

Research Brief – Market Research and Competitor Analysis – Creative Futures

A research brief to explore the market of opportunities to develop and grow The Mighty Creatives Creative Futures work, analyse the competitor landscape and identify growth areas/opportunities, partnerships and funding opportunities.

1. Introduction to The Mighty Creatives

The disproportionality for young people in this country in terms of opportunities and life chances are far too vast. There are far too many young people falling through the gaps and we are getting to a stage where just listening to the voices of these young people is not enough. (Hannah, TMC Youth Board)

The Mighty Creatives are an award-winning charity, providing creative youth services for those in the shadows of society. It is crystal clear to many that the arts, creativity and cultural education have a fundamental role in supporting young people in countering the impact of social injustice. That need has become more demanding in recent years, and we now need to ensure that this is expressed at the heart of our vision:

Social justice for young people through arts, culture and creativity.

To achieve this vision, our mission has four strategic objectives (SO) and associated SMART outputs over the five years of our Business Plan (2024-2029) as follows:

- SO1: To transform the lives of our beneficiaries through one-to-one and group-based **Creative Mentoring services**.
- SO2: To provide support, advice and opportunities to employers which assist our beneficiaries' employment prospects and enterprise opportunities through our **Mighty Employers Services** (as part of our **Creative Futures programme**).
- SO3: To inspire our beneficiaries to express themselves through the power of creativity and to work with other stakeholders to support best practice, youth-led approaches which foster meaningful cultures that place youth voice at the heart through our **Youth Voice services**.
- SO4: To sustain and grow investment in our work from across the UK and internationally.

If you want to read more about our Strategic Objectives and our SMART outputs, please take a look at our Business Plan, [available on our website by clicking here](#).

We aim to reach these Strategic Objectives and SMART outputs through the delivery of our [three core programmes](#):

1. **Creative Mentoring** – Our award-winning service that provides one-to-one support, empowering the most unheard children and young people in society to discover their sense of self, belonging, and a world of opportunities.
2. **Creative Futures** – We connect our young people with organisations and support them to create meaningful education, training and workplace opportunities together. By adopting creative approaches and listening to young voices, employers can inspire young people to take the next steps in their lives.
3. **Youth Voice** – We campaign and advocate for youth voice. We work with young people, other charities, organisations, youth services and employers to support best practice, youth-led approaches inspired by the views and voices of young people.

The main cohorts of children and young people we work with through the aforementioned programmes are ‘children and young people in need’ aged 5-25. This cohort includes children and young people who have experienced vulnerabilities and/or disadvantage/s in their lives, including those who are care experienced, young carers, children in need, children on child protection plans and separated/Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children and young people.

2. The Context

The Mighty Creatives are in the first year of delivering our new Business Plan, after a transition year across 2023-2024 after being a Bridge organisation for Arts Council England for 10 years, a role which concluded in March 2023. This is a pivotal time for us as an organisation to develop and embed our work, ensuring it is relevant, important and meaningful for all our stakeholders, but especially those at the core of our work, children and young people.

Our three programme strands (Creative Mentoring, Creative Futures and Youth Voice) are established to varying degrees. Our Creative Mentoring service is a very well established and evidence-based programme, with a secure suite of stakeholders, funders and demand. Our Youth Voice service is also well established, with a diverse range of commissioned projects and interest from across the sector. Our Creative Futures strand of work (inclusive of our Mighty Employer’s Network and Employ ME course) is informed by years of learning through the delivery of pilots, ad-hoc projects and career progression support for children and young people.

Over the next two years, The Mighty Creatives are looking to further develop and embed our Creative Futures programme to become more responsive to the needs of our children and young people and reflective of the current challenges they face when it comes to their next steps after education. An important part of this process is reviewing our current provision current provision of support available to the children

and young people post-16 who we serve and identifying the gaps we can support with through our unique provision.

3. The Brief

The Research

We are looking for a research organisation or individual to work alongside our Head of Programmes and Communications and Marketing Manager design, manage and coordinate a phased market research project, with the aim to support and inform the development of our Creative Futures programme. The research will include four research areas:

1. Market research into current providers of creative support and advice for children and young people in need aged 16-25 about their next steps (including employability, further education and training opportunities),
2. Competitor, partner and funder analysis to help identify potential collaborations in programme development and support,
3. Identification of gaps in the market, of where The Mighty Creatives' Creative Futures programme can support,
4. Analysis of our Mighty Employer's Network, in response to findings from the above.

This piece of research will be taking part alongside an audience consultation exercise for marketing and communications purposes.

Aims of the Research

The above research areas will aid us to understand the opportunities for our Creative Futures programme, and how we can continue to develop, adapt and deliver this important aspect of our work. More specifically, it will help us to:

- Deepen awareness and understanding of existing mechanisms for support and advice, for children and young people in need, about their future prospects and opportunities after formal education,
- Provide a complete and comprehensive picture of the market landscape to help us establish relevant and meaningful plans to develop our support in a way that is unique to our service and responds to the needs of the market,
- Identify competitors and partners in the space, with a view of how our services compares with and can work alongside pre-existing provisions of support,
- Identify recommendations for programme development to encourage an evidence-based approach within our Creative Futures work, with the opportunity to focus on sustainable approaches and delivery,
- Review the need for our Mighty Employer's Network specifically, and whether this Network responds to the needs of the market and beneficiaries.

Objectives of Research Areas

As identified with the above, The Mighty Creatives request that the research organisation/individual addresses the proposed objectives through the research delivery. The methods of which these are conducted are negotiable between the research organisation/individual and The Mighty Creatives.

1. Market research into current providers of creative support and advice for children and young people in need aged 16-25 about their next steps (including employability, further education and training opportunities),

The objectives of this area of research include:

- Identify and explore the current offer of support and advice for children and young people in need aged 16-25 with a focus on:
 - o Employability support (including support with self-employment/freelance),
 - o Support to access further and higher education opportunities,
 - o Support with training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Delivering a SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunities and threat) analysis for the market, identifying:
 - o Current strengths of the existing market (and therefore saturated areas of the market),
 - o Current weaknesses of the existing market (and therefore where there may be opportunities for growth),
 - o Current opportunities in the market, considering market trends, policy changes and national guidance,
 - o Current threats within the market, considering funding threats and changes to national policy, for example.

2. Competitor, partner and funder analysis to help identify potential collaborations in programme development and support,

The objectives of this area of research include:

- Identify competitors (specifically those The Mighty Creatives are not already aware of) in the 'Creative Futures' space and examine their strengths and weaknesses in comparison to our offer/potential offer,
- Identify partners (specifically those The Mighty Creatives are not already aware of) in the 'Creative Futures' space, including:
 - o Partnering organisations,
 - o Forums,
 - o Working Groups,
 - o Advisory Groups, etc.
- Identify potential funders who fund creative employability, further education and training programmes/initiatives for children and young people between the ages of 16 and 25.

3. Identification of gaps in the market, of where The Mighty Creatives' Creative Futures programme can support,

- Through the SWOT analysis, identify potential gaps in the market for Creative Futures support, and where The Mighty Creatives can contribute to filling this gap,
- Identify some recommendations for programme development, and specific areas of focus on youth employability, further/higher education, self-employment support/, creative careers or training support.

4. Analysis of our Mighty Employer's Network, in response to findings from the above.

- Identify whether our existing Mighty Employer's Network responds to the opportunities and gaps identified above,
- Identify some recommendations for programme development for the Mighty Employer's Network, including whether to adapt, change, grow or reduce.

Research Methodology

We request that the research organisation/individual submits a proposal which includes a combination of internal, external, primary and secondary research. We are open to hearing from organisations/individuals about their approaches to the above research.

We do expect that the research organisation/individual presents their findings from the research in the form of a final report, shared with The Mighty Creatives at the endpoint of the research through a presentation (online or in-person where appropriate).

The Mighty Creatives will fully brief the successful organisation/individual, providing deeper insight into the history of the Creative Futures programme as well as any previous reports, evaluations and findings that have been collated to date, where appropriate.

Timescales

The Mighty Creatives will aim to successfully recruit an organisation/individual by the start of September 2024. We anticipate the research will take up to 6-months, with a completion date of Monday 17th March 2025, where The Mighty Creatives expect a final report and presentation.

Key dates:

- **August 2024** – Open callout for a research organisation/individual,
- **September 2024** – Recruitment of a research organisation/individual, including induction meetings and planning meetings,

- **September 2024 – March 2025** – Delivery of research by research organisation/individual,
- **March 2025** – Presentation of final report and findings.

Budget

The Mighty Creatives have allocated a total budget of **£10,000.00 (including VAT)** to fulfil the research brief above.

This fee is inclusive of any travel, resources, materials and staff time required on the research project.

Responding to the Brief

To respond to this brief, please complete **the application form, ensuring that you include the following information in your written response:**

- Your proposed approach to the areas of research listed in this brief, including possible methods of research,
- A timeline of your proposed activity over the 6-month period,
- An outline of how you aim to distribute the budget for the purposes of the research.

Please email your completed application form to recruitment@themightycreatives.com by **9am on Tuesday 10th September 2024**.

If you have any questions about the brief, please email recruitment@themightycreatives.com who will forward your query onto the relevant member of staff.