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## Art, science and organisational interactions: Exploring the value of artist residencies on campus<sup>☆</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

This case study examines how an artist residency at an aquaculture institute within a university creates value on campus and beyond. We find that the residency, initially regarded as ‘risk-taking’ by both artist and institute, created unexpected opportunities stemming from the synergies between art and science. We find that ‘new ways of seeing’ aquaculture science resulted in the creation of aesthetic, emotional, environmental, educational and social values embracing the intrinsic, instrumental, and institutional, on both personal and organisational levels. The lack of available time from academic staff and financial support for the artist, however, need to be addressed in order to achieve the residency’s full potential. In addition to the arguments for art-based initiatives generally, we suggest that artist residencies, if planned thoughtfully, have the potential to create an innovative and creative culture on campus and beyond.

### 1. Introduction

The last two decades have seen a growth in the interactions between the art world and business (Berthoin Antal & Straub, 2016). This reflects a need to identify new ways for organisations to conduct business in an uncertain and fragmented global environment. Consequently, the ‘art-based initiative’ is now seen as a legitimate means by which organisations can increase creativity and innovation, and thereby encourage a more productive workplace culture (Schiuma, 2011; Sköldberg, Woodilla, & Berthoin Antal, 2016). Artistic thinking and creative problem-solving can help organisations visualise alternative directions in strategy and product development through judgement, curiosity, opportunity recognition and risk-taking (Carr & Hancock, 2003; Chia, 1996). Insights from art can also stimulate enhanced organisational understanding (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). This interest in the potential value of art and business collaborations has led to increased research since Buren (2010), with considerable work on highlighting the benefits and value created (e.g. Austin & Devin, 2003; Berthoin Antal, 2012; Berthoin Antal, Woodilla, & Sköldberg, 2016; Darsø, 2004; Styhre & Eriksson, 2008).

One form of artistic intervention is the artist residency which may be viewed as a critical lens on the organisation and its practices, in the same way that organisational aesthetics provide alternative platforms

for understanding (Carr & Hancock, 2003; Taylor & Hansen, 2005). Much about how artist residencies add value, however, remains unknown. For example, the use of enabling agents such as mentors or facilitators in the host organisation, funding bodies and intermediary organisations, is not widely understood (Schiuma & Carlucci, 2016). There are also several discourses to consider when thinking about putting art into an organisation, including the metaphor of art in organisational theory (Dobson, 1999), using art to raise levels of innovation and creativity (Biehl-Missal, 2011; Schiuma, 2011), and using aesthetics in understanding art-based leadership practices (Barry & Meisiek, 2010; Guillet de Monthoux, 2004). Partnerships between artists and organisations can result in the co-creation of new values. Berthoin Antal and Straub (2016) call the location of these opportunities interspaces, or “temporary social spaces within which participants experience new ways of seeing, thinking and doing things that add value for them personally” (p.9).

These interventions occur “when people, practices or products from the world of the arts enter organisations to make a difference” (Berthoin Antal, 2009: 4). Given that artists are driven by their own motivations (Lehman & Wickham, 2014), it may appear unlikely that relationships with non-artistic organisation may add value. Unpacking the potential benefits to both parties, however, makes fruitful relationships more likely. There is potential for a range of social and public, economic,

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instrumental and intrinsic values to be created as artists and organisations interact in mutually beneficial ways (Straub, 2009). Consequently, there is a need for research on collaboration between artists and industry, in order to understand best practice, working methods and alternative models to guide practice (Shanken, 2005).

This is particularly the case in the tertiary education sector, where art-based initiatives can be effective, given their impact on personal learning and development (Darsø, 2016). It has been suggested that art/business engagements within an education framework foster a creative mind-set in staff and students in countering the impact of managerialism and consumerism (Nixon, 2004). Similarly, Tepper (2004) notes that while creativity exists in universities this is often in the absence of specific policies to enhance it. There would be more likelihood of creative work being produced and sustained if university policy embedded creativity as a core value and practice, rather than only viewing it instrumentally. Consequently, several recent innovative art-based initiatives have been employed by universities with the intention of developing creativity and innovation (Berthoin Antal et al., 2016; Scott, 2006, 2010).

Despite increasing interest from researchers and universities, there remains a dearth of empirical research on artist residencies in terms of their benefit and value to the artist, the institution and the community (Lehman, 2017; Shanken, 2005; Stephens, 2001). Scott (2006, 2010) argues for greater radical discourse concerning education, innovation, ethics and social engagement via university learning centres where knowledge can be shared with outsiders. This paper explores how an artist residency in a university aquaculture institute serves as a source of value creation. We explore the opportunities and challenges created for the stakeholders, and investigate how both artist and scientific activities influence each other.

In the following section, we review literatures on the value of art, creativity and artist residencies in universities highlighting synergies created by art and science interactions. In the next section, we discuss our case study approach to the artist residency, data collection and analysis. Our findings are then presented together with our propositions, and we conclude with further discussions.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Art, creativity and universities

Following the 2012 higher education reforms and further reductions in public funding, UK universities face financial uncertainty, finding it challenging to remain sustainable and internationally competitive (Universities UK, 2016). As a response, developing a creative and innovative culture across universities is crucial (Bridgman, 2007). Hunter, Baker, and Nailon (2014) posit that ‘critical and creative thinking’ is the key concept underlying contemporary Australian educational discourse, with creative thinking involving “students in learning to generate and apply new ideas in specific contexts, seeing existing situations in a new way, identifying alternative explanations, and seeing or making new links that generate a positive outcome” (ACARA, 2013). Tepper (2004) claims that the most effective way of fostering creative mind-sets and innovation in universities is by exposure to the arts. The relationships formed may serve as conduits for further creative activity (Tepper, 2006). While his notion of the ‘Creative Campus’ encourages interaction and collaboration between different disciplines, it is also predicated on the assumption that culture should feature not only ‘on’ campus but also ‘beyond’ campus.

This is an important point, not only because of the effects of the creative campus beyond academia in impacting economic growth (Andres & Chapain, 2013), but also because of the perceived benefits to universities and to society (Comunian & Gilmore, 2015). Shalley and Gilson (2004) argue that skills associated with creativity include an ability to think creatively, generate alternatives and suspend judgement. This is consistent with universities looking to the arts to

encourage innovative thinking and to link artistic, scholarly, industrial and cultural paradigms (Bennett, Wright, & Blom, 2009). Generally, the notion of ‘creative campus’ provides a framework within which art-based initiatives such as artist residencies can play a significant role in higher education.

### 2.2. The value of artist residencies

Fine art, and cognate disciplines, may have a particular value in stimulating innovation for entrepreneurship and facilitating productive knowledge exchange. Artist residencies are one way of actualising this and there is increasing emphasis contained in government policy. The Australia Council for the Arts (2015) reports that residencies provide artists with opportunities for creative investment, development of ideas and connections at minimal cost. Many art graduates choose self-employment (Menger, 1999), commencing their careers by searching for residencies offering professional sustainability and inspired creativity (Styhre & Eriksson, 2008). Residencies often provide artists with stipends, facilities, tools, professional feedback and opportunities, to develop networks with other artists and potential audiences. Residencies may offer access to new technologies, partnerships and funding opportunities leading to the development of new ‘products’ and ideas and organisational and managerial skills (European Commission, 2014). International residencies may widen cultural awareness, build international networks and expose artists to new developments (Styhre & Eriksson, 2008).

Artist residencies are a powerful form of art-based initiative, embracing individual and organisational level value-drivers including passion, emotion, hope, morality, imagination, aspiration and creativity (Schiuma & Carlucci, 2016). Residencies can impact on the processes, values, identity, image, brand and culture of organisations. They can contribute to staff development, and facilitate organisational learning and capacity building (European Commission, 2014; Shanken, 2005). Several organisational impacts have been identified including economic enhancement through improved performance and inspirational action, added product and service value through innovation, and leveraging participants’ experiences to inform future practices (Berthoin Antal, 2012, 2013, 2015; Darsø, 2004, 2016).

### 2.3. Art/science interactions

Art often challenges conventional thinking. Its aesthetic dimension enables the experiencing, exploring and knowing the world differently (Tadajewski & Brownlie, 2008). Prior to the Enlightenment; many individuals (e.g. Leonardo Da Vinci) worked as both artists and scientists (Gerber, 2006). Potential contributions of art to science include uncovering the unexplainable, developing new angles of perception and creating innovative metaphors (Stettler, 2006). While many industrial sectors now host residencies, e.g. in technology (Naiman, 2011) and medicine (Rockwood, 2004), the sector that appears to interact the most with artist residencies is science. Several organisations facilitate and support art/science collaborations, and also engage new audiences, such as the UK based non-profit ASCUS Art & Science body (ASCUS Art & Science, 2017). Benefits may flow each way, with residencies encouraging artists to get involved in scientific discovery, and scientists becoming interested in art. Scott (2010) argues that ignoring scientific knowledge situated in art and culture potentially limits scientific progress. Gerber (2006) sees the artist as a catalyst and liberator of science and the mind, with collaboration creating new synergies and solutions impossible through individualised approaches.

Despite considerable interest in interactions between art and science, there is little empirical research on the value of artist residencies in terms of benefits to the artist, the host organisation, or the wider public. There is a need to investigate how artists and organisations can influence each other and create mutual value. Consequently, this paper seeks to address the following research question: *In what ways do artists’*

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