

CREATIVE LEARNING HUBS

future and feasibility



An Investigation by Kindle on behalf of
Arts Council England, South East
November 2005-April 2006



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Arts Council England, South East in April 2006.**

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Creative Learning Hubs: future and feasibility

April 2006

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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Kindle investigation

1.1. What is this report about?

Kindle were commissioned by **Arts Council England, South East** in November 2005 to investigate a way to establish four Creative Learning Hubs in the region by 2010. This report presents the findings of our investigation, which has been conducted through stakeholder consultation, independent research and project evaluation. Kindle employed a range of media to gather information and views, including participatory workshops, an online consultation facility, one-to-one interviews and desk research.

1.2. What is the stated purpose of Hubs?

Hubs would be the principle mechanism by which Arts Council England, South East propose to capture the legacy of Creative Partnerships¹, by facilitating existing Creative Partnerships areas to take on a sub-regional role² as Creative Learning Hubs. The Hubs have a proposed role in the Arts Council England, South East regional strategy for Children, Young People and the Arts (CYPA) to help build the region's capacity in arts education, in youth arts and to stimulate a creative-learning community.

1.3. What new information does this report present?

Based on stakeholder response and research, Kindle have set out in this report:

¹ *Creative Partnerships* is an existing time limited initiative begun in 2001 and due to end by 2010. The main body of this report gives more detail.

² Four Creative Learning Hubs would serve each of the four geographical sub regions of Kent, Thames Valley, Hampshire with Southampton / Isle of White / Portsmouth and, a fourth Hub serving all of Sussex with Surrey, Brighton & Hove. Hubs would be phased in from 2008 to 2010.

- ✦ a 'needs analysis' – the challenges and barriers that the Arts Council England, South East proposal to establish Hubs will face in moving forward
- ✦ a 'route map' – the opportunities and essential next steps for Arts Council England, South East to take by 2010 in order to establish Creative Learning Hubs
- ✦ a set of recommendations – relating to governance, management, funding and types of work for Hubs
- ✦ a view on feasibility – our interpretation of the viability of the Hubs proposal

This report is not a business plan.

1.4. What was the baseline for this work in the region? We found:

- ✦ A shared enthusiasm for creative learning in many organisations
- ✦ Some vision of what a Hub might be, do and achieve

But there was not:

- ✦ a high level of awareness of the Hubs proposal in the region
- ✦ a clear understanding of their intended purpose and remit
- ✦ pre-developed operational models for Hubs

These became priorities areas for the investigation.

2. Summary of key themes emerging from the investigation

2.1. How did people respond to Arts Council England, South East making this proposal?

On the whole it was welcomed warmly, both inside and outside the core constituency of Arts Council England partners. One stakeholder said it was a

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further illustration of a 'new, grown up Arts Council' that wanted to work strategically.

2.2. Did respondents think establishing Creative Learning Hubs was a good idea?

Most said yes, but there were important caveats. These are discussed in the main body of the report.

2.3. What concerns did respondents have?

That the relationship of future Hubs to existing Creative Partnerships was not clear enough in the proposal, considering the remit for Hubs is potentially wider than that of Creative Partnerships.

2.4. What roles did respondents think a Hub should carry out?

In order of preferred importance, they believed a Hub should:

- a) be an axis for networking between creative learning providers
- b) be an incubator for new or innovative work
- c) develop continuing professional development (CPD) and training for creative professionals
- d) have an advocacy and lobbying function
- e) help translate the language of professionals working in different sectors

Other important roles were cited, and these are contained in the main body of the report.

2.5. How did respondents envisage they might engage with a Hub?

Much of a Hub's perceived added value was articulated as its ability to gather and disseminate information. Hence there was a desire for a Hub to have a comprehensive virtual or online facility.

2.6. Did respondents think there was a specific need in their part of the region that Hubs could fulfil?

Many answers focused on the need for a single place to pool and draw information, and share practice. It was notable that very few needs differed due to geographical location. Most expressions of ‘added value’ were generic and/or common across sub regions.

2.7. What added value did respondents think a Hub could achieve?

Recurrent answers were:

- 🌱 to help develop a common entitlement to creative learning for children and young people across the whole region
- 🌱 to enable time-saving for projects and practitioners through easy access to information about creative learning practice and resources
- 🌱 to enhance funding for a locality or area of work by being a conduit for leveraging additional resources.

2.8. How did respondents think Hubs should be financed?

Most said that Hubs would need to ‘portfolio-fund’ through a mixture of subsidy, private-sector partnership and through selling services and being commissioned.

2.9. How did respondents think Hubs should be governed and managed?

Most felt that Hubs should be governed by a small group that could take quick decisions and be responsive to opportunities. Most were not in favour of any large organisational structure that would require heavy resourcing just to exist. Most respondents felt a Hub could be managed by a consortium of organisations. Many people found it difficult to express a single ideal governance and model³.

³ *Creative Partnerships* is managed by Arts Council England who employs the project’s staff. Each partnership has a local Director, line managed by Arts Council England, and a local Board which contributes to steering.

3. The key opportunities for Hubs

3.1. Hubs as a vehicle for arts sector business development:

Creative Learning has the potential to bring together a number of strands of Arts Council England, South East's corporate agenda. It is also a growing market opportunity for both the public and private sectors outside the arts. In the South East, creativity and creative learning offer an opportunity to highlight the importance of the arts to the economy, as well as to the wellbeing of children and young people. Hubs could harness capacity from the arts and creative sectors across the region, and offer a strong collective voice for this field of work.

This might be achieved by positioning Hubs as:

- 🌱 drivers for business innovation and productivity
- 🌱 contributors to workforce development and area prosperity
- 🌱 a stimulus for encouraging young entrepreneurship and the creative industries
- 🌱 collaborators in raising educational attainment

This is discussed in greater depth in the main report.

3.2. Hubs as a means of reaching greater numbers of children, young people and young adults:

Hubs have the potential to enable creativity to impact on the lives of young people and young adults before, during and after their school years. There is a rationale set out in the main part of this report for extending Creative Partnerships-type practice to settings including post-16 years learning and training, and to business and the world of work. This could complement work with early years settings, schools and the curriculum.

4. The key challenges for Hubs moving forward from now

- 4.1.** The awareness level of the Creative Partnerships programme is currently very low outside Creative Partnerships areas and outside the programme's immediate set of partners. This means that many potential stakeholders and users of Hubs would find it difficult to understand Creative Partnerships being assigned a leadership role in Hubs, without first having evidence of the programme's impact
- 4.2.** Many respondents felt that the regional CYPA strategy document implies a wider remit for Hubs than for Creative Partnerships. Again, this presents credibility issues for assigning a leadership role to Creative Partnerships
- 4.3.** The awareness level of creative learning as a field of work is currently low in the region as a whole. This is exacerbated by multiple definitions and ownership of the term outside both the arts and Creative Partnerships. The lack of common definition makes it difficult for different organisations and practitioners to understand how their work may relate to that of a Hub
- 4.4.** There is a lack of confidence among respondents about how to integrate diversity (primarily Black and minority ethnic and disability definitions) policy into the planning and delivery of Hubs. Respondents put forward their ideas, but were concerned that these are too simplistic
- 4.5.** Hubs will operate over a whole sub region, but Creative Partnerships were originally conceived to operate in tightly-defined geographical areas. This means that operating models for Hubs are likely to be different from Creative Partnerships.

- 4.6.** Hubs will begin delivery approximately 10 years after the Creative Partnerships programme was conceived. During this time, there have been changes to policy and organisational infrastructure and the fiscal climate is different. Hubs will need to reflect the new landscape in the way they operate.

5. A summary of Kindle's key recommendations

We have made ten recommendations as a result of this investigation, which can be found in Section 6 of the main report. Key points include:

- 5.1. Legal status:** Creative Learning Hubs should be independent entities, with the legal ability to trade and hold funds.
- 5.2. Governance and management:** the governance and management should allow a Hub to be a flexible, demand-led organisation. A self-governed body, such as a consortium of providers where governance is drawn from membership, could offer this. The roles of user, financier, beneficiary and partner should be considered flexibly as interchangeable and interdependent, allowing the Hub to serve a membership by whom it may be part funded.
- 5.3. Reaching a greater number of young people:** the core age bracket of beneficiaries should be wider (0–25 years) than that of Creative Partnerships but should prioritise the 5–16 and 14–19 years groups in the early stages of operation.
- 5.4. Sustainability and cross-agency working:** Hubs will be most sustainable as a collaborative, cross-agency initiative. This reflects the fact that creative learning has wide ownership outside the arts sector, by the wider cultural and creative industries, for instance.

- 5.5. Capturing opportunity:** to reflect need and harness opportunity, Hubs should be prepared to embrace the types of work and settings that are not core to Creative Partnerships. Hubs must also be prepared to consider different operating models to those employed by Creative Partnerships.
- 5.6. Investment levels and cost benefits:** the financial tolerances of core funding for Hubs sit between approximately £80,000 and £300,000 per hub, per annum, depending on the range of core activities a Hub undertakes. A business plan should be drawn up, which further investigates the market of potential users and investors for Hubs, along with a cost-benefit analysis for funding agencies. The finding of this investigation is that Hubs present opportunities to further embed the position of the arts sector as a major strategic player in the region and benefit would be likely to exceed cost.
- 5.7. Using investment strategically:** a proportion of the available budget supplied as core subsidy to Hubs should be ring-fenced, and targeted at priority groups to enable them to become commissioners. A Hub could then provide activity to that group, within agreed regional strategic or sector priorities.
- 5.8. Sustainable financial models:** Hubs should be set up as ‘not-for-profit’ entities, but should operate a business model. This is to take account of a fast changing public-sector landscape, where much more provision is contestable and subsidies are not always the route to sustainability.

6. A view on feasibility

Creative Learning Hubs are feasible, providing the key challenges identified in this report are addressed. A ‘route map’ is provided in Section 7 of the main report, which sets out 12 key next steps to lead to the successful establishment of Hubs.

B. MAIN REPORT

1. Introduction

1.1. What is this report about?

Kindle were commissioned by Arts Council England, South East in November 2005 to research how to establish four Creative Learning Hubs⁴ in the region by 2010. The research was to be conducted through stakeholder consultation and through evaluation of some existing work in the region.

Kindle designed and delivered a project, which brought together consultation, evaluation and independent research as a single investigation. This investigation has produced two principle outcomes:

- 🌱 a 'route map', setting out essential next steps for Arts Council England, South East to take in order to establish Creative Learning Hubs
- 🌱 a view on the feasibility of the Creative Learning Hubs proposal

It has proven essential to produce a needs analysis for the proposal, which identified the challenges and barriers it will face in moving forward. This analysis is woven through the report, highlighted as a series of 'critical issues' and accompanied by relevant action points. The report concludes with a number of recommendations for possible models of operation, types of work, investment and income opportunities for Hubs.

⁴ Arts Council England, South East have a working definition of Creative Learning which focuses on the development of cognitive and thinking skills as an outcome, using artists and creative practitioners to animate learning. A full definition is available from them.

It has been a central tenet of this investigation to base our recommendations on the dialogue we had with potential Hub stakeholders, partners and users, as well as on our independent research.

1.2. The proposal for Creative Learning Hubs

1.2.1. Why have Hubs been proposed?

The proposal to establish four Creative Learning Hubs in the South East region has been made by Arts Council England, South East, as part of their Regional Strategy for Children, Young People and the Arts⁵ (CYPA) 2005.

1.2.2. Which areas would Hubs serve and from when?

In the strategy, four Hubs would be established to serve each of the four geographical sub regions⁶ of the South East as follows:

- 🌿 Kent – the whole county, including Medway
- 🌿 Thames Valley – from Bracknell Forest to Milton Keynes, including Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire
- 🌿 Hampshire and the surrounds – including Southampton, the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth
- 🌿 Sussex and Surrey – including West and East Sussex, Brighton & Hove

These would be phased in from 2008 to 2010.

1.2.3. What is the stated purpose of Hubs?

Creative Learning Hubs would play a significant role in delivering the priorities for children, young people and the arts, set out by Arts Council England, South East in their strategy. These include building the region's capacity in arts education and in youth arts, and stimulating the growth of a 'creative learning community'⁷.

⁵ *Regional Strategy for Children, Young People and the Arts*, Arts Council England, South East, pages 8 & 9.

⁶ See <http://www.gos.gov.uk/gose/ourRegion/aboutLocalities> for full listing by local authority area

⁷ *Regional Strategy for Children, Young People and the Arts*, Arts Council England, South East. This defines children and young people as being between 0-25 years

1.3. What else drives the Hubs proposal?

1.3.1. Creative Partnerships: the proposal to establish Creative Learning Hubs also arises from a specific challenge faced by Arts Council England, South East: the need to plan for the end of the national initiative, Creative Partnerships, which Arts Council England has managed on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)⁸ since its inception in 2001. This stated purpose of this programme is that:

‘Creative Partnerships works to give school children in areas throughout England the opportunity to develop their potential, their ambition, their creativity and imagination through sustainable partnerships with creative and cultural organisations, businesses and individuals⁹.....’.

‘Creative Partnerships provides school children across England with the opportunity to develop creativity in learning and to take part in cultural activities of the highest quality’.¹⁰

In the South East region, four Creative Partnerships were established to serve Kent¹¹, Slough, Southampton and the Isle of Wight and finally, Hastings and East Sussex. Creative Partnerships Kent and Slough were established first during 2001 and 2002, with Southampton and the Isle of Wight, and Hastings and East Sussex following in 2003 and 2004. The projects serve their specific geographical locations. They are tasked with working in depth, and with a relatively small number of schools. The Creative Partnerships programme is

⁸ government Department for Culture, Media & Sport. CP also receives government funding from Department for Education & Skills (DfES)

⁹ Creative Partnerships Education Team strap line March 2006

¹⁰ www.creative-partnerships.com March 2006

¹¹ Beginning in and prioritising East Kent; not including Medway

time-limited to 2010, with the earliest established Creative Partnerships due to end in 2008.

The challenge facing Arts Council England, South East is to identify ways to capture the benefits of Creative Partnerships so that:

- 🌱 the programme can have a meaningful legacy – particularly by embedding its practice more widely
- 🌱 the original investment into Creative Partnerships (nationally £140 million, £20 million in the South East region) can impact more widely

1.3.2. The regional strategy: work that flows from the CYPA strategy needs to address the following aims and objectives: to contribute to the Government's objectives for children and young people, as set out in Every Child Matters¹² and Youth Matters as a priority, and:¹³

- 🌱 to create a climate for a network of enterprising young people and a creative learning community to grow
- 🌱 to build the infrastructure for arts education and youth arts
- 🌱 to increase the leadership role of Arts Council England, South East's regularly funded organisations to take forward integrated education and creative learning programmes
- 🌱 to ensure capacity building for the arts, cultural, education and youth sectors as the key to sustainable improvement

Hubs are proposed as a way to help achieve these aims. Hubs therefore perform a dual role within the CYPA strategy – as an exit (or 'legacy') strategy for Creative Partnerships and, as a mechanism for delivering its wider priorities.

¹² See <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

¹³ See <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth>

1.4. Methods, parameters and baselines

1.4.1. What does this report include?

It does:

- ✎ provide a tool, including a needs analysis, for subsequent business planning
- ✎ articulate the views expressed during consultation and examines the viability of suggestions made by stakeholders
- ✎ include views from respondents both inside and outside the arts, culture and schools sectors, including post-16 years learning, enterprise support, economic development, museums, libraries and archives
- ✎ take feedback from respondents drawn mainly from the South East region, with some additional key personnel at national level

1.4.2. What does this report exclude?

It does not:

- ✎ provide a research study into teaching or learning methods, or the nature of creativity
- ✎ provide a business plan for Hubs
- ✎ represent the views of young people. A parallel project was commissioned simultaneously by Arts Council England, South East to engage the views of young people on the CYPA strategy. Kindle liaised with the appointed contractor during our commission, in order to understand that work and feed in its findings where possible
- ✎ set out to make any comment on the specific skills sets of individuals, within Creative Partnerships or any other project, in relation to their suitability to perform a role in future Hubs

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- ✦ set out to recommend roles in future Hubs for individual organisations or projects in the existing Arts Council England, South East-funded portfolio¹⁴

1.4.3. What media did Kindle use to conduct this investigation?

- ✦ design and hosting of an online consultation at www.kindleco.co.uk
- ✦ design and delivery of four workshops –one in each of the four sub regions
- ✦ telephone interviews (one-to-one)
- ✦ round-table meetings
- ✦ on-site observation of Creative Partnerships during pilot work and during dialogue with partner organisations

To draw out relevant information, Kindle used a matrix of key questions as a skeleton for the investigation, from which we generated two online questionnaires, bespoke questions for one-to-one interviews and a programme for the workshops.¹⁵ Kindle were also tasked with evaluating the strategic impact of two pilot projects being led by Creative Partnerships Kent and Slough. This is described and analysed in Section 5. Appendix 2 provides a full list of respondents for the investigation. We did not weight the responses of any one group, individual, project or organisation in our analysis or in deciding our final recommendations. These were formulated on the basis of pragmatism, their potential to increase hub sustainability and on their ability to reflect the majority stakeholder view.

¹⁴ A small number of public agencies responsible for strategic development and/or funding of regional or national significance are included.

¹⁵ Kindle's matrix of key questions is attached at Appendix 1. Our questionnaires are available at www.kindleco.co.uk or on request along with the Kindle workshop programme.

1.4.4. What was the starting point in the region for this work?

Kindle observed the following in the region, at the outset of our work:

- ✿ a shared commitment between Creative Partnerships, Arts Council England, South East and many other organisations to stimulating creative learning in the region, for the benefit of children and young people
- ✿ A shared understanding between Creative Partnerships and Arts Council England, South East that the former should embed their benefits more widely post 2008, mainly in geographical terms

Kindle did not observe the following in the region:

- ✿ a high level of awareness of the Hubs proposal in the region
- ✿ a clear understanding of the key purpose of Hubs
- ✿ a shared vision of the potential remit of Hubs and their types of work
- ✿ a high level of awareness of Creative Partnerships, its work and its evidence base
- ✿ pre-developed operational models for Hubs, although in most sub regions, we found stakeholders had a sense of vision and possible remit for Hubs

These became priorities areas for the investigation to explore.

2. Key themes emerging from the investigation

This section provides a summary of key points and recurring themes that emerged from the combined consultation, observation of pilots and independent research¹⁶. This summary is intended to give, in as raw a form as is feasible, stakeholder views prior to our conclusions, which are provided later in the report. Kindle have additionally offered a commentary on these responses, in order to highlight some of the challenges that Hubs may face.

2.1. How did respondents understand the proposal?

The following references were selected from the regional strategy by respondents as important in illustrating a possible purpose for Hubs:

- 🌱 that Creative Partnerships will: ‘move in a phased way from working in depth in very geographical focused areas, to their new sub regional Creative Learning Hubs role’
- 🌱 that Hubs will: ‘facilitate a networked creative learning community across the region.....offering leadership for the arts, education and creative learning sectors’
- 🌱 that Hubs will: be a channel through which Arts Council England, South East ensure ‘capacity building for the arts, cultural, education and youth sectors... (in tandem with the work of arts education and youth arts partnerships)’

The broad purpose of Hubs was welcomed warmly. However, respondents felt that, on the whole, the proposal lacked clarity in articulating the balance of roles between Creative Partnerships and other creative providers of work with children and young people.

¹⁶ Responses were publicised to a representative sample of organisations, drawn from a range of relevant sectors (in and out of the arts and in and out of education) and from different levels of staff hierarchy.

2.2. Did respondents think that establishing Creative Learning Hubs in the region is a good idea?

92 per cent said 'yes'¹⁷. However, many respondents added important caveats as follows:

2.2.1. Yes, providing that a hub:

- ✎ does not invent another layer of bureaucracy
- ✎ does not soak up lots of funding, just to exist
- ✎ adds value
- ✎ is sustainable
- ✎ does not draw disproportionate resources into restricted areas (as DCMS was perceived by respondents to have done with Creative Partnerships¹⁸)
- ✎ takes a facilitative role – including enabling the sharing of expertise, knowledge and information about creative learning
- ✎ is integrated with other related initiatives, not working alone
- ✎ recognises the differences and synergies between Creative Partnerships' practice in creative learning, and other work that engages young people through creative means: not all work sets out to produce learning outcomes or effect 'whole organisation' change

2.2.2. What concerns did respondents have?

Respondents (who said that Hubs were not a good idea), commonly cited three reasons:

- ✎ they felt the precise relationship of future Hubs to existing Creative Partnerships is not clear enough in the proposal
- ✎ they felt the remit for Hubs set out in the regional CYPA strategy is potentially much wider than Creative Partnerships currently have.

¹⁷ All % are approximate and are taken mainly but not exclusively from the on line consultation. Unless stated otherwise, responses collected via other media reflected the same majority views.

¹⁸ This comment was made many times by a range of different organisations including schools, arts organisations, local authorities and practitioners

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- 🌱 they were not sufficiently confident in the work of Creative Partnerships to agree to them having a leadership role in Hubs

'It is difficult to say [if Hubs are a good idea] because we don't have enough knowledge of what Creative Partnerships has achieved....'

Head of Arts, Local Authority, South East region

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.2:

The expertise of Creative Partnerships and the remit of Hubs:

respondents that said Hubs are a good idea – and this group included some Creative Partnerships representatives – shared similar concerns to those endorsing the proposal. The priorities set out in the regional strategy are wide ranging, and they have an equally wide associated set of potential partners, funders, funding targets, settings for activity and beneficiaries. Creative Partnerships shares some of this working environment and associated policy priorities, and some it does not. Some of this arena sits outside the 'sweet spot' of Creative Partnerships but very much inside that of other existing organisations in the region. It is likely that this is partly the cause of stakeholders' uncertainty about the Hubs concept and the possible role of Creative Partnerships. One workshop participant illustrated this to be a potential hazard for the Hubs proposal by saying:

"The work different creative and cultural organisations are delivering with young people isn't all creative learning... there is not a common understanding of where all our work crosses over with Creative Partnerships." Workshop participant, Thames Valley

The following provides two crude illustrations of different types of targets and beneficiaries:

Creative Partnerships may:

- 🌱 target its campaign at schools

- ✎ benefit young people, mainly in the 5–16 years age bracket
- ✎ lobby mainly those that are responsible for the national curriculum and for educational attainment
- ✎ has its success measured by its impact on the degree to which creativity is adopted across a whole school ('whole school change')

An organisation specialising in youth arts may:

- ✎ target its energies on settings outside school, such as youth clubs
- ✎ benefit young people mainly in the 12–19 years age bracket
- ✎ lobby mainly those that are responsible for young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
- ✎ have their success measured by their impact on engaging NEETs in activities that can be seen to represent progression into learning, training or employment

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.2:

Expertise and age ranges: what these two working 'zones' have in common is a beneficiary group of children and young people. However, there are differences in the landscape that different providers inhabit. To a greater or lesser extent this affects their partners, settings for the work, targets and funding streams. A project set up to hook disenfranchised 16-year-olds into productive activity using the arts, will not necessarily have the same drivers as a project set up to help raise educational attainment in a school. The expertise of the professionals that work with young people in these two settings, and the age of the young people, are two basic differentiators.

Young people as whole people: some providers (including arts organisations) would argue that young people reached via school, and those reached via non-institutional settings, may have different needs and consequently be attracted by different types of provision. However, a finding should be noted from the research conducted with young people by

Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership (OYAP), as the sister commission to this work. It found that young people who articulated a desire for greater access to creative activity, referred to provision both in *and* out of school. They did not necessarily prioritise one setting over another¹⁹. So, it may be that the difficulties in navigating different activity and age settings is purely a provider difficulty. Separate systems for government funding of work with young people and the diversity of agency targets may contribute to this problem.

There was some basic commonality observed by us in responses from diverse providers about their creative work with young people, including:

- 🍃 seeing children and young people as their prime beneficiaries (but work dealing with different age brackets was often seen as different in terms of style and content)
- 🍃 delivering work that is targeted in deprivation areas – where young people have a greater likelihood of low educational attainment and/or employment
- 🍃 the use of artists and other creative media to animate the activity (but not necessarily produce learning outcomes)
- 🍃 work delivered in partnership, often by multiple agencies

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.2:

Every Child Matters and Youth Matters: an important change in some public sector services should be noted as context for future Hubs. As part of Every Child Matters, the government has asked local authorities to reform a single, more integrated service supporting children and young people, bringing formally disparate services together. A growing emphasis on ‘integration’ and legislative imperatives, have impacted on local provision for learning. Local authorities are now tasked with increasing their level of collaboration within their own corporate structures, and with external partners.

¹⁹ *Securing Voices*, Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership, April 2006

One manifestation of this, arising in part from the 2005 schools white paper and Education and Inspections Bill (2006)²⁰, is the obligation for each area to provide 'a prospectus' of training and learning opportunities for 14-year-olds. This means that historically separate local education authority responsibilities (for schools), and provision for post-16 years learning (via the Learning and Skills Council) will now be joined up for the 14+ years age bracket. Further Education Colleges, independent providers of work-based learning and schools are now collaborating out of necessity in England through newly formed '14–19 partnerships'. Section 4 (Opportunities) returns to this point.

Greater integration of services also bring responsibilities for social care, together with other aspects of a child's wellbeing such as health and education. In this way, it is intended that the needs of the whole child or young person will be better met. At present, the general thrust within public bodies, and certainly within local government, is one of integration and collaboration. This is a potential opportunity for Hubs as entities that bring together providers. It is also a potential challenge for the arts sector: often, providers of 'youth arts' and 'arts in schools' see themselves as separate.

2.3. Did respondents think the term 'hub' is a good one?

59 per cent said 'yes'

Kindle comment on 2.3: however, many people felt the term was already over-used, and implied a 'controlling centre' organisation. There was a desire among respondents to find a term that would imply an entity that 'facilitated'.

²⁰ See <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/educationandinspectionsbill>

2.4. What roles did respondents think were most important for a Hub to carry out?

In order of preferred importance:

- a) be an axis for networking between creative learning providers
- b) be an incubator for new or innovative work
- c) develop CPD and training for creative professionals
- d) have an advocacy and lobbying function
- e) help translate the language of professionals working in different sectors

Other roles commonly cited²¹ were:

- 🌱 be an 'uber-network', facilitating other networks
- 🌱 provide a resource centre:
 - giving access to a database of creative-learning practitioners and organisations practicing creative learning
 - giving access to information on funding and other opportunities
 - a place to share and access examples of practice in creative learning, partnership working, project and business models
 - bringing together evidence to support common arguments for creative learning
- 🌱 provide an interface between providers and users of creative learning (matching supply and demand)
- 🌱 be a broker for additional resources

2.5. Did respondents think a Hub should be a physical or virtual entity, or a mix of the two?

72 per cent said a hub should be 'both a virtual and physical entity'

Kindle comment on 2.5: there was a strong body of opinion that much of a Hub's perceived added value would be its ability to gather and disseminate

²¹ workshop participants and one to one interviews

information. The sub regional geography that Hubs are proposed to serve meant that many respondents emphasised the need for a comprehensive, virtual facility. One teacher said:

“If I want to access services through a Hub, I don’t want to have to book a meeting and travel to do that every time....particularly if I am based 30 miles away from its office.”

Most people saw it as inevitable that a Hub would have some sort of physical home with core staffing, but they were generally not in favour of creating another large organisation.

2.6. What did respondents perceive to be the awareness level of the Creative Partnerships programme among their most influential professional circles?

73 per cent said ‘nil, low or moderate’, of which 38 per cent said ‘nil or low’

Awareness of Creative Partnerships outside Arts Council England’s immediate constituency of partners, and awareness of the achievements of the programme across the region as a whole, were found by this investigation to be generally poor.

2.7. What did respondents perceive to be the awareness level of Creative Learning among their most influential professional circles?

77 per cent said ‘nil, low or moderate’, of which 35 per cent said ‘nil or low’

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.7.

Terminology: we encountered very little common understanding of the term ‘creative learning’ but we did find multiple definitions and wide ownership of

the term – many among organisations dealing with learning outside Creative Partnerships and outside the arts and culture sectors. Crude though this illustration may be, a quick ‘pages from the UK’ search on Google provides a reality check: it brings up 5,410,000 hits for the term ‘creative learning’, and many of these are from organisations who consider themselves to be delivering creative learning. Many of these do not engage with the arts, or with the type of arts or creative industry-based ‘creative practitioners’ commonly referred to by Creative Partnerships.

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.7.

Creative learning and the arts: many Arts Council England, South East-funded projects we spoke to, including Creative Partnerships, found it difficult to articulate how ‘creative learning’ relates specifically to the arts and vice versa. Possibly the most effective illustration of the relationship we encountered came from Creative Partnerships Slough, which said:

‘Creative learning is not exclusively about the arts and so nor is Creative Partnerships. But artists are a particularly effective medium by which to deliver it.’

We also observed a lack of confidence in some quarters in articulating the contribution that the arts and artists make to creative learning. Some respondents commented that if the role of arts within creative learning is not championed, this would inhibit the success of Hubs as an Arts Council England- sponsored initiative:

‘There is almost a paranoia about claiming the arts have a significant contribution to make to creative learning....a kind of reverse snobbery that is most unhelpful....we need to champion the arts not diminish them.’

Workshop participant, Surrey

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.7.

Business relationships: many organisations we spoke to outside Creative Partnerships, that specialise in working with young people through the arts, struggled to identify the potential relationship between the business of their organisation and the business of a Hub, if it was purely for 'creative learning'.

2.8. Did respondents think there is a specific need in their part of the region that Hubs could fulfil?

Common answers were:

- 🌱 to pool creative resources (e.g. practitioners) for the local area
- 🌱 to provide a central database
- 🌱 to facilitate sharing of practice
- 🌱 to draw together arts organisations working with children and young people, so that their successes could be promoted more widely ('strength in numbers')
- 🌱 to be a champion for creative learning

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.8: it was notable that very few respondents (either consulting online or through the workshops) expressed different needs due to their geographical location. Most expressions of 'added value' or 'need' were generic.

2.9. What did respondents think a Hub could achieve for a *whole* sub region?

Common answers were:

- 🌱 supporting economic development: forging closer links between creative learning and area economic plans (Thames Valley: Workshop 1)

- ✦ enhance funding for a locality or area of work: be a conduit for leveraging additional resources into a whole sub region on behalf of a number of providers for collaborative projects. A distinction was made between this and Hubs as 'grant giving' bodies. The former was envisaged as adding value by providing a 'collective voice' that could bid and be commissioned; the latter was perceived to be resource thirsty because it needed to administer grants. (Sussex and surrounds: Workshop 2)
- ✦ enable time saving: a facility that lessens the need to search independently for information when conceiving, planning or delivering a project in your sub region. (Kent county: Workshop 3)
- ✦ develop a common entitlement to creative learning for children and young people: promoting and increasing the chances of this, rather than the piecemeal experience most get because they happen to have a project funded on their doorstep. (Hampshire and surrounds: Workshop 4)

2.10. What types of income did respondents think Hubs would benefit from?

In order of preference:

- a. The largest proportion of respondents said 'a combination of subsidy, private sector and trading/selling activities' (39 per cent)
- b. The second largest proportion of respondents said 'a combination of subsidy and trading/selling activities' (20 per cent)
- c. The third largest proportion of respondents said 'a combination of subsidy and private sector' (13 per cent)

The workshops explored views from participants about the fiscal climate that Hubs might face. Overall, we found:

- ✦ an anticipation that the level of government subsidy given to Creative Partnerships for creative learning is unlikely to be repeated for Hubs

- ✎ a growing acceptance that Hubs would need to generate resources from a variety of sources
- ✎ a strong view that Arts Council England (as the managing agent for Creative Partnerships) and Arts Council England, South East (as the proposer of Hubs) should take responsibility for providing essential core funding, and also help with leveraging in other complementary funds. In short, the arts constituency in the region would be looking to Arts Council England for leadership.
- ✎ a view that if Arts Council England collaborated with other key agencies, this would help sustain Hubs and be resource efficient²²

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.10: it seems sensible to us that the Hubs proposal would best be served by Arts Council England committing specific resources to their pre-launch development before 2008. This is because of the desire for an Arts Council England, South East leadership role for the region, the scale of the task in establishing Hubs, and the opportunities they may bring to Arts Council England. Opportunities for collaboration with external agencies on Hubs are dealt with again in Sections 3 (Critical issues) and 4 (Opportunities).

2.11. Did respondents think a Hub could be managed by a cooperative or a consortium of providers?

63 per cent said ‘yes’

However, a strong caveat was added in most cases: that Hub members would require a common purpose and clear leadership.

²² cited examples were SEMLAC (South East Museums, Libraries & Archives Council), NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts), LSC (Learning & Skills Council), Design Council and Skillset (the sector skills council for the Audio-Visual industries)

2.12. Did respondents think there is an 'ideal' management model for Hubs?

When any were cited, a clear favourite was an independent body, governed by a small group and including respected figures who could champion the Hub.

However, many respondents expressed the views that:

- 🍃 hubs should be governed and managed in a way that helps generate, not divert resources
- 🍃 that independent governance (particularly by a board that is detached from the delivery arm of an organisation) is usually expensive

It was also suggested that:

- 🍃 another layer of bureaucracy would not be welcome
- 🍃 duplication of effort and/or dissipation of resources should be avoided
- 🍃 existing infrastructure, that might provide an umbrella for governance, should be considered.

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.12:

Management models: most respondents struggled to identify an ideal management model for a sub regional Hub, especially when the existing structure of Creative Partnerships was used as a starting point²³. One Creative Partnerships Chair commented that management and governance models need to be holistically conceived, and should facilitate simple decision-making processes and staff line-management. Governance expertise should impact meaningfully on strategy and policy.

²³ *Creative Partnerships* is a project managed by Arts Council England who employs the project's staff. Each partnership has a local Director, line managed by Arts Council England, and a local Board which contributes to steering. The project has its own branding within the Arts Council England portfolio of work.

2.13. How did respondents think Hubs should best integrate diversity²⁴ and access issues in their planning?

Common answers were that Hubs should achieve this by:

- ✎ making these issues integral to the planning, and not simply an add on
- ✎ by encouraging diversity among the people and organisations steering Hubs
- ✎ by working actively with schools on planning and the shaping of diversity-friendly provision (not just the delivery) - because they are in touch with their surrounding communities
- ✎ by drawing on existing resources such as training packages already in use, that are known to be effective (the Arts Council England, South East Diversity Training was cited as an example)
- ✎ by having a policy to engage and develop artists from diverse backgrounds

Kindle comment on consultation question 2.13:

Application of diversity policy in practice: of all the issues discussed with respondents, this was the question they demonstrated least confidence (as apposed to 'skill') in answering. Even with a helpful prompt from us about an inclusive definition of diversity, many said they felt they lacked the tools to state more than stock answers and were concerned that their answers might appear 'tokenistic' or 'obvious'. Schools that responded were more confident than most consultees. We therefore concluded that many areas of work are likely to be affected by this issue, not just the Hubs proposal.

²⁴ Including black, minority ethnic and disability definitions

3. Critical issues in next stage planning

This section sets out four key sets of issues, identified by Kindle as being critical to moving forward the hubs proposal.

3.1. Critical issue one: policy priorities- does one size fit all?

The Creative Partnerships working environment was felt by respondents to be much narrower to that visioned for future Hubs in the regional strategy. This view was expressed by a range of respondents from different organisations, including local authority arts officers, arts organisations, and by Creative Partnerships directors and board members. There are concerns, therefore, that if Hubs were asked to lead on work not just with schools, but in a range of other settings as well, that leadership by Creative Partnerships might place limitations on Hubs.

Action one: choose which strategic priorities are the most important

There is an urgent need for Arts Council England, South East to make more specific choices about the purpose of Hubs, and which of the regional strategy priorities they are best placed to serve. This will impact directly on the arguments that Hubs make for support, who they target as priority investors, who they target as priority partners, and in which settings they first set out to engage young people. If Hubs are to embrace a wide range of practice and policy areas, then the role of Creative Partnerships as Hub leaders may need to be reconsidered. If Hubs are primarily a legacy for Creative Partnerships and are led by them, then the focus of a Hub may need to be more specific.

3.2. Critical issue two: Creative Partnerships – ‘what’s that?’

Our investigation found that awareness of Creative Partnerships in the region, knowledge of its successes and dissemination of its evidence base, is generally low outside the programme’s immediate constituency of partners.

An inherent part of the programme's design was to work in-depth in specific geographical areas and with a relatively small number of schools.

This means that the Hubs proposal begins its life from a starting point of:

- 🌱 approximately 56 per cent of Arts Council England, South East's regularly funded organisations²⁵, which make up a significant proportion of the organisation's funded client portfolio, have not engaged with Creative Partnerships
- 🌱 at least 90 per cent of schools in the region have not been part of the Creative Partnerships core programme²⁶.

We also found that:

- 🌱 representatives from Creative Partnerships areas did not always feel confident in their knowledge of work being done by other Creative Partnerships areas in the region
- 🌱 Organisations that had not been part of Creative Partnerships, but which had a good awareness of it generally, nevertheless felt there was insufficient access to an evidence base illustrating the success of the programme. A number of people cited a lack of evaluation material accessible from the Creative Partnerships national website.

Action two: identify diversity in practice and raise awareness

Action two (a) There is an urgent need to disseminate the achievements of Creative Partnerships to a much wider group if they are to take a significant role in Hubs. This needs to include awareness-raising of their remit, their ways of working, and dissemination of examples of successful practice. Put

²⁵ Consultancy report to support the development of the Children, Young People and the Arts Strategy by Sussex Arts Marketing for Arts Council England, South East, 2005.

²⁶ Consultancy report to support the development of the Children, Young People and the Arts Strategy by Sussex Arts Marketing for Arts Council England, South East, 2005. This states 98% but this is considered by ACE SE to be out of date.

simply, there is a credibility issue for Creative Partnerships in large parts of the potential constituency for Hubs. In many respects, the lack of awareness is also a missed marketing opportunity for Arts Council England. Creative Partnerships has established a brand but, outside its own constituency, has not strategically marketed its successes to a wider audience.

Action two (b) There is an equal need to map creative-learning practice outside Creative Partnerships in the region (as distinct from other types of work with young people that use creative media) and to disseminate the findings.

Action two (c) There is a need to map and articulate for common consumption, the synergies and differences between existing provision that is considered to deliver ‘creative learning’ that which is considered ‘as arts education’ and that which is considered to be ‘youth arts’²⁷. The regional CYPA strategy cites all three terms as sectors that it seeks to build through Hubs, although the Hubs themselves would be titled for ‘creative learning’. To move Hubs forward pragmatically, there is a need to understand where Creative Partnerships-type work in creative learning, and other creative-led activity with children and young people, crosses over and diverges. This is essential to providers and users in determining how their work might relate to one another through a Hub. It may also assist Arts Council England, South East in determining how any investment into Hubs will add value, rather than duplicate. Once synergy and diversity in work is recognised, a more strategic decision can be made about what types of work Creative Learning Hubs should embrace.

Hubs may indeed find their added value lies in being a catalyst for better collaboration and connection between different types of creative activity

²⁷ *Regional Strategy for Children, Young People and the Arts*, Arts Council England, South East, pages 8 & 9

provider. However, while the title of the proposal is for Hubs that specialise in ‘creative *learning*’ – as apposed to a broader title such as ‘arts and inclusion’ – there will remain confusion about their intended purpose. So clarifying exactly what Hubs seek to specialise in (or not, as the case may be), needs to be part of early decision making in moving forward the proposal.

3.3. Critical issue three: sub regional provision – radically different from Creative Partnerships?

Creative Partnerships was not designed at the outset to be scaleable. Because of this, there are likely to be significant challenges in approaching sub regional working from the starting point of the existing Creative Partnerships operating structure. It is also the case that the programme was conceived in a policy climate of the late-1990s–early-2000²⁸. Whilst some of these values are highly relevant now and may still be so in 2010, the landscape of the public sector is likely to be quite different. Consequently, the operational dynamics required of projects and organisations will also be different.

Action three (a) Sub regional provision – models that are fit for purpose

Great care needs to be taken in approach – trying to roll out Creative Partnerships, will not be the same as establishing Hubs. It may be more helpful to focus on the legacy of Creative Partnerships, rather than its structure, in embedding the programme’s benefits through Hubs. Different operational models may suit Hubs better if they are conceived bespoke for sub regional working. In our view, also crucial to success will be the need to allow for operating models (including governance and management), which are flexible. These need to be capable of reflecting the make-up of each sub region. Each place has its own needs, strengths and opportunities and existing network of providers.

²⁸ *Creative Partnerships* was a response in large part to *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, a seminal report produced in 1999 by Sir Ken Robinson and the NACCE group.

Action three (b) The legacy of Creative Partnerships and the unique selling proposition (USP) of Hubs

Arts Council England has clearly stated that Hubs are not intended to be a straightforward extension of Creative Partnerships after it ends formally. There is a need to devote time and resources between now and when Hubs are established, to identify the strongest aspects of the Creative Partnerships legacy. In the Workshops, one of the hardest things for participants to achieve was to define the Creative Partnerships legacy. Some suggestions that resulted were:

- 🌱 Creative Partnerships can show impact on the creative sector and its increased ability to respond well to a school's needs (Thames Valley: Workshop 1)
- 🌱 Creative Partnerships provide models for partnership with external partners working in deprived areas, especially schools (Sussex and surrounds: Workshop 2)
- 🌱 Creative Partnerships provide evaluation models for ground-level work in learning (Kent county: Workshop 3)
- 🌱 Creative Partnerships provide models that could map the degree of 'change' an organisation had gone through – a kind of 'transformational measurement' for schools and creative organisations (Hampshire and surrounds: Workshop 4)

Respondents from Creative Partnerships have told us that identifying their legacy is a complex task, defined as much by their users and partners as by themselves. Without a defined legacy, which can be communicated clearly, it will be difficult to demonstrate how the benefits of investment in the programme can have an impact in the future.

(Action 3.b continued) It will also be difficult to sell the concept of a Hub externally if the legacy is meant to be a major part of the offer. Once articulated, the Creative Partnerships legacy can become a useful part of the USP for Hubs.

3.4. Critical issue four: where do Hubs fit in Arts Council England, South East's business?

Issue four (a) Arts Council England, South East has published a number of strategies as part of its overall corporate planning during 2005. Two of these have particular significance to the Hubs proposal:

- ✶ the regional CYPA strategy, which presents the Hubs proposal. This has been led by the Development Team, which holds responsibility for Education and Skills, Diversity and Social Inclusion
- ✶ a new strategy for regularly funded organisations. This has been led by the Arts Department, which holds responsibility for the strategic direction of management of regularly funded organisations, and has officers assigned as leads to a range of individual art forms

In addition, the work of the Resource Development team, which holds responsibility for managing development of Arts Council England, South East's relationship with local authorities, offers some potentially fruitful bridges between the learning and wider-economic development agendas in the region. This team manages a clutch of 'Local Government Partnerships', which bring together clusters of local authorities as consortia across council boundaries to work collaboratively. There is important learning to be gleaned from the consortia projects about sub regional working.

On interviewing individual staff with responsibilities in different departments²⁹ it became apparent that:

- 🌱 there is complete unity in the vision that the ultimate beneficiaries of Hubs should be children and young people, and that any investment must impact at that level
- 🌱 the relationship between future Hubs and the portfolio of regularly funded organisations has not been articulated and there were some divergent views about if and how investment into Hubs should explicitly aim to benefit this portfolio. There were divergent views on the degree to which a target (set within the CYPA strategy) to develop up to 10 regularly funded organisations as ‘flagship’ organisations for creative learning, is achievable by 2010
- 🌱 there was not a clear or unified view yet of how hubs might act as a piece of the business within Arts Council England, South East’s overall corporate plan, or catalyse common agendas between teams.

Issue four (b) Creative learning and art form development:

Through the workshops it became apparent that there could be greater synergy between regularly funded organisations with learning programmes managed by art form officers, and learning projects managed by the Development Team. Some respondents felt they did not have sufficient knowledge of the education and learning work managed by this team, and that their lead art form officers also had a low level of knowledge. Some art form team-managed clients expressed an interest in being able to contribute to policy making by the Development Team on education and learning. There was no inference that they assigned fault to any one department at Arts Council England, South East, but they felt that Hubs are a good opportunity to address this issue³⁰.

²⁹ External Relations department, Development Team, Resource Development Team, Arts department.

³⁰ Workshop participants Hampshire and surrounds, Basingstoke, February 2006

(issue 4.b continued) Our investigation also found that there is tendency for Creative Partnerships to repel the notion of creative learning being aligned to art form development, for fear that they would be diverted from their purpose. This is understandable, given the demands of their working environment and the 'push and pull' of so many external agendas relating to young people. However, there is a legitimate counter argument put forward by some art form professionals that says: if the quality of the art form practice is high, the quality of the learning practice will benefit.

'Creative Partnerships and projects like it need to develop closer relationships with the producers [of artistic product] to ensure that there is a mutually beneficial growth in practice.'

Staff member, Arts Council England, South East

Issue four (c) Creative learning and economic development: there are potential links between policy priorities in economic development and in creative learning. This rests mainly on the ability of creative learning to position itself as part of workforce development and of sustainable communities programmes. 'Social creativity', a central theme in some debates about urban regeneration and sustainable communities, is another agenda gaining profile at the present time³¹.

There is scope for collaboration on these within Arts Council England, South East. Greater strategic positioning of the contribution creative learning can make to workforce skills, business productivity and organisational innovation could prove beneficial. These arguments might further draw together Arts Council England, South East agendas with those of the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and local level bodies such as Local Strategic Partnerships.

³¹ Demos creative cities programme- see <http://www.demos.co.uk/events/citysalonliverpool>

(issue 4.c continued) Local Area Agreements, which will influence and reflect local priorities for children and young people and economic development, are also an important mechanism for an initiative such as Hubs to engage with. It may be interesting for Arts Council England, South East to scope the potential for joint working between teams on influencing the spend of community infrastructure benefits arising from Section 106 tariffs in growth areas³², towards the arts and creativity. It is beyond the scope of this report to investigate this in greater depth.

Action four: engage dialogue between different Arts Council England, South East departments and maximise the strategic position of Hubs

We observed the need for a more developed vision, which is shared corporately, of how Hubs form part of the business for Arts Council England, South East . In particular, if the regularly funded organisations portfolio forms a majority part of Arts Council England, South East business, it may help Hubs to become a high and sustainable part of their corporate priorities, if they define a clear benefit back to this.

³² Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) have identified specific areas of the south east for investment and the building of capital infrastructure, namely housing

4. Opportunities

This section sets out some opportunities for Hubs which we have identified through our research. The criteria we have applied in defining them as opportunities is that: they are of significance within a national context; they will influence the regional and local infrastructure of provision for children and young people; and that they can form appropriate links to the existing body of work of Creative Partnerships.

4.1. Opportunity one

Schools: by 2008 and 2010 respectively, each of the four Creative Partnerships areas in the region should have built a critical mass of work and body of evidence of their impact on schools. No Creative Learning Hub would therefore be meaningful or complete in the region without schools and the curriculum as a target for its work. However, connecting this body of work with area strategies, particularly the workforce and economic development facets of Local Area Agreements and Area Programmes, will be important. Creative Partnerships may wish to examine how it can market its relevance better to those agendas, of which learning and skills are an important part.

4.2. Opportunity two:

Post-14 and post-16 years learning and training: 'integration' is a key term in public sector services at present. The establishment of singular 'Children's Services Departments' and 'Children's Trusts'³³, means that some of the silos that currently exist within local authorities and between different agencies that serve the community will have to be broken down. Government policy and pending legislation, notably Youth Matters and the Education and Inspections Bill (2006), effectively compels schools, colleges and other

³³ Children's trusts bring together all services for children and young people in an area, underpinned by the Children Act 2004 duty to cooperate, to focus on improving outcomes for all children and young people. See <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/aims/childrenstrusts>

training providers to work together. One manifestation of this is the obligation to provide an integrated and comprehensive menu of opportunities for 14-year-olds at local area level. This has resulted in an approach to the planning and delivery of local area learning provision based around the bringing together of organisational consortia – namely ‘14–19 partnerships’. The introduction of specialised Diplomas, due to be introduced into the education by 2008, also means a wider, more flexible view will also be taken of who provides what to school-age young people, so that they have access to the specialist training they choose.

4.2.1. The relevance of opportunity two to Hubs is threefold:

Link (a) Existing CP Practice in animating learning: the practice that Creative Partnerships applies to animating learning of core parts of the curriculum (such as English and Maths) might comfortably be adapted for application to the ‘key skills’ curriculum (also English and Maths) found within government-funded accredited work-based and sector-specific training. This is delivered by post-16 years training providers, outside schools. Trying a Creative Partnerships-type approach (i.e. using creative practitioners and artists within these learning frameworks) would be a departure for most work-based learning and further education providers. It would need to be piloted. Nevertheless, it presents an interesting and potentially fruitful setting for the application of Creative Partnerships-type creative learning. There are already examples in the arts sector, outside the Creative Partnerships programme, of creative learning being used effectively with young adults and with professionals in a corporate environment. Examples can be found among the portfolio of providers that work with the organisation, Arts & Business³⁴.

Link (b) Umbrella networks and organisational infrastructure: a large and sophisticated organisational infrastructure is being developed through

³⁴ See <http://www.aandb.org.uk>

national initiatives such as Centres for Vocational Excellence (COVEs), 'Action for Business' Colleges and 'Action for Communities' Colleges. The latter is about to be established in the South East, with a £2 million investment from the Government Office for the South East,³⁵ routed through the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), and will address the needs of young people over the age of 16 years.³⁶ Action for Business is an already established regional network of Colleges working with young people. These address local-area skills needs as defined by local employers and area economic profile.

It is worth considering that this existing infrastructure of providers may present a useful point of access for future Hubs to young people, in parts of the region where Creative Partnerships does not have a foothold. Equally, Hubs may be able to facilitate access for Colleges to employers within the creative industries where young people could be offered workplace learning. Workplace learning (taking place on the site of an employer) is a valuable commodity to post-16 years training providers in a 'demand-led' funding environment where their provision has to be demonstrated as 'employer-responsive'.³⁷ Skillset (the Sector Skills Council or 'SSC' ³⁸ for the audio-visual industries) is in the process of developing a first specialist diploma for its sector. As a well-established SSC, Skillset are also taking a national lead on developing sector-specific training provision for 14-19-year olds, that may impact on other parts of the creative industries³⁹.

Link (c) Soft and hard outcomes: the LSC and its delivery partners are interested in innovative ways of engaging young people and adults in learning. The success of funded work may therefore be measured formally by

³⁵ Government Office South East

³⁶ See <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/sussex/Partners/Action+for+Business+Colleges.htm>

³⁷ Association of South East Colleges interview, March 2006

³⁸ SSCs are an employer-led, independent organisations that cover a specific sector in the UK. See www.skillset.org

³⁹ An SSC for the creative and culture sectors exists but is in its infancy. See www.ccskills.org.uk

learning outcomes and accreditation but, in other circumstances, it may be measured by the impact on ‘engaging the disengaged’. Hooking socially excluded or non-economically active people back into learning, for example, is a valuable outcome. The ‘Action for Communities’ initiative, with the backing of the LSC, will also be embarking in the near future on a southeast regional audit of learning opportunities in the community⁴⁰. There are potential bridges to be exploited here between creative learning as practiced by Creative Partnerships, and the expertise of many other arts and culture organisations that use creative or artistic means to attract young people into meaningful activity.

There is no doubt that further dialogue with the post-14 and post-16 years learning-provider network via the LSC would benefit Hubs. The sheer scope and scale of this sector, however, indicates that Hubs (and Arts Council England, South East as their key sponsor) will need to identify ways of keeping abreast of developments and understanding the language. This aspect of intelligence gathering and ‘inter-agency’ translation may require some specific resourcing to maximise the opportunities for partnership and cash leverage.

4.3. Opportunity three:

Hubs as a driver for economic development: innovation (of both the technological and business kind) is a priority area for the Government and for SEEDA⁴¹. The Treasury-commissioned ‘Cox Review’ (2005)⁴² sets out a case for encouraging and investing in creativity within business as a way to make Britain more competitive. SEEDA are leading a major initiative – Regional Skills for Productivity Alliance (RSPA) – which is predicated on the principle that skills, employment and productivity are intrinsically linked.

⁴⁰ Kindle were unable to verify the precise detail of this so confirmation and accuracy should be checked further.

⁴¹ SEEDA regional economic strategy consultation event, Oxford 2005. See <http://www.seeda.co.uk>

⁴² http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/cox_review/coxreview_index.cfm

RSPA stimulates collaboration between strategic agencies, brokers and providers of training, to ensure that supply of training better matches demand. It is also to place skills at the heart of business. Supporting the development of young people is one priority within the RSPA initiative.

In addition, ACE fund Arts & Business, which already has access to a network of organisations that work with corporate business, using the arts to animate the workplace and corporate training. There are also examples elsewhere in the Arts Council England national network of arts organisations delivering within corporate social responsibility programmes and recruitment strategies⁴³.

A significant difference between delivering in these settings and the current work of Creative Partnerships would be age range, with a consequential impact on the style of delivery. However, there is sufficient synergy with the existing body of Creative Partnerships work, and with other projects funded by Arts Council England, for a bridge to be meaningful.

4.3.1. The benefits of opportunity three's agendas to Hubs could be:

Link (a) Enabling extension of the Creative Partnerships core age range: to include a wider constituency of young people and young adults in the 19–25 age bracket.

Link (b) Linking the Creative Partnerships legacy to Hubs: enabling Hubs to maintain strong initial focus on Creative Partnerships-type practice in creative learning as a starting point. A widening of settings and age brackets could be phased in but, when Creative Partnerships first 'flies the nest' after 2008, it will be important to ensure that there are meaningful connections with the existing body of practice. The agendas cited above allow for that because

⁴³ SMart was developed by Arts Council England, East in 2001 and enabled theatre practitioners to be employed within the Employment Strategy of the British Airport Authority (BAA) at Stansted.

the focus of the activity at ground level can remain as the development of learning and thinking skills in the end beneficiary group

Link (c) Linking with enterprise: offers a potential bridge between creative learning and enterprise education, in schools and in initiatives such as RSPA. Some Business Links also manage youth enterprise projects

Link (d) Linking with strategic local-area planning: potential alignment with the economic development and local area agendas, including Area Programmes⁴⁴, Local Area Agreements and cross-agency⁴⁵ sub regional partnerships.

4.4. Opportunity four: Olympic Games London 2012

The relevance of opportunity four to Hubs is:

Link (a) A major skills programme: 'On Your Marks' will help meet the workforce-development demands generated by the 2012 games. This will be a joint initiative between Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), LSCs and Government Office in three regions: East of England, London and the South East. There is an European Social Fund allocation to SEEDA of £5 million.

Link (b) A cultural programme will accompany the games.

Link (c) The Thames Gateway is already a focus for strategic investment and an identified Growth Area for government investment through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. This is likely to be the case with any learning and skills initiatives associated with the 2012 games. Thames Gateway includes parts of Kent, the home of one of the South East region's Creative Partnerships and home to a possible Hub.

4.5. Opportunity Five: Early years play and education

There was insufficient response to our consultation from the early-years sector to represent their views here. However, our research suggests there

⁴⁴ New Area Programmes were announced for 2005-08 with sizeable investment for the Thames Valley including Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. These sit within the overall Area Investment Frameworks.

⁴⁵ Sub regional Economic Partnerships (e.g. Thames Valley) as an example.

are three reasons to suggest early years presents a good opportunity for future Hubs, as set out below.

4.5.1. The relevance of opportunity five to Hubs may be

Link (a) Families: Sure Start, Extended Schools and Childcare Group is part of the same Children, Young People and Families Directorate of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Thus the aims of creative learning as practiced by Creative Partnerships are potentially in close alignment with other DfES work with carers and parents.

Link (b) Existing Creative Partnerships work: Creative Partnerships already work with some early years settings and have a growing body of work to offer Hubs.

Link (c) Identified need in the South East: early years and arts provision in the South East region is mapped as low, compared to provision for other age brackets, so Hubs would be meeting an identifiable need⁴⁶ for Arts Council England, South East.

⁴⁶ *Consultancy report to support the development of the Children, Young people and Arts strategy*, Sussex Arts Marketing for Arts Council England, South East 2005.

5. Lessons from two pilots

Before we set out our final recommendations, this report will summarise some of the key lessons learned by observing two pilot projects. At the time of our research, these projects were being led by Creative Partnerships Kent and Slough, and gave the opportunity for some real-life exploration of issues pertaining to future Hubs.

Kindle were commissioned to undertake an evaluation. We were asked by Arts Council England, South East to focus on strategic impact, rather than ground-level delivery, and to evaluate the Creative Partnerships' approach to working in new areas and with new partners and vice versa. We were asked to draw conclusions about what this told us about the testing of 'Hub working principles' by the pilots.

By mutual agreement with Arts Council England, South East, our work took the form of an 'observation' instead of a classical evaluation. We felt the latter was precluded by the fact work had already begun in the pilots before we were commissioned, and would conclude after we reported. However, the pilots gave us an opportunity to observe Creative Partnerships 'in the field' as they talked and brokered relationships with new partners in new geographical areas. A separate report on this subject has been produced for Arts Council England, South East, not contained here. However, the key points as they relate to the feasibility of future Hubs are presented here in summary form.

5.1. Who, what, where and when?

Interviews were conducted with 20 respondents involved with two pilots led by Creative Partnerships Kent and Slough. Work led by Creative Partnerships Slough was also observed in Oxford by Kindle, by attending a partnership-induction session early in the pilot programme. Kindle also observed Creative Partnerships Slough and Kent in dialogue with external

organisations in settings such as: a Creative Learning Forum, led by Arts Council England, South East in November 2005; and at the four consultation workshops we ran in February 2006.

The interviews, conducted by telephone, took place between December 2005 and February 2006. Of the interviews conducted, 11 related to Kent Creative Partnerships, and eight to Slough (including the Oxford and Milton Keynes pilots). One interview was conducted with Arts Council England, South East.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) was chosen as the focus for ground-level activity. Creative Partnerships Slough was tasked with working in new geographical areas, and did so with Oxford and Milton Keynes. Creative Partnerships Kent was similarly tasked and worked across the county. They were encouraged to include Medway, as a unitary authority in Kent, in the pilot. Some respondents also participated in the general consultation process in addition to the pilot-observation/analysis.

5.2. The main successes of the pilots at the time of observation were:

- a) both Creative Partnerships formed new partnerships outside their existing areas, achieving a core part of their set challenge for the pilot
- b) both Creative Partnerships have raised their profile outside their existing areas and have initiated dialogue where it did not exist before
- c) Creative Partnerships Slough levered-in money to the pilot in the Thames Valley from a new and participating partner – an indicator of successful advocacy at the time of the pilot
- d) Creative Partnerships Kent has furthered its case with Kent County Council to invest in creative learning, which can only benefit Hubs
- e) Creative Partnerships Slough captured the imagination of partners in one area (Milton Keynes) with an inspirational project concept, which placed stand up comedians into partnership with schools to work with teachers.

5.3. The main challenges of the pilots at the time of observation were:

5.3.1. Clarity of the purpose of the pilots: this was ostensibly to test 'Hub working principles'. However, in reality, these projects were better understood at ground level as either CPD programmes or general 'awareness raising' of Creative Partnerships. In the Thames Valley, Creative Partnerships Slough brought some new CPD opportunities to schools, but there was little mention of Hubs in the induction sessions or briefings for partner organisations. In Kent, a mixed programme of CPD and briefing sessions about Creative Partnerships was taking place in parts of the county not previously covered by the initiative. However, participants we interviewed had little or no concept of being part of something that was testing future Hub working. In addition, some did not identify with the Kent pilot being about CPD either, but felt they had benefited from a very useful introduction to Creative Partnerships as a whole. This lack of consensus about purpose, which we believe is related to timeframes (see below), has meant that many aspects of Hub working remain untested at the time of report writing. The pilots are due to continue in 2006–2007.

5.3.2. Timeframes in which the pilots operated: the pilots appeared to have been set up in a time-pressured manner. This hampered their ability significantly to actively plan to test a range of 'Hub working principles' or recreate realistic working conditions that Hubs might encounter. Working in new geographical areas was achieved and was received with enthusiasm by many participants. However, this was achieved by Creative Partnerships using their existing organisational structure and funding mechanisms. Creative Partnerships ring-fenced money, received via Arts Council England and DfES, was placed into the new locations. Some match funds were levered, for example through the Oxford Excellence Cluster by Slough Creative Partnerships, but the pilots did not rigorously test any new mechanisms for funding. Nor did they test robustly the extension of their core work into new sectors or age brackets.

5.3.3. Sustainability: the degree of sustainability of the new relationships that have been formed through the pilots remains unclear at the time of writing. This is particularly so on both a strategic and organisational level. In Kent, the pilots benefited from existing relationships with strategic organisations such as Kent County Council, but this was not new to the pilot.

In Oxfordshire, organisational partners have been stimulated to engage with Creative Partnerships Slough through a mix of interests: commitment to securing new, quality opportunities for young people; commitment to trying out innovative work with teachers and young people; politics (the desire to be seen to try a new organisational relationship out); and opportunism (the potential for an injection of cash). However, simultaneously, some partners that engaged also expressed concern about the equality of their relationship with Creative Partnerships and the sustainability of the partnership model adopted by the pilot. Some also said they needed more evidence of how Creative Partnerships' practice could add value locally.

In Milton Keynes, a second strand of the Creative Partnerships Slough-led pilot (effectively a separate and discreet project to that in Oxfordshire) was received enthusiastically by its key partner organisation, Stantonbury Campus⁴⁷, which delivered the project on behalf of Creative Partnerships.

5.3.4. Sub regional provision: delivery into new (non-Creative Partnerships) geographical areas was achieved. However, strategic planning at sub regional level was less evident. As one of the key facets of Hubs working, it will be important for future pilot work to test sub regional planning and delivery.

⁴⁷ A community comprehensive school incorporating a leisure centre, gallery and community education facility

5.4. The key lessons from the pilots about planning future Hubs are:

5.4.1. Sub regional provision: that working strategically across a whole sub region is easier in some areas than others. For example, the patchwork of unitary, district and county level authorities in the Thames Valley makes strategic collaboration, brokerage and advocacy much more complex and difficult than is the case in Kent, where there is a county council, its associated districts and one other unitary (Medway Council). This has implications for planning because the Government has recently announced a possible restructure of local government, splitting large authorities into smaller unitary models.

Lessons can also be learnt from the Local Government Partnership projects managed by Arts Council England, South East. These have brought consortia of authorities together, but they have generally found the process difficult on a sub regional level. There are some successful examples, but in areas such as the Thames Valley, partnerships have largely operated on a county-wide basis. Hubs operating over an entire sub region need to make sure they are complementary to existing structures, rather than creating artificial ones.

5.4.2. Sustainability: that local arms of national initiatives (such as the Excellence Cluster in Oxford) provide good delivery partners and help ensure work responds to identified needs. However, there needs to be more testing of partnering initiatives that sit within a regional or national framework, so that Hubs can be viable as part of a sustainable infrastructure of sustainable cross-agency provision. More testing of operating models also needs to be undertaken, including how Hubs may draw in and spend money.

5.4.3. Strategic relationships: more testing is needed of how a Hub would form a sustainable partnership model across a whole sub regional network of organisations. In addition, there needs to be further investigation into what is the best balance between Creative Partnerships leading Hubs and these programmes being simply *one* important strand of a Hub's work. At present, Creative Partnerships has a lack of credibility in parts of the region where it is an unknown quantity. This report does not seek to legitimise that view, but to merely represent it, since it is a potential barrier to the success of the Hubs proposal. Addressing the basic lack of dissemination of the evidence of Creative Partnerships' impact, is one way in which this might be partially resolved.

6. Kindle's Recommendations

Our recommendations are made with the following criteria – that they should:

- 🌱 be pragmatic
- 🌱 maximise identified opportunities
- 🌱 prioritise Hub sustainability
- 🌱 allow meaningful links to Creative Partnerships' practice, as a bridging point to Hubs

6.1. Operating models, governance and management: Recommendations one–three

6.1.1. Recommendation one: that Creative Learning Hubs are independent entities with the legal ability to trade and hold funds

This means they would not sit within Arts Council England or, for example, within a local authority. This is so they can operate in a flexible and responsive way, capturing appropriate opportunities as they arise on behalf of their sub region. It also means that their sustainability is not dependant on a single parent organisation, making Hubs less vulnerable to political change or public-sector restructuring. Arts Council England, South East should remain firmly part of the steering mechanism for Hubs, and use its influence tactically with national and regional strategic bodies to 'champion' them. Ideally, this would be complemented by a contribution in steering and funding from other regional agencies with a common interest in creative learning, such as SEEDA, the South East Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (SEMLAC) and the LSC. This will require advocacy and lobbying, to a degree.

6.1.2. Recommendation two: that the governance and management of Hubs allows for a demand-led body

(a) Governance: our recommendation to achieve a truly demand-led body is that Hubs are ‘self-governed’ by their users and partners. Users, likely to be learning and/or creative-activity providers themselves, would determine the Hub’s programme of work and its priorities on a sub regional basis. Such users could include local authorities, schools, colleges, arts organisations, individual practitioners and businesses. They may all draw services from a Hub. The users would also subscribe to the Hub, contributing funds through a membership system. Hubs will add value by reflecting members’ needs and those of their beneficiaries.

A governing panel would be drawn from within that membership. Task groups which are steered by the governing panel may be considered a useful mechanism for the Hub addressing different policy strands or time-limited projects. An overarching regional framework of priorities could be set by Arts Council England, South East in collaboration with those key agencies that contribute to core funding. It is anticipated that under this model, Hubs would be free to take on commissions and bid for project funds, where they served a common purpose for the membership.

(b) Management: it is extremely difficult to make sensible projections about staffing for management this far in advance, with the exact priorities for Hubs yet to be decided. However, the stakeholder response we received asked for clear and identifiable leadership. We understood this to be more about regional leadership from Arts Council England, South East. However, it is sensible to assume that, even with a governance group, the Hub will require day-to-day direction and management. It is therefore anticipated that a Hub will require a Director, who would make arguments in favour of the Hub, its members and in favour of creative learning. A Hub will also need a role that

attends to business development. In addition, it appears likely (based on consultation feedback) that Hubs will need the capability to gather, store, interpret and disseminate a large amount of diverse information, about practice and about opportunities. This role also needs to be catered for.

Until market research is undertaken as part of business planning, it is not possible to make recommendations for the structural size a Hub, or the size and cost of these human resource roles.

(c) Models we considered for contrasting comparison include:

- 🌱 **SEEDA Enterprise Gateways:** funded regionally, managed by Business Links as geographical clusters and cited locally answering local need. They are not independent but exist as ‘accounts’ of Business Link.
- 🌱 **Charitable organisations with a not-for-profit trading arm:** this is often a model employed by regularly funded organisations, heritage sites and community organisations. However, there is a risk that such governing boards become resource-intensive and that the trading arm has to generate money simply to keep the board going. There is also a risk that policy is less demand-responsive.
- 🌱 **Social enterprise:** one model that could be given further consideration is that of a business with a social purpose. This trades, using a business (not subsidy) model, but its objectives are for the good of society or local community. The Government recently announced a new Social Enterprise Action Plan⁴⁸

These options may merit further consideration. However, we believe the findings of this investigation favour a membership organisation.

⁴⁸ See DTI announcements 25/01/06.

6.1.3. Recommendation three: that governance and management takes known strengths into account

This is another argument for adopting a flexible structure that can be locally responsive. It means that where a particularly strong relationship has been formed – such is the case with Creative Partnerships Kent and Kent County Council (KCC) – that this is captured in the planning of operating models in each sub region. Creative Partnerships Kent has achieved great success in this regard, with a significant financial contribution from KCC as an indicator of that success. However, it is not recommended that Hubs become overly dependant on a single organisation for sponsorship or funds as this leaves them open to too much risk.

6.2. Users, customers, investors and beneficiaries: Recommendations four–seven

6.2.1. Recommendation four: that users, partners and investors should be considered to have interchanging roles to ensure a demand-led service.

This is largely dealt with before in Recommendation two, ‘Governance’. In the flexible model we are proposing, these types of stakeholders may cross over. For example, a cluster of schools might subscribe to a Hub if it felt its services could add value. That cluster might then later commission the Hub for a specific task. The schools become the direct beneficiaries of the service when the project is delivered. Similar scenarios may be envisaged with local authorities, with arts organisations or most other potential customers of Hubs. Young people (including children and young adults) would be end beneficiaries and the project would have a good chance of being entirely demand-led. This model has the ability to capture the demand-led culture that publicly-funded organisations (such as training providers) will be adopting.

6.2.2. Recommendation five: that core funds should be divided between helping to run the Hub and enabling users to commission it

We are recommending that groups of ‘priority users’ (which might include a particular type of learning provider or geographical area) should be identified on a rolling basis. These priority users, determined jointly by Hubs and the key sponsoring agencies such as Arts Council England, South East, could be given some buying power. By devolving some of the available core funds for Hubs to priority users, they are helped to become commissioners of work. This will again help ensure that Hubs provide a needs-led service. Importantly, it can help ensure that the next phase of development for creative learning in the region is driven jointly by users and beneficiaries (such as schools), not solely by providers.

6.2.3. Recommendation six: that the age bracket of beneficiaries for Hubs is wider than that of Creative Partnerships

This is pragmatic because it allows Hubs to draw from a range of potential sources of income for commissions, and on a range of potential partners. It is meaningful in terms of the regional CYP strategy because it allows Hubs to retain a focus on creative learning, using Creative Partnerships practice as a jumping-off point. It does not, however, close the door on expanding into practice and settings in which organisations outside Creative Partnerships can offer expertise.

6.2.4. Recommendation seven: that core funding is collaborative

Because creative learning has such wide ownership as a field of work, it makes good sense for the financial ownership to also be shared. We have identified the following as priority targets for brokerage of collaborative investment:

- ✦ SEEDA and its partners: including LSC & Business Links – drawing on SEEDA and GOSE money for post-14 years learning, workforce development and enterprise
- ✦ SEMLAC – harnessing the expertise and legacy from Renaissance and their own ‘Museum Hubs’ initiative and tabling Creative Learning Hubs as a joint venture with Arts Council England, South East
- ✦ Local authorities, area programmes and Local Strategic Partnerships: which may consider core funding, may subscribe to their ‘local’ Hub and/or may act as commissioners of projects or services

It would be beneficial for this brokerage to happen in the near future, so that Hub development might be jointly planned between now and 2008–2010.

6.3. Types of work:

6.3.1. Recommendation eight: that activity reflects need and harnesses opportunity

The types of work that both reflect need and harness opportunity are:

(a) Serving an age bracket of 0–25 years as end beneficiaries. However, establishing Hubs might be best achieved in their infancy by prioritising the 5–16 years (Creative Partnerships’ ‘sweet spot’) and 14–19 years age brackets (capitalising on opportunities arising from new integrated multi-agency services).

(b) It may also be a valuable role for Hubs to enable an advisory service to be provided, to target young people. The sister commission to this investigation, undertaken by Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership (OYAP), consulted a sample of young people about their views on the arts and how they would like to engage with them. One young person cited how off-putting they found the Lottery Programme, ‘Grants for the Arts’. The OYAP research reports that young people’s access to the arts and culture is hampered by the

grants-application process. It is unlikely that Hubs would be able to comfortably provide a direct service, but as a broker of those services they would certainly add value and impact at ground level.⁴⁹

(c) In Section 6 ‘Opportunities’ we listed some settings in which children and young people as beneficiaries might be accessed. These settings imply some types of work including:

- 🌱 schools and the curriculum
- 🌱 further education and work-based learning, as a way of animating key skills
- 🌱 business, as a driver for innovation and a part of youth-enterprise programmes
- 🌱 early years settings, in play and supporting the early-learning goals
- 🌱 in significant one-off initiatives, such as the Olympics (London 2012), which will have workforce development and culture initiatives as complementary strands
- 🌱 CPD for teachers, artists and creative practitioners
- 🌱 the development of action research

However, any chosen fields of work will need to be reviewed on an ongoing basis. We can only speculate on their relevance to 2008–2010 at the present time.

6.4. Indicative costings: **Recommendations nine—ten**

6.4.1. Recommendation nine: that the financial tolerances of the proposal sit between approximately £80,000 and £300,000 for core costs per Hub

⁴⁹ See *Securing Voices*, OYAP, April 2006

Please note: all information in this section is strictly indicative and is offered purely as a projection to aid planning. It is both impossible and artificial to cost precisely an initiative which is due to begin between 2 and 5 years hence.

6.4.2. The lower figure: £80,000 is based on providing a core contribution to support a Hub whose services are primarily information gathering and dissemination, facilitating networking and the gathering of resources on behalf of its members. It would provide for a Hub Director role, some administrative support and an online facility as the principle media through which it would carry out its work. Its programme of work will include bringing together organisations in the physical sense several times a year. It is unlikely to include action research or project work without additional funds. Similar membership networks are resourced by the LSC at around this level per annum.

6.4.3. The upper figure: £300,000 is based on providing all of the above but with the addition of additional staff roles that could develop a solid programme of project work, financially enhanced through commissions and other sources. This programme could include the types of work cited in this report but may need to generate additional income to cover the full range. The core funding could provide for some branding and marketing, but again this would benefit from being enhanced on a project basis where required.

6.4.4. A comparison: the average budget for core costs and programme work in 2006–2007 for a Creative Partnerships area is around £800,000. However, we do not believe it would be sensible to plan for a core operation that is dependent on such levels of essential subsidy funding. In order to achieve the ‘fleet of foot’ and flexible entity that stakeholders described to us, Hubs

would do well to limit subsidy, portfolio fund, start smaller and grow with the market opportunity.

6.5. Recommendation 10: that Hubs are ‘not for profit’ entities but operate a business model.

The external landscape is changing, particularly in the public sector where much more provision is contestable and is commissioned competitively. National government initiatives such as Change Up⁵⁰, which has built the capacity of the voluntary and community sector to ‘trade’ with the public sector, demonstrate the way the tide is turning in this regard. Subsidy pots are finite and some would argue, shrinking. In the last spending review, Arts Council England did not do as well as it had hoped. Arts Council England, South East is also currently examining why many of its regularly funded organisations do not make a surplus. All this points towards an opportunity to set up Hubs differently, and in a way that equips them well to survive as organisations of the 21st century. Part of this will be their ability to develop their own financial sustainability and remain independent of any one income source.

7. Route map


This map is a summary of essential next steps for Arts Council England, South East to take, and lead on with key partners. Milestones are expressed as ‘immediate’, ‘mid-term’, ‘ongoing’ or ‘long-term’ priorities over a 3–5 year period. Assigning specific dates to actions is not appropriate when dealing with such long timescales and it is also problematic outside a full business planning process.




⁵⁰ See <http://communities.homeoffice.gov.uk/activecomms/sup-vcs/changeup>

Kindle Route Map 2006–2010

(white area denotes the timeframe in which the action is undertaken)

STEP	IMMEDIATE	MID-TERM	LONG-TERM
1	Make specific choices about the purpose of Hubs, and which of the regional-strategy priorities they are best placed to serve, so that advocacy can be targeted.		
2	Disseminate the achievements of Creative Partnerships and identify market opportunities for creative learning.		
3	Plot the practice in creative learning that exists outside Creative Partnerships and share it.		
4	Articulate the synergies and differences between provision that delivers 'creative learning', 'arts education' and 'youth arts', for the purposes of helping organisations understand how their work might interact with a Creative Learning Hub.		

STEP	IMMEDIATE	MID-TERM	LONG-TERM
5	Building on departmental vision, develop a corporate vision of how Hubs form part of business for Arts Council England, South East.		
6	Engage strategic partners, particularly the post 14–16 years learning sector (via the Learning and Skills Council), the South East England Development Agency and local government Local Area Agreements.		
7	Arts Council England, South East, to table proposals to key collaborating agencies to become co-funders of Hubs.		
8	Set up fresh pilot work that tests a whole range of 'Hub working' principles, including financial and operational models. 		

STEP	IMMEDIATE	MID-TERM	LONG-TERM
9	Undergo a full business-planning process for Hubs, to produce more detailed market research into potential users and investors. 		
10		Enable a phasing-in of Hubs from 2007–2010 (rather than from 2008), allowing them to operate alongside Creative Partnerships in the final year of this programme.	
11		Identify the strongest aspects of the Creative Partnerships' legacy and define USPs for Hubs. 	Ongoing
12		Expand the age range of beneficiaries for Hubs beyond that of Creative Partnerships, to include early years and business. 	

8. Final comments:

Creative Learning Hubs are feasible in the South East region. They could add considerable value to the infrastructure of provision for children, young people and the arts. However, the role of Creative Partnerships as potential leaders of Hubs is less assured, until the intended remit of Hubs is clarified and the impact of Creative Partnerships is more widely understood.

C. Appendices

Appendix 1: Kindle's matrix of key investigation questions

Appendix 2: List of respondents to the investigation and acknowledgements

Appendix 3: About Kindle and the team for this work

Appendix 4: Bibliography

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Appendix 1

Matrix of overarching questions for the Kindle Investigation

The questions relate to one or more of the key headings

TYPES OF WORK	GOVERNANCE	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
What is the Hub's role?	How do Hubs operate?	How do Hubs add value?	What models allow Hubs to generate resources most effectively?

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS	PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING	RESOURCES	DELIVERY
How does information flow in and out of a Hub?	How do Hubs plan and make decisions?	How do Hubs generate resources?	What modes of delivery best meet needs?
How do Hubs impact on regional infrastructure of provision? (for children and young people and for the creative sector)	How do Hubs impact on existing organisations?	How do Hubs function politically?	How do Hubs become viable?
How do Hubs link into Every Child Matters & Youth Matters?	How do Hubs link into cross-sector initiatives?	How do Hubs link into regional economic strategy (SEEDA)?	How do Hubs connect with local initiatives?

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Appendix 2

List of respondents to the investigation and acknowledgements

(i) List of respondents to the investigation via consultation, research and project evaluation

- Respondents marked * participated in one of a series of four workshops during February 2006.
- + denotes chair of a Creative Partnerships board

Kindle would like to express its thanks to everyone that participated in this investigation and gave of their time and ideas including:

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Mary Tennant	South East Dance
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Mike Fitzsimons*	Songware, Brighton, East Sussex
Natalie Andrews	Loop Dance Company, Chatham, Kent
Natalie Walton*	Towner Gallery, Eastbourne, East Sussex
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Appendix 3

Kindle and the team for this work

Kindle specialises in helping business and the public sector incubate new projects and initiatives. We also help organisations work in partnership. Our work takes us into a range of sectors including economic development, education, training, corporate social responsibility and culture. Our recent assignments have included work with business, enterprise agencies, training providers, schools and government agencies in projects at local, regional and national level.

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Emma Copeland, Kindle Project Coordinator, writer and researcher

Supported in the pilots evaluation by:

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If you would like to know more about any of the team members or their work on this project, please contact Kindle.

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Appendix 4

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