

Building the Creative Economy in Africa



# What is a Creative Economy and Why Does It Matter?



## Learning Unit 1

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# Learning Unit 1: What Is a Creative Economy and Why Does It Matter?

## 1. Introduction

Welcome to the first unit of this course.

This course is designed for artists who want to establish their own creative businesses. People engage in countless creative pursuits such as music, dance, photography, and art. When these creative works are successfully sold, they form the foundation of a creative business. Together, these businesses contribute to what is known as the Creative Economy.

## 2. Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the Creative Economy
- Recognise the benefits of the Creative Economy for your country and communities
- Understand why people want to take part in the Creative Economy
- Identify the different choices you have when planning a creative business

Look out for **short activities** to complete throughout the unit. They will help you achieve the learning objectives mentioned above.

## 3. Before You Start...

Think about the following three statements and rate them between 1 and 5. With 1 being that you feel that you know or understand very little, and 5 that you have extensive knowledge and expertise in the area:

- I understand what the Creative Economy is
- I know how to generate an income from a niche market
- I know how to use my African culture and heritage within a creative business



Use the **course evaluation form** provided. There you will find these statements and a scale to mark your responses.

## 4. What is the Creative Economy?

Creativity means thinking differently, coming up with new ideas, and finding fresh ways to solve problems using your imagination. It can take many forms, like art, writing, design, or problem-solving, and is a valuable skill in the Creative Economy.

- Creativity is not just something you are born with—you can develop it through practice and trying new experiences.
- Working with others and using techniques like brainstorming and mind mapping can help improve your creative thinking.

When you run a business using your creativity, you are part of the Creative Economy.

There are many definitions of the Creative Economy. All of them talk about the creative skills that people have and how they can make money from them. This kind of creative work is part of the Creative Economy. Let's look at the following case study as an example.



### Case Study: Lira, South African Afro-Soul Vocalist



Image: Lira, world-renowned South African singer-songwriter  
*Image credit: Lira*

Lira, born Lerato Moipone Molapo on March 14, 1979, in Johannesburg, is a celebrated South African Afro-soul singer. Her music blends soul, jazz, and African rhythms, earning her multiple platinum-selling records and 11 South African Music Awards (SAMAs). Lira's career began in 2000. She gained international recognition with her album "Feel Good," which became the most-played local song on South African radio and achieved triple-platinum status.

Beyond music, Lira has been a coach on "The Voice South Africa" and is known for her philanthropic work.

Lira is an artist, but she has not achieved success on her own. Many people have helped her turn her music into her business. Can you think of what roles they might have played?

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Here are a few we came up with:

- People who play the musical instruments in her songs i.e. her musicians, band
- Recording studios
- Sound producers, editors and engineers
- Music management, lawyers, agents, promoters, marketing team
- Concert venues, security, cleaners, food vendors
- Merchandise providers

- Tour managers, drivers, riggers
- Fashion designers, hair and make-up artists
- Photographers and video-makers who take her photos and sell them to magazines
- Radio stations and TV channels where her music is played
- Streaming organisations like Spotify which play her music
- Clubs where her music is played
- Fans

All the people involved in these activities will make money and earn a living from her music, so they are all part of the Creative Economy. People not only make money from being creative, but they can also find it very meaningful and have fun doing it.

Now that you've learned about the diverse roles in the Creative Economy, let's meet two other successful African artists: Dr. 'H' Patten, a visual and performance artist, and Volley Nchabaleng, a composer and percussionist.

As you go through this course, 'H' and Volley will share valuable tips on the key skills and qualities needed for success in the Creative Economy. Their insights will help you grow and thrive in this fast-changing industry. The following activity will introduce you to their work.



## Activity 1: Artist's Perspectives on the Creative Economy

Watch the following two short videos. Click on the link to play.

[Meet Dr 'H' Patten](#)

[Meet Volley Nchabaleng](#)

Listen as they talk about their journey to becoming artists, how they make a living and their thoughts on the Creative Economy, and then answer the following questions in your exercise book:

- What struck you most about each artist's stories?
- Do you relate to either of the artists? How?
- What similarities do you notice between the two artists?
- How do their stories connect to broader themes in the Creative Economy?

***\* You can find the video transcripts at the end of the Unit.***

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### Our Reveal:

- What stood out to us from their stories was that 'H' is very happy he has such diverse interests and abilities in different art forms.

He brings all these into his creative business. 'H' is world renowned for African dance, but he markets many other aspects of his art too. Volley talks about his passion for music and desire to become a professional musician. Despite his difficult situation he found a way to craft his education and skills in African music.

- Where they are similar is that neither set out on a path to become professional artists but had other ideas and professions in mind, such as a doctor or a journalist. Both clearly fell in love with the arts, which eventually led them into the Creative Economy.
- They differ in the education route through which they became artists. 'H' had formal arts education in a university while Volley went to a community college.
- Their stories connect to the broader theme of the Creative Economy in that both feel that creativity is not a naturally given talent but is a skill you develop and improve through education and practice.

*How did your answers compare with those given above? Did you come up with other points that we had not spotted?*

Now that you have heard from 'H' and Volley, we will move on to helping you explore your own artistic identity.



## **Activity 2: Talking About Your Artistic Identity**

Prepare a short note to yourself answering the following questions. You can do this individually, in pairs or groups.

- What type of art do you create or are inspired to create?
- How does your art draw on your cultural heritage?
- Why do you want to pursue creative work as a business?
- How will you (or do you) earn a living from it?

There are no right or wrong answers to this. Our aim is to help you start to think about what will be at the core of your business.

Try to be as creative as possible here. You could talk or create a short video or an artistic representation – draw, paint or deliver it in poetry or song.

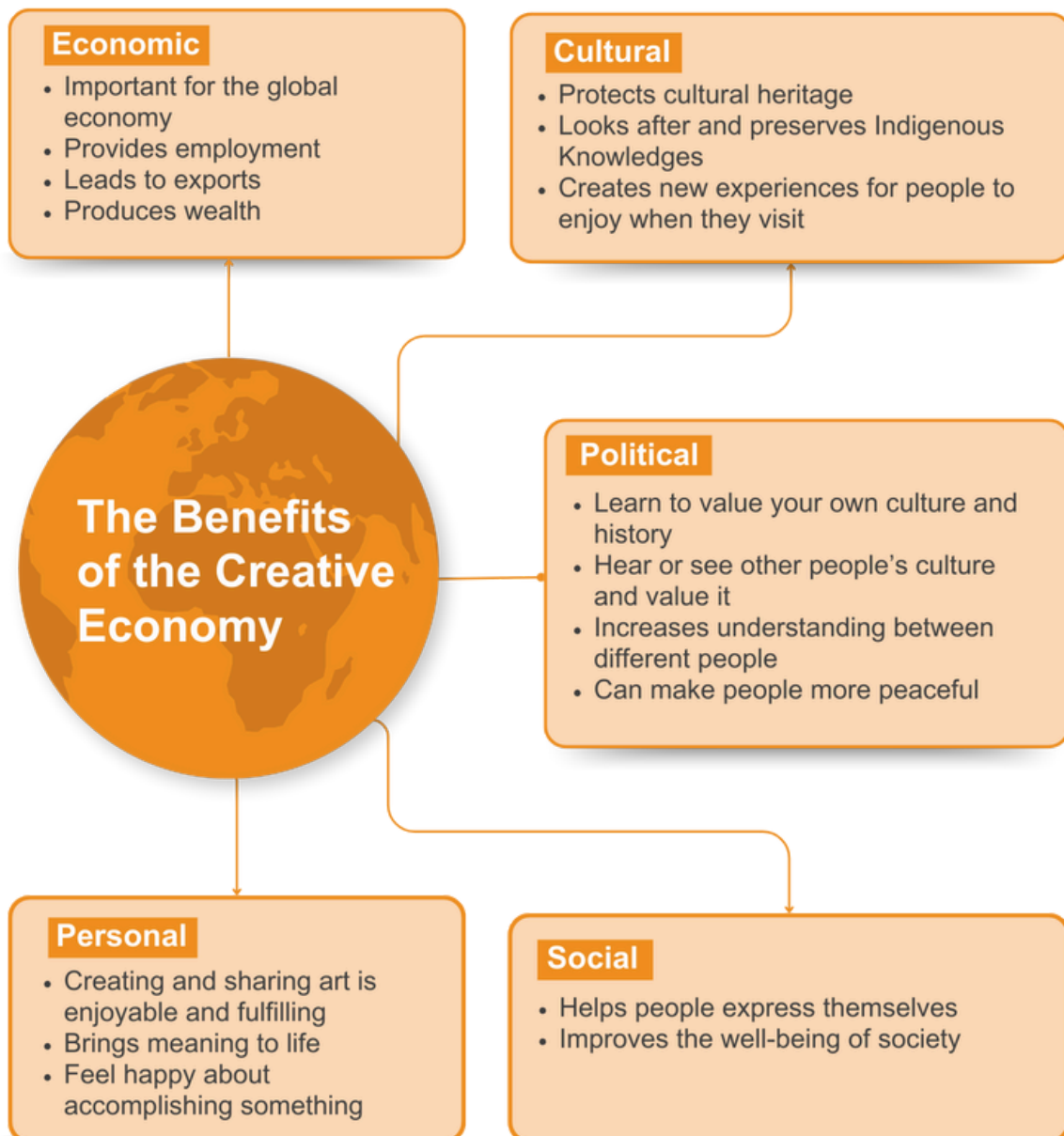
If you are in a group, you may want to present this to others in the group. They can provide feedback that will help you to fine-tune your ideas.

In this section, you have been introduced to the Creative Economy from a personal perspective. In the next section, you will look at it from a national and community perspective.



## 5. What are the Benefits of the Creative Economy?

The Creative Economy is growing rapidly globally. It has got a lot of attention from policy makers and governments. There are many reasons why it is important. Study the following infographic to learn more about the benefits of the Creative Economy.



### Pop Quiz

Can you guess **how many people** the Creative Economy employs worldwide?

- 5 million
- 50 million
- 500 million



The answer is **50 million**.

It employs more young people (15–29-year-olds) than any other sector. This is exceptionally important in Africa, as 60% of Africa's population in 2022 was below the age of 21.

### **What does this mean for anyone interested in contributing to the Creative Economy?**

The Creative Economy offers many opportunities, and you don't need to be a star to make a difference. Lots of jobs help keep this industry going, like sound engineers, box office staff, graphic designers, and marketing experts. For example, take Lira, a well-known South African singer. While she is famous, her success depends on many people working behind the scenes - like producers, sound engineers, and event planners - who make sure her music reaches fans. Even truck drivers delivering sound equipment for concerts are just as important. They are part of the team that makes live events happen.

You don't have to be on stage or in the spotlight to be a key part of the Creative Economy- every job counts.



### **Did you know?**

In Southern Africa, the **creative sector is thriving**. Cities are promoting themselves as places where creative people can **connect** and **grow their businesses**. The creative sector also benefits rural areas. For example, in **South Africa's Sarah Bartmann District in the Eastern Cape**, creative industries have created jobs as work in agriculture and mining has decreased.



*Image: A group of seamstresses from the Masincedane Project in the Sarah Baartman Municipality of the Eastern Cape have received a much-needed boost from the local government in the form of an industrial sewing and overlocking machine to help expand their textile production businesses. Image credit: Vukuzenzele*

As you can see there are many benefits to having a creative business. But before we go further let's look at the different types of creative businesses that you can run.

## 6. What are the Different Types of Creative Businesses?

There are many different types of creative businesses that people can take part in based on

- What people make or the **kind of skill** they have
- What **type of business** they want to run

### 6.1 Type of Skill

There are many types of skills in the creative sector. Here is a list of some we thought of:

- Advertising and marketing
- Architecture
- Crafts
- Design (including exhibition, games, graphic, industrial, interior, landscape, product, textiles, and theatre design)
- Fashion
- Film, TV, video, radio, and photography
- IT, software, and computer services
- Publishing
- Museums, galleries, and libraries
- Music, performing, and visual arts
- Fiction and non-fiction writing, copywriting, blogging and vlogging, podcast scriptwriting
- 2D and 3D animation
- Festival planning, management and support services
- Restoring paintings, sculptures, or textiles
- Cultural heritage promotion
- Arts business planning, crowdfunding campaign design

Because the Creative Economy is seen to be a vital part of the economy, there are many organisations involved in regulating it, advising on it and categorising it. This includes national and regional governments and international organisations like some of the branches of the United Nations. One such is UNCTAD, the UN Conference on Trade and Development. They also classify creative industries, and you can see their classification below.

# CLASSIFICATION OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Industry	Classification	Examples
Heritage	Cultural sites	Archaeological sites, museums, libraries, exhibitions etc.
	Traditional cultural expressions	Art, crafts, festivals, celebrations
Arts	Visual arts	Paintings, sculptures, photography, and antiques
	Performing arts	Live music, theatre, dance, opera, circus, puppetry, etc
Media	Publishing and printed media	Books, press, and other publications
	Audiovisuals	Film, television, radio, and other broadcasting
Functional Creations	Design	Interior, graphic, fashion, jewellery, toys
	New media	Software, video games, digitised creative content
	Creative services	Architectural, advertising, creative R&D, cultural and recreational

There are many types of creative arts, but it's important to remember that they are all connected. For example, there are many jobs in music alone, as you saw with Lira earlier. You don't have to be centre stage to be part of the Creative Economy!



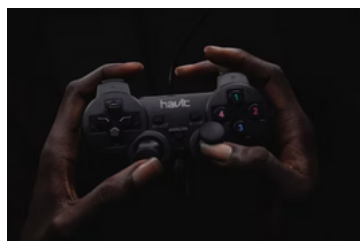
## Activity 3: Job Creation in Creative Industries

Can you think of some of the different jobs that might exist in any one of these creative areas listed above? Make a list in your exercise book.

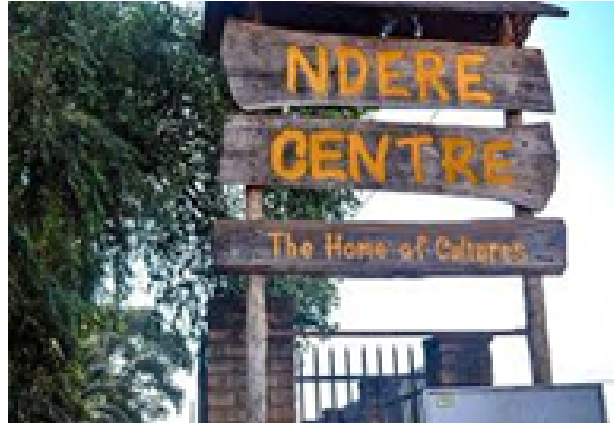
This is a reflexive activity that should help you to think about your own business. There are no right or wrong answers.

### Our Reveal:

Lira's example shows the diversity of jobs that can be connected to the **Arts** (area 2 above). If we consider **Media**, like game design, it can include script writers; actors; voice artists; coders; graphic designers; software engineers; promoters and multimedia companies.



Thinking about **Heritage**, many countries will have a cultural centre, like Ndere in Uganda. The Ndere Cultural Centre provides space for many types of artists (musicians, dancers, painters) but many more jobs are created through the centre such as catering, comparing and tour guiding. There are also administrative roles such as managers, accountants or being members of marketing teams.



*Image: Ndere Cultural Centre, Kampala, Uganda  
Image credit: Ndere Cultural Centre*

We are sure you will have come up with these and many more. What this exercise shows is that **creative economies create and require a very wide-ranging set of jobs and skills.**





## 6.2 Types of Business

Some people do creative things just for fun without trying to make money from them. Others want to earn their living from their creativity.


To earn a living, you need to make a profit from your business. Every business has costs, including your time. In creative businesses, there are costs like materials and sometimes renting a shop to sell you work. There is also the cost of your time and that of others who you might work with. There may be other costs too. When you sell your product, you earn money. The profit is the difference between what it costs to make the product and what you sell it for.



*A sole trader selling traditional carvings and bowls at the Graskop, Mpumalanga, South Africa. Image credit: South African Tourism via Creative Commons*

The way a creative business is set up, whether as a sole trader, partnership, or company, affects how profits are made and shared. But businesses may also use a non-profit model. In the following table you will see some of the **different types of companies that operate in the Creative Economy**, what they are and examples of these.

# Types of Companies

For-Profit	Non-Profit
<p><b>Sole Trader</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works alone</li> <li>• Keeps all profits after costs</li> <li>• Responsible for losses</li> </ul> <p><i>A photographer who takes pictures for clients, edits them, and sells prints. They make money directly from their work, but also carry the cost of equipment and editing software.</i></p>	<p><b>Social Enterprise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does good while making money</li> <li>• Uses some profits to help the community</li> </ul> <p><i>A theatre group that performs to raise awareness about social issues, like climate change or poverty: the ticket sales money might be used to support community projects or teach art to young people in poor areas.</i></p>
<p><b>Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two or more people work together</li> <li>• Share the profits based on an agreement</li> <li>• Combine skills and money to grow the business</li> <li>• Need to agree on how to divide profits, which can sometimes cause disagreements</li> </ul> <p><i>A jewellery-making duo, where one partner designs the jewellery and the other handles the sales and marketing. They split the profits after covering the cost of materials and other expenses.</i></p>	<p><b>Co-Operative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers, and sometimes the people who use the products, share ownership of the business.</li> <li>• Work together to make decisions</li> <li>• Share the profits</li> </ul> <p><i>Several artists share a gallery space, and all contribute to running the business, managing the gallery, promoting events, and selling artwork. The profits are divided equally among the artists.</i></p>
<p><b>Company</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involves more people</li> <li>• Often requires more money to start</li> <li>• Profits might go toward paying back loans, improving the business, or rewarding investors</li> <li>• Can make larger profits, usually shared among many people</li> </ul> <p><i>A fashion brand with a team of designers, marketers, and investors. The company uses profits to expand, pay employees, and sometimes give a return to investors who helped fund the business.</i></p>	

Each business setup affects how much money each person gets, who takes the risk, and how the business can grow. **Which structure best fits your business vision?**

Now that you have looked in more detail at these categories, you can use the following exercise to map your own creative business.



## Activity 4: Mapping Your Creative Business

Think about your own creative business or the one that you want to have. Now think of these aspects of your business and write your thoughts in your exercise book:

- What is the skill you will use?
- Of the business types you just learned about, which would you use?

*This is a reflexive activity that should help you to think about your own business. There are no right or wrong answers.*

Reflecting on your creative business ideas is a powerful step toward shaping a creative business that feels aligned and purposeful. By considering your unique skills and choosing a business structure that suits your goals, you're starting to build a foundation that supports both your creativity and your values. Remember, this exercise is about exploring possibilities, not finding perfect answers.

**Trust your instincts, stay curious, and let your reflections guide you toward a business model that empowers you to thrive.**

## 7. Introduction to Setting up a Creative Business

In this section, we introduce you to a few different stories of how people started their businesses. You will see that all of them had very different experiences and that the challenges and opportunities that they had were also very different. We hope that this will introduce you to some of the variety of what a creative person's journey can be.

Firstly, you'll read an interview transcript from a woman migrant business owner who runs a bespoke chocolate business in Ghana. This interview was conducted as part of the **MIAG Project (Migration for Inclusive African Growth)**, which focuses on the entrepreneurial journeys of migrants and their contributions to local economies.

As you read, reflect on her experiences and take notes in your exercise book and respond to the following questions.





## Activity 5: A Chocolate Entrepreneur's Journey in the Creative Economy

Read the following interview transcript from **Afua Adomako**, a female migrant business owner talking about her bespoke chocolate business in Ghana.

As you read, think about the following questions and make notes in your exercise book on the following questions:

- What challenges did Afua face and how did she overcome them?
- What local resources were used?
- How did she become a leader in the market?

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### Transcript

**Afua:** So, one of my colleagues, she had a bureau back to the US, that means to go back to your base; so, the portfolio she I had, I mean it was the same company, was to do with confectionaries, chocolate, toffees, and stuff which she added to mine because she left suddenly. And so that is how I got first hand information and in amazement the way confectionary moved in the US; I mean that was particularly shops in the US and in Europe with chocolate. So, I started asking myself questions that how come chocolate moves so fast and sells not so well here [Ghana]. We have cocoa and then we cannot do anything about it; so that was one of the things that informed my decision to return to Ghana to see what I could do with that idea. I found myself back in Ghana umm that's 2006 and then I started... Well, when I came, incidentally I got pregnant, and I had to have my child. So even though I had registered my company in 2006 I had to wait till I had the baby, weaned her a bit before. So, my work started in January 2008 and then to start my business you know you need some money and all that. I sold a house to start my business.

**Interviewer:** Here in Ghana or?

**Afua:** Here in Ghana, I sold my house to start my business; anytime I tell people they are taken aback because who would sell their house; I mean I believe so much in the Ghanaian home. At that time [President] Kufuor was in power so I had that belief that I could make it.

**Afua:** But nothing prepared me for the shocks because umm the Ghana that I left some 10 -12 years ago was not the same Ghana that I came to meet I was already into business, so I had to quickly adjust to those things, and you know whether the storm. I mean it has been quite a journey; I mean I have not gotten there yet but I think that umm with the right push I could be tops but I mean even though I am still in business working and all I am making quite a lot of impacts because I quite remember that umm first contact, I got was umm Barclays Bank. hey were going to celebrate, I think, their 90th anniversary of being in Ghana; so, I approached them and said I could do customised chocolates for them to add to the spice of the celebration and they agreed because the package that I gave them I guess they had not seen anything quite like that in Ghana.

It was a success and I mean the chocolates were distributed all over Ghana; it was an actual hit. So, from there on, I started getting, you know, people recommending and recommendations and stuff and then. I have customised chocolates for more than 200 companies.

**Afua:** And most of them are even repeats, to name a few Barclays, in fact, all the banks, I think, except for GT Bank, and then, which other bank again; GT Bank, there is one other bank but, in fact, all the banks. I have done for Zenith, Access, Fidelity, Atlantic, and Bank of Africa, Stanbic, in fact, all the banks and then a lot more companies, MTN, Vodafone, you know quite a lot of them because of the unique style which I performed. So, it has been quite a journey, but you see that in the cocoa industry we are short chained in the sense that I do not see why the foreign people take the cocoa here and go and add value to them while we can do that because the only difference is the technology, machinery, and all that. And so, we were made to believe that we cannot live up to that. But once one person has done, which is mooch cocoa, a Ghanaian then others.... Well based on what I was doing, I was recommended by somebody to attend a women's conference in the US, and I was invited by Hilary Clinton and...

**Afua:** Yes, it was a particularly pleasant experience I had over there, and I went to a lot of women owned businesses; I was interviewed by CNN and then by the State Department itself, I mean the TV station you can see that on YouTube. Over here in Ghana I was interviewed by UK Aid, Engen Ghana and they visited my little factory and took videos you know they were quite impressed because somebody who just started from nothing has been able to reach these heights. But again, I always tell them that even though it came with a lot of hitches, you do not just come, make a story to make a name for yourself; you must help that individual who is trying to reach, I mean, those heights, especially being a woman and all those challenges that this county has to offer. So, like I told you, yes, I am working, I have started supplying big supermarkets, Shoprite, Melcom, Citidia and a host of other supermarkets. Yes, I am doing well but it gets to a point where you realise you need more to do more, you understand.

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### **Our Reveal:**

We hope you enjoyed reading about this remarkable chocolate entrepreneur. You would have noted:

### **Challenges:**

- Adjusting to the changing business environment in Ghana after being away for over a decade.
- Financial constraints requiring her to sell her house to start the business.
- Facing scepticism and infrastructural limitations in the local cocoa industry.

### **Overcoming challenges:**

- Leveraging her belief in Ghanaian potential and persistence to navigate the challenges.
- Identifying opportunities for innovation, such as customised chocolates for corporate clients.
- Gaining recognition through consistent quality and unique products that distinguished her business.

**Local resources used:**

- Ghana's cocoa industry for the primary raw material.
- Local supermarkets and retail chains like Shoprite, Melcom, and Citidia to distribute her products.
- Partnerships with Ghanaian banks and companies for customised chocolate products.

**Becoming a market leader:**

- By offering innovative products, such as customised chocolates tailored for corporate events and branding.
- Building a strong reputation through consistent recommendations and repeat clients, including major banks and telecommunications companies.
- Expanding her reach by attending international conferences, gaining media recognition (e.g., CNN interviews), and inspiring trust in her capability to create high-quality products locally.

*How did your answers compare with those given above? Did you come up with other points that we had not spotted?*

Now let us turn to two more stories.



## **Activity 6: Setting up a Business in the Creative Economy**

Watch 'H' and Volley describe their experiences of setting up a business in the Creative Economy.

[Dr 'H' Patten's Experiences of Setting up a Business](#)

[Volley Nchabaleng's Experiences of Setting up a Business](#)

Can you write down a few strategies that they used to build their business?

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**Our Reveal:**

'H' and Volley shared some key strategies they used to build their creative businesses.

- One important approach is their use of local resources, such as cultural heritage, traditional instruments, or local materials, which make their work special and connected to their communities.
- They also talked about the need for persistence and determination, showing that working hard and not giving up is important.
- Another key point is continuous self-improvement, as they are always working to learn new skills and get better at what they do.
- Finally, they focus on constant innovation, finding fresh and creative ways to share their art and keep it interesting for their audiences.

*How did your answers compare with those given above? Did you agree or disagree? Did you come up with other points that we had not spotted?*

H", Volley and Afua have shown us how hard work, and creativity can lead to success in the Creative Economy. Now let's look at some of the skills that would be of benefit to you in the Creative Economy.

## 8. Which Skills Do You Need to Take Part in the Creative Economy?

Creativity helps you come up with fresh ideas, work efficiently, and solve problems. But these are not the only skills needed in your business. Along with creativity, you also need social and professional skills to support your career.

To achieve success, you need a combination of:

- **Creativity:** For innovative ideas and problem-solving.
- **Flexibility:** To adapt to changing situations.
- **Professionalism:** To maintain credibility and foster trust.
- **Strong Ethics:** To ensure integrity and long-term growth.



### Activity 7: Skills and Qualities for Success

To explore further, watch the two following videos where 'H' and Volley share their thoughts on the skills that are important for success.

#### [Versatility and Skills Improvement](#) [Qualities for Employability](#)

While watching the videos, make a list of

- the skills Volley and 'H' think are important.
- other skills or qualities you think are important to succeed in your business.

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#### Our Reveal:

Here is what we found in these videos:

#### **Volley** highlights:

- the importance of being versatile and always improving your skills.
- the need for creatives to learn new things, stay updated with trends, and keep an open mind.

'H' has had a slightly different journey. He therefore picks up on some different things. He highlights:

- the importance of knowing your audience and having strong ethics.
- the need for professionalism, punctuality, and being prepared in the creative industry.
- having a varied portfolio to handle challenges and effectively assigning roles in your work.

In the fast-changing Creative Economy, being successful means putting creativity, flexibility, professionalism, and strong ethics into building a business. Volley and 'H' talked about these important skills, but it is also up to you to keep improving and growing. **Focus on building your creativity, sharpening your skills, and staying ethical** to stand out as a creative professional.

*What other skills or qualities do you think are important to succeed in this exciting industry?*

Skill	Importance	Example
<b>Adaptability</b>	The creative industries change quickly. Being flexible helps you adjust to new trends and technologies.	<i>A graphic designer learning new software to keep up with client demands.</i>
<b>Collaboration</b>	Working well with others, even from different fields, leads to better ideas and results.	<i>A filmmaker teaming up with a musician to create a compelling soundtrack.</i>
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Analysing problems and making smart decisions is key to success.	<i>A marketing team deciding the best strategy to reach their audience.</i>
<b>Communication Skills</b>	Explaining your ideas clearly is important for teamwork and showing clients the value of your work.	<i>A fashion designer presenting their collection to potential buyers.</i>
<b>Digital Literacy</b>	Knowing how to use digital tools is essential as technology shapes the industry.	<i>An artist using social media platforms like Instagram to sell their work.</i>
<b>Resilience</b>	Facing setbacks is part of the creative journey, and bouncing back is crucial.	<i>A writer reworking a rejected script until it gets published.</i>

Now that you have been introduced to creative economies and what kinds of businesses you can have in this sector, consider if this is for you. Do you want to set up a creative business? If so, carry on and over the next few units we will show you how to identify a niche and find a customer base, how to market your products and how to work collaboratively and sustainably to build your creative business.

## 9. Protecting your Business

One of the hardest parts of a creative business is making sure you benefit from your creativity and that others don't steal your ideas. To do this, you need to protect your business idea.

There are three main types of protection:

- **Copyright:** Protects creative work like art, music, and writing, giving credit to the creator.
- **Trademark:** Protects brands or logos to stop others from copying them.
- **Patent:** Protects inventions, like a new tool, such as a paintbrush or a musical instrument.

Problems can arise when creative knowledge is owned by a community rather than one person. If your business is based on traditional cultural expressions and communal knowledge, you need to understand the rules about ownership.

In Africa, the **African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (ARIPO)** handles some of these issues. ARIPO recognises the challenge of protecting community-owned creative knowledge under systems designed for individuals. To address this, ARIPO has developed new ways to protect local and traditional knowledge, ensuring that such knowledge is acknowledged and valued. This helps keep creative knowledge tied to its original owners and cultural roots. You will find a link to the ARIPO website at the end of this unit.

## 10. Conclusion

You have reached the end of the first unit of this course. We hope you found it engaging and insightful. Throughout this unit, you have explored the foundational concepts of the Creative Economy and its role in Africa.

### What We Have Explored

- The importance of the Creative Economy in Africa
- The characteristics of the Creative Economy, including its diversity and complexity.
- Why creative businesses matter and the ways they can impact society.
- Skills required to be successful in the Creative Economy
- Types of business models that can be applied

### What Creative People Can Take Away

This unit has provided you with key insights to reflect on your own creative journey and the skills needed to succeed in the Creative Economy.

### Reflecting on Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should have:

- Described the Creative Economy

- Recognised the benefits of the Creative Economy for individuals, communities, and national development
- Understood why people want to take part in the Creative Economy and the opportunities it offers
- Identified the different choices available when planning a creative business, including considerations of skills, products, and profits.

## **Applying What You Have Learned**

This unit has introduced you to the importance of the Creative Economy. You should now be able to:

- Understand and discuss the key elements of the Creative Economy.
- Identify how skills, products, and profits interact within creative businesses.
- Reflect on your own creative interests and how they could fit into the broader Creative Economy.
- Engage with others in conversations about the value and potential of the Creative Economy.

## **Interested in Finding Out More?**

There are a many good resources on these two websites:

- <https://arts.britishcouncil.org/resources>
- <https://www.creative-economies-africa.org/>

Here are some specific resources you may find interesting to deepen your understanding of the Creative Economy:

- Baraza Media Labs (2022) Kenya Creative Economy Research Study, Baraza Media Creative Sector Research, Nairobi. Available here: <https://barazalab.com/storage/2022/11/Full-Report.pdf>
- British Council. (2020). Creative industries ecosystem mapping in three Zimbabwean cities – Creatives Zimbabwe Unlocked 'Unlocking the Zimbabwean Creative Scene'. [https://creativeeconomy.britishcouncil.org/media/resources/CreativesZWunlocked\\_report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://creativeeconomy.britishcouncil.org/media/resources/CreativesZWunlocked_report_FINAL.pdf)
- Comunian, R., Hracs, B. J., & England, L. (2021). Understanding and Supporting Creative Economies in Africa: Education, Networks and Policy: A policy report. King's College, London.
- Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, Government of South Africa. (2022). Creative industries master plan. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.za/sites/default/files/u4521/Annexure%20A%20-%20Creative%20Industries%20MasterPlan.pdf>

## **Looking Ahead**

As you move into Unit 2, which focuses on developing creativity into a business, take with you the skills and insights gained here.



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## 11. Transcripts

### Meet Dr. 'H'. Patten

**'H':** Hello, I'm Doctor 'H' Patten and I'm an artist. I started out as a visual artist and then became a performing artist. But really in terms of the Arts, I wasn't sure that I would actually become an artist. As a child, I always wanted to become a doctor. Part of that was because of how doctors were treated. They were respected within the community and within our community. I was born 20 days after my mother arrived in the UK. So within the black community respect was a very important thing and when I left school and with the qualifications I had, I could either go and head straight towards a college where I could have focused on the arts, or I could have gone to a college where I focused on the sciences. I went to the art school because I was told that I could still continue the sciences if I so wish. Well once I got involved in the arts more deeply I just fell in love with it and it just took me away.

Today I'm considered one of the top African dance artists in the UK. I trained in Ghana with the National Dance Company out there. I've worked all across Africa with most of the national dance companies choreographing. And teaching. I'm a storyteller. I'm also a visual artist. Today I use my visual arts in many ways. I still paint and I still do a little bit of sculpture here and there.

But I also use my artistry to do illustrations. I also do use it to design costumes and design sets, and so therefore I can make a living. And I do make my living as an artist where there are many artists who might make a living doing something else, and they do the artistry on the side. But if you are brave and bold enough to go for it, you can make it as an artist.

### Meet Volley Nchabeleng

**Volley:** Dumelang, Hi! My name is Volley Nchabeleng. I'm a percussionist, specialised in African instruments. I play a couple of them. And I'm a teacher.

Well, born from the family of musicians I started playing music at the early age, but I was not intended to be a musician professionally, but after passing matric, I wanted to do journalism. But yeah the situation was not on my side and I went for music school. Do audition. I passed the audition, but the price was just too much for me, I couldn't afford, so I went home sad.

I found out about the Community Center that was teaching African instruments through the newspaper. And I went there and enrolled, the price was a bit lesser. And I said to learn African instruments through community structure and since then I became professional musician and I make a living out of it. Thank you.

## **Dr H' Patten's Experiences of Setting up a Business**

**'H':** You might start out as an artist within a particular category of art. So for me, I started out as a visual artist, but then your aim is to become the best artist you can be, and so therefore I didn't remain just a visual artist. I got involved in the dance.

And once I got involved in the music and the dance I was able to develop my skills, because sometimes you have something to say. Art is about communication. So you have something to say, it might be best said through music. It might be better said through dance. It might be better said through theatre. And so you have to develop yourself as a fully rounded artist. As a dancer, for example, I have to be able to dance, but I have to communicate something. So depending on the style of dance and I have to be able to embody that.

So if I'm dancing that dance like Kete, which is a court dance, the music plays 'kang kekang kang...kang kegang kang...You see I automatically have to embody that, but also and sometimes when I'm teaching I have to change to and adapt to the situation. So if I'm somewhere and they want me to teach music and I don't have drums, I use drum utterances. So for example, if I wanted to teach him the Jamaican Mento music... various repetitive drum sounds...Now, once that is learned by everybody, we can transfer it to the instruments and then you have the full sound.

## **Volley Nchabaleng's Experiences of Setting up a Business**

**Volley:** Well, born from the rural areas, it kind of works on my advantage because coming to the urban, they look at you as someone who grew up from the rurals and but actually it helps because culturally I'm able to execute some of things that I've learned like the way I carry my music as a Pedi.

I played the Pedi pipes and advanced them to the level whereby now they from the rural they are now on the bigger stage at theatres and then we sell them to the world. So the culture, now people start to be aware of the Pedi people of Limpopo because of how we handle and we package the culture of the music.

So yeah, it's so important to really carry yourself and value your own culture and promote it. And I know sometimes it doesn't feel good or you feel like I'm oppressed just because you want to, we all want to be Americans as someone famous in hip-hop. But we mustn't forget who we are and our sounds and promote it up because people will start to recognise you on the basis of who you are.

## Qualities for Employability

**'H':** There are many challenges as an artist that you will face when you're working within the creative industries, but there are a number of them that are crucial that you are able to deal with. The three top ones I think is to do with your own personal ethics in terms of how you work with people, the fact that you will be able to deal with particular things that will be able to bring to life any issue, then the audience needs or whoever is booking you needs to cover.

The second will be the fact that you have to be professional at all times. When you're working with people you have to be on time. If your time keeping is bad, you can't work. For example, in schools in the UK for example. Everything goes by the bell as soon as you hear the bell, everybody starts to pack up and pack up their bags and go. So, if you don't know how to manage your time, you will lose. You will lose work because people will just not book you again, so you have to be able to turn up on time. And you have to be able to deliver what you need to deliver within time.

And then third thing is that you have to make sure that you are well prepared at all times. You have to prepare what you're going to deliver, but importantly, you also have to have something in your back pocket, because maybe you've prepared one specific thing and when you go, it's not working. The people are not really feeling it or they're not warming to that activity. You have to have another activity that you can bring in. So, preparation is important. You can be the best artist but if you're not prepared and something isn't working and you're not able to switch and bring something else that will work, you won't get booked second time.

As an artist, you're always working with individuals within community members who have different grievances. They have different things that are important for them and they have different issues that are burning, burning issues for them.

And so as artist, you start to listen to these and you start to work in a way where you can get them to express it and bring it out. But then importantly, sometimes we do have the ear of those who are in positions of power who might be able to implement a change in the policies and so that you can get them. For example, if you know that one of the issues that you're having, for example, I was working in one country where one of the policies it was that when the female dancers are trained up, if they became pregnant, then they'd have to leave the job. And I said to them: Well, this isn't right and it's crazy because what you're doing, you're putting a lot of resources into the training of these women, and then if you just if you just get rid of them and you've lost all of that training, what you have to do is find a role that they can occupy during the time whilst they're pregnant and then and find ways and means to bring them back into the workplace. So for example, if a dancer is pregnant and cannot dance on stage, then you use them to teach and or you use them to work in the costume department until after she's delivered. Then you can use her to start teaching again initially and then while she's teaching, she can then develop and rebuild her stamina to then get back into the performance space, and that's one of the policies that changed within that company.

## Versatility and Skills Improvement

**Volley:** Myself, I specialise in music, but any creative, whether you are a painter or weaver, you know just need to be versatile. Because for myself, Volley I think I spend a lot of time as a versatile musician and a singer.

I play modern...if I start counting, I'm not going to finish now...I play so many instruments and I collect the instruments around the world and that makes me employable. I once made money as a dancer. I made money at soundscapes creating sounds skills. I've created the ambience for movies and the TV productions, so there's a lot of pool for me to pull from so because you are versatile you are employable.

You know, when there's no time to go and perform, I teach. When there's no, when I'm not teaching, I create. I'm part of the creative team and I play mbira, I play marimba. I play all in string instruments, drums. You know, in Africa the first instrument, it's a drum of course, you can't be African, not playing a drum, you know it's the oldest instrument. So because of being versatile, I'm employable, so I encourage everyone if you are creative, don't just stick to one thing. Try all angles so that you can be as versatile as possible.

