

# Arts and Cultural Companies: Their Environments, Everyday Experiences and Growth

**Dear Readers,**

A vibrant culture scene results from the existence and interactions of artists, arts and heritage organisations and businesses, audiences, policymakers, funders and so on. Some parts of this complex ecosystem are better understood than others. For example, in Singapore, we know a lot more about the lives and works of our Cultural Medallion artists. The business of arts and heritage tend to be profiled less often. Hence, in this issue, we explore the latest research on arts and cultural businesses and entrepreneurship.

In the recently launched [Our SG Arts Plan \(2023-2027\)](#) and [Our Sg Heritage Plan 2.0](#), the National Arts Council (NAC) and National Heritage Board (NHB) have reiterated their commitment to working with arts and heritage organisations to help them transform and innovate. As the NAC, NHB, our arts and cultural companies, and like-minded partners (including the Culture Academy!) embark on this 5-year journey together, it is timely to take a look at our cultural companies, to understand how they have emerged out of the COVID-19 pandemic, to reflect on their concerns, experiences and roles in changed policy and operating environments, and to imagine how they might grow in the years ahead.

In *Backstage: Managing Creativity and the Arts in South-East Asia*, the authors review the policies and operating environments that small and medium-sized arts and cultural companies in Southeast Asia face. Analysing these companies' strategies, capacities and challenges, the authors provide several recommendations on how to improve the financial and market environment for arts and cultural companies. The second article, *Funding arts and culture: Everyday experiences and organisational portfolio precarity*, delves into how the work of UK arts organisations in identifying and managing multiple, potential funding sources may give rise to an overall experience of precarity rather than increased funding and security. In addition to diversifying funding, some arts and cultural companies these days also juggle their roles as intermediaries. The authors of our third article examine the plural or hybrid nature of intermediaries in culture and innovation and the different kinds of internal value generated for arts and cultural companies playing such roles. Playing the role of an intermediary is but only one possible path of expansion and our final article by Ellen Loots and Simone van Bennekom highlights lessons on how and why firms in creative industries develop and grow based on empirical research from the Netherlands.

From all of us at Culture Academy.

## Research Articles

### Article 01

2021

#### Backstage: Managing creativity and the arts in South-East Asia

By Sunitha Janamohanan, Sari Sasaki and Audrey Wong Wai Yen



*Backstage: Managing Creativity and the Arts in South-East Asia*, draws on the findings of UNESCO's recent study of the creative sector in the nine countries of the South-East Asian region, which involved a quantitative survey, in-depth interviews, and policy analysis. It showcases the policy environments in which the creative sector is operating, points out the similarities and differences across countries of the region, and concretely identifies areas in which exchanges and further development can be engineered to unleash the sector's full potential. Beyond a review of existing policies, it also tells the stories of twenty-nine small and medium-sized organisations across the region which are on the front line of moving the sector forward. While all vary in terms of strategies, capacities, and challenges, they share a great ambition to succeed and a full commitment to supporting their countries' creative sector and making them vibrant.

[Read here](#)

### Article 02

2022

#### Funding arts and culture: Everyday experiences and organisational portfolio precarity

By Daniel Ashton



With intensifying demands on the public purse, the UK government emphasized funding income diversification for arts and cultural organisations. This article examines the experiences of UK arts and cultural organisations in balancing simultaneous funding sources, managing timelines and working through change. The article introduces the concept of "organisational portfolio precarity" as a way to critically understand the everyday situations and implications of how art and cultural organisations respond to the income diversification priority.

[Read here](#)

### Article 03

2023

#### Cultural and innovation intermediation in the cultural-creative industries

By Sam Stockley-Patel and Jon Swords



Cultural intermediaries have long played important roles in enabling the production, evaluation and consumption of cultural-creative industries work. Though past studies have explored the roles of different types of cultural intermediaries across a range of different sectors, the role of cultural and innovation intermediaries in R&D and innovation in the cultural-creative industries remains under-researched and under-theorised. As digital technologies play increasingly important roles across the value chain of the cultural-creative industries, it is important to understand how innovation intermediaries combine with, overlap with, and complement cultural intermediation processes. This article explores the intermediary processes undertaken by a university in a creative industries R&D project. In so doing, the authors illustrate the plural and hybrid nature of cultural and innovation intermediation, highlight where internal value is generated, and identify the importance of affective intermediation through relational labour.

[Read here](#)

### Article 04

2022

#### Entrepreneurial firm growth in creative industries: fitting in ... and standing out!

By Ellen Loots and Simone van Bennekom



Firm growth in the creative and cultural industries seemingly presents a conundrum. Creative firms are characterised by craftsmanship, imagination, artistic quality, innovativeness and a seeming disregard for money or profits as a guiding principle. How creative firms grow, and which ones do, continues to remain poorly understood. By means of matched case studies of market leaders and followers in seven creative industries in the Netherlands, this paper seeks to tackle this conundrum and gap in research. The authors suggest that for creative firms to develop (instead of stagnating or dying), founders need to fit in, or understand the value creation and conversion processes in effect within their industry. For firms to grow by means of an expansion of their markets, founders need to stand out, or create resource advantages vis a vis other firms in the industry, which could lie in an internationalisation or a digitalisation approach.

[Read here](#)

Subscribe to Culture Bytes

Brought to you by



Culture Bytes is brought to you by the Culture Academy Singapore, a division of the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. © 2020 Government of the Republic of Singapore. All rights reserved. The Government of the Republic of Singapore does not warrant or assume any responsibility for the contents of Culture Bytes and accepts no liability whatsoever for the reader's use of or reliance on the same.

