Great Minds Don't Think Alike

Artists as innovators in business, government, and society

Upstart Co-Lab

Launched in 2016, Upstart Co-Lab has a mission to create opportunities for artist innovators to deliver social impact at scale. One way Upstart seeks to fulfill this mission is by shining a spotlight on Artist Innovators. Upstart Co-Lab is a fiscally-sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.

Emergence Creative

Emergence is a global creative agency specifically dedicated to social impact. Based in New York City, Emergence works with nonprofits, corporations, startups, governments, and multilateral institutions that serve the common good around the world. By crystallizing complex arguments into compelling and perspective shaping narratives, Emergence develops and executes creative solutions that drive awareness, engage audiences, create targeted demand, and change overall behavior.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Upstart Co-Lab and Emergence Creative are partnering on a campaign to highlight the massive potential of artists as innovators. The target audience for this campaign is decision-makers in business, government, and the social sector seeking to unlock greater effectiveness and innovation.

We coined the term Artist Innovator to describe artists who work outside the studio, the theater, and the concert hall and bring their distinctive talents and skills into business, government, and the social sector. Artist Innovators are starting social purpose businesses, developing new software, initiating unique public-private partnerships, and anchoring real estate developments in creativity and culture. Not every artist is—or wants to be—an Artist Innovator. But creative people gravitate towards solving problems, and increasingly those problems stretch beyond the arts.

Over the past decade, leaders across diverse fields have signaled that creativity—original ideas that are effective and useful—is the single most important factor for success. In parallel, there has been growing recognition that cognitive diversity—differences in perception, judgment, and thinking style—is essential to maximizing the efficiency and problem-solving capacity of teams.

We identified the traits and tools of artists that Artist Innovators can bring to teams, partnerships, and investors. Artists bring an Openness to their work which is developed through Immersion in what they are doing. They doggedly pursue Originality, but they are comfortable using Serendipity to find their way there. While discipline yields Productivity, artists have a range of techniques that enable the Development of the work. Mastery is achieved through persistence and focus, with an Evolution that distills an idea down to its simplest form.

These distinctive ways of thinking and working enable artists to solve problems in unexpected ways. We will not fully realize the potential benefits of creativity and cognitive diversity until leaders in business, government, and the social sector systematically and deliberately seek out the "Olympic athletes" of creativity: Artist Innovators.

The following report summarizes the research from Phase 1 of the Artist Innovator campaign. In Phase 2, we will develop a multichannel communications campaign to gain mainstream support for this concept and an interactive toolkit to facilitate adoption of these principles. In Phase 3, the campaign and toolkit will be implemented and disseminated broadly.

WHAT IS A CAMPAIGN?

A campaign is a powerful instrument of persuasion. When thoughtfully and intentionally designed, a campaign successfully delivers highly strategic communications messages in memorable and compelling ways to specific target audiences, ultimately changing beliefs and behaviors. While commonly associated with the sale of consumer products, campaigns are increasingly being used in the social sector to generate awareness of important problems, drive donations to nonprofits, catalyze global conversations on issues of social and cultural significance, and highlight new and important solutions or initiatives.

Whether it's the "Ice Bucket Challenge," a social media campaign which raised $115 million for ALS research; "Giving Tuesday," a campaign to promote charitable donations that has raised tens of millions of dollars for nonprofits; "Dumb Ways to Die," a viral YouTube campaign about train safety in Melbourne that has been viewed more than 140 million times and has resulted in a 21% decrease in railway accidents; or the recent global sensation "Fearless Girl" Campaign from State Street intended to pressure corporations to add more women to their boards, there is no doubt that a well orchestrated campaign can shape narratives and conversations in ways that technical documents, long-form opinion pieces, and statements of principle cannot.

For campaigns to be effective, they must be designed with the target audience in mind. A rigorous and detailed analysis of the cultural context, appropriate media channels, and forces that shape the habits and behaviors of the intended audience is the essential foundation of a successful campaign. To ensure the ideas of a campaign result in action, structures and toolkits are built to accompany the messaging—in this case, tools to assist business, government, and social sector leaders; tech entrepreneurs; leaders in science and medicine; and investors to integrate artists into their projects and organizations.

Upstart Co-Lab and Emergence Creative will develop a campaign to introduce the Artist Innovator to the world through paid and earned media. This campaign will require strategic clarity, powerful creative ideas and execution, and broad dissemination through key channels to reach the right audiences at the right time in the right way. We envision a campaign that spans from peer-to peer engagement, business cases, and programmatic work to PR, social media, print ads, video content, and out-of-home ads. With a singular idea driving the campaign, we can own the conversation and establish the Artist Innovator as the resonant trend of the next twenty years.

INTRODUCTION

> *"Both artists and entrepreneurs function as our society's scouts, forerunners who are sensitive to changing conditions, on the lookout for broader perspectives and new opportunities, who report back to the rest of us about the emerging landscape ahead. Uniting artistic and entrepreneurial visions unlocks a powerful potential for responding to community needs in unexpected, creative ways."* [1] **Yo-Yo Ma, Cellist**

Today's artists are revitalizing our communities. They are leading efforts on immigration, criminal justice reform, the environment, and healthy food. Artists are starting social purpose companies. They are working in technology, science, and medicine. But artists often go unrecognized as innovators. Responding to this gap, Upstart Co-Lab was founded with the mission to create more opportunities for Artist Innovators to deliver social impact at scale.

To increase mainstream recognition of the potential artists have as innovators in business, government, and the social sector, Upstart Co-Lab, in partnership with Emergence Creative, has undertaken a campaign. We seek to shift perceptions among influencers about the role artists can play on teams, in partnerships, and for investors seeking high potential companies and products. Ultimately, we hope to elevate the status of the Artist Innovator as an essential figure in the successful efforts of the future.

This report begins with a review of some important contributions Artist Innovators have made throughout history, followed by an assessment of two parallel trends that have disrupted business, government, and the social sector in recent decades: creativity and cognitive diversity. We believe these are core drivers of innovation and effectiveness. Next, we provide a framework for understanding the unique traits and tools artists bring to everything they do. Finally, we examine the perceptions held by leaders in business, government, and the social sector that must be overcome, and outline the next phases of this initiative.

1. Silkroad Project. "Business and the Arts: A New Model for the 21st Century." Accessed June 13, 2017.
http://www.silkroadproject.org/studies/cultural-entrepreneurship

THE ARTIST INNOVATOR CAMPAIGN: PHASE ONE

Upstart Co-Lab, in partnership with Emergence Creative, is in the process of developing a communications campaign and toolkit to transform the way leaders in business, government, and the social sector think about creativity and cognitive diversity when hiring staff, forming partnerships, and investing in new ideas. The goal of this initiative is to open up more opportunities for Artist Innovators to ideate and innovate so that organizations of all types can benefit from the unique problem-solving and opportunity-generating ability artists offer.

This report summarizes research findings from the first phase of the project. Over the next year, Upstart and Emergence will continue to work with partners to inform the execution of a multichannel marketing campaign and toolkit to disseminate this idea and drive change.

In Phase 1 of this project, we conducted research focused on the following sources:

- Individual interviews with prominent figures and influencers from the business, technology, government, academia, and social sectors, as well as artists
- Working session and discussion at the 2017 Kennedy Center Arts Summit with an online follow-up questionnaire
- Literature review of overall workforce trends, demographic reports on artists, previous surveys of business leaders, and case studies

EXAMPLES OF ARTIST INNOVATORS

Artists have used their imagination and foresight to anticipate and catalyze dramatic shifts in human endeavor over centuries.

Painter and sculptor Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) sketched diagrams of helicopters, tanks, and parachutes hundreds of years before such technology became a reality.

Science fiction writer Jules Verne (1828-1905) not only predicted the moon landing a century before it happened, but closely approximated the weight and cost of the spaceship, the site of the launch and the ship's return to earth, and the feeling of weightlessness the astronauts experienced. Verne also anticipated videoconferencing, skywriting, submarines, and live newscasts. With no formal background in technology, Verne relied on imagination and intuition to pioneer these vivid concepts in his fiction.

Though mostly remembered for his work with the peanut, George Washington Carver (c. 1860s-1943) initially studied art and piano at Simpson College in Iowa. It was only after his art teacher recognized his talent for drawing plants that he was encouraged to pursue botany and agriculture more seriously.

Heddy Lamarr (1914-2000) achieved fame as a film actress before developing a patent for "spread-spectrum radio" during World War II. This technology sought to make torpedoes more effective by preventing radio signals from being jammed. Not only was this breakthrough adopted by the US military many years later, but it also served as an important precursor to subsequent inventions like WiFi and Bluetooth.

Edi Rama (born 1964; Albanian Prime Minister 2013-present), a painter-turned politician, faced long-standing corruption and immense budgetary problems as mayor of Tirana from 2000 to 2011. By repainting the city's grim, Soviet-era buildings in vivid colors and designs, he transformed public sentiment and cultivated civic pride with tangible benefits.

> *"It had a chain effect I didn't imagine. Once the buildings were coloured, people started to get rid of the heavy fences of their shops. In the painted roads, we had 100% tax collection from the people, while tax collection was normally 4%. People accepted to pay their share for the city, because they realised that through the colours the city exists."* [2] **Edi Rama, Prime Minister of Albania**

German artist Enno Schmidt (1958-present) has emerged as a vocal proponent of the Guaranteed Basic Income,* a concept gaining traction. Leveraging empathy and imagination, Schmidt argues that a basic income serves the dignity and security of the poor, while freeing people from the demands of traditional work and opening up opportunities for entrepreneurialism.

Steve Jobs (1955-2011) spoke often about how studying calligraphy taught him the importance of design, a hallmark of Apple. He recognized from the start that personal technology products benefit from being human-centered and beautiful. Jobs was early in the list of artist-founders of transformative companies including AirBnB, Crowdrise, Kickstarter, and Etsy. These businesses point the way forward for all types of organizations to leverage the abilities of artists to become more effective and innovative.

> *"If you're a Kickstarter and you have a mission to support the arts, and you really believe in it, everybody who works there is on board and excited to be there. You attract amazing people. They work harder and stay longer. It's just a different kind of feeling."* **Eric Berlow, Co-founder, Vibrant Data Inc.**

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*A basic income (sometimes referred to as basic income guarantee, Citizen's Income, unconditional basic income, or universal basic income (UBI)) is a social welfare program that grants a country's citizens a regular, unconditional sum of money.[3]

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2. Jason Farago. "Meet Edi Rama, Albania's artist prime minister." *The Guardian.* Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/nov/15/meet-edi-rama-albanias-artist-prime-minister-exhibition**

3. Annie Lowrey. "Switzerland's proposal to pay people for being alive." *The New York Times.* Accessed June 13, 2017. **http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/17/magazine/switzerlands-proposal-to-pay-people-for-being-alive.html?ref=magazine&_r=4&pagewanted=all&**

CREATIVITY

According to leading creativity researcher Mark A. Runco, the standard definition of creativity requires both originality (also described as novelty, uniqueness) and effectiveness (also described as usefulness, fit, or appropriateness). [4] An idea or product that is new does not meet the definition of creativity if it is useless. Effectiveness drives the value of creativity, whether that is financial or social value.

There is consensus among CEOs that creativity is key to the future of their business—extremely important for both leaders and staff. A recent study of 1,500 CEOs conducted by IBM determined that creativity is the single most important skill for leaders. [5] Another survey of employers, assessing workforce preparedness, found that 97% believe creativity is of increasing importance, yet 85% reported having difficulty finding qualified applicants when filling creative positions. [6]

Venture capital firms like Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers and Khosla Ventures have designers-in-residence playing an important and varied role. [7] Design is no longer regarded as simply the way a product, service, or platform looks. Rather, it has become the defining factor in how and why customers will engage with something new. Designers have the insight to guide the development of nascent ideas, and by integrating their perspective, VC firms are signaling that creativity and human-centered design are at the heart of growth and innovation.

4. Creativity Research Journal, Volume 24, 2012. Accessed June 21, 2017 **http://www.tandfonline. com/doi/abs/ 10.1080/ 10400419.2012.650092?tokenDomain= eprints&tokenAccess= d2qvAqb3TR4xiMj2dauz&forwardService= showFullText&doi=10.1080%2F10400419.2012.650092&doi= 10.1080%2F10400419.2012.650092&journalCode=hcrj20**

5. IBM Corporation. "Capitalizing on Complexity: Insights from the Global Chief Executive Officer Study." Accessed June 13, 2017. **http://www-01.ibm.com/common/ssi/cgi-bin/ssialias?htmlfid=GBE03297USEN&appname=wwwsearch**

6. The Conference Board. "Ready to Innovate: Are Educators and Executives Aligned on the Creative Readiness of the U.S. Workforce?" Accessed June 13, 2017.**http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/ReadytoInnovateFull.pdf**

7. Mark Wilson. "Why VC Firms Are Snapping Up Designers." *Fast Company.* Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://www.fastcodesign.com/3029639/innovation-by-design/why-vc-firms-are-snapping-up-designers**

> *"I remain convinced that artists and designers will be the innovators of this century, and that the problem-solving, the fearlessness and the critical thinking and making skills that I see every day are what is needed to keep our country competitive. Designers and artists create objects, devices and services that are more engaging, more efficient, more desirable and ultimately, more human."* **John Maeda, first Designer-in-Residence at Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers[8]**

Government has also demonstrated an increasing interest in creativity. At the federal level, the Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation and the Social Innovation Fund were launched in 2009 to engage and bolster the fields of social entrepreneurship and impact investing, tapping new approaches to promote social welfare.[9] The federal government has also supported social sector breakthroughs like these through regulation and, in some cases, adopted disruptive approaches like Pay for Success* within federal programs. In 2012, the Presidential Innovation Fellows program was launched to connect innovators from the private sector, nonprofits, and academia with government officials on issues ranging from open data to healthcare to foreign aid. These efforts brought diverse experiences, competencies, and perspectives to bear on difficult questions, and demonstrated a willingness to embrace creativity to find new and better solutions.[10]

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*Pay for Success (PFS) is an innovative contracting model that drives government resources toward high-performing social programs.[11]

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8. John Maeda. "Guest: Turn STEM into STEAM with arts education." *The Seattle Times*. Accessed June 13, 2017. **http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/guest-turn-stem-into-steam-with-arts-education/**

9. Obama White House Archives. The President's Social Innovation Agenda. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/administration/eop/sicp/about**

10. Obama White House Archives. Wanted: A Few Good Women and Men to Serve as Presidential Innovation Fellows. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2012/05/23/wanted-few-good-women-and-men-serve-presidential-innovation-fellows**

11. Third Sector Capital Partners. Accessed June 23, 2017. **http://www.thirdsectorcap.org/what-is-pay-for-success/**

Many cities are adding Chief Innovation Officers to explore new ways to harness technology, big data, crowdsourcing, and similar approaches.[12] "Innovation districts" in cities as diverse as Oklahoma City and Philadelphia are "...dense enclaves that merge the innovation and employment potential of research-oriented anchor institutions, high-growth firms, and tech and creative start-ups in well-designed, amenity-rich residential and commercial environments." Urban planning and government policy are cultivating creativity and innovation as a driver of economic growth and inclusion.[13] For example, Toronto's Culture Plan for the Creative City has elevated the significance of arts and creativity in improving economic growth and quality of life.[14]

In the social sector, many leading foundations have adopted prize-based and crowdsourced models to tap new problem-solvers. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's "100&Change" is an open call seeking large-scale proposals for unexpected and transformative solutions worthy of $100 million in grant support.[15] The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has funded more than $450 million in global health and development projects through their Grand Challenges program, which seeks innovators with "high risk, high reward" ideas.[16]

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12. Jessica Mulholland and Noelle Knell. "Chief Innovation Officers in State and Local Government." *Government Technology.* Accessed June 13, 2017. **http://www.govtech.com/local/Whos-Making-Innovation-Official.html**

13. Bruce Katz and Julie Wagner. The Rise of Innovation Districts: A New Geography of Innovation in America. Brookings Institute. Accessed June 13, 2017**. https://www.brookings.edu/innovation-districts/**

14. Culture Plan for the Creative City. City of Toronto. Accessed June 13, 2017. **http://www.torontoartscouncil.org/TAC/ media/tac/Reports%20and%20Resources/City%20of%20Toronto/2003_cultureplan_to.pdf**

15. 100&Change. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://www.macfound.org/programs/100change/**

16. About Grand Challenges. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://gcgh.grandchallenges.org/about**

OpenIDEO connects organizations and companies like MasterCard, United Healthcare, USAID, and others with a global community of activists, experts, and social innovators, enabling a vast network of individuals to contribute ideas to causes that inspire them.[17] The Rockefeller Foundation partnered with crowdsourcing platform InnoCentive to harness open innovation and create social impact in education, public health, and disaster relief.[18] These examples demonstrate a belief that innovators from diverse backgrounds can work with established leaders to uncover new solutions.

17. About. OpenIDEO. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://openideo.com/**

18. The Rockefeller Foundation and InnoCentive Renew Partnership Linking Non-Profit Organizations to World-Class Scientific Thinkers. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://www.innocentive.com/the-rockefeller-foundation-and-innocentive-renew-partnership-linking-non-profit-organizations-to-world-class-scientific-thinkers/**

DIVERSITY

Alongside the increasing recognition of creativity's role in business, government, and the social sector, the importance of diversity has also emerged. Once regarded as an ethical imperative to offer access to demographic groups that had been deprived of opportunities, the economic value of diversity is now being recognized. A recent report by Dalberg Global Development Advisors concluded that "Improving ethnic and gender diversity in the U.S. technology workforce represents a massive economic opportunity, one that could create $470 – $570 billion in new value for the tech industry, and could add 1.2 – 1.6% to national GDP."[19] As this example illustrates, inclusion is more than just the right thing to do–it makes sound business sense.

Yet despite this immense opportunity, as Jean Case's recent TEDx Talk points out, only 10% of venture capital funding in recent years has gone to companies with a female founder, and only 1% has gone to companies with an African American founder. This inequity in funding is not only unfair, she argues, but is actually holding America back because it ignores the potential contributions of a huge portion of American society.[20] Across sectors, leaders must begin to recognize the potential opportunity presented by building more inclusive partnerships and teams.

19. Decoding Diversity: The Financial and Economic Returns to Diversity and Tech. Intel Corporation and Dalberg Global Development Advisors. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://newsroom.intel.com/newsroom/wp-content/uploads/ sites/11/2016/07/Diversity_report_7.7.16_web-1.pdf**

20. Jean Case. "Unlocking the American Dream." TEDx Midatlantic. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGUdm1o3utE**

In exploring how and why diversity has been beneficial for organizations, a growing body of neuroscience and behavioral psychology research finds that being around a wider range of people causes us to be more diligent in making a case for a particular idea and considering alternatives. In her research review, Katherine Phillips of Columbia Business School writes that small groups composed of many different races were more effective at solving problems than groups composed entirely of one race, and they were more rigorous in their decision-making processes. In one study, for example, groups were given evidence regarding a fictional murder and tasked with solving the crime. The more diverse groups "significantly outperformed" the groups composed entirely of one race, despite having access to the same information.

Extrapolating from these findings, researchers have conducted similar studies of groups composed of different genders or political allegiances and reached the same conclusions. Phillips summarizes her findings: "When disagreement comes from a socially different person, we are prompted to work harder. Diversity jolts us into cognitive action in ways that homogeneity simply does not."[21]

A report by the consulting firm Deloitte defines "diversity of thought" or "cognitive diversity": "Each human being has a unique blend of identities, cultures, and experiences that inform how he or she thinks, interprets, negotiates, and accomplishes a task... the focus is on...acknowledging and appreciating the potential promise of each person's unique perspective and different way of thinking." [22]

21. Katherine Phillips. "How Diversity Makes Us Smarter." *Scientific American*. Accessed June 13, 2017.
https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter/

22. Anesa "Nes" Diaz-Uda, Carmen Medina, and Beth Schill. "Diversity's new frontier: Diversity of thought and the future of the workforce." Deloitte University Press. Accessed June 13, 2017.
https://dupress.deloitte.com/dup-us-en/topics/talent/diversitys-new-frontier.html

According to the report, diversity of thought is found to have three primary benefits for organizations:

1. **It helps guard against groupthink and expert overconfidence.** Diversity of thought can help organizations make better decisions and complete tasks more successfully because it triggers more careful and deeper information processing than typically occurs in homogeneous groups.

2. **It helps increase the scale of new insights.** Generating a great idea quickly often requires connecting multiple tasks and ideas together in a new way. Technological advances are enabling approaches such as crowdsourcing and gamification to bring the diversity of human thinking to bear on challenging problems.

3. **It helps organizations identify the employees who can best tackle their most pressing problems.** Advances in neuroscience mean that matching people to specific jobs based on more rigorous cognitive analysis is within reach. Organizations that can operationalize faster ideation can begin to purposely align individuals to certain teams and jobs simply because of the way they think.

These findings were supported by a recent study published in the Harvard Business Review in which teams were formed based on thinking styles and then given a series of challenges.[23] An assessment of their speed and accuracy revealed that the teams with the greatest amount of cognitive diversity performed far better than those with less diversity. Intuitively, this may not be surprising, yet we've all heard the maxim that companies "hire in their own image," or prefer candidates who reflect their own personalities and values. As research into cognitive diversity demonstrates, this approach neglects an immense source of potential innovation and value.

23. Alison Reynolds and David Lewis. "Teams Solve Problems Faster When They're More Cognitively Diverse." *Harvard Business Review*. Accessed June 13, 2017.
https://hbr.org/2017/03/teams-solve-problems-faster-when-theyre-more-cognitively-diverse

A ROLE FOR THE ARTIST INNOVATOR

As the employer survey cited above suggests, there is a disconnect between the demand for worker creativity and the perceived availability of workers who bring that creativity. This may be because other factors are diminishing the workforce's overall creative capacity. Leading creativity researcher Mark A. Runco suggests the rise of social media inherently discourages novel, outside-the-box thinking by focusing on algorithms to determine what is "trending" or "liked" among the largest number of people, reinforcing popular consensus about what kinds of "content" should be consumed—and created.[24]

These parallel developments in creativity and cognitive diversity point to an immense and untapped source of potential value for organizations in business, government, and the social sector: Artist Innovators. In an increasingly homogenous environment, it takes someone with a unique perspective and mindset to pursue truly original ideas.

While professionals in all fields can be creative, artists possess a specific set of traits and tools that enable them to offer a human-centered perspective on a wide array of challenges. The artist's perspective harnesses a deep engagement with human emotion and experience, and is anchored in cultural and historical context. We believe that **integrating Artist Innovators into organizations in business, government, and the social sector can unlock greater effectiveness and innovation.**

An in-depth discussion of artists' traits and tools, as well as how they can benefit organizations, follows.

24. Mark Runco. "The Real Creativity Crisis." *Creativity and Human Development International*. Accessed June 13, 2017. **http://creativityjournal.net/contents/articles/item/286-the-real-creativity-crisis**

ARTIST TRAITS AND TOOLS

No one would dispute the difference between an avid jogger and an Olympic marathoner. They both run. But their results are notably different. The same distinction exists between leaders and workers in business, government, and the social sector who are encouraged to be their most creative, and artists.

We will not fully realize the potential benefits of creativity and cognitive diversity until organizations systematically and deliberately seek out the "Olympic athletes" of creativity: the Artist Innovators. This requires a fundamental shift in the way we view artists and a greater appreciation of how they think and what they can contribute.

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Upstart Co-Lab and Emergence Creative used insights from our research to develop the framework below, describing the specific traits and tools artists use in their work. With these traits and tools, Artist Innovators bring a unique, human-centered perspective to help all types of organizations be more effective and innovative. Artist Innovators can contribute to an initiative as it moves through all phases of development, from conception to scale.

TRAITS & TOOLS		DESCRIPTION	PERSPECTIVES
Openness	**Immersion**	Artists train themselves to see, not just look; to hear, not just listen. Artists seek the truth. They are endlessly learning. Nothing is off limits. Anchored in tradition, they are free to innovate.	*"We really need the openness, creativity, empathy, collaboration, and flexibility [of artists]. If we display all those skills, if we stretch all those skills, we'll come up with something great and new."* **Jonathan Bays, Executive Director, Sound Postings LLC**
empathetic	apprenticeship		
curious	observation		
exploratory	embedding		
engaged	dreaming		
Originality	**Serendipity**	Artists navigate by instinct. They turn mistakes into breakthroughs. A long, empty day is glorious. They possess a wary optimism that they will find their way. But they don't talk about their work until it's done, in case the idea disappears.	*"Artists possess a broad toolkit of methodologies and practices that can help potential collaborators in every sector approach problems in new ways, engage audiences and customers more deeply, and find connections and adjacencies between seemingly unrelated ideas… Artists are imagination partners. Always ready to pose the "what if" questions that blow up our old thinking and lead to radically new ideas"* **Steven J. Tepper, Dean, Arizona State University Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts**
imaginative	use of found objects/chance		
ability to see connections	improvisation		
generative	unencumbered time		
risk-taking	trust		
Productivity	**Development**	Artists are focused and tireless. They experiment, and refine. They pivot and plunge ahead. The white hot of working well is their ultimate joy.	*"Perhaps the broader business community doesn't really see art as a process, they don't see it as a discipline. They see it as a chaotic, purely creative flash of inspiration. I think that is part of the challenge."* **Barbara Dyer, MIT Sloan School of Management**
critical-minded	sketching		
disciplined	workshopping		
autonomous	revision		
brave	bias to action		
Mastery	**Evolution**	As artists evolve and grow in their work, they do more with less. They focus, cutting out the extraneous. Artists return to ideas until they have finished with them. Knowing it's hard, they cheer other artists on.	*"I think of myself in a couple different ways. One is that I'm my own lab. I experiment using myself… I put myself in situations and see how I react, test it out… The next part is that there's a reporting element of experience… 'I was a witness to something, I need to tell people about this.' So first I have to ask, 'Did I design the experiment well?' … And then, 'How accurate was the reporting? Did people get the message?'"* **Yo-Yo Ma, Cellist**
focused	repetition		
persistent	distillation		
simple	continuity		
generous	hope		

PERCEPTIONS

Despite diverse examples of Artist Innovators, perceptions persist among leaders and influencers in business, government, and the social sector that inhibit greater engagement of these creative thinkers.

In the next phase of this project, Upstart Co-Lab and Emergence Creative will develop a creative campaign that can help persuade decision-makers of the benefits of engaging, partnering with, and investing in artists. We know this campaign must address several specific issues:

ART

A 2015 study by Arts Midwest exploring the perceptions Americans have about the arts concluded that the concept of "creative expression" resonates with people more than "arts and culture." Probing this finding further, they determined that "creative expression" encompasses a wider range of activities that both artists and non-artists participate in and appreciate. In fact, respondents repeatedly described "creative expression" as central to their identity, reflecting the recent emphasis on and interest in creativity in the workforce. By contrast, "arts and culture" was perceived more narrowly and was therefore seen as less integral to daily life (a "nicety" rather than something essential).[25]

These insights suggest that we must bridge the gap between the perceived meaning of "creativity" and artists themselves. While employers are seeking out more creative workers, they may be overlooking the more than 2 million working artists and 60,000 annual graduates of art schools in America today.[26] This large, skilled, and highly trained workforce represents a much needed, yet overlooked segment that can provide value to business, government, and the social sector.

25. Creating Connection: Research Findings and Proposed Message Framework to Build Public Will for Arts and Culture. Arts Midwest and Metropolitan Group. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://www.artsmidwest.org/sites/default/files/ArtsMidwest_BPWReport.pdf**

26. Creativity Connects: Trends and Conditions Affecting US Artists. Center for Cultural Innovation for the National Endowment for the Arts. Accessed June 13, 2017. **https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Creativity-Connects-Final-Report.pdf**

"I think there are stereotypically many business leaders would think of the arts as a completely different realm, that arts and entertainment go in the same phrase, as opposed to arts and business go in the same phrase. They see art and entertainment as something people do when they're trying to unwind, and it's not relevant for their business." **Lenny Mendonca, Managing Director Emeritus, McKinsey & Company**

ARTISTS

Many industries and organizations have historically sought out artists for narrowly-defined, clearly "artistic" roles. Art directors have been a staple of the advertising industry since its inception and, more recently, businesses, government agencies, science labs, and think tanks have experimented with "artists in residence." But fully benefiting from the unique human-centered perspective artists can bring means incorporating artists into more diverse functions across fields. This requires a comprehensive appreciation of what traits and tools artists can bring in order to expand the opportunities available to artists and organizations alike.

While organizations can benefit from the "outsider" perspective only an Artist Innovator can bring, we don't want to suggest that every artist will be capable of handling every position. In arguing for greater inclusion of Artist Innovators, we recognize that a baseline level of competency related to the partner organization will be essential. A data artist with coding experience could fit in a technology company and an artist who addresses immigration in their creative practice could contribute to a government agency or nonprofit focused on immigration issues. But swapping those two artists and organizations would not likely yield a successful result.

"There is this idea that you're ostracized for a lot of your life if you're in the arts. You've taken the road less traveled…[so] you do need to educate the artist on how to fine tune or frame their message in a way that doesn't just seem ethereal or abstract. When done properly… you get this mutual respect." **Andy Walshe, Director of High Performance, Red Bull**

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

When considering shifting organizational practices, the question inevitably turns to whether the change will pay off. In business, shareholders and boards of directors are watching quarterly results and want to know not just if but when an investment will show results. In government, change happens slowly and it takes real effort to do things differently. In the social sector, resources to experiment are limited, putting pressure on any new initiative.

Mainstreaming the engagement of artists across business, government, and the social sector will require the participation of some early and influential pioneers who can serve as ambassadors to their peers. It's important that the right artists are welcomed into the right roles at the right organizations to demonstrate early success and give these ambassadors something to crow about.

IMPLEMENTATION

Even among leaders who accept the basic premise that artists can add value to their organizations, there may be concerns about actually rolling out a new approach. Institutional change is always challenging.

The toolkit that will be developed as part of Phase 2 will be designed to assist organizations with recruiting, selecting, onboarding, and integrating artists into new roles. By collaborating with leaders in business, government, and the social sector to build a toolkit, we hope to ensure their needs are addressed. In parallel, we will develop a toolkit for the Artist Innovators to help them assess if the opportunity is right for them, to ensure they are prepared to join a new organizational culture, and have clarity on their role.

CONCLUSION

Across business, government, and the social sector, leaders recognize the value of creativity and cognitive diversity. But organizations must become more active in hiring, partnering with, and investing in the most creative among us: Artist Innovators. The unique set of traits and tools artists cultivate through rigorous training and years of application enables them to view problems differently. Artist Innovators can bring a human-centered perspective to increasing effectiveness and innovating new solutions that work.

The challenge now is to create a campaign that will overcome misperceptions and enable widespread adoption of a new model of innovation, with Artist Innovators as central players.

By crystallizing the research and insights collected in Phase 1 of this initiative and disseminating it through a range of media channels, Upstart Co-Lab and Emergence Creative can challenge business, government, and social sector leaders to think differently about the potential for Artist Innovators within their organizations. A toolkit will provide the blueprint for transforming this change of mindset into tangible action at the organizational level.

This report summarizes the findings from the Artist Innovator Campaign Phase 1 research. Phase 2 of this project will be the development of a public-facing communications campaign and toolkit, to be disseminated in Phase 3.

Artist Innovators can unlock greater effectiveness, innovation, and value across all fields of endeavor. Let's ask for their help.

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