

9th April 2021

Ground-breaking careers work led by the creative industries across England and Wales has reached over 120,000 young people during the last twelve months, despite Covid-19 restrictions.

- **The creative industries across England and Wales have come together to inspire and inform thousands of young people about creative career options through Discover! Creative Careers Week / Darganfod! Wythnos Gyrfaoedd Creadigol and Creative Careers Programme Cymru / Rhaglen Gyrfaoedd Creadigol Cymru (CCP Cymru)**
- **Collectively the programmes, which have been delivered online due to the pandemic, have reached over 120,000 young people, over 900 schools and over 200 careers advisers**
- **This ground-breaking work has won the CDI's UK Careers Development Award for Innovative Employer Engagement at a virtual ceremony on 10th March 2021**

The Creative Careers Programme (CCP) is an integrated industry-led programme of activity across England and Wales that is working to ensure there is a larger and more diverse intake of talent via a broader range of routes into the creative industries, a commitment of the Creative Industries Sector Deal.

The programme launched in 2019 and was designed to directly address the fact that 90% of creative industry jobs are occupied by more advantaged socio-economic groups by giving students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds live encounters with employers and insight into real workplaces. The programme also provides resources and training for those that inform young people's career decisions.

In its first year alone over 1,000 creative sector employers were engaged, leading to 92,000 student interactions.

Its flagship event, Discover! Creative Careers Week is a call to arms for the creative industries to open their doors, physically and online, to introduce students from all backgrounds to the various job roles that exist. In 2019 hundreds of employers hosted thousands of students in their buildings to take part in tours, workshops and tasks and provide hands-on experiences.

The programme has recently adapted to a digital delivery model with two online Discover! weeks, for Wales and England respectively, consisting of filmed interviews, tours, live panel discussions and teaching resources for schools and colleges.

The most recent Discover! week took part during National Careers Week 2021 and, despite it occurring in the week prior to students returning to the classroom

where teaching staff were busy making preparations, we saw 461 schools engage with online films and resources, with 231 schools taking part in live Q&A panel discussions with professionals from across the creative industries including Rick Gibson, CEO of the British Games Institute; Catherine Ritman-Smith, Head of Learning and Skills at V&A Museum of Childhood; Louise Smith, Sustainability Manager on Bond 25; David Evans Head of Production at National Theatre Wales and Nainita Desai, an award-winning film composer whose work includes *Bad Boy Millionaires* and *American Murder*.

A key focus of the Creative Careers Programme and Discover! Creative Careers has been to engage students and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds that currently have poor representation across the creative industries, these include lower socio-economic groups, those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities.

During the March Discover! week, a specific programme of activity ran for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including a live panel discussion featuring people working in the creative industries who have physical disabilities, neuro-divergent characteristics and learning difficulties.

Schools with a higher-than-average number of students accessing free school meals (FSM) were given additional support to ensure their engagement during the week, with nearly 5000 FSM students taking part.

“SEN students felt by the end of the week they would fit into the creative sector and felt confident to explore creative opportunities offered around school.”

Teacher feedback from Discover! Creative Careers Week 2021

“My students are quite diverse so it was good for them to see multiple ethnicities represented within the resources.” **Teacher feedback from Discover! Creative Careers Week 2021**

The impact of this access to real employees and workplaces to understand career pathways is palpable. 97% of schools that took part claim that Discover! Creative Careers Week 2021 has increased their students’ knowledge of the range of job opportunities in the sector and 95% of schools claim that it improved their students’ perception of working in the creative industries as a viable career.

UK Government Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage said: “The creative industries are a vital part of our economy and offer exciting career opportunities to young people right across the UK. Ensuring that under-represented groups are able to enter the creative industries will help us build back fairer from the challenges of the pandemic and future-proof the sector for generations to come. I am pleased to see Discover! Creative Careers and the Creative Careers Programme focus on diversity in their engagement and I would like to congratulate the team for deservedly winning CDI’s UK Careers Development Award for Innovative Employer Engagement for this excellent work.”

Darren Henley, CEO, Arts Council England who funded Discover! Creative Careers Week 2021 said: “The last year has highlighted even more need for access into the creative and cultural industries. Discover! Creative Careers Week greatly deserve recognition for its commitment in ensuring the range of opportunities and knowledge of creative careers are made visible to all young people. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the team developed an innovative digital programme, which will create a legacy of engaging online resources for young people, teachers and their schools, as well as a platform for the sector to continually add to. This important initiative will help develop new talent pathways and contribute to the growth of a more inclusive arts and cultural sector, key ambitions of our current strategy, *Lets Create.*”

Having industry lead the Creative Careers Programme and Discover! Creative Careers is fundamental, so far it has been supported in-kind by hundreds of leading companies from across the creative industries including Framestore, National Trust, National Theatre of Wales, the Royal Opera House, Cockpit Arts, Dr Martens, Pinewood Studios, Museums Wales, Channel 4, The Grand Theatre Blackpool, Tate Liverpool, Leeds Museums and Galleries and many more.

The most recent Discover! week was also supported by well-known personalities including TV Presenter and Modern Furniture Restorer Jay Blades; Actor and Broadcaster, Mim Shaikh; Video Game Actor and Developer, Abubakar Salim and Rapper and Manga Author Shao Dow, who all introduced various areas of the week and shared their own career journeys.

Jane Ide OBE, CEO of Creative & Cultural Skills said,

“It was key for us to ensure that employers were at the heart of this far-reaching programme, with the sector taking responsibility for engaging and educating young people. We very much hope that Discover! Creative Careers Week will continue to play a role in achieving our ambition to see a more diverse and inclusive cultural sector that embraces young people from all backgrounds as we support the sector to ‘Build Back Fairer’ post-Covid.”

The programme has been a partnership of Creative & Cultural Skills, Screenskills; Creative Industries Federation; Ffilm Cymru; the Arts Council of Wales and Trac Cymru. It was originally funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports with recent Discover! Events funded by Welsh Government through Creative Wales, and Arts Council England.

Seetha Kumar, CEO ScreenSkills said,

“As the industry-led skills body for the UK’s screen industries, we know that inspiring the next generation of talent is a major concern and that Discover! Creative Careers Week – with events both live and virtual and all the associated resources on the Discover! website - has provided a way to connect industry with young people in an engaging and accessible way. We at ScreenSkills are grateful to all the companies and organisations who provide speakers, tours and other opportunities that bring working in the screen and other creative industries to life.”

Pauline Burt, Chief Executive of Ffilm Cymru, said: “We are proud to be part of the award-winning Creative Careers Programme, working with the

partner organisations to help people discover and further career opportunities in the film & TV industry. We encourage you to check out the resources, where industry professionals share their insights into their world of work and the value of transferable skills. There's something for everyone."

Sarah Gregory, Head of Creative Careers at Creative Industries

Federation said: "The Creative Careers Programme is a fantastic opportunity for young people to engage with our world leading creative industries. Led by employers from across the sector the CCP is reaching and inspiring thousands of young people with untapped talents. We are all so thrilled that the CDI has recognised Discover! Creative Careers Week with an Innovative Employer Engagement Event award. Congratulations to all who make the Creative Careers Programme the success that it is."

The resources and films created for Discover! Creative Careers Week 2021 can be found at <https://discovercreative.careers>, a one-stop-shop website and careers finder to help young people discover the range of jobs available across the creative industries.

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Notes for Editors

For further information, images, and interviews, please contact the Creative & Cultural Skills Press Office: T: 020 7015 1800 | info@ccskills.org.uk



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