**AHRC Cultural Encounters Fund 2015**

**Accessing Cardiff’s Hidden Creative Economy:**

**Facts and Figures**

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This research interrogates notions of working habits, aspirations, education and training opportunities held by the Cardiff region’s “embedded creatives”, i.e. those people performing jobs defined by the DCMS as creative who are occupied in organisations whose primary activities are not defined as creative by the DCMS. Its context is a digital revolution that has created opportunities for creativity to influence workplaces by increasing the usefulness of creative processes for competitive reasons. As creativity-valuing culture becomes more pervasive in daily life, so creativity can be seen as growing naturally into areas of work that have hitherto been less immersed.

# Project Overview

There is a need to better understand the perceptions, aspirations and feelings of the “embedded creative” population in the Cardiff region. This group of workers has not been studied in depth before in the UK, and so this project serves as a preliminary interrogation of their feelings towards the label “creative”, their sense of mobility, satisfaction and creative freedom in their jobs, and their access to training and peer networks.

As its starting point, it takes definitions supplied by the UK Government’s Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), which defines both a range of possible creative jobs, and the creative industries which they partially exist within. However, though these definitions are essential and widely used in the predominantly quantitative research that is conducted in this area, in order to test the validity of these definitions against the perceptions of those they set out to describe, a more qualitative approach was deemed necessary.

Thirty-seven interviews were conducted with embedded creatives from the Cardiff region. Participants were interviewed using a question structure derived from a literature review, which was slightly evolved during the course of the data collection as the researcher became more familiar with the effectiveness of the questions. Sessions were audio recorded and the recordings transcribed on behalf of the researcher. The transcripts were then “coded”, using NVivo 10 to perform a thematic analysis in which themes discussed in each interview were identified and applied to all transcripts. This coding structure is reproduced in an appendix below (Section 13.1), and served as the basis for the discussion of findings.

# Project Achievements

As little qualitative work has been carried out on embedded creatives worldwide, and none in Wales, this project carries a novelty that could be considered an achievement and increases the potential value of findings.

The participants were made aware of other work being done by the team, specifically Creative Cardiff, a professional network and information site for the creative community in Cardiff. This means that the research is strongly linked with pragmatic engagement and community-facing activities, both feeding into them and benefitting from them, rather than being conducted in isolated academic conditions.

A lunchtime seminar for the participants strengthened the links between the Creative Economy Team and the embedded creatives, and allowed information about the wider context and purposes served by the research to be communicated to the largely non-academic audience.

In certain cases, the interviews encouraged participants to think about their work in a way they hadn’t before, or to open the beginnings of a critical dialogue with themselves about the nature of creativity and how it could be seen to relate to their work. Although difficult to directly measure, this was felt to be an achievement because it suggested the receptiveness of the subject group to the questions being posed.

# All Interview Participants

## Private Sector Organisations

Unnamed, Policy and Projects Officer, Unnamed Organisation (Think tank)

Jack Cooper, Marketing and Events Manager, Chapel1877 (Food and beverages)

Susan James, Head of Marketing, Castleoak (Construction)

Emily Griffiths, Marketing and Communications Manager, Capital Law and People (Legal and HR)

Unnamed, Graphic Designer, Unnamed Organisation (Legal and HR)

Unnamed, Head of Content and Social Media, Unnamed Organisation

Angharad Dalton, Policy and Projects Officer, Institute of Welsh Affairs (Think tank)

Unnamed, Founder, Unnamed Organisation (Private assistance agency)

Unnamed, Corporate Communications Officer, Unnamed Organisation (Electricity distribution)

Cerian Price, Marketing and PR Coordinator, Unnamed Organisation (retail)

Unnamed, Marketing Executive, Unnamed Organisation (Office equipment supplier)

John Dunnington, Marketing Manager, EuroClad.Ltd (Construction)

Vanessa Yilmaz, Director of Development and Communications, Howell’s School (Education)

## Public Sector Organisations

Barry Richards, Senior Web Developer, Unnamed Organisation (Higher education)

Alice Percival, Assistant Subject Librarian (Business) and Executive officer of Cardiff University Press, Cardiff University (Higher education)

Sarah Vining, Communities and Regeneration Assistant, Cardiff Community Housing Association (Housing association)

Charmine Smikle, Senior Communications Officer, Care Council for Wales (Regulator)

Sophie Jenkins, Communications Officer, Welsh Gymnastics (Governing body)

Jo Foxall, Marketing Manager, Traveline Cymru (Public information provider)

Adam Fairbank, Marketing Manager, Sport Wales (Sports advocacy)

Unnamed, Social Media Officer, Unnamed Organisation (Public health)

Jo Berry, Communications Officer, Welsh Treasury (Government)

Unnamed, Senior Communications Manager, Unnamed Organisation (Funding)

Rachel Lewis, Communications Manager (Digital Lead), Unnamed Organisation (Healthcare)

## Third Sector Organisations

Unnamed, PR, Events and Communications Manager, Unnamed Organisation (Responsible business advocacy)

Unnamed, PR Manager, Unnamed Organisation (Children’s Charity)

Amy Lee, Communications and Relationships Manager, The Wallich (Homelessness Charity)

Unnamed, Marketing and Communications Manager, Unnamed Organisation (Local environment charity)

Stewart Harding, Information and Communications Officer, Diverse Cymru (Equality Charity)

Unnamed, Digital Media Officer, Unnamed Organisation (Charity)

Unnamed, Marketing and Communications Officer, Unnamed Organisation (Charity)

Clare James, Fundraising Coordinator, Llamau (Social exclusion charity)

Luke Merlini, PR and Communications Manager, Tenovus (Cancer support charity)

Dylan Thomas, Web Developer, Unnamed Organisation (Charity)

Carol Jones, Wales Director, The Audience Agency (Audience development charity)

Lynsey Jackson, Digital Communications Manager, Cynnal Cymru (Sustainable development charity)

Unnamed, Media Communications Manager, Unnamed Organisation (Charity)

# Participant Numbers, by Sector

# Reported Organisation Sizes, by Sector

The following tree diagram shows the sizes of participants’ organisations, as reported by the participants, divided according to the sector in which they exist. Micro organisations are defined here (in partial overlap with EU definitions, which also include a turnover component) as those employing fewer than 10 people. Small organisations contain from 11 to 50 employees; medium organisations contain from to 51 to 250; large organisations contain more than 250. Those who didn’t report an organisation size are listed as “Unassigned”.

