



# ***Creative Job Club:***

## ***A Case Study***



Interactive goal-setting group work facilitated by Simon Wakeman

Creative Job Club was a supportive 6-month job skills development programme aimed at supporting 18-25-year olds who were looking to secure a career in the creative industries. The aim was to build young people's confidence and to help them discover what they might need to study to get into the creative business that interested them.

The programme attracted 14 young people from the following areas across Kent: Whitstable, Rochester, Faversham, Chatham, Sheerness, Teynham, Sittingbourne, Strood, Ashford, Tunbridge Wells, Rainham and Faversham.

During the 6-month programme, young creatives attended one meeting and interactive workshop per month at No. 34. The speakers and workshop leaders who facilitated these sessions were: Adam Henderson, Kath Abiker, Gordon Lamont, Freya Briley, Kevin Grist, Brian Condon, Jim Byford, Heather Collingwood and Simon Wakeman. This was a mixture of successful entrepreneurs who led meaningful workshops about the creative industries and educational experts who delivered informative talks about different routes into creative careers. These monthly sessions ran from 18.00 - 21.00 with a short break and feedback forms were given out at the end of every session to ensure that ongoing constructive feedback could be incorporated into the programme.

Feedback from one of the workshop leaders, Gordon Lamont:

*"I haven't enjoyed a workshop so much in ages – really buzzy and, as Freya said, a very supportive atmosphere. If only we could bottle that... You've done an amazing job getting it set up and going."*

Prior to starting the programme, each young person was interviewed to find out what type of industry they might like to work in and, subsequently, a 40-hour work experience placement was found for them in a key company in Kent. These companies ranged from: Art 31, Artswork, The Gulbenkian, Screen South, Ideas Test, Sparked Echo, Sidney Cooper Gallery and Strangeface. To support their travel costs for the work experience, workshops and mentoring sessions, each participant was given £200 to cover their travel costs.

Work experience placements were a success and, prior to starting, summary information about each placement was sent to the company and a work place visit was organised to check that the young person was happy.

Feedback from one candidate further to completing their work experience placement at Artswork and Sidney Cooper Gallery said:

*"The placement went really well, and I had a great time at Boing Festival! The Sidney Cooper Gallery was also great and the lady in charge was really lovely and accommodating."*

In addition to the workshops, each participant was matched to a professional mentor who had expertise in the creative industry that the young person was interested in. They met with them once at the start of the programme, again whilst they were on their work placement and again finally after their placement. During these sessions, mentors discussed career pathways, practised interview skills, checked supporting statements, proof-read any applications, helped to update their CVs and to create a LinkedIn profile.

Feedback to the question: Did you find your 1:1 mentoring sessions useful ranged from:

*"Yes very useful, it supported me in my writing and in networking",*

to,

*"Yes, incredibly useful. I now have goals set."*

Out of the original cohort, 6 have now got jobs, 1 has gone to university and 2 are currently still volunteering.

### **Programme Learning:**

The flexibility that this programme offered meant that some of the attendees invited their friends to attend the workshops to see what they were about. And, as a result, they became interested in the programme.

There was also flexibility in joining with some members joining mid-way through the programme as others secured jobs as the programme progressed. This meant there was a sense of progression and renewal throughout.

Having members of Ideas Test support and mentor the young people was incredibly beneficial as it meant that they could signpost relevant opportunities that were coming up in the programme. An offshoot of this was that one member gave a pitch the group about a play he was presenting, and another ran a workshop at No.34 as part of his work experience.

The programme was free to participants and was funded by NatWest Skills and Opportunities fund.



Brian Condon working with a CJC member on setting freelance budgeting targets