



Erasmus+

YT2M STAKEHOLDER SURVEY & FOCUS GROUP. RESULTS

Report prepared by Liz Ungureanu

INTRODUCTION

During the month of June 2015 Gecko Programmes consulted the target groups that we considered relevant for our project input regarding the obstacles artisans face when seeking to gain entrepreneurial skills and the artisan entrepreneurial needs.

The survey was conducted using two main tools: semi-structured questionnaires and focus groups, addressing our two main target categories:

- sector professionals, business support services
- artists/artisans

The templates that we used are enclosed as annexes at the end of this report.

We tried to reach artist and artisan associations, education providers, sector professionals, consecrated art business entrepreneurs, education providers (both universities and vocational education providers), the local chamber of commerce and business support advisors. The number of stakeholders we contacted was considerable (over 100 individuals and organisations), but the replies weren't proportional with our effort.

However, we did obtain a representative case study to guide us through the workshop design process. Even though our samples exceeded the number of stakeholders promised by the project proposal, we believe that a higher number of respondents would have made the survey more comprehensive.

Our consultation included stakeholders such as an art university's enterprise development department, artisan training organisations, creative enterprises, art entrepreneurs, and last, but not least, artists and artisans (glassware, fine arts, tattoo artist, textiles and screen printing, leather and fashion sectors).

RESPONDENTS

1. Sector professionals/business support advisors

The survey targeting the sector professionals and business support advisors had 7 respondents,

- four of whom were sector professionals
- four were involved in the art business support sector.

All eight were engaged in the art sector while three were working with an organisation representing the art sector/providing training to the sector.

Below is a brief description of their organisation activities:

i. Higher Education Institution, School of Art, Department for Enterprise Development

ii. Creating artwork. Own website design. www.belindamarialongsden.com Promoting artwork through the Wolverhampton area.

Working at Shop in the square to promote own artwork with other artists. Each person works one day a month on a voluntary basis, the shop is a community interest company. Please see website for more details. www.shopinthesquare.co.uk

Co-ordinator for the Junction Festival 3 – 5th June 2015.

Manager of Art in the City, which displayed artworks in shops in the town centre. Some of which are still displaying the work. Invitation from Waterstones to do an Alice in wonderland display this year.



Erasmus+

Director of Arts and Culture for Creative Wolverhampton, an online website to promote art activities etc in Wolverhampton. Creative Wolverhampton is a project that aims to bring all art activities, Theatre, local events, groups etc....to one place where information can be easily accessed. Most of the groups listed will be able to upload their own information to the website so that it can be kept up to date.

Represented by The Asylum Gallery, Chapel Ash, Wolverhampton. www.theasylumgallery.com

And by The Black Sheep Gallery. www.blacksheepstudioandartgallery.co.uk

iii. The main focus of this organisation is the provision of one-to-one courses that provide skills based training by trade experts which is specifically tailored to the needs of an individual artist/jeweller.

The Bespoke Jewellery Training Company provides national **one-to-one** professional development training for those working within the jewellery industry – both makers and companies. We facilitate and arrange a training or consultancy day to take place in the **tutors** own trade workshop. Collaborating tutors are specifically expert, industry recognised Goldsmiths with over 15 years trade experience or Jewellery Industry specialists in their area of expertise. Both practical and business training is provided, along with training guidance to support fine trade skills and professional development.

iii. Creative Arts Organisation, Support & Mentorship for Artists, Facilities for Artists, Projects for Artists, Exhibitions, Photography & Videography

iii. Supporting, uniting and promoting the creative, cultural and heritage industries in Wolverhampton through an online hub; www.creativewolverhampton.org (Currently under development).

iii. Teaching art in after school clubs and youth clubs. Painting and selling art work through galleries, online etc. Licencing work to publishers to print wall art/giftware etc and delivering sessions to Adult Education students trying to create a business in the creative sector.

iii. Wolverhampton School of Art – research and education and practice in arts education/ inclusive of Public Lecture Programmes/ Summer Schools

iii. Delivering training and development for SMEs

2. Artists/artisans

The survey targeting artists and artisans had six respondents: a tattoo artist, two fine artists, a glassmaker, a leather artisan, a textiles and screenprinting artisan and a fashion designer. Four of them have started trading more than one year ago, two for one year and one for less than 6 months. Five of them are sole traders, one is involved in a partnership and one hasn't started trading yet.

RESULTS

1. SECTOR PROFESSIONALS/BUSINESS SUPPORT ADVISORS

Question 4. Availability of materials and advice to develop enterprise skills. [Respondents were asked to score the below statements on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being excellent. The results for each line are an average of the respondent's scores]

	Return rate %	Response average
- availability of generic materials	45.25%	3.62
- availability of sector specific materials	37.5%	3
- availability of open access materials	37.5%	3
- availability of formalized advice from advisory groups	35.88%	2.87
- information from chambers of commerce	32%	2.56
- paper based	35.88%	2.87
- DVD based	26.5%	2.12
- web based	40.63%	3.25



Erasmus+

Question 5. Skills need to reach and sell to new customers (multiple choices):

	Return rate	N° responses
Management Skills	62.5%	5
Business Skills (negotiation, contracting)	75%	6
Marketing	75%	6
Financial Management	75%	6
Event Management	42.86%	3
Other	14.29%	1
-Project management		
-Practical skills		
-Soft skills		
-Team building&IPR		

Question 6. What specific skills do artists/artisans need to gain to set up an art enterprise?

1) There is a need for artists access to sector specific training that helps them to understand firstly the importance in developing a strong and robust business strategy with staff development training and a clear financial model to become sustainable for the longterm. This would need to be coupled with a mentoring or peer-peer coaching programme to keep the business on track and moving forward. A training programme that helps the artist understand where their IPR is and how to capitalise financially on it.

2) If you are setting up an art enterprise, for example a community art gallery, you need to be organised to deal with other artists as they are notoriously late. When I ran White Tree gallery in chapel ash, I learnt to give specific times as you can spend a lot of the day waiting for artists to bring artwork. Every artwork needs to be labelled with media, size, price etc as you will lose custom if not. Make sure that the space you are renting is painted and looks clean and tidy, if you are trying to sell artwork, people expect a high standard. If you can have a credit card reader this is better than cash, as people sometimes buy art on a spur of the moment. If not make sure you get a deposit as this is a way to keep in touch with them after the event.

3) Business including costing and pricing, professional development, marketing & social media skills, networking, links to industry, support to market.

4) All above (management, business, marketing, financial management, event management, project management)and specific skills related to area.

5) Basic Organisation Skills, Basic Financial Management, Basic Project Management, Good Communications Skills, Common Sense.

6) Understanding of markets, buyer behaviour, trends, etc. Relationship management. Portfolio development. Communication skills.

7) Whilst all the skills listed above are useful, if not crucial, it is the soft skills of artists that need to be improved. Too often there is an lack of ambition, confidence, focus, creativity,drive, realism or determination. If all this is in place then much of the above listed in section 5 will follow or can be taught on a standard business course

8) Entrepreneurial skills in marketing a service or material product – guidance and training networks/ employability skills. Self Employment Training and support packages eg AA2a

Question 7. Do you think that existing enterprise training offer for art sector professionals in your country is sufficient? If not, where do you see any deficiencies of training?

1) There is a lack of training and understanding in the importance of becoming financially independent from what the artist produces, Universities are still not giving the right information about how to become commercial from their practice and this holding the sector back. Most training for artists is developed for the Creative Industries sectors and then applied to Artist and is expected to meet their needs in their understanding of how to price and commercialise their



Erasmus+

products or services, this needs to be addressed with developing the tools available for artist and business development to meet the needs of the artist.

2) Technology based Hubs need to be more available similar to Silicon Roundabout in London to encourage SME's

3) Training is quite around completing business plans written with standard product/service business model in mind.

4) Recently went on Creative Enterprise (Coventry) training, which was excellent. I have no idea about availability in the country as a whole.

I would suspect that there is London, then pockets of places where it is sufficient (e.g. Bristol, Coventry)

5) Probably not. Information about funding sources and enterprise development skills.

6) I've always been able to find help when I need it. From Adult Education, friends, galleries, other artists etc. However, some of the advice I have received from some of the more "prestigious" organisations is was often vague, whimsical and not at all helpful. I also think that graduates aren't given a realistic picture of what being a commercial artist is about and the skills and choices they may have to take on in their career.

7) No, I did not think it is sufficient, that is why I started my own CPD advice and training company in 2014 for the Jewellery Industry to support practice/business based needs.

8) My experience from University is that you are given projects to complete and some idea of how to set up an exhibition. It would be good, if artists were given information of organizations in their area where they can interact with other artists who can give them an insight of how to get artwork into the public sector.

Question 8. If you think that a programme to develop enterprise skills in artists/artisans would benefit the sector, what could be changed?

1) How the tools interacts with the practice and how they develop the person to become more entrepreneurial in their thinking process.

1) Artists can benefit hugely from any programme that provides links to trade professionals in their own sector, to provide professional development practical training or in a mentoring capacity.

2) I think a programme where artists could be given information on how to become self employed, for example book keeping, managing cash etc... Places to rent studios so they can interact with other artists. How to rent a building so a group of artists can work together, show their work.

3) Networking, facilities, sustainability and access to funding

4) Artists Basic Enterprise Skills as stated in question 6

5) Referral from work programmes to creative industry support for people looking to set up in the creative sector rather than to generic one-size-fits-all support.

6) It would hopefully mean that more artists would be able to make a living from their creativity

7) Networking needs to be supportive and Regional if not local to offer sustained support for R&D which drives forward innovation.

2. ARTISTS/ARTISANS

Question 4. If you already run an art business or if you considered starting up a business, when seeking to gain entrepreneurial skills, did you find the necessary guidance materials to be easy to access?

1) yes

2) yes, mostly online

3) there are a lot of options, but if you work full time most funding is applicable. So you have to save and start yourself

4) I found some useful information but a lot is not aimed at creative businesses and is hard to adapt to fit. But much of the creative information is not easy to access and require membership and money to join.



Erasmus+

5) I have learnt about business through trial and error. I had a gallery space in Chapel Ash, Wolverhampton and was part of MD Gallery in Wolverhampton town centre. I work on my own now as I can get more work done without concentrating on outside ventures. I do however work for Creative Wolverhampton as this paid. I was part of Wolverhampton Society of Artists and The Junction festival but these took up too much time and were not paid work.

Question 5. Availability of materials and advice to develop enterprise skills. [Respondents were asked to score the below statements on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being excellent. The results for each line are an average of the respondent's scores]

	Return rate	Response average
availability of generic materials	55%	3
availability of sector specific materials	58.33%	3.14
availability of open access materials	50%	2.71
availability of formalized advice from advisory	50%	2.71
information from chambers of commerce	50%	2.71
paper based	46.67%	2.57
DVD based	35%	2
web based	71.67%	3.85

Question 6. Skills need to reach and sell to new customers (multiple choices):

	Return rate	N° responses
Management Skills	54.14%	4
Business Skills (negotiation, contracting)	71.43%	5
Marketing	100%	7
Financial Management	100%	7
Event Management	54.14%	4
Other -Communication skills and knowledge of applications	14.29%	1

Question 7. Do you think that existing entrepreneurial training offer in the sector in your country is sufficient? If not, where do you see any deficiencies of training?

- 1) There is training from the Crafts Council to assist with entrepreneurial skills but this is limited to a small number of people. I did it and it was fantastic, but the limiting number of people that can do it makes it difficult for many.
- 2) Training especially for creatives is needed.
- 3) Most training is paid
- 3) Not sure what training is on offer
- 4) It may exist I haven't really looked for it.

Question 8. What are your views on how to learn and apply knowledge to enterprise?

- 1) Continuous research and networking with similar makers to yourself both in your current position and further down the line to gain knowledge and tips from each other.
- 2) More hands on practical teaching should be available.
- 3) Speak, speak, speak. In order to get the know-how and knowledge networking is a priority.
- 4) as a tattooist, very little knowledge is ready available and must be attained from experience.
- 5) if by this you mean work experience, this can be hard to come by and require working for free. However, extremely worth will.



6) I think that you glean ways of working through meeting up with other art organisations, artists who are self employed. Going to art events to meet other creative people

FOCUS GROUPS & SWOT ANALYSIS

Focus Group Artisans

1. Do you have any enterprise knowledge? How did you gain it?

- Yes some, from teaching for over 14 yrs.
- I have some enterprise knowledge, I participated on the Hothouse programme with the Crafts Council last year, where I learnt most I know about my business, but there;s always more to learn!

2. What do you think would be the most efficient method to learn and apply knowledge to enterprise?

- I think the most efficient method is hearing from people that use particular methods, and being given an overview, and a chance to see how they work to enable you to think whther it is a way that suits you
- Practical coursework days.. then actual marketing days.

3. Do you think that an enterprise workshop can help you develop a successful art business?

- Yes, I think that being given the tools that would don't have in enterprise gives you the confidence and a bit of knowledge to get further.
- Yes I think so. Also to meet with others in the same area of work.

4. What do you think are the main issues when setting up an art business?

- Main issues are, making/finding money to start your practise, knowing where to find opportunities, business knowledge, loneliness!
- Knowing how to obtain funding, and finding the right clientele.

5. What do you think are the main issues when developing an art business?

- How to approach potential outlets, knowledge of contracts, upscaling work to fit your audience - getting different equipment or your own if you don't already to enable you to be more productive.
- Space to work, pricing work, connections that will boost your creativity not hinder it.

6. What are the main issues of enterprise sustainability?

- The infrequency of work in an art business, economic climate, developing new work whilst still working on other projects.
- Having a mentor that has recieved enterprise training then passing it on and so forth may ensure enterprise becomes sustainable.. and could create a small income during that time of mentorship??

Focus Group sector professionals/education providers, etc

1. What do you think would be the most efficient method(s) for artists/artisans to learn and apply knowledge to enterprise?

- To put into practise what they have learned – research, create, market and sell
- Through a programme of business training and personal development and strong peer-peer coaching programme to support through the development process.
- Work through a programme covering specific aspects of creative business, such as; identifying a niche, artist statement, developing a portfolio of work, branding, costing of work or services, auditing of existing work (date, titles, cost), identifying an audience (galleries, individuals, agents), communications, financial management, which is overseen by a mentor and signed off at every stage.
- Practical workshops with case studies and teamworking. Follow up visits or workshops to see how they are getting on applying what they learnt.
- a) Ideally one-to-one consultations (courses) specific to their craft industry would deliver the most suitable tailored content and information. Alternatively small group workshops aimed at a



Erasmus+

particular craft area eg Ceramics etc could be suitable but not quite as effective as one-to-one knowledge transfer.

- b) Artists/Makers local groups can be useful too. On a positive note, makers working in the same craft discuss ideas and support each other – on a negative note, those working in the same craft area are most likely competing for the same target market and may not wish to share useful helpful leads or knowledge.

2. How could an enterprise workshop help artists/artisans develop a successful art business?

- A workshop can only be effective if the course content is specific to the craft area, and it includes critical information about identifying target markets, identifying competitors, costing/pricing and production and finding a route to market. For this information to be useful it has to be specific rather than generic.
- By making a difference to the artist. Making them positive and see that with some basic enterprise skills and a continuous support network that business is actually easier than it looks
- Highlight some of the main issues
Provide them with a general framework
Specific Q&As
It would motivate them and encourage them, give them examples of other successful artists and their journeys. It would concentrate on developing good ideas into viable businesses .
- To become commercial and entrepreneurial in the way the artist develops and produces their work, have the customer more in mind when producing some of the work and how to capitalise on work that they have and will produce in the future. There is very little about the different financial models trained to artists and this holds them back when thinking about selling their work.

3. What are the main issues artists/artisans face when setting up an art enterprise?

- Lack of confidence and business experience
- a) Identifying unique selling points for products
- b) Resolving issues regarding production costs vs determined maximum wholesale price and retail sales price (Creating a big enough profit margin)
- c) Finding a route to market that enable a profit to be made.
- Creative businesses don't necessarily fit into a standard business model
- daunted by entering into the business world, fear of competition, conflicting advice from the many organisations offering advice.
- They still think that funding is the way to get their work produced and don't think about other income streams that are freely available to them.

4. What are the main issues artists/artisans face when developing an art enterprise?

- Bad organisation, lack of self confidence, consistency.
- a) Finance: Research and development takes time and/or financial investment. Continuous professional development is critical but often overlooked because other financial business pressures tend to take priority. Funding is limited, non-existent or it has unmanageable criteria that the artist must follow eg 50/50 match investment by the artist.
- b) Finding the right level of expertise to learn from within their own craft industry.
- c) Finding a training course or opportunity that fits in with their specific developmental requirements.
- Funding

5. What are the main issues of enterprise sustainability?

- Cashflow
- Bad organisation, Cash Flow Management.
- a) Competition for route to market is exceptionally high



- b) A lack of understanding about how much time should be allocated to business and marketing – Artists prefer to make and choose to make because they are creative. Most find the business side difficult or troublesome.
- c) Sales growth vs productivity limitations
- d) Production time (handmade items) costs exceeding selling price limits – lack of profit margin.
- e) Isolation: Motivation is difficult to maintain when you are working in isolation in your workshop.
 - Artists underpricing their work, not spotting trends and waiting for the door to knock!
 - The right training and longterm support so they can get to the point where the business can support itself.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic enterprise training materials available online • An enterprise workshop would offer confidence to artists that are considering a business start up • Makers working in the same craft support each other and exchange good practice • Basic enterprise skills can boost an art business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most artists have a 9 to 5 job • Most information available online is generic and not aimed at creative businesses • Most enterprise knowledge for creative enterprises must be attained from experience • Correctly identifying the target market • Enterprise training can only be effective if it's specific for the art sector • Lack of enterprise/business skills • Creative businesses don't fit into a standard business model • Cash Flow Management • Most artists/artisans find the business side difficult or troublesome
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise training from the Crafts council available, but has limited places • Ensuring sustainability by finding a mentor • Put into practice the art learnt: research, create, market and sell • Practical workshops/hands on practice • Identifying competitors • Provide motivation by showcasing best practice from successful art businesses • Continuous professional development • Identifying unique selling points for products • Resourcing the finance to start up a business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most training offers require a lot of money • Developing a business whilst still working on other projects/attending a regular job • Infrequency of work in the art business • Economic climate • Lack of confidence and business experience • Production costs vs determined maximum wholesale price and sales price • Conflicting advice from business support services • Competition for route to market high • Production time costs exceeding selling price limits