

Company Name: Ten2 Gallery
Contact: Rose Allinson and Linda Flower
Website: www.ten2gallery.co.uk

The Art Studio has been located in Hinckley Town Centre since 1989, originally consisting of just an inspiring art studio selling art materials and carrying out picture framing. In 2001, the shop moved to its current premises on Castle Street where the upstairs of the shop was opened up as a contemporary gallery showing work by local artists. This part of the business became the Ten2 Gallery (because it is located at 102 Castle St). The gallery then shifted towards selling limited edition pieces which was initially successful, but more recently the gallery has moved back towards showcasing and selling original pieces through its 'open' exhibitions (this Christmas will be their third Open Christmas Exhibition).

Initially just being a gallery, visitors began to tail off and it became difficult to draw people upstairs, so in 2003 Rose and Linda opened a café within the gallery which has once again attracted customers. Further developments took place in 2005 when their landlord enabled Ten2 to take over the upstairs of the next building and knock through to create more space. This now accommodates art workshops and classes.

That same year the Arts Officer from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council saw the potential of Ten2 due to its uniqueness of being a private sector arts project. They were then introduced to Creative Leicestershire's Creative Industries Manager who informed them of the Bursary Scheme. Ten2 applied for the Bursary in its first year and were successful in their application and received £2,000.

"The Bursary application process was very straightforward and with the form covering aspects such as what activities the business did, how the money would be spent and how we saw the business developing. We then had an interview which was very relaxed and went into more detail about what we wanted the money for and our long term plan."

Rose and Linda used the Bursary money to pay for a website designer to create a website for the business as they felt that this was something that was greatly needed. The website is now used to market the different aspects of the business and promote the workshops that are available. Though the website is not used to sell any of the gallery paintings or shop stock it is widely used for the information it provides and has become a necessity to the business.

Alongside the website they also commissioned design work for their logo which provided them with the level of professionalism they wanted to achieve. This has since become easily recognisable which helps with marketing the business.

The Bursary was also used to purchase computer equipment and bring in a Strategic Planning Consultant who came into the business to establish what their aspirations were and suggested ways in which this could be achieved. This aspect in retrospect was quite expensive for the service they received as the advice given was quite self-explanatory.

Overall, the impact of the Bursary upon the business has been very positive. It has contributed towards increasing footfall and enabled the disbursement of information a lot easier, particularly through the website. Promoting the workshops through the website has proven very successful as it is an easy resource to direct people to as other adverts can be very expensive – the best advert though according to Rose has been the A board outside the shop which entices people into the shop, café and gallery.

As Ten2 continues to go from strength to strength and build on their 20 years of experience they will continue to diversify to keep themselves at the top of the market. Upcoming events include three-course meal and entertainment evenings in the café, Christmas and summer art exhibitions and a new relationship with the charity Mind on a project funded by the Arts Council to run art classes and workshops for people with mental health issues.

“The Bursary from Creative Leicestershire is a big chunk of money for any business, particularly new start businesses. For us, it enabled us to purchase a number of services earlier than we would have been able to, and it has helped the business to grow and succeed.”

Company Name: 2Funky Arts

Contact: Vijay Mistry

Website: www.2funkyarts.co.uk

Vijay set up 2Funky Arts in 2006 as a non-profit creative arts and development agency committed to the creative learning and development of children and young people.

Having originally set up his urban music shop, 2Funky, 13 years ago in Leicester City Centre Vijay was frequently being asked by young people who used the shop whether he ran DJ workshops with the many DJs who used the shop. Alongside this he was also invited by the organiser of the BASS (British Arts and Street Sounds) Festival to take part in the yearly event. He realised that in order to carry out the work that was frequently in demand and enable him to apply for funding to put on workshops and participate in festivals he would need to create a social enterprise – 2Funky Arts was born.

2Funky Arts now carries out music and dance workshops with young people in the city. They have designed many high quality creative learning programmes including DJ, MC and Music Production workshops and also Graffiti Art, StreetDance and BreakDance classes. The classes are carried out at schools, youth clubs and community centres around the city and are continually adapting and changing in response to demand from those involved. These events are usually promoted through the venues or via emails to members, leaflets, posters and through social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace.

A second strand of the work carried out by 2Funky Arts is organising and participating in various festivals and showcases both in Leicester and around the region. They have formed many creative partnerships over the years within education and other creative organisations across the UK which are demonstrated through the events in which they organise. Some of their biggest events have included:

- **The Lyric Lounge** – a week of events which creates a unique performance space celebrating the power of live literature. It was part of the cultural programme for the Special Olympics which took place in summer 2009. 2Funky Arts and partners developed and delivered the Lyric Lounge as part of Renaissance East Midlands’ contribution to the region-wide Igniting Ambition programme.
- **BASS Festival** – short for British Art and Street Sounds, the BASS Festival is a month long festival celebrating the best of the streets produced by Punch Records in partnership with 2Funky Arts, Hella Music and Baby J Studios.
- **Tha Lo’ Down** –in 2007 this project brought together unsigned artists from around Leicestershire to record their music onto a compilation CD and perform at The Shed in Leicester. 2Funky Arts worked in partnership with Leicester City Council, BASS Music Festival and Creative Leicestershire on this project.

It was through the ‘Tha Lo down’ project that Vijay came into contact with Creative Leicestershire after submitting a proposal to them and Leicester City Council to carry out the project. As a social enterprise 2Funky Arts are not core funded and are reliant on funding to keep their projects running thus meaning there is often little spare money about for additional resources such as the website. The Bursary they won from Creative Leicestershire will therefore be used to create a new website for 2Funky Arts to promote the workshops and events and keep users updated on the changes taking place.

This money has come at the right time to promote a business that is continually growing from strength to strength. Having also recently received funding from the Big Lottery they are planning to transform the part of the shop along with the rooms upstairs into additional workshop space and new studios. This money will also be used to fund 2 new part-time members of staff to run additional projects.

As the business continues to grow the money won from Creative Leicestershire will be put to good use to create a much needed website to enhance advertising and communication with the increasing numbers of people taking part in the workshops and events put on by 2Funky Arts.

Company Name: Lunchbox Films
Contact: Theo Godley and Leo Altarelli
Website: www.lunchboxfilms.co.uk

After meeting at university, Theo and Leo decided to combine the skills and experience gained through their degrees in Fine Art and Music respectively, and their passion for film, to set up Lunchbox Films. The company works predominantly with schools, but also within communities, to provide animation workshops and help to bring the national curriculum to life.

Since making their first film in 2005, it has become their mission to “Keep Kids Animated”. Through their expertise in animation and music they help children to work as a team to make films that will make learning “*exciting, spontaneous and fun*”. Their first films were made in Loughborough where they carried out workshops in local schools.

After becoming a Limited company in 2007, Lunchbox Films moved to the East Midlands permanently where the company now operates on a full time basis. It was back in Loughborough that they were informed about Creative Leicestershire by word of mouth and they were encouraged to apply for funding. Unlike other funding applications that they had come across before the Bursary application was very straightforward and took little time to complete which made it even more attractive and encouraged them to apply.

After the initial application Theo and Leo met with Creative Leicestershire's Creative Business Advisor to discuss their application and talk more about what the money would be used for. They both found this element of the application process very useful as it allowed them to put their personality across, something which is not achieved through just the paper application. Their first application was successful and Lunchbox Films received their Bursary in 2008.

The Bursary was used to purchase software for the company to enable them to make, edit and produce the films that they create with school children. The majority of the projects they undertake in schools are gained through Creative Partnerships – the government's flagship creative learning programme, designed to develop the skills of children and young people across England. Schools apply to the Scheme and a Creative Agent organises for companies, such as Lunchbox Films, to go into the school and create educational films that are themed to the national curriculum.

The Bursary has helped Theo and Leo to trade more professionally due to the multimedia software that they were able to purchase. The new software is protected giving them increased confidence in their ability to create a more expert piece of film. They have also been able to advertise that they have received the Bursary which itself has led to more work.

They believe there needs to be more pots of money available to enable projects similar to the Bursary Scheme in order to help improve the confidence of businesses within the creative industries sector. Having seen it work for themselves they strongly believe the money would be beneficial to other similar businesses.

Company Name: Kuma Studios

Contact: Martin Lewis and Pete Popham

Website: www.kumastudios.co.uk

De Montfort University's Innovation Centre is home to Kuma Studios, an Illustration and Graphic Design business owned by former De Montfort University students Martin Lewis and Pete Popham. Shortly after graduating the two designers set up their business, originally named Ten Five Design, in early 2008, before changing its name to Kuma Studios in September 2008 to better reflect the work they carry out.

Kuma Studios provides two services, illustration and graphic design, which in their own words '*complement one another, whilst also differing wildly*'. The illustration services offered include character design, comic artwork, editorial illustration, storybook illustration and exhibition whilst the graphic design services include logos & branding, brochure, leaflet & literature layout, poster & promotional design and artworking.

They decided to apply for a Creative Leicestershire Bursary in 2008 after hearing about the Scheme through word of mouth the previous year, at which point they were ineligible to apply (due to the length of time they had been established). The application process proved to be very straightforward and the support they received throughout from Creative Leicestershire was very useful.

The Bursary has been used to purchase a second set of computer software which has enabled them to increase their digital work time and effectively double their workload.

The impacts of the Bursary upon their business have been “massive” and were instantly apparent, primarily through their capacity to carry out more work. The new software has made it possible for Pete and Martin to work more independently of each other and effectively deliver the two sides of the business. It has also meant they are able to maximise their administration activities by being able to simultaneously work on projects on one computer whilst using the other to carry out admin and promotional / marketing work. Before the Bursary the admin work took time away from fee earning projects.

Without the Bursary from Creative Leicestershire Pete and Martin feel that the business would not be able to run properly and in the long run will help to increase profit through the increased amount of work that they are now able to carry out. Their experience of Creative Leicestershire has been very positive and they would recommend them to other creative businesses.

Along with the Bursary from Creative Leicestershire, Kuma Studios has also received an Incubating Graduate Business (IGB) grant from Leicester City Council and support from the Enterprise Inc Project funded by EMIN which provides rent relief for graduate businesses in the East Midlands.

Martin and Pete have also sought support from Business Link through their fund locator which unfortunately did not prove successful as they believe that due to the current economic climate there is limited funding available. They require additional funding to continue improving their business and continue to increase productivity to the professional high standard they already achieve – *“software is always changing and advancing and we need to ensure that we stay up-to-date and at the top end of the market.”*

They also looked into courses run by Business Link for start-up businesses but found that the majority of them were not suited to them as a creative business. They believe that there needs to be some form of bridging link between business and creative support to ensure its relevance to the sector due to the fact that creative businesses quite often experience different problems to those of other businesses.

Business support that Martin and Pete have received that they feel has been very beneficial includes a Business Mentor provided by the Innovation Centre and a session with a Portfolio Consultant. They recommend that these be more widely available and suggest bringing them into Leicester to work with the growing number of creative industries.

Company Name: Alex Williamson Contemporary Jewellery

Contact: Alex Williamson

Website: www.alexwilliamson.com

After completing her degree in Multi Media Textiles at Loughborough University in 2005, Alex spent a year developing her jewellery products before setting up her business in 2006. Alex, a contemporary jewellery maker, designs and makes pieces of jewellery inspired by architecture which portrays the repetitive lines held within contemporary architecture.

Her craft combines new technology alongside traditional skills. Her unique designs involve laser cut aluminium or chemically etched silver each inset with beautifully soft hand chosen leather, all carefully assembled with individually cut aluminium rivets and hand crafted silver links and clasps.

Though her business is based at her home in Kirby Muxloe, Alex spent a lot of time at various craft shows around the country selling her goods and trying to secure contracts with various suppliers. Attending these shows can be very expensive and to help with costs Alex has received funding from a number of sources including Arts Council and UKTI.

In 2006, Alex applied for a Bursary from Creative Leicestershire to help advertise her shows and create promotional material to be used within the shows and on a wider level. The money was spent on creating a new website to enable her to publicise her work to perspective clients and commission the creation of letterheads, business cards and compliment slips to enhance the professionalism of her business. Some of the money was also spent on attending the shows themselves.

Unfortunately, the recession has had dramatic effects on her new business and has meant she was unable to build up enough viable sales to continue trading through the fairs. Luckily, the website, created through the Bursary, has enabled her to continue her business as a sideline through that medium and will hopefully in time draw in some new commissions. Where possible she is also attending some exhibitions such as ones at the Guildhall and Belgrave Hall but for the time being is having to forgo the larger shows due to them costing in the region of £1,000 per time to attend.

Alex is currently retraining and hopes to qualify as a graphic products teacher where she can pass on her skills to the younger generation and continue to practice a craft she loves. Without the money from Creative Leicestershire she would have had to cease trading altogether but with her website and promotional material she has every chance of one day returning to trading as a business and selling her jewellery.

Company Name: Foot in Hand

Contact: Louise Katerega

Website: www.footinhand.co.uk

Louise is considered to be one of the most popular and versatile contributors to the UK contemporary dance scene and enjoys a varied career as a performer, choreographer, educator and mentor to people of all ages with differing amounts of dance experience. Over recent years, she has seen change and growth take place within her profession. She states that the arts is fast moving into ordinary people's lives for health, wellbeing and social cohesion purposes which has influenced her practices as they become more specialist and targeted toward specific groups.

Having built herself a reputation over the years as a freelance dancer working with disabled people and as a mentor, Louise decided to set up Foot in Hand as a vehicle for her own choreography in 2003. With a grant from the Arts Council, she was able to choreograph dances, work with live music for them and hire a number of people to dance in her dances. This was all carried out under the auspices of Derby Dance Centre (now DEDA), with Foot In Hand as company in residence and during her time there she created two full length works – “Words Afoot” (2003) and “Pockets on Fire” (2004/05).

This work led to further demands for her work as both a performer and a choreographer, so during 2005-06 she toured as a dancer and carried out various workshops. This period enabled her to gain further experience and form new friendships and contacts that have stood her in good stead today. In 2006, Louise made history when a piece of her dance was entered into The Place Prize (dance equivalent of the Turner or Booker Prize). The dance, “A State of Becoming” reached the semi-final and was one of the first ever at that level of competition to have a cast of disabled and non-disabled dancers.

In 2007, capitalising on the credibility of The Place Prize, Louise returned her focus to Foot in Hand as an organisation, expanding its scope beyond making new work to include the strategic projects she found herself in demand for in education, community and professional development.

At the same time, she decided to further develop the next stage of the business – *“I wanted it to be more credible in terms of marketing and to rethink what the company was about. It needed to be re-branded and bring everything under one umbrella”*. To enable this to take place Louise decided to apply for the bursary from Creative Leicestershire which she had heard about through previous work with the organisation. Going through the application process allowed her to articulate what the business was about and the values that it held – it was evident that these had changed since the business first developed in 2003 and Foot in Hand was now more ambitious about working to change the face of British dance and bring together disparate groups of people.

The bursary money was used to create a new website, develop new promotional material and employ a Project Manager to promote their new programme of work – “One Night Only”. After this work initially failed to take off, Louise started to doubt whether the work of Foot in Hand would continue. Luckily, a contact at the Peepul Centre in Leicester linked her to the Cultural Olympiad Programmer for East Midlands, Paul Brookes, who was searching for artists to invest in for the “Igniting Ambition Festival”, the cultural aspect of the Special Olympics which were held in Leicester in 2009. With his help, Louise secured awarded £48,000 from Arts Council England and £15,000 from Igniting Ambition - Cultural Olympiad Legacy Trust to re-work “A State of Becoming”, create and premiere her new show “One Night Only”, and run education/community workshops and residencies in the East and West Midlands.

From this, other high profile and long-term partnerships have been proposed e.g. Foot In Hand is the subject of a two year bid for Cultural Olympiad funding in the West Midlands and the company was head-hunted to pitch for a large scale outdoor piece combining disabled dancers and sailors for the 2012 celebrations. Louise, therefore now sees a potentially much more secure future for the company. Without the bursary which paid for the website and branding she believes that they would not have been able to show the credibility to secure the funding to carry out “One Night Only” which has seen Foot in Hand ‘explode’ as a company onto the Leicester arts scene and the Midlands dance

map. She states *“the bursary won’t solve all problems instantly but can play a crucial part in the jigsaw of success – you may not see the results straight away but see them with the long view later.”*

Her advice to others is to grow your business incrementally, focussing on the aspect you most need at any given time and doing that well rather than spreading yourself too thinly. Also to build yourself a reputation backed up by powerful and/or knowledgeable advisors to ensure continued success. She concludes: *“I rarely do anything without seeking advice from those older or more specialist than myself – including from my dancers (though it is important any advisor genuinely respect and understand what I am trying to achieve.) I rarely take 100% of it on board, otherwise I would never innovate or remain an individual, however, the perspective of others always saves me from some pitfall or improves my idea, The period spent on the Creative Leicestershire bursary was particularly valuable in this sense.”*