

# Prosper

Supporting the business of culture

## **70 arts and cultural organisations across England to receive business development support, advice and training on the Prosper programme**

Creative United, has today announced the cohort of 70 organisations and individuals across the arts, museums and libraries which will benefit from free business support through its Prosper programme. This cohort includes cutting edge artists, innovative library services, enterprising museums and much-loved arts organisations.

Prosper was designed and launched by Creative United with funding from Arts Council England, Access – the Foundation for Social Investment and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, and is delivered in partnership with the Centre for Business in Society at Coventry University and the Arts Marketing Association. It will enable those in the cohort to grow and develop into more resilient organisations, better able to attract income from a variety of sources as well as pursue their creative and social missions.

The application period for the programme ran from 27 March to 31 May 2017. In that time 260 organisations, sole traders, local authorities, charities, enterprises and artist practitioners applied from across England. The selected cohort represents companies of all sizes and types, with specialisms including contemporary dance incorporating VR technology, promotion of sub-cultures, youth theatre, clowning, design for the stage, music education, museums of social history and community libraries. 81% are based outside of London.

Over the next 9 months the cohort will work with a specialist business advisor to tackle areas such as strengthening business plans, empowering their teams with innovation and enterprise skills, identifying new business models and understanding the value of their own assets and intellectual property (IP). They will also have the choice of participating in a range of masterclasses, workshops and webinars designed for all levels – from CEO to project assistants, shop floor workers to trustees.

During this time, the Centre for Business in Society will carry out what promises to be vital research in England and Scotland (thanks for support from Creative Scotland) into the current provision of business support available for arts and culture, and an evaluation on the drivers and journeys of those organisations entering into business development projects with Prosper support.

The Arts Marketing Association is creating an online resource on their CultureHive website ([www.culturehive.co.uk/prosper](http://www.culturehive.co.uk/prosper)) which will not only tell the stories of those going through

the Prosper programme, but also link to other business support toolkits and programmes, and share the learning from Prosper with the wider sector.

Mary-Alice Stack, Chief Executive of Creative United, said:

*“We’re thrilled that, working closely with our partners and networks across the country, we have attracted so many vibrant and culturally significant organisations to apply to Prosper. I feel this is a clear indicator of the appetite for the business development opportunity offered by the programme, and I look forward to seeing the impacts of our work - enabling creative and cultural companies to be more resilient to change, more able to respond to opportunities, and increase their contribution to our economy, culture and society.”*

Jane Tarr, Director, Organisational Resilience and Environmental Sustainability, Arts Council England, said:

*“I’m delighted Prosper has had so much interest from across the country – it shows there are a lot of organisations interested in exploring new, sustainable ways of working to help them do more, and the Arts Council is keen to support that through Prosper and our other Resilience programmes.”*

Amar Patel from Prosper supported social enterprise Soul Labels said:

*“Soul Labels is delighted to be taking part in the Prosper programme. We are a young arts group with a clear social purpose. But our work will only have lasting social impact if we know how to run a successful company. That means having a firm grounding in basic principles, from honing a business plan to managing risk. Some of this information might be available online but it is so much better to be sitting in a session led by top professionals or having a one-to-one. It’s tough out there. Free access to this kind of support gives us every chance of succeeding. We intend to make the most of it.”*

Also on the programme is Gateshead Council Library Service, and Councillor John McElroy, the Council’s Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Leisure, said:

*“Gateshead Council is delighted to have been selected to participate in the Prosper project being delivered by Creative United. The expert advice and support our library service will receive will assist with the ongoing transformation of exciting services and the development of new business plans and opportunities for income generation. We look forward to a very successful project.”*

More information about the Prosper cohort can be found on our website –

<http://www.creativeunited.org.uk/programme/prosper/>.

For more information about Creative United or Prosper please email

[sarah.thirtle@creativeunited.org.uk](mailto:sarah.thirtle@creativeunited.org.uk).

For images and other enquiries please email [bethan.williams@creativeunited.org.uk](mailto:bethan.williams@creativeunited.org.uk).

**Notes to editors****The full Prosper cohort**

64 Million Artists (London)  
Antlers Gallery (Bristol)  
AΦE (Ashford, Kent)  
Barnsley Library Services  
Burnley Youth Theatre  
Cambridge Live  
Candoco Dance Company (London)  
Clowns Without Borders (London)  
Coney (London)  
Creative Arts East (Wymondham, Norfolk)  
Creative Future (Brighton)  
Creativity Works (Radstock)  
Criterion Theatre Company (Coventry)  
Culture& (London)  
DaDaFest (Liverpool)  
darts (Doncaster Community Arts)  
Derby Museums  
Exeter Phoenix Ltd  
Festival of Thrift (Newcastle)  
FRONTLINEdance (Stoke on Trent)  
Gateshead Libraries  
Geese Theatre Company (Birmingham)  
Greenwich Dance (London)  
Jasmine Illustration (London)  
Jazz re:freshed (London)  
Kala Sangam (Bradford)  
Kings Theatre (Porstmouth)  
Kirklees Theatre Trust, The Lawrence Batley Theatre (Huddersfield)  
Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation  
Live Theatre Winchester Trust: Theatre Royal Winchester and Hat Fair  
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (Libraries and Archives)  
Luke Emery Productions (Bristol)  
Meadow Arts (Ludlow, Shropshire)  
Metal Culture Ltd (Southend on Sea)  
Middle Child Theatre (Hull)  
Modern Art Oxford  
Museum of Army Flying (Stockbridge)  
New Brewery Arts (Cirencester)  
New Writing North (Newcastle)  
NYMAZ (York)  
One Latin Culture (Liverpool)  
Philharmonia Orchestra (London)  
Photographic Archive Miners (Coventry)



Photoworks (Brighton)  
Poet in the City (London)  
Polly Tisdall (Bristol)  
Polysemic (London)  
Red Herring Productions (Bideford, Devon)  
Rhythmix (Tunbridge Wells)  
Ripon Museum Trust  
Salford Community Leisure  
Sheffield Galleries & Museums Trust  
SoCo Music Project (Southampton)  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council  
Somerset County Council/Somerset Libraries  
Soul Labels London)  
Spike Island Artspace Ltd  
Stellar Projects and Events (Stockton on Tees)  
Studio Peascod (Morton in Marsh, Gloucestershire)  
Ruth Singer (Leicester)  
The Architecture Centre (Bristol)  
The Farmland Museum (Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire)  
The Mill Arts Centre (Banbury)  
The Wardrobe Ensemble (Bristol)  
Turned On Its Head (Leicester)  
tutti frutti Productions (Leeds)  
UK Young Artists (Loughborough)  
Vane (Newcastle)  
Virtual Migrants (Ashton under Lyme)  
Wild Rumpus (Macclesfield)

### **About Creative United**

Creative United has been established with support from Arts Council England to provide a range of financial products and services designed to enable the growth and development of the UK's cultural and creative industries. Their mission is to build a sustainable and resilient creative economy, making the arts accessible to all. In doing so, they help the creative sector to understand how best to take advantage of the finance opportunities open to them, and enable their finance partners to build their experience and interest in working with creative and cultural enterprises. They provide creative businesses and cultural organisations with access to a range of commercial tools, finance options, business skills and marketing channels designed to drive sales revenues and allow them to maximise their commercial potential.

As a Community Interest Company, Creative United's focus is on delivering a combination of strong social and financial returns.

Creative United's publicly funded programmes are:

- Own Art – interest free loans for the purchase of contemporary art and craft
- Take it away – interest free loans for the purchase of musical instruments
- Prosper – a business support and action research programme for the arts, museums and libraries
- Creative Industry Finance – business support and access to finance for creative enterprises



- ArtsCard - The UK's first employee benefits scheme to focus exclusively on arts, culture and creativity

For more information please visit [www.creativeunited.org.uk](http://www.creativeunited.org.uk)

### **About Arts Council England**

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we plan to invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

For more information please visit [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

### **About Creative Scotland**

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here. We enable people and organisations to work in and experience the arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland by helping others to develop great ideas and bring them to life. We distribute funding provided by the Scottish Government and the National Lottery.

For further information about Creative Scotland please visit [www.creativescotland.com](http://www.creativescotland.com). Follow us @creativescots and [www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland](https://www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland)

### **About Access – The Foundation for Social Investment**

Access – The Foundation for Social Investment exists to bridge the gap between charities and social enterprises and social investors. Access does this through two main programmes: the Growth Fund which blends grant from Big Lottery Fund and loan from Big Society Capital and is focused on enabling the provision of the simple and affordable investment products that charities and social enterprises tell us they need; and the capacity building programme, which provides charities and social enterprises with the support they need to get ready to take on investment.

For more information please visit [www.access-socialinvestment.org.uk](http://www.access-socialinvestment.org.uk)

### **About the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation aims to improve the quality of life for people and communities throughout the UK both now and in the future. We do this by funding the charitable work of organisations who are building an inclusive, creative and sustainable society.

The Foundation is one of the largest independent grant-makers in the UK. In 2016 we made grants of £42.4 million towards a wide range of work within the arts, children and young people, the environment, food and social change. We also have a £45 million allocation to social investments for organisations with the aim of creating social impact.

For more information please visit [www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk](http://www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk)

### **About the Centre for Business in Society**

CBiS is responsible for nurturing, developing and expanding research culture and activity within the Faculty of Business and Law at Coventry University. Over thirty-five full-time research staff, more than sixty Doctoral students and colleagues within the Faculty undertaking their research sabbaticals are located in a dedicated hub within the Faculty of Business and Law.

Through understanding the impact of organisations' activities, behaviours and policies, our research promotes responsibility and seeks better outcomes for economies, environments and societies.

Our teams are focussing on:

- Examining the circular economy, sustainability and ethical consumption.
- Searching for durable and inclusive economic growth models with new partnerships between state, economy and society.
- Exploring at the national, organisational and individual level the economic and social impacts of the financial crisis and financialisation.
- Addressing the implications of digital and big data for business, society and the economy.

For more information please visit [www.coventry.ac.uk/research/areas-of-research/business-in-society/](http://www.coventry.ac.uk/research/areas-of-research/business-in-society/)

### **About the Arts Marketing Association**

The AMA is a membership organisation with nearly 2,000 members working at all levels in the arts, culture and heritage sector. The organisation helps its members make better connections between art and culture and the public, providing professional development for those working in cultural marketing and management.

Some of the AMA's major projects include CultureHive, the website for sharing best practice, the resilience programme Future Proof Museums, the intensive online Digital Marketing and Audience Diversity Academies and the AMA's conference, which attracts over 600 delegates to a new city annually.

For more information please visit [www.a-m-a.co.uk](http://www.a-m-a.co.uk)