Creative Industries Report

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Beyond the Academy:
Engaging with the Creative Industries

(Greater Manchester Report)

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The Creative Manchester initiative began in October 2018 in the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures at The University of Manchester with a £3.3m investment. The project signalled the University's commitment to champion culture and creativity, nurture talent and ensure an equal place on the economic agenda.

Creative Manchester seeks to position the University in the Culture and Creative Industries sector, raising awareness, through our core strategic goals: Teaching and Learning, Research and Social Responsibility. It provides a framework to develop partnerships and strengthen collaborations with business and cultural organisations, and to educate future generations to work in the ever-growing creative industries.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In December 2020, Creative Manchester, an initiative that began in The University of Manchester's School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, secured funds from Aspect to undertake a study of creative industries 'best practice'. The Creative Industries Deep Dive Aspect Project explores industries' business engagement with social sciences, humanities, and arts research in both Yorkshire and Greater Manchester regions. The University of Manchester has focused on the Greater Manchester deep dive, whilst The University of York focused on a Yorkshire and Humber deep dive. As well as delivering regional deep dives and outputs specific to both Greater Manchester and Yorkshire, a collaborative output considers broader Creative Industries BE best practice. Partnered deep dives, then, have delivered regionally informed but nationally relevant outputs.

These outputs include the following: Social Sciences and Creative Industries Business Engagement report (Yorkshire and Manchester Regions), Good Practice for Social Sciences and Creative Industries Business Engagement report, Good practice guide aimed at HEI Business Engagement staff, Short 'interest grabber' aimed at Creative Industry companies, and Social Media Content to disseminate highlights from the above.

Team members participating in the Greater Manchester Deep Dive include the principals (Dr Alicia Rouverol, Research Associate; Anne-Marie Nugnes, Creative Manchester Manager; Professor Ian Scott, (Director for Social Responsibility and Internationalisation), but also a broader team (Dr Ian Fairweather; Alexander Riley, BE Aspect Broker at The University of Manchester). Professional staff support included Clare Haywood, Catriona Dalziel, and Sofy Lam. Rachel Kenyon provided valuable assistance.

Interviews conducted (February–March 2021) served also as bedrock for a Creative Archive at Creative Manchester as the Manchester team determined that GM interviews featured significant contributors to creative industries and higher education and/or significant players in the CCI-HEI partnership landscape. Thus the interviews offer a permanent legacy both of the project and of creative industry partnerships in the Greater Manchester area.

1.2 Summary

This report focuses on key areas including: definitions of research engagement; establishment of partnerships; engagement infrastructure; language and outputs; value added; training into partnership (UG, PGR, ECR placements); commercialisation; COVID impacts; and diversity. Each section features key findings and anonymous quotations from interviews with both industry and academic informants. The methods section does feature some data; however, the report utilises qualitative research primarily to examine CCI-HEI partnerships in the Greater Manchester region.

Firstly, the report evidences that HEI researchers and industry professionals generally rely on personal networks to develop partnerships. Whilst university BE teams offer useful support, it was often not fully utilised to its greatest capacity by HEI researchers; researchers involved in entrepreneurship may more readily seek support from commercialisation units. Secondly, the report finds that substantive differences exist between the sectors in terms of partnership needs: issues pertained primarily to timing/pacing, linked to problems in infrastructure support, with researchers facing bureaucracy and inadequate administrative support, and heavy teaching and marking loads, hampering response capacity. Underlying these differences were sometimes differing agendas. Differences in language/communication also suggested broader 'cultural gaps'; in some instances, these reflected differing partnership motivations and outcome expectations. Lastly, the report explores how sector engagement added value to CCIs, HEI researcher agendas and career development, and PGR/ECR opportunities. Whilst CCI professionals benefited from academics' critical and strategic thinking, academics participating in engagement enhanced career development and research and publication opportunities.

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1.3 Method

Participants took part remotely in recorded interviews, by video, on Zoom, alongside audio (through H4n Zoom recorders), to ensure archival-quality recordings. Interviews ran 45–90 minutes, with the average length beyond one hour. A select group of interviewees participated in a 30-minute questionnaire. Participants were selected from a list of more than 70 potential interviewees, developed by the principals on the project (Research Associate Dr Rouverol, Creative Manchester Manager Anne-Marie Nugnes, and Professor Ian Scott, Director for Social Responsibility and Internationalisation). Interview criteria were developed to prioritise the leads. Potential informants grew out of prior exposure to Creative Manchester or the University, but were gathered also through the University's business engagement team and researchers at neighbouring institutions. Snowballing techniques were in operation as interviewees recommended other individuals, whom we then approached. HEIs represented in the study include University of Salford (n=2); Manchester Metropolitan University (n=3); and University of Manchester (n=13). Recorded interviews were conducted with 18 informants in 17 interviews; an additional 13 informants were interviewed by questionnaire. In total, there were 30 interviews with 31 participants: 18 HEI researchers (including PGRs, ECRs, and BE team members) and 13 CCI professionals.

Disciplines in the sciences, humanities and arts represented in the study ranged from computer science and business (banking, innovation); to history, museum studies, and architecture; to literature, drama, and digital arts. CCI informants were similarly broad in scope; this includes 13 workers employed in Theatre, Performance & Music (n=3); Film, TV & Media Arts (n=2); Museums & Galleries (n=1), Literature Festivals & Community Arts (n=3); and Government Agencies & Arts Consultancies (n=4). CCIs featured in the study ranged from small-scale CCIs to national portfolio organisations (NPOs). The scale might affect the range and extent of engagement, but informants across HEIs and CCIs reported similar concerns (e.g., time and pacing) and strategies for partnership (e.g., alignment of values, trust), regardless of size and scope.

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2. Defining Research Engagement

"So it's sort of relationship management, which is what business engagement is. It's relationship management with academics and with the organisations that academics work with, and so that understanding of both sides of that equation is quite useful."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

2.1 Research Engagement

Research engagement can take a variety of forms, as our informants illustrated. This section distinguishes the various types of engagement: BE, KE, KTPs, with discussion of student placements, internships, collaboration labs and commercialisation to follow.

The terms 'business engagement' and 'knowledge exchange' are sometimes used interchangeably, although the meanings are quite different. Business Engagement (BE) is generally broad in focus and involves any value-added activities linked to a partnership with non-academic organisations, which includes business as well as public- and third-sector organisations. A Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) is a government funding scheme designed to enhance a business' productivity and performance; a knowledge-based partnership, it involves a graduate or post-doctoral researcher working full-time within the business to apply and embed knowledge, technology, or techniques. Projects allocate a regular amount of academic supervision from one or more established academics. Beyond this, Knowledge Exchange (KE) also incorporates activity such as Impact Acceleration Accounts (IAA), which enable partnerships in which the exchange of information is a key component; for example, delivery of workshops to raise awareness of new technology and methodologies and to explore how they might be applied in certain businesses or sectors. The terms have changed somewhat over time.

"The reason we are 'business engagement' is because we're quite general. But the real core of what it is, and why we're doing it, is around knowledge exchange. It used to be called knowledge transfer… But 'knowledge exchange' is a much better term, because we're talking about learning from the world outside of academia, as well as them learning from us."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

Academics and industry professionals reflected on the elements required to create these partnerships—be they BE, KE, KTPs, placements and internships, or commercialisation. Informants offered key components that are essential to successful business engagement.

"The key part of business engagement is identifying the needs and the interest on both sides. So understand the businesses won't [necessarily] appreciate why academics want to do something. We want an interesting question to answer that will allow us to apply academic expertise, methodology, technology … in a new way, that will give us an understanding that can be applied [and deliver impact and routes to publish findings] and that works."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

3. Establishing Partnerships

"I'm interested in real world problems and how we might tackle those, and I come at this from both angles. So it's partly to do with speaking with external partners and understanding what their requirements are and what their focus is. But also it's to do with theoretical work at the university, thinking, 'Okay, well, what difference could this actually make? How could we apply this in practice?'
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

3.1 Key Findings: Establishing Partnerships

1. Most partnerships evolved out of existing professional networks, with few HEI researchers looking to their university's BE team to undertake their partnerships.

2. Establishment of partnerships required time, the building of trust, and flexibility in negotiating both sets of needs across each sector (CCI, HEI).

3. Management of expectations with regard to pace/timing, delivery, outcomes, and equitable budgets was a key component of success.

3.2 Relationship Building and Networking

Whilst HEIs and CCIs responded differently to the question 'why do BE?', they recognised that successful business engagement relies on relationships as core to their development. CCI-HEI partnerships often did not develop through existing university BE teams:

"I think a lot of relationships go individually, don't necessarily go through business engagement…. There might be some exceptions that get brokered through other departments… [If] it has been brokered, the broker has disappeared quite quickly."
(CCI Informant, Manchester)

Informants across HEIs, CCIs, and BE teams flagged this crucial point—the centrality of professional networks as sources for partners. Commentary focused on strategies to build and maintain these relationships effectively.

Because of its relational orientation, the partnerships grew out of existing CCI-HEI networks, whether long-standing colleagues or individuals already in their circles. This proved consistent across HEIs and creative industries partners/artists.

"Somebody said quite early on in my academic career…. 'You need to network and form collaborations, and you would do this on the basis of how useful someone is to you and their skills and what makes what's a good fit on paper'. And somebody [else] said, 'Well, … the way I approach this is just to work with people I like… If we have a shared understanding … and the relationship is there, the work will come [together]'. This is totally what I do now."
(Academic Informant, The University of Manchester)

"[The partnership] is partly to do with our friendship, our relationship, our connection, and mutual interest in doing things differently…. Some of the later examples of ways of working emerged in different ways, … [but] a lot of them still have relationships at the heart of them."
(Poet/HEI Informant, University of Salford)

Partnerships largely grew out of an interest in engagement work. For creative artists based in HEIs, the creative practice itself often led to the partnership. Creative practitioners themselves represented a 'hybrid' as their practice took them outside of academia, their interests overlapping with those of CCIs.

"Maybe it's that peculiar position of the writer in education that you're almost like a double agent…. I can be an academic or perform being an academic…. There is that trust or understanding based on knowing each other as artists … a basic recognition of that common fate."
(Poet/HEI Informant, University of Salford)

Being 'hybrid'—i.e., having a foot in both academia and industry—proved advantageous. BE team members with prior exposure to business or academia, or HEI researchers coming from industry, had skillsets enabling them to bridge the gap between the sectors.

"I'd started doing a PhD so I had some awareness of the academic process. And yet I had worked outside of academia, so [I had] the commercial awareness [too]." *(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)*

3.3 Components of a Successful Partnership

Informants noted the value of getting understandings in place prior to the partnership. This included identifying agendas, needs, and interests on both sides, and a focus on set-up. They also recognised that partnerships are fundamentally about relationship-building.

"Set out some clear impact-focused agendas—i.e. co-design a common purpose. This doesn't have to be in a formal partnership, but it readies partners for any potential funding bids and increases the visibility of the agenda you share."
(CCI informant, Arts Consultancy)

Components for a successful partnership featured qualities such as trust, generosity, and a shared vision. Partnerships required a measure of 'emotional labour', so there must also be a willingness and desire to engage in the work itself.

"So shared vision and mutuality. And then it needs to be led by people who enjoy collaborating with people outside their organisation. So you need to have people who are good at collaboration. You know, if people just want it to be their organisation, their name on it, it doesn't tend to work."
(CCI Informant, Film & TV Sector)

Academic and industry informants noted the importance of understanding motivations; yet it proved vital to communicate about other issues, including feasibility of the project and effects of institutional change on the partnership.

"Understanding each other's motivations is the starting point. Then honesty about what the relationship isn't or can't be. Too many times you go in with these big, lofty ambitions, but when it comes down to it, the money isn't there to do the thing…. [And] when an organization's been through change … does this affect the thing that we're trying to achieve together?"
(Policy Maker Informant, Manchester)

Securing a level of mutuality required discussion and dialogue. Indeed, alignment of interests was more likely to grow out of such exchanges. Academics reflected on the underlying differences between researchers and industry, and their respective aims:

"It's about working out what you want, and what the different partners you want to work with want. What does success look like for them?…. That's my key lesson

in collaboration: aligning interests."
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

"Academics care, largely, about doing innovative research that can lead to strong publications; business[es] are often driven by financial factors."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

Collaborative approaches to the work often proved most successful. Informants spoke about other fundamentals, including inclusivity, which CCIs often cited. This in turned linked back to vision and the value of long-term development as crucial underpinnings.

"Genuine inclusive co-authorship and time, resources and research to get the foundations in place. Getting the right people on board to provide leadership and inclusive representation."
(Policy Maker Informant, Manchester)

"Personally I've always looked at collaborations that had a long-term basis to it and an agreement on certain principles, way of looking at things… What your outlook is and what you want to produce."
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

HEI senior leadership commitment to engagement—even modelling its value and importance—was noted as affecting the capacity to achieve the work once envisioned.

"[The former Director of Social Responsibility], I think he's been great to put social responsibility [as a priority]; he's also interested in theatre himself. So those senior leaders are important too, to create the culture. Having that culture at the University, with those types of people, for me has been important. Otherwise, you work harder to get things done."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

Cross-sectoral partnerships also proved a rich arena for many of the informants. A CCI might presume more alignment from other arts organisations, yet one informant highlighted the degree to which partnership outside of the arts sector had rich results:

"What was really interesting is that we had more in common in terms of values with a community drugs programme than we did with some of our arts partners. And sometimes negotiating the ethics, the ethical values behind a project, with other people in the arts was really difficult, because they were often driven by a kind of notion of what quality looked like."
(CCI Informant, Community Arts)

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Discussions of this kind sometimes revealed the notion of a 'third place', where the two parties might meet up, metaphorically, carving out something new, evincing neither party's ground (or interests) but developing a new shared realm. Sometimes this was an actual physical 'third place', as if to accentuate the need to find territory that belonged to neither organisation. Partners found it useful to meet off campus, in more social environments.

"I very much agree with the 'third space' model in that … we looked at third spaces that were being developed in different ways by universities working with creative partners. So whether that is a public program that a contemporary art gallery would run … or whether it's, literally, the third space of the serendipitous meet-up space."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

Inevitably partnership development work was not static or simply a 'one-off'; informants spoke of the value and need for on-going reassessment of the project.

"It's a process of discovering together what you need to do, then repeat and repeat. It's a cycle. It's not something you just do once."
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

Academics spoke about the need for agility, not only within the partnership, but especially in response to industry. They recognised the nature of HEIs as slow-moving institutions:

"What I find in academia is, though, there's not much room for flexibility. And our notion of working in an agile way is really tricky. Because our agility is not like business; the wheels of a university turning slowly. And [our organisation] has to be in a better position, it has to operate in an agile way."
(HEI/BE Informant, Manchester Metropolitan University)

3.4 Institutional Support

Our informants made clear that they did not always go directly through university BE teams. HEIs who struck out on their own sometimes reached out directly to senior management.

"Don't go to the marketing manager straightaway, go right to the top and go and interview someone really senior…. Then they'll refer you to somebody lower down. And because it's been referred from the senior person, they will see you."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

Sometimes academics and industry partners did not fully grasp the other sector's culture. These differences sometimes led to a 'cultural clash'. Understanding what each side wanted could sometimes ameliorate these problems but not always.

"So [part of it is] understanding what academics want to get out of something. But also, similarly, academics don't necessarily understand what businesses are wanting out of it. Because of the environment that they're in, [they] don't appreciate the timescales and the decision-making processes and the way things work in the non-academic environment."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

The single greatest challenge for most academics involved in engagement proved time allocation; this served also as a deterrent for academics who might otherwise consider it.

"What academics are expected to do nowadays has expanded dramatically. It's now teaching, research, business engagement, knowledge transfer, and all these sorts of things. And it is difficult for any academic to be able to spread themselves across all of that."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

"The motivation system in business schools is often very much tied to publishing in a very small number of journals…. People may be less willing to take risks with any research because they have to meet these journal lists."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

The need to adhere to REF expectations also meant that academics who expressed interest in partnerships might be pegged for participating exclusively for that reason.

"There is this perception that academics who want to do business engagement have their own agenda, and are often just interested in notching up publications."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

The presence of the REF, teaching loads, and the need to publish in top journals may prove challenging to academics otherwise keen to participate in partnerships. Moreover, partnerships require essential support to be in place; placements and bid-writing take time. Academics felt strongly that additional support, especially administrative, was vital.

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"All four and a half of us [at] the [organisation] have been involved in developing placements, or we bring in somebody on a temporary contract to support that... I'm sure you're getting from other interviews—and I can't say enough as well—is about having administrative support."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

Academics noted that interdisciplinarity, even whilst a stated goal, lacked substantive support to enable such collaborations to realise that goal:

"[Galleries are] an ideal vehicle for interdisciplinarity, which is what all universities talk about it, but very few actually do it.... You meet people from physics and biology, and they all say, 'We really want to be interdisciplinary. But there's no facility to do it.' When actually, the University in Greater Manchester certainly does. It's got the museum, the art gallery, The John Rylands Library, Jodrell Bank. There needs to be a transformation in the way those places are seen."
(CCI Informant, Gallery Sector)

"Maybe Manchester is very focused on giving academics administrative roles as a kind of pinnacle of success, rather than maybe seeing more exploratory work as something that's valuable."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

4. Partnership and Engagement Infrastructure

4.1 Key Findings: Partnership and Engagement Infrastructure

1. University business engagements teams, whilst not always the first port of call for researchers, offer capacity to broker partnerships and related support.

2. Whilst researchers sought adequate funding for their projects, smaller funding pots and/or seed funding often enabled partnerships to develop with the prospect of laying the groundwork for subsequent funding bids.

3. Partnerships were often stymied by bureaucracy, heavy work/teaching/marking loads and ethics processes; precarious contracts also resulted in inadequate staffing.

4.2 Institutional Engagement Models

"The role of funding? Well, there should be adequate."
(HEI/BE informant, Manchester Metropolitan University)

Universities across Greater Manchester have resources and mechanisms in place to support business engagement at various levels. BE teams are exposed to the demands academics face and recognise these can prove deterrents to participation. BE teams may broker a deal, but they allow academics to steer projects once established.

"They're a fantastic [BE] team. I keep bringing them into meetings with [our academic team], so they get to know them …. so they can understand what a KTP is. And, oh, I've got this great idea to work with a public-sector organisation or SME … and how they can translate that into a fruitful project."
(HEI/BE Informant, Manchester Metropolitan University)

"Once things are set up, we step back and leave them to it. We don't want to interfere."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

Researchers may not realise what BE teams actually do and how they support academics. BE officers not only broker external partnerships but connect researchers within the university.

"I said to the PI, 'I know an academic in SEED in Education, who looks at digital literacy. You should speak to him and see if you can bring him in as a co-investigator'. And that's what's happened. And he's been really valuable to it. So sometimes that can be our role is that [intra]-university linking, but bringing complementary disciplines is really useful."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

BE teams serve as intermediaries, facilitating contact with research, finance, and contracts offices on campus. They also have access to funding pots that academics may not be fully aware of. Impact Accelerator Accounts (IAAs) can allow access to funding without going directly to the Research Council (RC), representing a lesser commitment of time.

"So we'll pitch to UMRI and say, if you give us £30,000 from university budgets, we will run two innovation labs, and that will seed fund six projects, which hopefully will lead to bigger things that will pay back that initial investment…. There are the Impact Acceleration Accounts, where universities like ours that do a lot of research are given a chunk of funding by the Research Councils…. Because they give us the money in a lump sum … and we administer it, it doesn't need a bid directly to the RC."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

Yet such smaller grants can nonetheless prove fruitful; several researchers noted that smaller pots of funds could yield good results. In some instances, relatively little funds were involved. Funding for collaborative projects, however, remains inadequate.

"I've have had a couple of big grants, but it's almost invariably the £1,000 here, £1,500 there, the £5,000 here and there, that's been essential."
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

"We still don't have specific funds to encourage collaboration… The University of Manchester is great in promoting, encouraging collaborations. But we don't have specific funds that are meant to be supporting those relationships. We still work with [the] existing structure to raise funds."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

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Agility and efficiency of movement represented a key infrastructure capacity that not all universities can offer. The capacity for speed on the part of HEI researchers was linked to being in management or not teaching, or both—suggesting that minimising such commitments may well lead the way to greater and more ambitious forms of collaboration.

"I do feel that [our organisation] is moving much quicker than other institutions I've worked at. But that's because we're not teaching. So we're able to respond really, really quickly at the pace the creative industries expect…"
(HEI/BE Informant, Manchester Metropolitan University)

4.3 Facing Obstacles in Partnerships

Informants reflected not only on the strengths and value of successful partnerships; they addressed problems frequently arising, revealing problematics or underlying tensions in a changing HEI landscape. Time and pacing, differing CCI audiences, and precarity in researcher employment, all represented significant hurdles. The demand of the academic schedule—primarily around teaching and marking—proved a deterrent to partnership work.

"The university timetable and business timetable is different. That is really difficult; it's hard to flex, particularly around the marking. The marking is worse than the teaching…. You've got to go when business is ready. It's no good me saying, 'Oh, I've got my marking now.' It goes cold."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

"If we're really serious about [industry engagement], then people either have to be released, or there has to be … some help with my marking."
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

Researchers recognised the value of rapid response to research opportunities. They also reflected on the challenge of availability of research staff due to precarious contracts.

"If we want to be able to respond quickly to research projects, we've got to have people in place who are actually able to work for them… There have been many instances in universities of them simply not being able to do the work because … there's no researcher to work on it…. We know that there's an issue with the culture around how we hire."
(HEI informant, University of Manchester)

To resolve the problem, this same informant worked with IT Services to create a team of researchers on permanent contracts, who move externally from funded grant project to grant project, with the costs recovered against the proposals. This afforded academics more secure employment, enabled consistency in the research team, whilst retaining talent at the University. It also secured adequate staffing in support of future research grants.

"So you'll write in, I want a research software engineer, I want a data scientist to work at 0.5 FTE on this project I'm putting in. And because they're baseline-funded, it means we're not having to go through all the inefficiencies of re-recruiting every time when they're building their skills, and they're working across different projects at that university. That is one of the models that I'm really enthusiastic about… So it's not just that the funding model needs to change, it's that universities need to change."
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

Academics recognised the value and importance of ethics process reviews related to partnerships, yet one informant noted the degree to which, for student projects especially, ethics limitations frequently slowed down research:

"[Without the] full ethical review process, students … are not allowed to email one of their friends and say, 'Oh, would you mind taking part in this study?'…. It's viewed as coercive…. Whether or not a student should be able to email invite an individual to take part in their research project is one of those really interesting areas of tension that slows research down."
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

Some HEI informants spoke of the difficulties of bringing in staff from industry, who may have little understanding of (or interest in) the REF. The need for KE and impact to be valued with regard to career progression within universities themselves was also acknowledged.

"Unless we have a KE career pathway that allows someone who's brought in significant income from industry—and produced lots of great contract research that's made a real difference in the world—those people won't be going up a professorial track, because they don't have three- and four-star outputs. But what if we had a KEF, a knowledge exchange pathway, then maybe… (HEI/BE informant, MMU)

"This is one of the toughest challenges: there have to be clear benefits for the creation of research outputs, KE and Impact, which will be recognised in career progression."
(HEI Informant, Manchester Metropolitan University)

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5. Language and Outputs

"Well, most of the time people aren't speaking the same language, are they?"
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

"I've often found it takes about 10 years for something to become really useful or for you to get to the stage where you say, all right … I understand the point now. Here's where the useful outcome is."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester).

5.1 Key findings: Language and Outputs

1. Language and terminology often proved divisive between CCI and HEI partners, with BE team members serving as potential 'translators' to ameliorate these differences.

2. HEI researchers reflected on communication norms, academic language usage and its exclusivity, how this might be resisted in order to reach non-academic audiences.

3. Intercultural communication was deemed a critical area for exploration and further training as part of navigating the 'fourth industrial (i.e. digital) revolution'.

5.2 Writing Styles and Audience

Language and writing styles proved an area in which BE teams can provide valuable assistance. BE and industry informants recognised the role 'translation' can play:

"We're like translators between the academic environment…. We can play the role of, 'You tell me what it is, and we'll try and digest that. And then we will tell them what it is'."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

The use of language and its potential deterrents was frequently explored by CCIs; this proved disaffecting to potential partners. It also suggests an 'insider' world that, in essence, requires the outsider to penetrate.

"[A]cademia has a particularly leaden jargon, all its own. If you look at the average [AHRC] research paper, you'd wonder whether you're living on the same planet…. So there is that communication issue, because academia can be a closed world where people just talk to each other in their own rather strange language." (CCI Informant, Film & TV Sector)

Bridging communications gaps was a central topic among HEI and CCI informants.

"In management … you get ahead by making your own terminology. If you were to say that terminology to a business person or an organisation, they may feel that you were being perhaps quite deliberately unclear, and that obviously makes it difficult to go forward."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

"I think they can [speak the same language], if they want to. But the onus is on academics to learn the language of business, not the other way round."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

Academics who had worked in the creative industries, or BE team members who had previously been PGRs, were often in the best position to serve as communication brokers:

"I've had a lot of experience and run a successful festival. So I … can be the bridge between academia and the creative industries, hopefully…"
(HEI/BE Informant, Manchester Metropolitan University)

CCI professionals recognised not only language differences but also cultural differences, reflecting differences in orientation as well, between the sectors.

"Academia can be a very different environment. And it's very much based on proving things and validating things, and being careful about … making statements without things being really carefully and robustly ratified and justified. And the arts is almost the opposite of that."
(CCI informant, Theatre Sector)

Whilst language can be divisive, it also perhaps can offer an in-road to the other sector. Cross-cultural communication was noted as vital for moving into the future.

"Intercultural communication is definitely one of these [skills]—being able to work across sectors, so to speak, and communicate. Not just speak … but be able to reach people from different sectors … different cultures… These are all fundamental skills for the fourth industrial revolution…"
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

One informant offered a different version of the 'third place'—the ways in which language can be a way to 'meet people on their own patch'. In one sense, this represents learning the jargon; in another sense, it represents a kind of culture bridge building.

> *"Don't tell people what you think they need to know, really understand those people who you're seeking to engage with. And seek to use language and motivations that meet people on their own patch."*
> *(CCI Informant, Theatre Sector)*

5.3 Dissemination Beyond Publications

Project outputs often featured publications, but informants also cited public lecture series, conferences and symposia, as well as increased audiences (for CCIs) or more programmatic outcomes (e.g. documentaries, websites, podcasts, and exhibitions). Successful outcomes were not isolated to journal articles, but also to impact on cultural policy and practice, development of networks, and strengthened links between research and teaching.

> *"The success was assessed not just in academic outputs terms, but more importantly on the impact and changes in policy and practice it has facilitated. [Also] formation of networks and communities of interest/practice; new shared areas of interest in research and practice; upskilling of cultural organisations; two-way knowledge exchange; links between research and teaching."*
> *(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester).*

Blurred boundaries between academia and the arts resulted in meeting grounds between academics and young artists, who then went on to pursue PhDs.

> *"What I will say is that I have met two artists who were recruited by my colleagues to The Other Room [poetry venue], who then became PhD students of mine."*
> *(Poet/HEI Informant, University of Salford)*

Positive outcomes were not always isolated to publications, policy shifts, or funded PhDs. In some instances, outcomes were less tangible: HEIs developed links to external organisations or the partnerships featured on-going relationships or meaningful dialogues.

> *"I got asked to take over the organisation for the history of engineering and technology.... We have over 60 members in the North West branch alone who are*

> *very active; the wider organisation has over 1000.... I see it as an asset."*
> *(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)*

> *"I guess that [the partnership] produces a meaningful dialogue, really. I don't think it needs to be spectacular or highly funded or headline grabbing. If it creates moments for clear, mutual understanding and sharing, ... that becomes an educational experience."*
> *(Poet/HEI Informant, University of Salford)*

Researchers expressed frustration at the degree to which partnership outcomes beyond the publishing of journal articles were often not duly recognised within academia; yet they themselves valued these outcomes:

> *"If you've got an outcome where somebody is able to use the information in some way, in the real world, that's the ideal; but that often is quite a slow process. At the end of the project, if you still want to maintain the relationship and work together again, I think that's fantastic."*
> *(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)*

> *"We have had some meetings with policy advisors and MPs. Those haven't come to anything yet. But the point is, we've started the ball with that. Some people might view that as a 'failed outcome' of a project, because oh, you had a meeting with MP, and then nothing happened. But that's not really how it works. You've got to just keep at it."*
> *(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)*

In one instance, the usual bureaucracy involved in a university cross-sector collaboration, in the midst of COVID seemed strikingly absent, suggesting bureaucracies can be overcome.

> *"I was one of the core team for United We Stream. So that was instigated by our night-time economy advisor [who is] part of a global network of night-time advisors. When Coronavirus hit, one of the global network in Berlin came up with the idea of United We Stream.... We approached Salford University and said, 'Could we work with this team, we've worked with them before?' Within a week, we had established a partnership that was university, industry, and local government.... I think it was 308 hours of content. We had 450 artists perform. We raised £600,000 for charities and creative industries and businesses affected by the pandemic. And we had a global viewership in excess of 20 million...*
> *(Policy Maker Informant, Manchester)*

6. Value Added

"What are the things that they want to deliver? Is it brand awareness?... Is it corporate response, social responsibility?... So once you know that, you can then look at your own business, your own work, and say, 'Well, this is where we can add value to each other'."
(Policy Maker Informant, Manchester)

6.1 Key findings: Value Added

1. Researchers and CCIs acknowledged that value added was an essential component of partnerships and often served as important motivators for collaboration.

2. HEI researchers contributed knowledge and expertise to CCI bids; CCI professionals, in turn, offered tangible value to HEIs through student placements, student training, as well as input on HEI funding bids; whilst student researchers also benefitted from research collaborations and publication opportunities with faculty.

3. Both HEI and CCI sectors recognised the importance of enhancing careers, but equally, for many it did not necessarily serve as the central driving force.

6.2 Adding Tangible Value

CCI and HEI informants frequently explored value-added dimensions of their work and the myriad ways in which research informs industry:

"There is a demand in the creative industries for research. In some projects, that has taken the form of ... published findings or datasets and the expertise to analyse them. It's about bringing academic expertise to their outputs (e.g. heritage displays, community activism projects)."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

Researchers brought academic rigour to CCIs; but informants also reflected on the two-way nature of knowledge exchange between the sectors:

"[I] occasionally helped out with his funding applications around projects. And he appreciated some of the academic rigour I could bring to the conceptual work... In turn, [he] has been a critical friend on the funding project I was involved in...
(Poet/HEI Informant, University of Salford)

"So we want the academic rigour ... and all that kind of complex thinking—political, philosophical, academic thinking—to help us to change, to help us to evolve. But we also want to change that thinking." (CCI Informant, Community Arts Sector)

Industry informants expressed interest in the interchange between strategic and academic thinking offered by HEI partnerships and valued cross-fertilisation between the sectors. Academics reflected on creative industries policy and what HEIs bring to these discussions, as well as the degree to which arts can shape policy on local, regional, or national levels.

"What HEIs would bring you is potentially a sector overview, ... intelligence, and examples of research from other sectors that might be useful, and a stronger understanding of policy and its implications for strategy.... I'm thinking how Multilingual Manchester have helped shape policy around language directly with the City Council.
(CCI Informant, Literature Sector)

"It's a rare point where you've got some research that is [shaping policy]. I suppose the other thing is, I'm part of the COVID Rapid Response project at the moment. So that is feeding into policy." (HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

6.3 Prospective Value, Entrepreneurial Engagement and Commercialisation

Commercialisation represents the transformation of academic research into tangible business opportunities; as one informant put it, 'it's the commercialisation of ideas'. HEIs who commercialised their research still encounter levels of demand and expectation facing all HEIs in the academic world. Yet they have the satisfaction that they have taken their research and used it to broader effect and potentially society's benefit. Student business start-ups represented another arena in commercialisation.

"The idea is, we take the student, we help them get their business up and running. So we're not even trying to get student jobs in SMEs. We're just trying

to get students' businesses started. I believe that possibly now there is more work being done on helping academics commercialise their ideas. Some of that tends to be done more through dedicated centres..."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

Innovation labs specialise in working with both academic and student inventors to locate research with potential to 'create value' and aim to 'translate' those into a form that ideally benefits society. Informants reflected on the value of reaching beyond 'the ivory tower' with regard to commercialisation and its prospects for application of research to the wider world.

"It goes back to knowledge exchange: we don't want academia to be in silo... What's the relevance of this research expertise? ...Let's work with partners to make sure it gets out there into the world."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

Some academics may be suspicious of concepts related to entrepreneurial engagement, for instance, the funding of research by business. BE informants responded to researcher concerns that engagement might diffuse basic principles underlying higher education (e.g. creation and dissemination of knowledge, academic freedom, etc.).

"We've recently declined the contract with a number of partners, because someone—and it was a public-sector organisation, not a private-sector organisation—didn't want the outputs to be published. And we said, 'Well, then we won't do this'."
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

Academics did not always set out to become entrepreneurs, but instead discovered potential applications of their work in the process of their research. One researcher's 'toolkit', Ketso—used for running effective workshops and promoting active learning—grew out of her regeneration work in Lesotho, South Africa, as well as her PhD research. The path to commercialisation was not swift, but the product is now used in 80 countries across the globe and in half the UK universities.

"It was an absolute lightbulb moment: what I realised was that I'd embedded into the way I designed the toolkit, literally the physicality of it, the principles of effective engagement, that had come out of my PhD..... My idea was amplifying what I'd learned from my research, so that I could get it out there [and many] more people could use it."
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

"I went to the commercialisation unit, the knowledge exchange unit. At the time, they weren't actually interested because it wasn't going to make enough money. They were very much doing high-tech and licencing and spin outs. They came back later, when their remit broadened."
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

Academics may assume their research does not constitute 'commercial-worthy' research if they are not in high-tech/biotech research; yet, as this informant discovered, routes to commercialisation remain for academics even in other disciplines.

6.4 Enhancing Academic Careers

Partnerships and engagement often resulted in publication outcomes, frequently building a researcher's CV or REF outputs. This might result from collaborations with other researchers as well as collaborations with graduate students.

"A very good master's student came on the field trip with me, was very interested in natural flood management and wrote a brilliant master's dissertation around natural flood management and community perceptions of natural flood management. And we're hoping to turn that into a journal article, actually.
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

In industry settings, it often proved ideal if the collaboration featured researchers in both the HEI and the business setting, enhancing alignment of professional aims and interests.

"So you've got two research departments working together, one in university, one externally. And if you can get a paper out of the project, that's useful to both of you. it's probably more useful to the university partner in some ways, but the industry partner might value it too."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

But some HEIs expressed concern that engagement work (in this instance, action research) was not always well received by journal peer reviewers, presenting complications in journal submissions, potentially deflecting positive outcomes.

*"There's that sense, are you really an objective
observer if you've been involved in the partnership?…
If you do end up with a reviewer who has a different
paradigm, then it just gets rejected."*
(HEI informant, The University of Manchester)

Research generated during partnerships also found its
way into the classroom. Some partnerships featured
successful social sciences collaborations between HEIs
and industry that became embedded in teaching.

*"My engagement work is actually incredibly
important for my teaching… I did some research
for the Sustainable Consumption Institute, to look
at sustainability skills in the workplace and Tesco…..
And we've used this [systems-based framework]
now for teaching sustainability from primary to PhD,
through to workplace organisations and now whole
landscape partnerships."*
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

In some instances, new modules were created as a
result of partnerships; for example, an award-winning
LegalTech project led to the introduction of a module for
master's students.

*"It's now a core module that was optional … and
oversubscribed by six times, because they could only
offer 20 places the first time; it's now 80. It received
100% positive feedback from students."*
(BE Informant, The University of Manchester)

Other researchers spoke of enhancement of their
own research practice; in this instance, about the gap
between policy and what is often happening on the
ground level, illustrating too value added in terms of
longer-term policy.

*"It does become quite clear that there is also a lack
of knowledge about what happens on the ground,
what happens in locality. But predominantly, the
interest is in what works rather than evidence per se.
So that's why I'm kind of trying to think about … what
the models are that are coming out from different
spaces, and that might influence longer-term policy."*
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

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7. Training into Partnership

"And then there is … skills development, student engagement. It's essentially to do with the future cultural workforce. And we've been more focused over recent years on graduate transition."
(CCI Informant, Theatre Sector)

7.1 Key findings: Training into Partnership

1. Mechanisms such as placements and internships (for undergraduates), and collaborative PhDs and collaboration labs (for PGRs/ECRs), provide the opportunity to develop employability skills and training in partnership, respectively.

2. Mentorship of supervisors provided crucial support as well as practice in developing and locating skillsets, confidence, and enrichment opportunities.

3. Faculty members themselves were often benefited by their students' progression; in some instances, the students' own interests led to rich partnerships between them.

7.2 PGR and UG Opportunities

Various mechanisms—such as placements, internships, collaboration labs, and collaborative PhDs—support student opportunities. HEIs and CCIs both recognised the value-added dimension of such partnerships, from research and programming to skills development for students. Industry partners spoke about their keen interest in such student placements:

"It was out of necessity more than anything, because I had a small team …. What I needed was someone with the skillsets--whether it be videography, or editing, or creative arts—that we could actually employ."
(CCI informant, Media Arts Sector)

Such opportunities with CCIs, particularly for artists, represented career-changing moments, in addition to training opportunities for students to learn the skills of partnership building. Yet CCIs also benefitted from the presence of students placed in their organisations.

"They set me up with a mentor [at BBC Creatives]. I got that experience of talking about my work on a different level, outside an academic setting…. It allowed me to engage with my creative practice in a completely different way."
(Poet/PGR Informant, University of Salford)

"We've been able to put students in placement positions, that's been very beneficial for [the organisation] as well."
(Poet/HEI Informant, University of Salford)

CCIs know precisely the skillsets required from graduates and therefore were in a position to support their development. Yet informants also pointed out the necessity for fair treatment, including pay, to avoid exploitation of this readily available workforce:

"We are the employers of those people that are emerging from higher education… And as employers, we may spot the gaps in student learning that will equip them better for the workplace and the university."
(CCI Informant, Theatre Sector)

"In the organisations I've interviewed, they already rely a lot on students' work through internship, and while this is of course great for students, we must … make sure that they are paid and treated fairly."
(ECR Informant, University of Manchester)

Connectivity to industry remains a key component of training students into partnership. This is not simply a question of 'employability' but about developing networks in the industry. This happens through boards, organisations linked to an HEI, as well as through mechanisms that allow direct engagement with industry.

"So the industry connectivity is there, from the very moment that the students step into the building, they're able to work with industry… That would be people from the board, organisations that have approached us."
(HEI/BE informant, Manchester Metropolitan University)

Additionally, collaboratively funded PhDs served as fruitful partnerships allowing for more sustained CCI-HEI engagement. Collaboration labs feature pairings of PGRs/ECRs with CCIs. These represent high-level knowledge exchange and reciprocal arrangements, fostering career pathways for PGRs/ECRs, now facing limited prospects in the current job market.

"You went for the lectureship in the past, [now] we're talking about PhD placements…. REALab was really shifting the conversation and talking about PhD researchers as junior consultants."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

"The need to think about a career outside academia was one of the reasons I decided to apply to the [Collaboration Labs] scheme actually! [It] was an excellent avenue to develop the 'impact' and 'outreach' side of my research, while developing skills and networks outside academia."
(ECR Informant, The University of Manchester)

One HEI informant noted 'the unhelpful binary' between 'academic' and 'non-academic' careers as reflected in the language of postdoctoral careers. This suggests the degree to which alternate career tracks for ECRs in CCIs may still be considered 'next best'.

7.3 Value Added for Academics

PGRs recognised the value of mentorship through partnership with their supervisors; academics similarly found value added in the intersection of their work:

"I was asking [my PhD supervisor] questions about his practice … that enabled me to reflect on my own practice. It's about working together. I think students and mentors/academics should work together…"
(Poet/PGR, University of Salford)

" Following your students into the unknown. That's the point of intellectual endeavour, and I've grown. What you find is that subject is linked to everything else [you've] done. This is a new version of it. So don't be scared… I've always followed the students' interest basically, and they will always take you somewhere exciting."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

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8. Challenges to the Industry: COVID Impacts and Diversity

"There has been an outbreak of ingenuity [under COVID]. There's no doubt about that."
(CCI Informant, Film & TV Sector)

"During the time of the pandemic, [Black Lives Matter] highlighted that often Black-led organisations are smaller and more fragile and less well funded. That's not a coincidence. It also means they are often side-lined within partnerships."
(HEI informant, University of Manchester)

8.1 Key Findings: Challenges to the Industry: COVID Impacts and Diversity

1. HEIs and CCIs developed creative strategies for managing creative partnerships in the midst of the pandemic, whilst expressing concern for the impact of COVID on the Creative Industries overall.

2. HEI and CCI partnerships universally expressed concern about diversity in the sector, with suggestions ranging from making it a condition of public funding to re-shaping the structuring of boards to ensure wide, diverse participation at all levels, including leadership.

3. HEIs and CCIs both expressed concerns that COVID's impact would prove particularly damaging for diversity, potentially reversing recent small gains; they noted it was crucial that post COVID the sector not reset itself into a lesser version of itself.

8.2 CCI-HEI Responses to COVID

Responses to COVID and its impact on the CCI sector ran to both extremes: there was a recognition of the costs as a result of closures and affected budgets, as well as expressions or relief that there had been unexpected gains from the transition to digital venues. Concerns remained focused on the impacts beyond COVID especially at the granular level:

"The COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected our financial position as we lost almost an entire year's box office."
(CCI Informant, Literature Sector)

"We went immediately online for the season launch last time. We had people from Canada, from Holland, ... it might have been over 2000 people, because we made it a public event. And we're all sitting in our bedrooms with tears coming down our face.
(CCI Informant, Theatre Sector)

"An awful lot of businesses in our sector just aren't that big. The granularity of detail of how those small businesses are being affected, how those individual sole traders have been affected, is really, really difficult. So we've been in conversation with the unions about how we do that."
(Policy Maker Informant, Manchester)

An overarching concern was that COVID might result in loss of CCI staffing (especially freelancers) after the pandemic subsides and potential loss of diversity in the sector:

"If the industry has haemorrhaged staff, individuals, and talent, you also then get into one of my major concerns: diversity."
(Policy Maker Informant, Manchester)

"How do you make sure that there is space for talent, especially diverse talent, when your [post-COVID] labour pool has become so experienced?... How do you make sure that a sector that was awful in terms of diversity ... doesn't set back the tiny gains that we've made in the last 10 years? That the sector isn't resetting itself into a lesser version of what it was?"
(Policy Maker Informant, Manchester)

8.3 CCI-HEI Perspectives on Diversity

Artist informants and CCI executives of colour spoke openly about working in CCI-HEI partnerships as a person of colour:

"I was the lone BAME brown actor in every field I would go into…. The feeling that I got from people, not necessarily openly saying it, but it was almost like, 'You're only here because this organisation wants to tick a box'…. Sometimes it's important to tell people … that you're here because of your talent."
(CCI Informant, Media Arts Sector)

"If you don't make a place for yourself, nobody is going to do it for you. And if you don't apply for these opportunities, then the world will stay the way it is, and it's not going to change."
(Poet/PGR Informant, University of Salford)

It was acknowledged that students from non-middle class communities can sometimes struggle with placements if less familiar with the CCI environment. HEI faculty and staff can help ameliorate this, not only through CCI visits to the classroom (ideally, not simply a 'one-off', as one informant noted), but through actively coaching the students:

"People from the white, middle-class communities communicate [their] message better… They just feel a lot more confident… That's where the recruitment side, the role of the teachers, is really important…. I've not had as many students come forward from that background, so the pool is less to choose from. And then as well, communicating to that cohort what's expected."
(CCI Informant, Media Arts Sector)

8.4 Strategies to Address the Gap

CCIs were quite clear about their commitment to diversity, about supporting diverse artists and amplifying that message. Industry professionals shared their strategies to address the gap; this included making diversity a condition of public funding. Yet they recognised that underlying economic disparities have deterred entry into the field, even before COVID. Whilst not always articulated, the effects of this on engagement were nonetheless implied.

"Well, one of the ways you can do it is by making … diversity and access a condition of the public funding…. [And] to gather the next generation of talent and show them … the creative industries is a career path…. [M]y 2017 report [led] to more career materials for schools about creative industries aimed at teenagers and parents.
(CCI Informant, Film & TV Sector)

"If you think about the narrative over the past year, about the sector failing… If you are a young, diverse person, … if you view it through the pure economic lens, right, so you don't have the kind of familial support?… It's going to be harder for [them] to justify this very precarious career.
(Policy Maker Informant, Manchester)

To broaden diversity, CCI informants proposed investing in training schemes, changing recruitment processes, and fighting racism at the highest levels of organisation. Policy has been faulty, they recognised, as it has focused more on representation than leadership.

"Most arts and cultural institutions and higher educational institutions are led by white people….It's ideological… And it's arisen from the fact that white people have continued to enjoy privilege…. That power structure will never fundamentally change unless leadership changes."
(CCI Informant, Community Arts Sector)

"Invest. Invest for success, invest in people, invest in trainings schemes…. It's not just, you've got to have your equality and diversity training… You get people to step aside. That includes people like me."
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

"We designed a recruitment process for new board members that was not about skills…. We said, 'You should share our vision and values. And that's what we want. We want commitment to those values around diversity….' All the language around that recruitment was 'no experience necessary'."
(CCI Informant, Literature Sector)

One academic reflected on the value of dialogue—vital to partnership anyway, as this report has evidenced—as a strategy to address diversity. This might suggest how 'partnering' around diversity might itself support needed shifts.

"One of the ways I think we can improve diversity is finding ways to make sure that we actually hear everybody's voice and that people know that they're being heard. Whenever I get feedback about Ketso [the workshop tool], the two strongest things that come out are, 'Everybody's voice was heard. It helped us see things differently. It gave us new insights. We structured our thinking and we came up with new ways of thinking'…"
(HEI Informant, The University of Manchester)

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9. Conclusions

9.1 Overview and Key Findings

This report explores the various ways in which CCI professionals and HEI academics engage in partnerships in the Greater Manchester area. As the study sought to examine best practice, the report details partnership dynamics related to establishment of these partnerships, highlighting crucial components that must be in place in order for such partnerships to yield satisfactory results on both sides. 'Establishing Partnerships' revealed that HEI researchers did not rely on BE teams for their partnerships; commercialisation units were found to assist in enterprise developed by academics from their HEI research.

Secondly, in developing partnerships, the report suggests that HEI researchers or CCI professionals who themselves were 'hybrids'—e.g. a medieval historian teaching in the business school and/or a former PGR turned BE professional—were often better placed to successfully develop collaborations. These individuals had capacity for 'translating' their own research and/or research of others across disciplines, or had a 'foot in both camps', enabling better communication across the gap. This type of fluidity proved exceptionally useful in developing, or providing frameworks in developing, successful partnerships between academia and CCIs. Differences in language/terminology resulted in 'cultural gaps' between the sectors that sometimes deterred. BE team involvement might assist here, although as partnerships were built on pre-existing networks, this suggests that researchers themselves may need to address these gaps through greater sensitivity to sectoral differences, with greater emphasis needed on both sides for improved communication.

A third key area in the report finds that substantive differences exist between the sectors in terms of partnership needs: CCIs require greater agility and speed; HEIs struggle with bureaucracy and limitations such as adequate release time for researchers, access to sufficient administrative support, and difficulties securing researcher staff due to precarious contracts and hiring delays. Ethics processes as well as engagement with ethical practice (in addition to customary good practice) in partnerships were deemed worthy of consideration. Access to adequate funding proved a vital concern in both sectors, with a particular interest in funding for collaborative projects, especially interdisciplinary ones.

Lastly, both sectors found that CCIs and HEIs each offered value added through sharing of data, assistance in writing bids, securing placements for students and the embedding of research outcomes into teaching. Whilst publications remained a crucial output in which HEI researchers expressed an interest, both sectors acknowledged that programmatic outcomes, expanded research opportunities, successful student placements (e.g. collaboration labs, collaborative PhDs, expanding ECR career pathways), co-research development (between faculty and students), cross-sector partnerships and commercialisation, all added value across the sectors. Both sectors recognised the particular challenges to the Creative Industries (and therefore to partnerships) due to COVID; and academics and CCI professionals recognised the need for diversity at leadership levels so that diversity might continue to grow within the sector, and so that recent industry gains in this area are not lost post COVID.

9.2 Limitations and Further Study

This study was strengthened by the collaboration across The University of York and The University of Manchester, although it should be recognised that the interviews represent a relatively small percentage of industry partners. Further study, expanded beyond these areas and institutions, may well illustrate whether these findings bear up across other regions. Researcher-leads at both Manchester and York remain unconvinced, upon completion of this study, that geography plays a significant role in issues that are central to partnership for HEI researchers and CCI professionals locally (with perhaps the exception of the South-centric resources in relation to partnerships). It may be worthwhile to examine in future how geography plays into CCI-HEI partnerships locally as part of current place-based research in the Creative Industries. Overall, evidence gathered across both Yorkshire and Humber and Greater Manchester suggests that HEI partners' interests, concerns, and orientations remain more closely linked to micro-circumstances related to issues of infrastructure resources at respective universities, availability of funding,

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and release time afforded faculty, in addition to issues such as access to support staff, permanent research staff, and other such concerns. Among CCIs, concerns regarding language and communication, access to university research priorities and support mechanisms, aligning of timing and pace, equality and diversity in partnership, proved among the most pressing concerns, as noted above.

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