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## **THE “ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET” IN CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS HIGHER EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA**

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### **Abstract**

Creative and performing arts schools are increasingly facing the challenge of developing curricula to address an employability agenda in higher education. Arts entrepreneurship education is thought to address this need because it supports the unique nature of the work circumstances of creative and performing arts graduates. As an emerging area of research, arts entrepreneurship education faces the challenge of not only being relevant and important to creative and performing arts education but of being robust enough to contribute to a “paradigm shift” (Beckman, 2011, p. 29). With this in mind, this article attempts to clarify a recurring theme of arts entrepreneurship education, this being the development of an “entrepreneurial mindset.” We argue that if an entrepreneurial mindset is to be considered an essential aspect of arts entrepreneurship education, educators need to have a good understanding of what it means and how it might be taught. We examine data from four interviews with arts educators who have responsibility for teaching arts entrepreneurship in creative and performing arts schools. Their experiences enable us to clarify the meaning of an “entrepreneurial mindset” in a creative and performing arts context in higher education and to make suggestions about teaching and learning.

### **Introduction**

Increasingly, there is pressure on creative and performing arts schools in higher education institutions to develop curriculum that addresses the employability of graduates. Such curriculum must be reflective of the particular types of employment commonly experienced by creative and performing arts graduates. Typical employment in the arts is by way of short-term projects and contracts with high levels of self-employment (Bridgstock, 2011; Ball, Pollard, Stanley, and Oakley, 2010; Throsby and Zednik, 2010; Brown, 2005). Arts entrepreneurship is a relatively new discipline in creative and performing arts higher education and is currently attracting attention due to the possibilities it affords to address graduate employability issues. However, as an emerging area there is a need for further research that attempts to clarify the meaning of arts entrepreneurship and explore how it is currently practiced. Beckman (2011) argues the need for a paradigm shift to ensure that arts entrepreneurship is considered an academically robust and integral aspect of creative and performing arts education. The aim of this article is to contribute to this paradigm shift through an examination of an emerging and integral element in arts entrepreneurship education, an “arts entrepreneurial mindset” (Essig, 2013; Beckman, 2007, 2011; Carey and Naudin, 2006; Gustafson, 2011).

In the following, we investigate the notion of an arts entrepreneurial mindset as it relates to teaching in arts higher education through analyzing themes that arose from four interviews conducted with creative and performing arts educators who have responsibility for teaching in the area of arts entrepreneurship. These interviews revealed that an arts entrepreneurial mindset has five important elements, each with an indelible link to creative practice via a firm focus on the dissemination of creative work. These are 1) the capacity to think creatively, strategically, analytically and reflectively, 2) confidence in one’s abilities, 3) the ability to collaborate, 4) well-developed communication skills and 5) an understanding of the current artistic context. We argue

that these skills are important in higher education and our explication of these skills in arts entrepreneurship education show how such education can make an important contribution to creative and performing arts education more generally.

While our study is limited in that only four educators were interviewed, our findings suggest that arts entrepreneurship education aims to develop skills, attitudes and abilities that, in addition to assisting graduates to develop sustainable creative arts careers, also complements and contributes to higher education more generally through the development of generic graduate attributes. Our finding that the development of an arts entrepreneurial mindset also contributes in unique and valuable ways to broader creative and performing arts educational outcomes is an important step towards the necessary paradigm shift. This is because it positions arts entrepreneurship education as enhancing the mainstream of performing and creative arts education as it is understood in Australia. Further research with a larger number of participants is necessary to further contribute to this understanding of arts entrepreneurship education.

### **Teaching for Employability**

There is increasing pressure on institutes of higher education to improve graduate employment outcomes. Cranmer (2006) refers to this as the “employability in higher education agenda” (p. 170). In Australia, the federal government is the major funding body for universities. Recently the government has:

made public funding partially contingent upon demonstrable graduate outcomes with an emphasis on the production of “work ready” graduates who are competent within their disciplinary fields and possess the abilities necessary to negotiate a world of work that is in constant flux (Bridgstock, 2009, p. 31).

Creative and performing arts schools are facing unique challenges in terms of developing employability curricula because their graduates do not generally experience the same type of employment circumstances as graduates from other disciplines. They are far more likely to experience what are known as “portfolio, protean or boundary-less careers” (McCowan and Wyganowska, 2008, p. 30) characterised by high levels of self-employment, freelance work and short-term contracts (Daniel and Daniel, 2013; Bridgstock, 2011; Ball et al., 2010; Throsby and Zednik, 2010; Brown, 2005). Employment for these graduates does not usually involve a single full-time job, “less than 50% of employment in the arts sectors involves a primary occupation – people doing one type of work” (Summerton, 2001, quoted in Brown, 2005, p. 160).

The pressure to teach skills for employment is not limited to government policy. It also emanates from students themselves who are asking to be taught skills that will enable them to sustain a living. For example, a questionnaire of ninety-seven students from the performing arts in the UK found that “ninety-two per cent [...] believed it was important or very important that higher education should be preparing them for the world of work” (Brown, 2005, p. 161). Bennett (2009) undertook a survey of over thirty dance graduates in order to investigate their employment. When asked about changes to the bachelor degree curriculum in view of their graduate experiences three key themes emerged; “career awareness and development, training in different genres, and changes to course structure” (p. 32). The type of career awareness and development activities suggested by the surveyed graduates included the following:

- Include [a] unit involving business side of being an artist in the "real world."

- A better understanding of what happens after you've left [university].
- Perhaps a more realistic view of how the "real world" operates.
- More skills for surviving in the real world.
- Be trained to establish our own work opportunities, otherwise the industry won't grow and trained professionals are being wasted (p. 32)

Brown (2005) reports that a survey of UK members of the Musicians' Union found that more than "90% of all respondents stated that they had received little or no preparation for aspects of managing their careers" (p. 162). In light of these findings schools will need to consider Bennett's (2009) argument that "alongside 'selling the dream', pre-professional education should open the door to the myriad opportunities within and beyond the cultural industries" (p. 33).

Arts entrepreneurship education has been proposed as one way of addressing the employability agenda of higher education and the unique circumstances of employment in the arts. It is said to develop skills to navigate a career for a world in constant flux to which creative practitioners can contribute their particular artistic skills. It is a relatively new area in creative and performing arts higher education and has yet to achieve comprehensive recognition and integration into the mainstream curriculum. There needs to be considerable research investigating how it is understood and practiced in the field (Beckman, 2011). This is necessary not only to support arts educators in their attempts to develop curricula but also to contribute to developing arts entrepreneurship as a valid and integral aspect of creative and performing arts education. Beckman argues that scholars in the field need to contribute to a paradigm shift of understanding about arts entrepreneurship education: "We must not consider ourselves simply arts entrepreneurship educators but pioneering scholars advancing a fundamental paradigm shift in the outcome of arts training" (p.29). One of the aims of this article is to contribute to this shift through analyzing the idea of an entrepreneurial mindset in the context of the creative and performing arts education.

### **What does Arts Entrepreneurship Look Like? -- Two Approaches**

Arts entrepreneurship is a fairly recent and ill-defined concept (HEA and NESTA, 2007; Beckman, 2007; Brown, 2005). Beckman (2007) argues that there are two approaches to arts entrepreneurship education: one focuses on teaching new venture creation and the other focuses on transitioning students to professional careers.

The first approach, based on a business model, is common in arts entrepreneurship education yet is problematic in several ways. First, it tends to disengage students more interested in their own creative practice than in developing and running a business (Brown, 2005). This is particularly the case when "the antagonism between art and business" (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006, p. 234) is taken into consideration. This stems from the underlying assumption that money harms rather than enables art (Beckman, 2007). Creative and performing arts students are far more likely to identify as "living a lifestyle that is distinct and distinguished from the rest of society, especially the bourgeoisie and business" (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006, p. 234). Such a lifestyle is characterized by creative fulfillment and artistic achievement being held in higher esteem than financial reward. Students may not be intrinsically motivated at best and, at worst, disengaged by an education comprising new venture creation that does not take into

consideration their underlying values and motivations for embarking on a creative career and that privileges the business values of profit-making over creative fulfillment.

The business model of arts entrepreneurship education may also prove alienating to creative and performing arts students used to "the development of high level disciplinary creative and technical skills, often through an intensive and rigorous studio experience" (Bridgstock, 2013, p. 125) grounded in experiential learning pedagogy. Business curricula also tend to neglect not-for-profit, social, and cultural entrepreneurship (Kuuskoski, 2011; Phillips, 2010; HEA and NESTA, 2007). While business curricula, especially financial management and marketing skills, may have a place within arts entrepreneurship education, it is argued that they ought not to form its pedagogical backbone. Thus, Beckman's (2007) second form of arts entrepreneurship education is seen to be more appealing for creative and performing arts students in general and more appropriate in terms of making a scholarly contribution to creative and performing arts education.

The second approach to arts entrepreneurship education as identified by Beckman (2007) focuses on transitioning students to professional careers in the arts with a particular focus on more intangible, behavioral aspects of entrepreneurship. He describes this stream as "concerned with innovation in a professional environment and *entrepreneurship education* as training that prepares students to behave in this manner" (p. 89, emphasis in original). The training involves developing "entrepreneurial behavior [in an] arts culture, and the contextual integration of intellectual skills" (p. 91). It is a demanding form of education and it requires a "new curricula philosophy" (p. 95). This philosophy needs to encompass the development of business skills contextualized "through an understanding of arts policy, arts culture, arts management, and experiential opportunity" (p. 98). This philosophy addresses both "the intellectual and artistic self" (p.98). This is a far more intellectually rigorous approach than simply introducing a course in decontextualized business skills.

The wholesale adoption of business school curricula by creative and performing arts education is as inadequate to teach students arts entrepreneurship as it is to contributing to a paradigm shift to advance the understanding and importance of arts entrepreneurship in creative and performing arts education (Beckman, 2011). The stream of arts entrepreneurship curriculum focused on transitioning students to professional careers, with its aim to develop attitudes and behaviors, is more appropriate for facilitating a paradigm shift. This is especially the case in relation to a recurring theme in arts entrepreneurship education: the development of an entrepreneurial mindset (Bennet, 2009; Essig, 2013; Carey and Naudin, 2006). The focus on the development of said mindset is influenced by non arts-based entrepreneurship education. The clarification of the mindset as it relates to arts entrepreneurship education can help make a contribution to curriculum development and, quite possibly, to the paradigm shift as discussed by Beckman (2007). Such clarification can be undertaken through examining how the concept has been understood in entrepreneurship education and how it is currently understood in arts entrepreneurship education theory and practice. Such knowledge can contribute to developing new forms of arts entrepreneurship education.

### **The Entrepreneurial Mindset**

A recurring theme in entrepreneurship education over the past decades is that entrepreneurs have what has variously been described as having an "entrepreneurial perspective" (Kuratko, 2005, p. 578), entrepreneurial "personal capabilities" (Laukkanen, 2000, p. 28), "entrepreneurial mindset" (McGrath and MacMillan, 2000) and entrepreneurial "human

characteristics and traits" (Ronstadt, 1987, p. 43). Currently, there is debate about the location of the mindset: is it an essence? Is it cognitive? However, in spite of the debate, the idea itself remains pertinent in higher education and, as seen below, is central to how arts entrepreneurship education is understood and taught. In this section, we examine the idea of the mindset and the changes to how it is understood. The individualist and essentialist understanding of the mindset has recently given way to a "cognitive turn" (Duening, 2010, p.3) that focuses on teaching specific cognitive skills. This means that the individualistic nature of the mindset has shifted to one that is more inclusive and outward looking. Further clarifying the arts entrepreneurial mindset can make a contribution to this important shift in entrepreneurship education.

Traditionally, theories of entrepreneurship have focused on identifying the personality or behavioral characteristics of an entrepreneurial mindset (Duening, 2010). It was initially believed that this mindset was innate to entrepreneurs; "early entrepreneurship researchers acted on the belief that successful entrepreneurs possess personality traits that distinguish them from non-entrepreneurs" (Duening, 2010, p. 4; Ronstadt, 1987). This meant that entrepreneurship education was traditionally focused on instilling "the right human traits and characteristics" (Solomon, 2000, p. 172). This was very much an education focused on the "single (heroic, supercreative, etc.) individual who is key to everything" (Laukkanen, 2000, p. 30). It was also an essentialist view as the mindset was thought to be inherent to particular personality types, and therefore could not be taught.

Recently this type of personality trait approach has been reconsidered. This is a trend reflected in other areas of research such as leadership and strategic management (Ford, 2010; Villett and Vuillermot, 2005; Ireland et al., 2003). There are several reasons for this shift. First, there is little research that supports the contention that there are certain personality traits peculiar to entrepreneurs (Duening, 2010). A further reason is that attempting to instill personality traits into students is ethically questionable. In relation to a similar approach in leadership research, Ford (2010) argued that an approach based on instilling a set of personal capabilities is nothing more than "a list of behaviors that need to be practiced, learned and finally acquired" (p. 50). This approach is ethically questionable as it focuses on re-making individuals. Laukkanen (2000) similarly describes this aspect of entrepreneurial education in the following manner; "prevalent thinking of entrepreneurial education focuses upon *single* individuals. They are receivers, even objects, to be transformed by and within a linear education process" (p. 28, emphasis in original). Such an education does not pay attention to "more distant external goals" such as personal satisfaction and contribution to the economy (p. 28). This type of individually focused, "instilling" education has wider implications for higher education. Questions arise such as its capability for developing ethical, critically thinking, and socially responsible students.

For these reasons, among others, there is a move to develop new ways of educating entrepreneurs in higher education. One way in particular is making an impact. This is the "cognitive turn" (Duening, 2010, p. 3) approach that posits that entrepreneurs think in a specific manner. This changes the focus from instilling personality traits to teaching the habits of specific cognitive and metacognitive skills. Some habits that have thus far been distinguished include "cognitive rules that enable the management of risk and risk perception, the rapid vetting of [...] opportunities and the ability to manage ambiguity and failure" (p. 5). McGrath and MacMillan (2000) define an entrepreneurial mindset as "the ability to rapidly sense, act and mobilize, even under uncertain conditions" (p. xv). This definition clearly describes a way of thinking that is comparable with Duening's (2010) entrepreneurial habits of mind. Building on this definition, Ireland et al. (2003) "define an entrepreneurial mindset as a growth oriented perspective through

which individuals promote flexibility, creativity, continuous innovation and renewal" (p.968). It is clear that these habits and ways of thinking are learned processes and that the focus has shifted, from a special individual to the acquisition of cognitive habits of mind. Haynie et al. (2010) build on the cognitive skills model and move the focus from interrogating the cognitive skills that individuals use to identifying entrepreneurial opportunities to "the process through which entrepreneurs develop and inform 'higher-order' cognitive strategies" (p. 217) or metacognition. Haynie et al.'s (2010) "model of the entrepreneurial mindset is based upon situating metacognitive processes in the entrepreneurial context" (p.217). Implicit within the cognitive and metacognitive skills approach is the need for self-efficacy as an important pre-condition to support and successfully enact the entrepreneurial mindset (Mauer et al, 2009). Mauer et al (2009) view this as a complex psycho-social process which has obvious benefits in tolerating risk and uncertainty. Once again, self-efficacy was not found to be an inherent disposition but could be developed by entrepreneurship education. This shift in the entrepreneurial mindset from being based on personality traits and behavioral characteristics to cognitive skills and metacognitive processes is seen both in business-oriented entrepreneurship education and in arts entrepreneurship education.

### **Arts Entrepreneurial Mindset**

The development of an entrepreneurial mindset is a recurring theme in arts entrepreneurship (Bennett, 2009; Essig, 2013; Carey and Naudin, 2006). However, while there is general agreement that the mindset is integral to arts entrepreneurship education, there is little research that attempts to clarify how it is understood and integrated into teaching practice. This lack of research into the practice of entrepreneurship education is also applicable more generally; Fayolle (2013) notes this lack and strongly recommends more research. Clarification of the mindset is important because the ways by which concepts are understood in higher education has implications for how they are taught (Moore, 2001). The act of examining how an entrepreneurial mindset is understood can reveal how it is practiced and facilitates further development in the field. It is also important to note if the mindset is understood in arts entrepreneurship education as an individualistic, essentialist kind or as one that is part of the cognitive skills approach to entrepreneurship with its emphasis on teams, networks, personal satisfaction and community contributions.

According to the literature, the development of an entrepreneurial mindset or "outlook" (Bennett, 2009, p. 28) is integral to building a sustainable career in the arts. Carey and Naudin (2006) reviewed a Creative Enterprise conference, followed up with a questionnaire of participants, and found that there was a consensus that rather than simply imparting financial skills,

the role that higher education could and should be playing is that of instilling the "entrepreneurial spirit" amongst creative students. This could be achieved by embedding attitudes and including entrepreneurial activities in project based work (p. 528).

Carey and Naudin (2006) identify entrepreneurial characteristics and habits fundamental to this spirit. These include bringing people together, being well networked, being active in developing new enterprises, and having confidence to bring new ideas to fruition (Carey and Naudin, 2006). We can see that this is a cognitive skills understanding of the entrepreneurial mindset. No mention is made of personality traits and the mindset itself is very outward looking.

In a co-written introduction to the journal *Artivate*, Linda Essig claims that an "entrepreneurial mindset accompanied by entrepreneurial skills" (Beckman and Essig, 2012, p. 6) can support artists to both make art and to "stock the refrigerator" (p. 6). In a later article, Essig (2013) draws from the work of Gardner's (2008) *Five Minds for the Future* and Deuning's (2010) development of these five minds to elaborate an entrepreneurial mindset. The habits of mind necessary for creative entrepreneurs include collaboration and ideation skills, capacities of self-reflection, an ethical approach and the ability to set goals (Essig, 2013). It is important to note the addition of ethics in Essig's findings. This is an example of the external goals as described by Laukkanen (2000).

The entrepreneurial mindset as understood in the literature of creative arts education highlights both business and artistic acumen. This is a point of difference from more general entrepreneurship education and points to the need to develop more specific arts entrepreneurship curriculum and techniques. Aggestam (2007) defines an arts entrepreneur as "an individual who has an entrepreneurial mindset in response to two triggers for the entrepreneurial act" (p. 32). These triggers are extrinsic, being business-oriented, and intrinsic, being the need to create something artistic. The business trigger is "a way of thinking about your business that captures the benefits of uncertainty" (McGrath and MacMillan, as cited in Aggestam, 2007, p. 35) relating primarily to new venture creation and the artistic trigger is related to artistic achievement. Both triggers must be activated for a successful arts entrepreneur to experience both creative fulfilment and the commercial exploitation of that creativity.

The differences between general entrepreneurship education and arts entrepreneurship education is noted by Hong et al. (2011) who write that particular entrepreneurship skills, habits of mind and teaching approaches are specifically required for arts entrepreneurship education. Pedagogies cannot be imported wholesale from business entrepreneurship education. They argue that as well as developing beyond general entrepreneurship education, pedagogy needs to shift from a dependency on funding to the development of an entrepreneurial mindset characterised by independence, flexibility and adaptability within the context of arts and culture.

This review of the literature allows us to argue that, much the same as in general entrepreneurship education more broadly, arts entrepreneurship education gives the entrepreneurial mindset a central place. However, the entrepreneurial mindset is currently understood as being developed through habits of thinking and the development of specific cognitive skills rather than the outdated approach of instilling personality traits. These habits include collaboration, reflection, business acumen and creative practice. However, how this type of education is practiced remains largely under-researched. Such research can contribute to both how the mindset is understood and to future curricular development and practice. In the next section, we review data collected during a pilot study of arts educators and their attitudes towards and experiences of teaching entrepreneurship in an arts context. This form of study, despite its small size, can make a contribution to arts entrepreneurship education because it explores an under-researched area. As such, it paves the way for larger studies that aim to understand if the entrepreneurial mindset is a cogent element of an education in arts entrepreneurship.

### **Methodology**

The findings in this article are based on a pilot study that examined the understandings of and teaching approaches to arts entrepreneurship in Victoria, Australia from the perspective of arts educators who teach subjects concerned with arts entrepreneurship and enterprise skills development. The pilot was undertaken as a way of contributing to local curriculum

development and to the larger issue of arts entrepreneurship education. It is hoped that a larger study will be undertaken in the future. The pilot adopted elements of Bridgstock's (2013) study in which nine in-depth interviews with award-winning Australian artists and designers were undertaken in order to gain insight into the professional capabilities for twenty-first century creative careers and the implications for higher education. The elements adopted in the pilot were: a qualitative study with data primarily collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, a small number of participants, and criterion sampling for participant selection (Patton, 2002).

The pilot received ethics approval from the university hosting the study and the institutes in which the participants work. The participants were chosen using criterion sampling and were sourced through Internet research of institutions' websites and by word-of-mouth. Two participants from universities and two from the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector were interviewed. The TAFE sector in Victoria, Australia traditionally teaches Vocational Education and Training (VET) to the level of Advanced Diploma (Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level 6). In 2009, the TAFE sector was given permission to develop and deliver undergraduate degrees (AQF level 7). These degrees are also considered vocationally-oriented (Wheelahan, Moodie, Billett, and Kelly, 2009). It was thought that, due to the vocational focus, lecturers in the higher education area of TAFE would be particularly open to engaging with arts entrepreneurship and enterprise skills and would provide rich insight and a somewhat different perspective from the university sector. The participants were selected based on their years of experience lecturing in higher education in the creative and performing arts (between five and eleven years) and having current responsibility for teaching and/or coordinating subjects concerned with arts entrepreneurship.

Qualitative naturalistic inquiry was chosen as the research approach. This method was chosen because the aim of the research was to explore how arts entrepreneurship education is understood and practiced in higher education. We also wished to involve the participants in such a manner that they would benefit professionally. This is particularly necessary due to the limited amount of research in arts entrepreneurship education. For this reason, we needed a method that was directed towards understanding teaching practices in order to influence future understandings and practices. Naturalistic inquiry was chosen due the explicit focus it has on practice, the closeness it requires to participants and the acceptability of small numbers of participants.

The aim of naturalistic inquiry in educational research is not to make generalizations using large amounts of data but to influence future practice through the presentation and analysis of experiences.

The naturalistic researcher seeks to present selected raw data-portrayals of actual teaching and learning problems, witnessings of observers who understand the reality of the classroom, words of the people involved. These raw data provide the reader with vicarious experience which interacts with her existing naturalistic generalizations, formed previously from her particular experience (Stake and Trumbull, 1982, p. 3).

Due to the centrality of experience, naturalistic research is "very dependent upon context" (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen, 1993, p. 16). It is encouraged that researchers undertake research in a "natural setting" (p. 16). Sample sizes in naturalistic inquiry may be small and findings not easily generalizable. The purpose of such research is not, however, to

make generalizations from large samples but, as is seen in the quote above, to enable practitioners to have vicarious experiences that can then impact upon their future practice.

We chose to collect the data in this project through undertaking in-depth, semi-structured interviews at a site chosen by the interviewees. Further to that, we contributed to the future practice of the participants by sending a draft copy of the report and asked for any comments. They were also supplied with a final copy. In this way, we intended to contribute to their future practices just as they had contributed to the future practices of our readers.

### **Findings**

Four participants were selected and assigned pseudonyms (Jeff, William, Missi and Diana). All of the participants maintain a concurrent professional creative practice alongside their academic positions that provides the valuable perspective of a practicing professional. The primary creative and performing arts disciplines of the participants are graphic design, design, music, and creative writing. Three of the participants teach within a single discipline and one participant teaches a cross-disciplinary subject in addition to teaching within their discipline. Two participants are full-time academics and two are part-time. Two of the participants teach at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, the other two only at undergraduate level. One participant has course coordination responsibilities and all of the participants have subject coordination responsibilities and experience developing arts entrepreneurship related curricula. All of the participants teach in higher education performing and creative arts courses.

For this article we focused on the themes that arose in relation to current understandings of an arts entrepreneurial mindset as they had arisen in the literature review. Our findings begin with a definition of arts entrepreneurship, we then look at issues impacting upon teaching arts entrepreneurship and last, we analyze what was said that could be considered an element of an arts entrepreneurial mindset.

### **Defining Arts Entrepreneurship**

In order to interpret arts educators' views on what constitutes an arts entrepreneurial mindset, it is first necessary to determine exactly how the participants understand the term arts entrepreneurship. All the participants demonstrated a clear understanding of the term that was focused on the dissemination of creative work. This view was expressed concisely as:

Having the capacity to create your own market. (Missi)

There was consensus around this definition. The other participants similarly described it as:

Entrepreneurship to me is related more specifically to the business subset of that, which is to do with the simple broadcasting, marketing, getting your work out there. (Jeff)

Arts entrepreneurship says they go out on their own and they create something and find a market for it. So arts entrepreneurship teaches them the commercial edge to creativity. (Diana)

As well as having a clear understanding of arts entrepreneurship, all four of the participants strongly identified the word "entrepreneurship" itself as being problematic. The negative feelings towards the term were identified as relating to notions of identity as a creative artist that were

often seen as the polar opposite of being an entrepreneur. This was related to the underlying tension between art and money. Missi summed up these adverse feelings:

Is it the word entrepreneurship that is turning people off? Yes it is... I've run my own business in writing for years, and I think, was I an entrepreneur? Yes I was, but do I call myself that, no, I call myself a writer. (Missi)

### **Implications for Teaching and Learning**

The definition of arts entrepreneurship shared by the participants has a number of implications for teaching and learning. Despite the issues with the word "entrepreneurship," all the participants thought it essential that students be taught arts entrepreneurship skills; they considered them vital skills for students to navigate a creative career. The participants thought it best not to teach arts entrepreneurship via a traditional business model because they viewed arts entrepreneurship as emanating from creative practice rather than a business idea and therefore being fundamentally different in context, process, and underlying motivation from business-oriented entrepreneurship. A specific arts-based model of entrepreneurship education that recognizes creativity and the need for creative achievement as equally or more important than financial gain was mentioned as more appropriate for students.

I think it [arts entrepreneurship education] should emanate from creativity. I don't think the students should look at a business proposition first and foremost. I think they should understand what their creativity is and develop that ... and then look at the means of production. (William)

An interesting finding was that being an entrepreneur could be seen as being very similar to being an artist.

An artist is an entrepreneur in their own field. Because if an entrepreneur is someone who brings us something new and takes a risk to do it, if that's the definition you work to, that's what these guys do. (Diana)

Jeff also clearly saw a link between being an artist and an entrepreneur:

Basically the entrepreneurship, I view that as the self-starter, the capacity to make something happen. And that's very artistic. (Jeff)

Recognizing the synergy between creative practice and arts entrepreneurship points to a way to overcome the issues with the word "entrepreneurship." However, the participants did not think that business skills should be ignored but rather should be context-specific and tailored to the students' aspirations to artistic careers and the nature of the work environments they will encounter. Diana refers to this as developing a "commercial approach" in students.

Now I call it commercial approach – how you think about the world in which you are designing, where do you want to fit? (Diana)

On the importance of context specific teaching and learning, Jeff said:

Make them see the relevance of any financial management...don't teach them how to run petrol stations, teach them something that clearly extrapolates to their life ...so they can see themselves in the picture. (Jeff)

### **The Postgraduate Perspective**

One of the findings that we thought was interesting in terms of implications for both teaching arts entrepreneurship and developing an entrepreneurial mindset was that post-graduate students more readily engaged with arts entrepreneurship. While only two of the participants taught at the post-graduate level, both mentioned noticeable differences between these students and undergraduates. Missi highlighted that the post-graduate students quickly realized the value of arts entrepreneurship skills as a result of their real-life experience, first-hand experience of the employment realities of the creative industries, and the stage they were at in establishing their artistic careers.

I'd have to tell you my experience is they've always wanted to run their own business. It's not actually driving it that way. What they are seeing more is that they need better skills at it. So it's actually the nexus between their creative arts practice and being able to do it for a living. (Missi)

This contrasts with the undergraduate students who Missi noted enter a creative and performing arts program with their artistic discipline foremost in their mind and have a relatively short time in which to hone their skills. This, in some ways, obscures the importance of employability skills, in particular the skills to work as a freelancer that are often necessary to derive a living from creative practice early in artistic careers.

The [undergraduate] students don't see the value early enough, they are caught up in their practice; it's three years, a pressure cooker. (Missi)

The intrinsic motivation with which students focussed on developing their artistic skills in contrast to other areas was noticed by Jeff. He observed that students often engaged more easily with their creative practice than with skills to facilitate employment.

Artists tend to pursue their art with great passion. It's not hard to talk people into working on their music. Is it hard to get people to necessarily embrace the business side of it? Sometimes it's a little harder to get them on board to just realize how important it is and how much it could restrict their opportunities. (Jeff)

Post-graduate students on the other hand, have further developed their art, have more confidence in their artistic ability and were at the stage of seeking out additional skills to continue their career development.

What they saw of value was actually the business side. So they are at the point where they are setting up small businesses [...] and it was all about how to get their small business functional [...] what skills do you need for that. (Missi)

Diana, who also taught at the Masters level also noticed this difference:

The Masters [students], totally different group [from undergrad] and absolutely entrepreneurs, very much. (Diana)

She also noted the difference in teaching a post-graduate class due to their life experience and contrasted it to an undergraduate class:

What I like about postgrad is sometimes I can sit back and watch them do the class...I watch them talk, reflect, argue, challenge...and I'm sitting there thinking this is how learning should be...I find the undergrads...are not curious, they are not challenging thought, they certainly wouldn't know if I was contemporary or I was taking it out of a book and doing it by rote...They have gone to school, university, they live at home most of them. (Diana)

The differences highlighted between post-graduate and undergraduate students in the acquisition of arts entrepreneurship skills imply that not only does arts entrepreneurship education need to be unique in context, process, and methods from business entrepreneurship curriculum, it also needs to be specifically targeted to the different stages of career development and likely employment circumstances of both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

#### **What's in a "Mindset?"**

One of the main aims of this paper is to contribute to shifting the paradigm of arts entrepreneurship. Doing so can support curriculum development and support the case for embedding arts entrepreneurship more fully into creative and performing arts education. In this section, we clarify what is meant by an "arts entrepreneurial mindset" through exploring the themes that arose from the participants' responses. The data revealed that the following five elements are integral constituent elements of an arts entrepreneurial mindset; 1) capacity to think creatively, strategically, analytically and reflectively, 2) confidence in one's abilities, 3) collaborative abilities, 4) communication skills and 5) an understanding of the current artistic context.

#### **Creative, Strategic, Analytical and Reflective Thinking**

Developing particular capacities of thought were an integral aspect of arts entrepreneurship for the participants. In the participants' view, creative thinking was an essential aspect of arts entrepreneurship. It addressed the ability to develop new ideas, processes, and creative outputs and the ability to deeply understand one's creative practice through reflective practice, in this instance applied to the dissemination of creative work, through creating a market or developing an audience for it.

They would need to develop their skills and knowledge and innovate and apply it in a very original way. You secure work, finally on the strength of your talent and your originality [...] They have to be able to conceptualize, develop new ideas, formulate creative schemes, ideas, just work across a lot of applications. (William)

Missi said that the ability to know one's self and one's art underpinned by reflective thinking forms the basis for a business plan.

We ask them to write an artist manifesto, and in that manifesto they need to justify their arts practice to themselves...that's what underpins the business plan and that's why it's different to a standard business plan. (Missi)

She stated that this type of knowing underpinned by analytical and strategic thinking about your art in order to develop an audience was conspicuously missing in creative and performing arts education.

Almost everybody does not identify their market, they assume everyone will love my work. (Missi)

I think one of the most important elements of creative entrepreneurship is getting people to think strategically and getting people to see opportunity. (Missi)

Analytical, strategic and reflective thinking was also considered an essential capacity for arts entrepreneurship. In many ways, these three capacities of thought are interwoven and could come under the umbrella term "analytical thinking." This manner of thinking includes the ability to make judgments, to find opportunities and take advantage of these opportunities, to analyze how their work fits into a market place, the ability to reflect on the development of their work and the relationship between this and its dissemination. William said he teaches students to, "analyze and assess the market that they are going into, the people they are working for." Missi reflected that, "it's important to get students to accept the journey [of being an artist] and getting them to analyze more accurately where they fit in is great."

### **Confidence**

Developing confidence in one's abilities recurred as an important element of an entrepreneurial mindset. One of the reasons mentioned for developing confidence and associated self-promotion skills is to create a market for creative practice and that, without it, artistic talent may be overlooked.

It runs the risk that people with the greater promotional skills may go better than the people who are terrific artists with no self-promotion skills and that's why I think it's very important for students to understand this. (Jeff)

William argued for the importance of being confident in one's abilities.

They need to develop confidence and really need to communicate and you don't have to be a wonderful speaker, but you have to speak with a certain passion and sell your skill and what you have to offer. (William)

Confidence is linked to the ability to cope with the harsh world of business.

It's the capacity to believe in yourself much more ...than in business...to have resilience to know how to cope. (Missi)

### **Collaborative Abilities**

An important constituent element of an "arts entrepreneurial mindset" that emerged in the interviews was the ability to collaborate, network and be flexible.

Now it's imperative that you are a collaborator, you understand interdisciplinary work. (William)

Collaboration was identified in the sense of having a broad skill set to work across different areas of the creative industries as well as being a vital skill in order to create a market for creative practice. Collaboration is an area that is perhaps not as strong as it could be in the creative and performing arts as students are often not natural collaborators, so, again, here is an area in which arts entrepreneurship can support and strengthen the broader creative and performing arts education. Exploring this in the subject she teaches, Missi said:

A lot of our emphasis is to realize there are other people they can call on. That's the value they see. Quite often there's a selfishness inherent in being an arts practitioner, a self focus certainly. So to actually get out and do the other [...] that's what they find difficult and that's what we're moving towards – to get people to recognize that they don't have to do it alone.

This proclivity to work collaboratively varies somewhat by discipline. Practitioners in disciplines such as dance, theatre, or music are often working in ensembles in contrast to the often solo efforts of a writer or visual artist. However, even within disciplines such as dance, theatre, and music, Missi described her students as often preferring to work with students from within their discipline rather than other disciplines. In her subject they form inter-disciplinary groups that work collaboratively to stage a performance. This provides valuable learning experiences in collaborating outside of their usual discipline.

They are inclined to work in their discipline area, so what I do...I break them up ...there's a dancer and a visual artist and a filmmaker and ...drama ... a writer...they've got to develop a project...and with that they are being taught to work with each other...the ability to work amongst, with a whole range of different people. (Missi)

Jeff was interested in teaching students how to make judgments about who they get involved with in the music industry.

[It's] in students' best interest – to have entrepreneurial skills...even if that means they're excellent at making judgments about which member of the industry they deal with. Just to have a nuanced understanding of what they actually do to make good judgments. (Jeff)

The skills developed through collaboration include "problem-solving, negotiating...giving them the skills for that" (Missi).

### **Communication Skills**

Another element of an “arts entrepreneurial mindset” is the ability to communicate effectively in order to create a market or develop an audience for creative practice. All four of the educators agreed this was an important skill. Communication skills in an arts entrepreneurship sense meant, according to the participants, things such as the ability to put ideas forwards and a command of social skills.

You have to be able to think, to put ideas forward and that means thinking like a designer, having communicative and social skills. (William)

Communication skills underpinned a number of elements of an entrepreneurial mindset mentioned above. For instance, using reflective thinking skills to deepen their understanding of their creative practice in terms of creating a market for it then required communication skills to discuss their work.

It’s actually getting them to reflect on their processes and it doesn’t have to be academic per se. It does mean that they are going to be able to deepen their capacity to talk about their work, which is vital. (Missi)

Communication skills were vital for students in regards to having confidence in one’s abilities and to promote their creative practice. Once again, collaboration also required communication skills to enable students to work with others to network in order to create a market and develop an audience for creative practice.

### **Understanding of Current Artistic Context**

Finally, we suggest that understanding current artistic context is a necessary part of an “arts entrepreneurial mindset.” This encompasses the ability to know what is current in terms of artistic trends and values, popular and artistic culture, and the cultural policy environment in order to know how your art fits in, how it can challenge the cultural moment and how you can reflect on your work through contemporary currents.

You need an awareness of what is going on very currently. You need know what is happening not just in your town but globally... And then you need to contextualize your work in the current design trends. (William)

To illustrate this, he used the example of students in Manchester who go into the community with their art:

It was an association with the immediate popular culture and if you’re in the vanguard, at the cutting edge of creativity you must be aware of and tap into the popular culture of your immediate surrounds and the environs and the expectation of it. ... You need to be in tune with what’s going on at the very moment. (William)

Jeff spoke at length about examining artistic context to identify arts entrepreneurship opportunities without giving up values of artistic integrity:

Understanding artistic choice comes under my take on an industrial view of music... Look at the idea of genre, study the cross overs, they really crossed over that sound and it's very mainstream and they moved from a subculture across and I'm most interested in that moment where it still seems authentic and it still has truth to people but it just extrapolates out and it freakily hits a nerve. (Jeff)

Jeff also mentioned the need to have an artistic and cultural awareness in terms of policy:

We tend to look at entrepreneurship as just ... the cold hard reality of bums on seats ... But there's also this other notion of cultural policy and I think it's very important that students have an understanding of that too ... this legitimacy of supporting a vibrant culture. (Jeff)

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

Our analysis of four interviews of highly experienced arts educators has contributed to understanding what it means to teach arts entrepreneurship and what constitutes an arts entrepreneurial mindset. All the participants had a problem with the word "entrepreneurship." This was due to its links with money that was thought not to align with the fundamental motivation of being an artist. This finding re-emphasizes that made by Eikhof and Haunschild (2006) about creative and performing arts students identifying with a bohemian lifestyle characterized by creative fulfillment over financial reward and uneasiness with the word "entrepreneur" based on its negative associations with unchecked capitalism (Bonin-Rodriguez, 2012). However, this tension clashes slightly with the idea that artists and entrepreneurs have similarities. In view of this, we suggest that when teaching arts entrepreneurship the similarities are made explicit. This is to encourage students to begin to identify as both arts entrepreneurs *and* creative practitioners. This has the potential to challenge the current dichotomy of being an artist *or* being an entrepreneur. Students need to be consistently enabled to develop an integrated identity.

In the interviews, the term "arts entrepreneurial mindset" was mentioned rarely. However, the data did reveal information that is useful to re-thinking the constituent elements of an arts entrepreneurial mindset. This is not a matter of imposing the mindset upon the data but of re-thinking a concept that proved important in the literature review. This type of re-thinking of concepts in view of experience is an important element of naturalistic inquiry (Stake and Trumbull, 1985). We were able to discern five constituent elements of the mindset. These are 1) the capacity to think creatively, strategically, analytically and reflectively, 2) confidence in one's abilities, 3) the ability to collaborate, 4) well-developed communication skills and 5) an understanding of the current artistic context. While these elements are somewhat generic in higher education, especially if the usual graduate attributes are taken into account, the distinguishing feature is that these elements are integrally linked to students' creative practices, in particular the dissemination of creative work. The constituent elements of an arts entrepreneurial mindset that emerged in this study are consistent with the cognitive and metacognitive skills understanding of "entrepreneurial mindset" as discussed in the earlier literature review rather than any inherent personality traits.

The link between creative practice and entrepreneurship ("don't teach them how to run petrol stations" (Jeff)) emerged as the defining element of arts entrepreneurship education in this study. Any programs designed to teach business skills, career skills, and enterprise

development to creative and performing arts students are effective when creative practice is the defining core. In courses designed in this way, students are given the opportunity to place their art at the core of skills being learned to freelance in the creative industries or develop a creative enterprise. This will benefit their artistic practice, as they will learn to think about it in different ways. The close link between the dissemination of creative practice and the business side of art might also help to shift the paradigm towards widespread acceptance of arts entrepreneurship in creative courses in the minds of other creative and performing arts educators.

The term "arts entrepreneurship" is in need of re-consideration. All four of the educators found the term clumsy in that it alienated students. This possibly forms a barrier in terms of further acceptance and development of the field. We are led to suggest that an area for further study is re-conceptualizing and redefining the term. It needs to be more clearly linked with the creative aspirations of students, who are more focused on developing their art than on selling their art. It is equally the case that the term "entrepreneurial mindset" may also be in need of re-conceptualizing. As it currently stands, it may be too closely linked with the business world. Students recognize the need for arts entrepreneurship skills but it is not automatically part of their self-identity and the skills we identified in our study are not necessarily instantly appealing. Therefore, explicitly addressing the tension with the word entrepreneurship needs to be overtly built into courses. One way to achieve this is through a reflective process to create a flexible and adaptable creative career identity that incorporates both being a creative artist and an arts entrepreneur (Bridgstock, 2013). Students need the opportunity to continually and explicitly develop this self-identity so that they are then able to work towards realizing their goal of making a living from creative practice upon graduation without sacrificing their creative aspirations.

The difference between undergraduate and postgraduate student perspectives was an interesting finding. Our finding points towards the need for arts entrepreneurship to be taught differently to undergraduate versus postgraduate students. The first stream of curricular approach identified by Beckman (2007) focused on new venture creation might be more appropriate for postgraduate students who already have developed a fair understanding of where they are heading in terms of their careers and have expressed a desire to develop skills in new venture creation. The second curricular approach of transitioning students to professional careers broadly and inculcating them with skills to freelance specifically might be more appropriate for undergraduates who are intent upon developing their skills in their chosen discipline. However it is designed, we suggest that the five elements of an arts entrepreneurial mindset be addressed in both approaches. Given the pressure on universities to teach for employability, it is incumbent upon undergraduate education to include some type of education for employment. This might include work-integrated learning designed for creative and performing arts undergraduates (Daniel and Daniel, 2013; Hains-Weeson, 2012). Developing an arts entrepreneurial mindset addresses this need.

Finally, we would like to suggest that the capacities of thought that the participants distinguished as integral to arts entrepreneurship education and that we think are integral to an entrepreneurial mindset are foundational for shifting the paradigm of arts entrepreneurship. If arts entrepreneurship curriculum is developed with the aim of furthering capacities of thought it can make a significant contribution to creative and performing arts education more generally. This is because arts entrepreneurship education demonstrates that it is not solely focused on enabling students to make money but is far more focused on supporting students to think creatively, reflectively, strategically, and analytically about their creative practices in terms of its

output to a wider field than is currently found in creative and performing arts education. Students are encouraged to think about their artistic work in terms of its possible impact on audiences and audience development, in terms of sustaining a career, in terms of negotiating to the betterment of their practice, and in terms of deeply thinking about the processes and practices which maintain and develop their art practice. The ability to think about succeeding as an artist that encompasses these areas *as well as* sustaining a living is an important contribution that arts entrepreneurship education can make to creative and performing arts education. Whether or not this shift in paradigm is successful is dependent on further research that investigates the challenges faced and innovations undertaken by arts educators with the responsibility for teaching for employability skills.

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