



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BUILDING CREATIVE CAREER

PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH

A Field Scan for Los Angeles County

April 2019



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Commissioned By:

Los Angeles County Arts Commission
Los Angeles County Arts Education Collective

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The LA County Arts Commission's **Creative Career Pathways for Youth** (CCPY) initiative is working to develop pathways that prepare youth ages 14 to 24 for careers in the arts and creative industries. CCPY is part of the Arts Commission's wider Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII), and its purpose is to ensure access for youth of color, youth who are LGBTQ, disabled, current and former foster youth, on probation or from low income households, as well as others who experience barriers to participation in the workforce. The first step in the initiative was to conduct a field scan to begin to learn about career opportunities for youth in the creative industries, the kinds of barriers some youth experience in seeking to access those opportunities, and what work is already being done to help them overcome those barriers. This report is being used by the LA County Arts Commission and the LA County Arts Education Collective to design and implement the next phase of CCPY. We are publishing this information to help other agencies, institutions, and employers in the field discover how they can help improve access to career opportunities in the creative industries for all youth in LA County.

METHODS

Researchers began with a labor market analysis of the twelve industries that make up the creative economy in LA County, then reviewed the current literature exploring LA County's arts and creative industries. They conducted four focus groups and hosted more than 60 phone or in-person interviews with key stakeholders, including

- Youth who are interested in creative careers
- Creative industry employers
- Nonprofit organizations that prepare youth for creative careers
- Workforce development experts
- Educators
- Civic leaders

KEY FINDINGS

Labor market data shows that nearly 400,000 LA County residents work in the creative industries, making up 10.5 percent of the county's workforce. Another 154,000 residents are self-employed in the creative economy, most often as craft artists, fine artists, and photographers. This workforce crosses 12 sectors and 70 creative occupations. Earnings in creative occupations outpace the workforce at large, \$25.49 to \$34.21 per hour for creative occupations versus \$21.43 for the workforce at large.

This report analyzes opportunities for youth in 70 creative occupations in the creative industries. These include not only artistic workers but also workers who utilize artistic skills only peripherally on the job. To focus in on occupations where artistic skills are central to job requirements, a subset of "artistic-creative" occupations identified by the National Endowment for the Arts was used. Both sets of occupations are analyzed in this field scan. A table summarizing both artistic-creative and other creative occupations can be found at the end of this executive summary. Young adults age 25 and under can be most commonly found in occupations such as *Post-Secondary Teachers, Film And Video Editors, General And Operations Managers, Actors, Musicians and Singers, and Graphic Designers*.

This field scan found that creative career pathways programs in LA County can be organized into four types:

- Arts Education
- Career Exploration
- College and Career Readiness
- Work-Based Learning

In today's landscape, *Arts Education* programs are nearly ubiquitous, although not necessarily high quality or equitably accessible to all residents. *Career Exploration* and *Career and College Readiness* programs are less common than arts education, yet they serve an important function in helping youth—particularly youth facing barriers to employment—learn about creative occupations and how to successfully pursue opportunities in the creative industries. *Work-Based Learning* is a critical player in creative career pathways, and there are numerous opportunities for youth interested in almost any sector of the creative economy. Serving high school students and opportunity youth, college students, and early-career professionals, these programs offer a combination of hard and common skill¹ training and help youth forge important professional connections in the industry.

Despite the large number of programs the field scan discovered in LA County that specifically serve youth of color, youth who are LGBTQ, disabled, current and former foster youth, on probation or from low income households, as well as others who experience barriers to participation in the workforce, representation of those youth remains low across the creative industries.

This field scan organizes the types of barriers youth face into a series of categories that begin to suggest solutions. LA County youth experience barriers to creative career pathways at home, in school, and in the workplace. Some of these barriers are common to many Los Angeles youth entering the workforce: reliable, safe, and affordable transportation; juggling other responsibilities such as school and family; the

¹ Common skills are cross-industrial and non-technical, referring to broad range of cognitive and relational abilities. This is different from the better-known term “soft skills,” which is used more loosely to indicate any number of interpersonal skills (such as communication or conflict resolution) and individual behaviors (such as punctuality or resourcefulness).

need to gain experience for entry-level jobs; and the lack of available adult mentors. Challenges unique to opportunity youth in LA County include system-involvement, personal trauma, cycles of punishment, homelessness, food scarcity, gang involvement, and limited access to education and training. They also face lack of visibility or representation in the workplace, systemic racism, and a lack of social capital needed to build professional networks or navigate systems.

Some of the barriers are specific to the creative industries, such as limited access to state-of-the-art training and technology, which is not equally available in all public schools in LA County. Employer practices in the creative industries can create barriers, such as requiring a bachelor's degree or a professional-quality portfolio for entry level jobs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This field scan offers 23 recommendations to remove barriers and improve access to creative careers for LA County youth. Researchers found a strong body of work and best practices already taking place, but discovered much of it is happening in silos, with insufficient staff or funding, and with little infrastructure to bring it to scale. Briefly summarized, the recommendations are in three categories:

Career Pathway Investments:

Ensuring the scalability and sustainability of creative career pathways

1. Increase investment in K-12 public education
2. Significantly increase funding for nonprofit arts education and career readiness programs
3. Partner with local and regional workforce development boards
4. Invest in sustainable transportation solutions
5. Explore tax incentives to hire opportunity youth
6. Sponsor a third-party evaluation of creative career pathway programs

Career Pathway Access:

Ensuring LA County youth can enter and advance in creative occupations

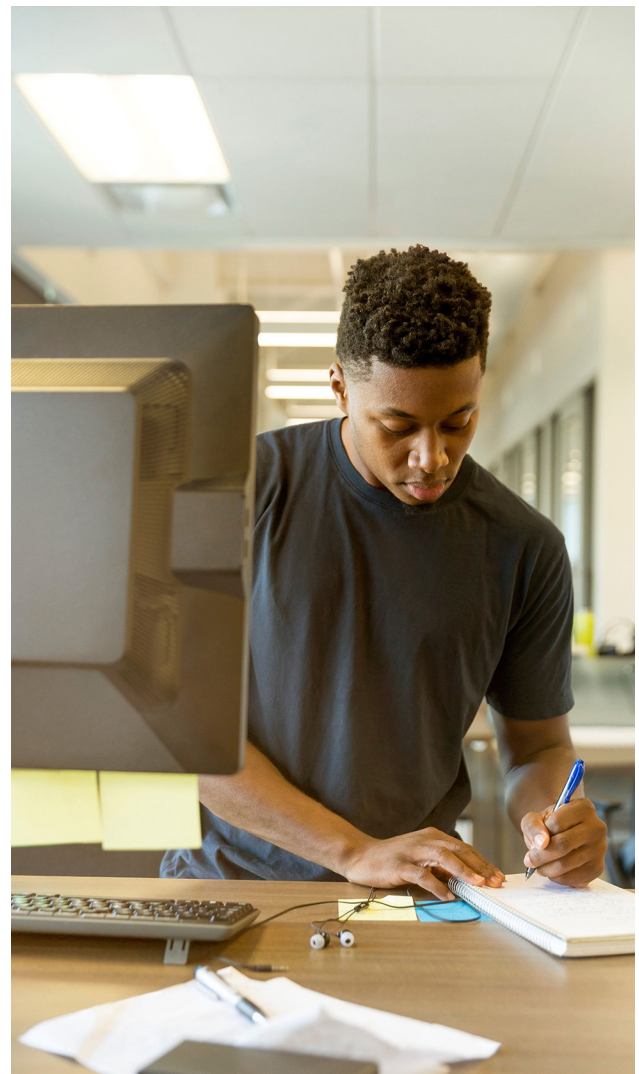
7. Institute a community awareness and outreach campaign
8. Research entry level requirements in creative occupations
9. Provide creative economy professional development for teachers, guidance counselors, school administrators, and school board members
10. Initiate a campaign to encourage prestigious arts institutions including museums, galleries, and universities to embrace local artists from underrepresented communities
11. Create a “seal of approval” badge program
12. Provide training on unconscious bias and on diversity, equity, and inclusion for creative industry professionals
13. Organize and host a creative industries hiring fair

Career Pathway Improvement:

Ensuring quality programs are available to meet business needs and provide LA County youth with the skills and support they need

14. Expand existing career pathway programs
15. Coordinate a series of workshops or webinars showcasing arts organizations and programs
16. Provide financial and business management training that will prepare youth to work in an industry where contract work and part-time work are common
17. Design and implement bridge programs to help youth navigate the transition from intern to full-time employee
18. Establish a creative economy one-stop for youth where they can learn about career opportunities in the creative industries and get referrals to training and support programs

19. Identify mentors and navigators who can help opportunity youth navigate the system and develop professional networks
20. Create and launch a “Mentor in the Middle” program to engage women, people of color, and those from underrepresented communities in mid-career
21. Explore apprenticeship as an employment model
22. Create extended on-ramps for system-involved youth by coordinating career pathway programs, supportive service providers, case workers, and mentors or navigators to work as a team
23. Formally establish an LA County Creative Workforce Development Committee



Summary Table: Employment in All Creative Occupations in LA County

The list of creative occupations includes not only artistic workers but also workers who utilize artistic skills only peripherally on the job. To focus in on occupations where artistic skills are central to job requirements, a subset of “artistic-creative” occupations identified by the National Endowment for the Arts was used. “Other creative” occupations are also analyzed. The table below shows all creative occupations in order from occupations with the most people employed in LA County in 2017 to the smallest number.

ALL CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)	Description	2017 Employment	Artistic-Creative Occupation	Other Creative Occupation
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	74,521		X
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	50,680		X
27-2012	Producers and Directors	26,242	X	
11-2022	Sales Managers	19,161		X
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	17,734		X
27-1024	Graphic Designers	15,929	X	
15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software	14,158		X
27-4032	Film and Video Editors	13,798		X
27-2011	Actors	13,744	X	
27-3043	Writers and Authors	12,996	X	
27-2042	Musicians and Singers	12,055	X	
27-4011	Audio and Video Equipment Technicians	10,501		X
27-4021	Photographers	9,013	X	
41-3011	Advertising Sales Agents	8,755		X
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	8,663		X
27-3041	Editors	7,442		X
27-4099	Media and Communication Equipment Workers, All Other	7,400		X
27-4031	Camera Operators, Television, Video, and Motion Picture	6,971		X
27-3099	Media and Communication Workers, All Other	6,902		X
27-1014	Multimedia Artists and Animators	6,876	X	
13-1011	Agents and Business Managers of Artists, Performers, and Athletes	5,507		X
27-1011	Art Directors	5,466	X	
27-1025	Interior Designers	5,309	X	
27-1013	Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators	5,235	X	
17-1011	Architects, Except Landscape and Naval	5,174	X	

Table 2: Emsi, 2018 Q2

ALL CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)	Description	2017 Employment	Artistic-Creative Occupation	Other Creative Occupation
27-2099	Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers, All Other	4,960	X	
27-1022	Fashion Designers	4,723	X	
17-3011	Architectural and Civil Drafters	4,227		X
27-4014	Sound Engineering Technicians	4,168		X
43-4121	Library Assistants, Clerical	4,003		X
51-7011	Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	3,430		X
25-4031	Library Technicians	3,281		X
27-1026	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	2,895	X	
25-4021	Librarians	2,891		X
27-2041	Music Directors and Composers	2,863	X	
27-1027	Set and Exhibit Designers	2,673	X	
27-4012	Broadcast Technicians	2,601		X
51-9071	Jewelers and Precious Stone and Metal Workers	2,286		X
27-1012	Craft Artists	2,225	X	
27-1021	Commercial and Industrial Designers	2,165	X	
27-3022	Reporters and Correspondents	2,084		X
51-6052	Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers	1,868		X
39-5091	Makeup Artists, Theatrical and Performance	1,731		X
51-6051	Sewers, Hand	1,564		X
27-3042	Technical Writers	1,516		X
11-2011	Advertising and Promotions Managers	1,448		X
27-3011	Radio and Television Announcers	1,435	X	
27-3012	Public Address System and Other Announcers	1,287	X	
27-1029	Designers, All Other	1,233	X	
27-1023	Floral Designers	1,136	X	
51-6092	Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers	1,016		X
39-3092	Costume Attendants	994		X
49-2097	Electronic Home Entertainment Equipment Installers and Repairers	797		X
51-9151	Photographic Process Workers and Processing Machine Operators	726		X
25-4013	Museum Technicians and Conservators	685		X
27-2031	Dancers	587	X	

Table 2: Emsi, 2018 Q2

ALL CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)	Description	2017 Employment	Artistic-Creative Occupation	Other Creative Occupation
17-1012	Landscape Architects	582		X
43-9031	Desktop Publishers	569		X
27-1019	Artists and Related Workers, All Other	545	X	
51-9123	Painting, Coating, and Decorating Workers	532		X
49-9063	Musical Instrument Repairers and Tuners	446		X
25-4012	Curators	401		X
27-3021	Broadcast News Analysts	387		X
25-9011	Audio-Visual and Multimedia Collections Specialists	373		X
49-9061	Camera and Photographic Equipment Repairers	339		X
51-9194	Etchers and Engravers	315		X
25-4011	Archivists	312		X
27-2032	Choreographers	198	X	

Table 2: Emsi, 2018 Q2