

Tackling the crisis in the creative sector

Creative Mentor Network's Impact Report 2017

It is now three years since **Isabel Farchy** set out to build a bridge between creative industry careers and the 16–19 year olds from social backgrounds that were typically excluded from them. By setting up creative professionals in mentoring relationships with the students who would most benefit, the **Creative Mentor Network** seeks to break down the social barriers to careers in sectors such as advertising, film, broadcasting and design, while offering creative organisations access to the fresh perspectives, diverse talents and untapped ideas of a demographic of young people they have historically neglected.

When she established the Creative Mentor Network in response to the startling lack of social diversity in London's creative sector, Isabel had three main aims:

- *To help students from lower-level socio-economic communities **build their professional networks***
- *To give them an **understanding of the labour market** within the creative industries that conventional education and careers advice often omits*
- *To help them develop the **confidence, initiative and communication skills** they need to compete in the creative marketplace*

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

7

Networking
Events

25

Partner schools
and colleges

30+

Creative businesses
signed up

192

Ambassadors, mentors
and mentees

1,536

Hours of mentoring so far

Thus armed with an understating of the social capital and contacts often necessary to gain a foothold in the sector, the Creative Mentor Network's students are better equipped to forge their own career path and secure opportunities they may not have known existed otherwise.

Three years after its first mentor and mentee sat down together for their first meeting, the Creative Mentor Network has released its first **Impact Report** – a detailed look back at its activities since inception, a review of the cohorts of mentors and mentees who have passed through its programme, and an assessment of the impact it has had on the professional lives of both parties.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT

- **12%** of Creative Mentor Network's student alumni have now obtained **full-time positions in the creative industries**. From the very first cohort of mentees in 2014, one is a BBC broadcast journalist, another a media executive at Maxus Global and another an events manager at Lush Digital.
 - **25%** have gone to obtain **further work experience** in the creative sector, working with the likes of Wieden + Kennedy, IDEO, BT Sport and Monocle magazine.
 - **93%** of mentees agree that they now have **a clear understanding of the different roles and career paths** available in the creative industries.
 - **93%** say that their experience with the Creative Mentor Network has driven them to **pursue and create career opportunities**, and given them the tools to take charge of their own career development.
 - **82%** have made **new 2–10 professional connections** as a result of their participation. In response to research from the Educational Endowment Foundation suggesting that students who make four or more professional connections before leaving full-time education are five times more employable and can earn up to 18% more, the Creative Mentor Network has set a benchmark for each partnership of at least four connections.
 - More than **30 creative organisations** are now signed up to provide mentorship – including Airbnb, Assemble, It's Nice That, Lucky Generals, M&C Saatchi, Pulse Films and We are Social. Each mentor takes part in a Mentor Development Programme to give participating individuals and companies the coaching and people development skills to get the best out of their mentees and develop themselves as better people managers – skills which they can then bring back to their organisation.
 - The Creative Mentor Network currently works with teachers at **25 partner schools and colleges** across London to identify and enrol students with the talent, drive and potential to thrive in and enrich the creative sector.
 - This year alone, **almost 200** people have participated in Creative Mentor Network programmes, as mentors, mentees or ambassadors.
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CREATIVE MENTOR NETWORK

PRESS RELEASE, 13 December 2017

- Thus far in 2017, the programme has facilitated **1,536 hours of one-on-one mentoring.**
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98%

of mentees agree that mentoring made them more likely to put themselves forward for new, challenging situations.

96%

agree that mentoring helped them to feel confident talking to people in a professional context.

93%

agree that mentoring helped them understand the different roles and career paths in the creative industries.

93%

agree that mentoring made them more driven to create and follow up on career opportunities, and to take initiative for their own career development.

93%

agree that mentoring made them more able to identify their own strengths and weaknesses.

The organisation's perspective...

'Delivering smart, enthusiastic candidates from diverse backgrounds who, post-mentoring, may join our team, makes the Creative Mentor Network invaluable.'

– **Jenny Bust**, Business Director, Lucky Generals

The mentee's view...

'I've just completed a week's work experience at the Global Brands Group, where I used the skills that I learned through the CMN programme to communicate, engage and network.'

– **Ava Brolan**, Creative Mentor Network alumnus

THE CREATIVE MENTOR NETWORK IN 2018

The first three years of the Creative Mentor Network have decidedly been a success story, but the organisation still has a lot of work to do if the social imbalance rife in the creative industries is to be permanently addressed.

The organisation's plan for next year will see it **double its mentee intake to 150 students** – with mentors to match – as well as expanding its team, and developing its alumni platform.

'In the next two years we want to have hubs in more UK cities, that have a creative economy of their own. Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow are all in our sightline. In 2018, our goal is to work with 50 creative organisations, 50 schools and to offer the chance to have a mentor to more than 150 young people across London and Greater London. We also hope to raise the profile of the creative industries and the opportunities out there to young people and their parents so that it doesn't seem like the risky option – because it isn't.'

– Isabel Farchy, Creative Mentor Network founder



Photography by Dan Wilton.

The full Impact Report is available to view via the Creative Mentor Network website on 14 December 2017.

*For more information about the **Creative Mentor Network's** work and mission, or for interviews with founder Isabel Farchy, please contact Jodi Moss on 07910 705147 or at jodi@zetteler.co.uk.*

Notes for editors

About the Creative Mentor Network

Since it was founded in 2015, the Creative Mentor Network has enabled more than 100 young people to access the skills, connections and knowledge they need to forge a career in the creative industries, and helped numerous businesses overcome the crippling lack of diversity that afflicts the creative sector. On a mission to improve inclusivity in all kinds of creative fields, the charity gives students from diverse and low-income backgrounds, who may not otherwise be able to access – or even be aware of – opportunities in these professions, the chance to gain a foothold in the industry by matching them with mentors in a wide range of roles. The network offers a professional Mentor Development Programme to give participating individuals and companies the coaching and people development skills to get the best out of their mentees, and works with schools across London to match 16-19 year-olds with professional environments that could transform their lives.

creativementornetwork.org

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I: @CreativeMentorNetwork
