

Creative Agents: Service Specification

For further information about the Creative Agent role and a suggested process for developing Creative Agent skills please see the report entitled “The Art of Looking Sideways” the role of the Creative Agent in supporting school improvement (Noel Dunne and Alison Haynes Nov 2007). This report is from research conducted by CP Black Country for the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) and former CP National Office.

For further information or advice please contact:

Clare Laidler – National Schools Programme Co-ordinator (Creative Agents)

tel: 0191 2292723 email: clare.laidler@cceengland.org

Sharon Taylor – National Schools Programme Manager (Creative Agents)

tel: 0191 2292717 email: Sharon.taylor@cceengland.org

Background to the role

Creative Agents provide a key service which enhances the Creative Partnerships programme to achieve its aims.

The service delivered by Creative Agents acknowledges the unique and complex nature of partnership working. As independent practitioners, Creative Agents are uniquely placed to develop sustained, supported relationships to ensure effectiveness and reach.

Creative Agents need to be creative thinkers and ideas generators, able to successfully negotiate partnerships between schools, the wider creative and cultural sector and beyond through their proven understanding and sensitivity to the needs of these different sectors. Creative agents draw on their practical experience of 'creativity', and can act as a catalyst able to respond to a schools specific dynamic, rather than applying a pre-determined process. Whether from arts, culture, education, science, or other sectors, their key skills will be their ability to challenge and support new practice in the field of creative learning.

Creative Agents support schools and creative practitioners through acting as a critical friend: this can mean asking challenging questions within a supportive context. They support schools and creative practitioners to work with young people as equal partners.

There are four key phases that a Creative Agent supports a school through on a Creative Partnerships process. Although presented sequentially, they can often happen simultaneously:

- **Diagnostic:** Analysing where a school is at and how a Creative Partnerships process might be most effectively introduced and owned by a school. For Creative Partnerships to be most effective, it has to be done with and not to a school.
- **Planning and Brokering:** Establishing a focus question, enquiry framework and action plan, with appropriate creative practitioners, to deliver a creative learning programme of work.
- **Change Management:** Supporting the school and creative practitioners to introduce and implement changes, planned and incidental, that emerges through a Creative Partnerships programme.
- **Evaluation and Sustainability:** Ensuring that all relevant stakeholders are involved in reflecting on the learning that has emerged from the Creative Partnerships process.

Title of Service Provider: Creative Agent

Status: Independent Contractor

Contracting body: Area Delivery Organisation or School of Creativity

Principal Service Aims:

The principal function of the Creative Agent is to act as the ambassador for creative learning with schools and creative partners. They need to model CCE and the Creative Partnerships programme's values of questioning, connecting, imagining and reflecting as they develop and broker creative learning projects between schools and creative partners.

The role of the Creative Agent is to support the development of creative learning in schools through:

- Articulating and sharing the vision of creative learning between all the partners;
- Developing an enquiry based approach to the Creative Partnerships programme;
- Brokering and supporting the partnerships between schools and creative practitioners to enable creative learning projects to take place.

Service Delivery Objectives – key areas:

Developing and managing effective relationships with schools

- To work in partnership with a school leadership team to identify a clear focussed area of work that has relevance and importance to the school
- To explore creative, realistic and tailor made approaches to developing that area of work to produce an enquiry framework, unique and specific to that school and linked to the school development plan
- To develop programmes in ways that maximise the active participation of a broad range of partners in a truly inclusive manner and supports schools to develop ownership of and responsibility for the programme
- To bring their own creative expertise and networks to the development of the Creative Partnerships' schools programmes

Planning and Brokering

- To work with schools and area delivery organisations to contribute to the recruitment of creative practitioners.
- To broker partnerships with creative practitioners who can work with the school to turn this enquiry framework into an action plan for a creative learning programme of work
- To work with young people, teachers and school staff, and where appropriate, parents and the wider community, to develop an inspirational long-term programme of activities in partnership with creative practitioners which reflects the aims and objectives of all partners
- To link the school with other ideas, approaches, experiences and organisations that may support this work

Programme Management

- To monitor and manage time effectively, to produce accurate timely records as required to evidence that the service is being delivered
- To apply CCE's values and policies of best practice; ensuring adequate provision is made for monitoring and evaluation and quality assurance

To ensure that project proposals and programmes of work are:

- founded on clear understandings of roles and responsibilities and partnership between all partners
- financially viable and sustainable
- effective in gathering evidence and evaluation that is built in to all creative project work

Evaluation and Sustainability

- To support the school to identify and embed the learning that has emerged into their planning in order to sustain the development of creative learning across relevant aspects of the school
- To ensure the project is kept focused on the key question and supporting the school in evaluation and reflection
- To share learning with all of the ADO Creative Partnerships team so that it can inform future projects and approaches

Collaboration

- To collaborate with other Creative Agents and staff within the Creative Partnerships programme, providing regular updates and attending regular planning, monitoring and evaluation meetings
- To liaise effectively between the Creative Partnerships team within the area delivery organisation and the school
- To raise the profile of Creative Partnerships and act as an ambassador for creative learning, representing the Creative Partnerships programme and CCE at events in school and outside to share experiences and advocate for the work
- To attend and participate in induction and professional learning sessions
- To contribute to the development of a professional working and learning environment within the organisation feeding into the continual development and improvement of the Creative Partnerships programme, locally, regionally and nationally
- To contribute to the understanding of diversity and its implications for the creativity and creative learning and to ensure that this understanding informs all activities within the Creative Partnerships programme
- To ensure adherence to policies and procedures with particular reference to Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety

Additional

Child Protection

- The offer of a contract to deliver Creative Agent services will be conditional on the contractor undergoing an enhanced disclosure check required for working with children and vulnerable people through the Criminal Records Bureau and understand and adhere to the area delivery organisation's safeguarding and child protection and health and safety policies.

Competencies required:

In order to be offered a contract to deliver Creative Agent services, individuals will need to demonstrate that they can meet the following key competencies (knowledge, skills, experience, qualifications etc)

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of creativity, the creative process and creative learning Knowledge and understanding of collaboration and effective partnership working Understanding of schools' organisational structures and the challenges facing schools Understanding of, and commitment to, the vision, values and objectives of CCE and the Creative Partnerships programme Understands the importance of advocating for the wider use of creative learning methodologies with key partners of influence Understanding of reflective practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of current education context and initiatives impacting on the creative learning agenda and the Creative Partnerships programme Understanding of curriculum and school needs Understanding of pupils as co-participants in learning and child-centred learning
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of establishing confident and productive relationships with a range of stakeholders Demonstrates a varied interest in cultural practice and networks proactively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of building long-term, sustainable relationships with individuals and organisations
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level of creative expertise The ability to seek out collaboration and engage dynamically in partnerships with a 	

	<p>range of partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project planning, including strong budget management skills, attention to detail and ability to work to deadlines• Ability to express ideas and theories about creativity using accessible language• Ability to devise with colleagues, a broad range of needs-based programmes of activity that are aligned with the individual or group learning needs or broader development issues in the school• High level of personal organisation and excellent time management• Excellent facilitation and negotiation skills and understanding of contracts and partnerships• Ability to work with children and young people as equal partners in an exploratory process	
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