

# Creative United

INNOVATIVE FINANCE FOR CREATIVE BUSINESSES

## About us

Creative Sector Services CIC (trading as Creative United) is an independent Community Interest Company that provides finance-based products and services designed to deliver economic growth, development and other benefits across the cultural and creative industries.

The communities that we serve include creative businesses (including individual artists and creative practitioners), charitable and social enterprises, and other not-for-profit organisations operating within the wider arts and creative industries.

Our mission is to build a sustainable and resilient creative economy, making the arts accessible for all.

## Background

Creative United was established as a spin out from Arts Council England to take forward and develop further the programmes of work previously delivered by its trading subsidiary company, ArtCo Trading Ltd.

Incorporated in November 2012, Creative United has been trading since 1 May 2013, the date on which the staff and assets of ArtCo Trading Ltd were transferred from Arts Council England to Creative United.

## What we do

- We work with **public funders** and **commercial partners** to develop and deliver programmes which increase **public access** to and **engagement** with the arts and creativity
- As a Community Interest Company, we are focused on delivering a combination of strong **social** and **economic returns** across all our programmes

## Our core services

We provide a range of services designed to deliver public benefit and support the growth of the sector:

- **Building audiences for the arts**  
We devise and deliver both direct and indirect marketing campaigns designed to increase public engagement with and demand for the wide range of arts opportunities and experiences offered by the cultural and creative enterprises, organisations and individual artists that we support.
- **Market insights**  
By marketing direct to consumer, we are able to capture valuable data on consumer attitudes and patterns of behaviour with regard to arts engagement, building an important evidence base for the societal impact of regular engagement in cultural and creative activity.

- **Supporting the sector**

We provide creative businesses and cultural organisations with access to a range of commercial tools, finance options, business skills and marketing channels designed to drive up sales revenues and allow them to maximise their commercial potential.

### **Our programmes**

Our current service offer comprises three core programmes of work: [Own Art](#) and [Take it away](#), our consumer credit schemes, and [Creative Industry Finance](#), a business support and access to finance programme targeted at micro, small and medium scale creative industry enterprises.



Interest free loans for the purchase of contemporary art and craft. This programme aims to:

- broaden and deepen the public's understanding and appreciation of **high quality visual arts**
- encourage **increased sales** of original work by living artists
- make buying art more affordable for everyone, and particularly for those on **lower incomes**
- support the development of the UK's **visual arts infrastructure**, including digital innovation, to make the arts accessible to the widest possible audience

[www.ownart.org.uk](http://www.ownart.org.uk)



Interest free loans for the purchase of musical instruments. This programme aims to:

- increase access to owning **musical instruments** for children and young people, with a specific focus on people with incomes below the national average
- encourage **participation** in music making across a wide cross section of society
- support a network of specialist musical instrument **retailers** across the country that provide a range of **support services** to customers including information and access to tuition and **opportunities** for developing musicians

[www.takeitaway.org.uk](http://www.takeitaway.org.uk)



Creative Industry Finance is a programme designed to assist creative and cultural enterprises in securing the finance and investment they need to successfully develop and grow into sustainable businesses. The aims of this programme are to:

- provide **access to finance** for wide range of enterprises operating within the cultural/creative industries, enabling business growth and supporting talent development
- improve the **business skills** and **commercial experience** of small and medium enterprises
- improve the **financial profile** and **lending history** of creative businesses to enable them to attract further investment
- provide an **evidence base** for the **demand and effectiveness of loan finance** as an alternative to grant funding for commercially viable cultural and creative industry enterprises
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**[www.creativeindustryfinance.org.uk](http://www.creativeindustryfinance.org.uk)**

In addition to the above, we are actively engaged in the development of new and innovative products and services that will allow us to increase our social impact and deliver our mission, including the planned launch of a new arts focused employee benefits programme in autumn 2015.

**For further information please contact:**

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