the workplace, in this section you'll find some of the big conversations related to learning, skills and the future of work.

# KEY FINDINGS

Many tech companies like Google, Apple and IBM no longer require university degrees.

A huge number of schemes, mentorship programmes and fast-track courses have launched to help young people without degrees enter the creative industries.

Soft skills (interpersonal skills, higher-order cognitive skills and systems skills) are greatly prized, especially in roles that bridge consumers and new technologies.

Rapid re-skilling is set to become the norm for employees and freelance creatives alike.

**SKILLS**

**THIS YEAR'S TOP STORIES**

- ❶ The Big Issue → £3.6 Million London Co-working Space Launches to Help Youngsters on Margins
- ❷ Mayor of London → Tackling London's Disability Employment Gap
- ❸ Creative Industries Federation → Gen Z Doesn't Want Your Jobs
- ❹ Creative Industries Federation → The Creatives Career Programme

58

1

## THE BIG ISSUE AND GLA LAUNCH A £3.6 MILLION LONDON CO- WORKING SPACE TO HELP YOUNGSTERS ON MARGINS

The Big Issue's social investment arm, Big Issue Invest, the Greater London Authority, The Local Economic Action Partnership and Charity Bank refurbished a 100-year-old building in Walthamstow to provide 160 desks for creative businesses from north and east London. Firms using the centre will provide training, mentoring, practical support and apprenticeships to young students from the borough and neighbouring areas, aiming to get more underrepresented talent into the creative industries.

2

## INVESTIGATION INTO THE DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT GAP FINDS TRAVEL INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKPLACE CULTURE LACKING

A report conducted by the London Assembly found that Londoners of working age (16 to 64) with disabilities were three times less likely to be in work than able-bodied Londoners. Barriers to work included lack of flexibility and inclusivity, negative assumptions about the capabilities of those with disabilities, a wider skills gap meaning adults

59

with disabilities are less likely to have degrees than

other Londoners, and a lower rate of internet use. The report called for the creation of a Disability Employment Taskforce for London, better guidance for disabled entrepreneurs and more reference to disability in existing workplace accreditation scheme The Good Work Standard.

3

## GEN Z DOESN'T WANT YOUR JOBS: HOW TO ATTRACT THE NEXT WAVE OF CREATIVES

A panel led by Brave Bison and the Creative Industries Federation at Advertising Week Europe in March outlined what Generation Z talent will look for when job hunting. Positive company ethics, positions that offered them experiences and travel, plus social clout all came up. The talk also recommended removing degree requirements when recruiting – Gen Zedders are more open to alternative routes into work – and the importance of getting existing Gen Zedders involved in recruiting.

4

## CREATIVE CAREERS PROGRAMME LAUNCHES TO HELP TEENAGERS DISCOVER JOBS

In March, ScreenSkills, Creative & Cultural Skills and the Creative Industries Federation launched a new careers education programme encouraging young people to consider jobs in the creative

industries. The scheme will provide 11 to 24-year-olds with up-to-date information about the growing range of creative careers, and train careers advisers about the pathways into those roles. It's hoped that the Creative Careers Programme will help match the growth in the UK's creative industries, while encouraging a more diverse group of people into the sector. The intention is to reach two million teenagers in the UK, via its online materials, and to reach 160,000 students face-to-face, all by 2020.

#### 5 SKILLS SHORTAGES THREATEN THE UK'S £101.5 BILLION CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

According to a report published by the Creative Industries Federation in May, there are around 77,000 roles within the creative industries that are currently unfilled or require more skills. Responding to the government's review of post-18 education and funding in England, the report called for an assessment of the barriers SMEs encounter with the current apprenticeship system, increased teaching grants to keep the quality of courses high and a better understanding of how creative careers differ in trajectory from other industries.

#### 6 UK FILM AND TV INDUSTRIES "FAR TOO RELIANT ON NETWORKING"

In June, filmmaker Paul Greengrass, the director behind the Bourne trilogy, spoke out about the need to widen access to jobs in the creative industries, describing the sector as "more meritocratic" when he started his career in the 1970s. Greengrass called for the creation of more schools like the London Screen Academy (a new free sixth-form academy due to open in September), more support for creative coding and increased socio-economic diversity in the industries.

#### 7 EXPERTS SPEAK ON HOW TO CLOSE THE UK'S DIGITAL SKILLS GAP

The UK is the third best country in the world at producing successful tech companies, making more \$1 billion companies than any other European country, but the Centre for Economics and Business Research has predicted that the UK is set to miss out on £21.8 billion of economic benefits due to a digital skills gap. The Evening Standard's Natalie Gross, President of Britain's digital community BIMA, suggested more emphasis be put on the creative skills and problem-solving needed in digital, rather just focusing on coding.

8

## ITV BECOMES FIRST PARTNER FOR SCREENSKILLS' NEW SOCIAL MOBILITY INITIATIVE FIRST BREAK

A new social mobility initiative from the skills body ScreenSkills has been launched to demystify the TV industry and support people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds into TV roles. The scheme includes Open Doors taster events at ITV, where young people can gain an introduction to TV production, a two-day boot camp (including information on broadcasters and major indies, departments and chains of command, set etiquette and hands-on workshops) and work experience on ITV dramas.

“unwelcoming” to people from BAME backgrounds.

9

## RECRUITING GRADUATES FOR ENTRY-LEVEL JOBS IS PREVENTING DIVERSITY IN THE ARTS

Employers in the creative industries risk alienating diverse young talent by “needlessly asking for degrees” for entry-level jobs, a report by Partnership for Young London found. This was identified as one of a number of barriers revealed in the study that exclude young people from BAME and lower-income backgrounds from working in the arts. According to the report, barriers include a lack of careers advice at schools, the use of unpaid internships to draw in entry-level talent and office environments that are

- Creative Industries Federation → Responding to the Post-18 Education and Funding Review
- Screen Daily → Paul Greengrass: UK Film and TV Industry “Far Too Reliant on Networking”
- The Evening Standard → This is How the UK Can Stay Ahead of the Game With Digital Skills
- ITV → ITV Becomes Inaugural Partner on ScreenSkills New Social Mobility Initiative First Break
- The Stage → Employers Who Recruit Graduates for Entry-Level Jobs are Preventing Diversity in the Arts

A LIFETIME

OF

LEARNING

How can we prepare emerging creatives and graduates for jobs that don't yet exist?

62

Back in 2016, a study conducted by the World Economic Forum predicted that 65% of school children would go into jobs that didn't even exist yet. In a world of AI and machine learning, we're moving into a phase where industry disruption and rapid up-skilling are going to become the norm, especially for an increasingly ageing workforce. "A generation ago, the half-life of a skill was about 26 years," said Indranil Roy, the lead at Deloitte's Future of Work Centre of Excellence in a BBC interview. "Today it's four and [a] half years and dropping." But for many, Roy's four and a half years are generous, with those in tech stating that specialist skills may now only be relevant for two to three years.

But are universities the right place to learn new skills? According to research conducted by recruiter Glassdoor last year, the number of major firms ditching degree requirements in their recruiting process is on the rise. Top firms like Google, Penguin Random House, Apple and IBM no longer require candidates to hold degrees for their top jobs, with many start-ups following suit. The move comes partly from recognising that talent, work ethic and a strong portfolio are more important to success than qualifications, while encouraging diversity is also a factor.

The creative industries contributed £101.5 billion to the UK economy in 2017, an increase of 53.1% since 2010. And yet creative careers are still

seen as risky by parents and schools, preventing people from lower socio-economic backgrounds from entering the field.

In the past two years there has been a huge growth in schemes that aim to bridge the gap to industry, becoming a thriving industry in itself. This year Creative Mentor Network (a non-profit that pairs young people with industry mentors) partnered up with Soho House for a new scheme to support under-27s, while last year, Brixton Finishing School (a free intensive 12-week advertising and digital skills programme for BAME, working class, neuro-diverse and female applicants) reported a 95% employment rate of its first intake. Is the creative degree on the wane?

FIRST  
HAND  
OBSERVATIONS

LYDIA WAKEFIELD

The Creative Industries Federation's deputy  
head of education on preparing for  
an unpredictable future.

Lydia Wakefield is the deputy head of education and skills at the Creative Industries Federation, a membership body of more than 10,000 people from creative organisations, businesses and educational institutions in the UK. The organisation has been an enthusiastic advocate of the importance of creativity for the future of technology and AI, and recently helped launch the country-wide Creative Careers Programme, a scheme that aims to raise awareness of opportunities in the creative sector and reach 160,000 students by 2020.

LIP

IF THE LIFESPAN OF SKILLS ARE DECREASING, HOW CAN STUDENTS AND GRADUATES PREPARE FOR THE WORKPLACE OF THE FUTURE, ESPECIALLY IF IT'S A FUTURE THAT'S VERY DIFFICULT TO PREDICT?

LW

The first thing is that 87% of jobs in the creative industries are at low to no risk of automation. There will still be a need for creativity and innovation, which is something that robots won't be able to do. Technology changes and advances so fast that you can't expect the software you used in your first year of university to necessarily still exist or be in the same format by the time you leave. I think one thing that is really needed is an aptitude for learning and continuing to develop skills. So the hunger to learn and continue learning is something that will keep people ahead of the game. If you're working for an organisation and you're an employee, they normally have some sort of training processes in place. But when you're self-employed (as a third of the sector are), you need to make sure you continue to up-skill.

LIP

WHAT SKILLS GAPS DO YOU THINK CURRENTLY EXIST IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES?

LW

It very much depends on the sub-sector. You'll see areas like screen and film pulling out skills in areas like augmented reality. But generally speaking, you can fit skills into three categories. There's the technical – developing tangible practical skills; then the professional skills of working in teams, communicating and problem-solving; and then enterprise skills. The workforce is starting to

work for themselves. People are taking ownership of their careers, wanting flexibility and autonomy. But many in the creative industries won't have studied business at any stage, so we need to make sure that people understand how they have to operate when they're working for themselves as well.

LIP

HOW CAN CREATIVE COMPANIES SUPPORT EMPLOYEES TO DEAL WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF AI, AUTOMATION AND RAPID RE-SKILLING?

LW

Ensuring that there are solid, continuing professional development [plans] in place and that they are very open. We think of education as formal environments, like schools, colleges and universities. But actually, it's really important that learning develops throughout careers to enable people to progress and to continue up-skilling. If people are self-employed we need to evaluate the education they can access through local networks, and introduce more informal learning as well as formal.

LIP

EMPLOYERS ARE INCREASINGLY LISTING SOFT SKILLS AS SOMETHING ESSENTIAL FOR NEW HIRES. WHY THE INTEREST NOW?

LW

Soft skills are the skills that AI won't necessarily ever be able to replace. Building relationships and quality communication won't be as easy to replicate through technology. There are new roles and jobs that are continuously becoming available that didn't exist even a couple of years ago. Soft skills are vital here, in any role adapting new technology. These include advances in virtual reality, augmented reality and lots more in the creative tech space. We're seeing a lot of new roles come from enterprise, whether that's secondary consultancy opportunities that connect different industries or the rise of tech in niche industries, like how digital can be used in heritage. It's not a sector you'd traditionally think as providing a lot of jobs in digital, but now it does.

## HOW CAN EARLY-YEARS CREATIVES CULTIVATE SOFT SKILLS?

LW

A lot of young people underestimate the skills that they've already developed through their own education – whether working in a team or presenting an idea. Part of the problem is that young people don't necessarily know how to articulate their skills. There's a lot to be learned from being proactive in learning about changes in the creative industries, whether that is contacting local businesses, or dropping someone a message through social media. Placements, internship schemes or work shadowing can be really helpful in developing professionalism.

## WHAT POLICY CHANGES DO WE NEED TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK?

LW

The Creative Careers Programme is essentially bringing together industry with young people, teachers and parents to educate across the board and raise awareness of the opportunities that are available. It's to help young people recognise what's going on behind closed doors. For example, in theatre, young people won't necessarily know about all the niche roles that might be ideal for them. As part of that we're launching Creative Careers week on 18th November, where businesses are opening up their doors to introduce young people to opportunities. More actions like that, bringing together the entire creative industry, would be really welcomed. The industry needs to continue to work with education providers, schools and colleges, and continue to work with government to make sure they're well-informed.

FIRST  
HAND  
OBSERVATIONS

MATTHEW WALSHAM

The policy and campaign lead for  
Partnership for Young London  
on supporting alternatives to university.

In July, a report by Partnership for Young London found that the creative industries risk alienating diverse young talent by “needlessly asking for degrees” for entry-level jobs. The report suggested a number of policies that would open up creative careers to those without degrees, from radically overhauling recruitment practices by abandoning degree requirements for entry-level roles to awarding loans and maintenance grants for apprenticeships or those starting their own business without going through university. Here the report’s author, Partnership for Young London policy and campaign lead Matthew Walsham, speaks to us.

LIP

MANY HIGH-PROFILE BUSINESSES HAVE DROPPED DEGREE CRITERIA IN THEIR APPLICATION PROCESS, AND THERE’S BEEN A HUGE INTEREST IN ALTERNATIVE ROUTES INTO THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS DRIVING THIS SHIFT IN ATTITUDE AND WHY NOW?

MW

Firstly, it’s the current government. While the Labour government was more about universities and widening access, in contrast the Conservative government had a particular focus on alternative forms of education, not just university – so technical education in particular. That has allowed bodies like the Creative Industries Federation to get involved in the curriculum of apprenticeships in a way that they can’t for universities, GCSEs or A-levels. Also, London in particular has some really negative statistics around creative industries and universities. We have the the highest proportion of graduates [in] non-graduate jobs. So we’re seeing quite a lot of people going through university being saddled with debt, without a knock-on effect in terms of earnings. The creative industries is one of the most oversaturated markets in terms of supply and demand. University is less certain as a guarantee to long-term employment than ever before.

Lastly there’s a lot of emphasis on the creative industries as a growth sector and the range of jobs that are available within it. The employers we spoke to were very interested in technical skills, and actually did see apprenticeship qualifications as an interesting way

of introducing those skills into the sector, but they weren't seeing that uptake. You're starting to see some institutions like Ravensbourne University introduce specific qualifications around technical knowledge needed in the creative industries, like camera work, but I think it's quite a slow uptake.

London has one of the lowest uptakes of apprenticeships of anywhere in the country. Nine out of ten young people in every single classroom go off to university. So it's a big thing for someone to make the decision to leave all of their friends and go against the tide to do an apprenticeship. When you couple this with the low standard of apprenticeships, the low name recognition of education providers, and the low expectations and status that young people have of apprenticeships (compared to university, which has a really strong lifestyle narrative around it) it's discouraging. Unfortunately, young people don't seem to care that you can earn more if you do a Level 3 to 5 apprenticeship in your lifetime compared to university – especially at age 16 when they're forced to make this decision.

LIP

ONE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REPORT WAS THAT THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES NEEDS TO OVERHAUL RECRUITMENT PRACTICES FOR ENTRY-LEVEL ROLES. HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THINGS CHANGE?

MW

Firstly, not asking for degrees where they're not needed. Portfolios and bodies of work are the most important factors, both for judging candidates and their suitability for the role. Asking for degrees is disenfranchising a large group of young people who didn't necessarily go to university, but have gone into industry and have a body of work. Blind CVs, removing bias on the names and genders are some basic approaches. The creative industries are putting more emphasis on soft skills, but my view is that the more emphasis there is on soft skills within the recruitment process, the more danger there is of systematic prejudice and bias. It's less focused on concrete factors, and more based on whether you like them or not.

LIP

ANOTHER RECOMMENDATION WAS TO SUPPORT YOUNG CREATIVE TALENT WHO DECIDED NOT TO GO TO UNIVERSITY THROUGH GRANTS. HOW WOULD THIS CHANGE THE DEMOGRAPHIC MAKE-UP OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES LONG-TERM?

MW

It's a push back against the disappearance of grants generally, not just for young people, but also charities, local organisations, community groups. We've moved away from straight grants and giving talent and good ideas room to flourish and succeed (or fail) into a payment-by-results, free market approach. One of the things that the report highlights is that getting into the creative industries is incredibly expensive. So without that grant-making procedure, for many people their work won't get made and their voices won't come through. And then if production values are low, or creatives aren't able to realise work properly, then it actually perpetuates the idea that this voice or this genre isn't very good because it's seen as amateurly made.

LIP

WHAT EXTRA CONSIDERATIONS DO BUSINESSES NEED TO PUT IN PLACE TO ENABLE EMPLOYEES WITHOUT DEGREES TO THRIVE?

MW

Learning at work is a really important one, and that's much harder for a sector built on very small organisations and start-ups, because that HR process isn't always there. It's so important that the workforce is constantly re-evaluated in terms of what skills they would like to learn. I think it'll be interesting to see the government's adult learning budget, especially if that gets devolved into the regional GLA [Greater London Authority], what Sadiq Khan has planned for it, and how he'll coordinate with the creative industries to find out what they need.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the breadth of this report and all the interesting people we've spoken to, it's inevitable that we've got something to say. Based on the conversations featured within these pages, here are the main changes we'd like to see the creative industries adopt, in order to make the world of work fairer for emerging creatives and allow them to reach their potential.

## ON A GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL:

More powers for SMEs and freelancers when chasing late payment fees, including a streamlined complaints procedure and help with legal fees.

Training stipends for freelancers wanting to re-skill or up-skill for in-demand areas.

Further collaboration between the creative industries and the Small Business Commissioner on upcoming consultations, to help end poor payment practices.

## ON AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL:

Freelancers to challenge and call out bad practice when it comes to payment terms with employers and clients.

Freelancers to carefully consider and limit the amount of free work undertaken and underbidding where possible, to reduce further exploitation and undervaluing of work.

## ON AN EDUCATIONAL LEVEL:

More soft skills and enterprise training to be made available on university courses.

## ON AN ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL:

50/50 male-female shortlists for new roles at all levels.

Better family-friendly policies, such as flexitime and shared parental leave.

The introduction of blind, portfolio-driven application processes for job vacancies, where appropriate to do so.

The introduction of bias training company-wide, to ensure equal opportunities.

Increased collaboration between creative companies and educational initiatives, to ensure that available careers advice is up-to-date, relevant and fit for purpose.



THANKS FOR READING



Lecture in Progress 2019  
lectureinprogress.com  
@lectureinprogress

Lecture in Progress is made possible  
with the support of our partners:

Paul Smith Foundation  
G . F Smith  
Google  
giffgaff  
Colophon Foundry  
Sky Creative Agency  
Hoefler&Co  
The Academy  
Greenspace  
anyways  
Amplify  
Kaleido Grafik  
Ogilvy  
ustwo

