

creative  
skills  
europe

European Platform on Employment and Training  
in the Audiovisual and Live Performance sectors

# A SAFE BET TRAINING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A toolbox for the development  
of HR solutions supporting skills investment  
in the creative sector



## The Creative Skills Europe series

5 focused publications to inspire businesses and professionals from the European creative sectors to engage in training and develop customised solutions for skills development and career management.

- **A Step Ahead - Training for Innovation**

Good practices from across Europe on skills development supporting the structural transformations of the creative sectors

- **A Safe Bet - Training and Workforce Development**

A toolbox for the development of HR solutions supporting skills investment in the creative sector

- **It is a New World - Training in and for the Digital Era**

Examples of successful training schemes and tools for creative professionals in the digital environment

- **Joining Forces – Funding our Training Needs**

Recommendations for the development of the creative sector training funding schemes

- **Fruitful Co-operations – Access to training through Social Dialogue**

Examples of social partners' initiatives supporting skills and careers development in the European creative sectors

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# Foreword

**M**aking sure professionals are equipped with the right sets of skills to face current and future challenges is key - both for the survival of businesses and for securing individual careers.

At European and national levels skills development has been given centre stage in public policy strategies with the aim of combatting unemployment and of safeguarding the quality and competitiveness of our economies.

Professional training agendas are however complex fields of action that require the involvement of a variety of stakeholders and a constant awareness of the developments and needs on the ground.

Creative Skills Europe, the European Platform on Employment and Training in the Audiovisual and Live Performance sectors, is a project which aims at collecting information and at developing tools to help the sector adjust its skills to the realities of the field.

Ran by a partnership of European trade unions, employers' organisations, and national skills bodies, Creative Skills Europe built on the intelligence of the sector on its evolutions and needs.

It looked at creating national and European synergies, and at inspiring new types of actions, both at company level and in a collective way at sector level. Its objective was to steer discussions on the evolving skills needs in our sectors and to promote initiatives to respond to those needs.

After a first phase of activities (2014-2016) that led to the identification of key trends impacting skills and competences in our sectors, it was decided to pursue the cooperation from the perspective of the concrete needs emerging from the field.

In 2017-2018 four thematic workshops were organised in different European cities on the topics of innovation, HR management, the digital environment and the role of social dialogue.

During those encounters, available intelligence about our labour markets was shared, qualitative analyses on key trends were studied, and good practices of skills solutions were presented by stakeholders representing education and training bodies, institutions, and industry representatives.

The main outcomes of those exchanges are presented in this publication series.



# Skills development for sustainable businesses and careers

**A**ccompanying the acquisition of new professional skills can cater to different needs and be driven by different motives, for example:

- (1) Professionals might need to catch up with technical developments;
- (2) They might have to receive some important health & safety training;
- (3) They might have to adapt to the digital environment;
- (4) Some might have to acquire new sets of skills as their professions evolve;
- (5) Some might want or need to retrain and transition to a new occupation;
- (6) Others might want to build on their expertise and on a new set of skills to evolve and explore new professional opportunities.

Professional training is therefore important both for the development of businesses and for individuals' career paths.

The acquisition of new professional skills can happen in formal or informal settings and, today, can rely on a variety of digital tools that makes learning more accessible and easier to organise. Still offering training opportunities and integrating those opportunities into a company's development strategy is of course not a small task. It demands to keep abreast with skills needs, to anticipate change, to maintain a constructive dialogue with the staff, to identify relevant training schemes and solutions to fund them.

A range of questions arise:

- (1) How to develop training strategies in very small businesses that do not have a 'human resources' department such as the ones in larger companies?
- (2) How to prioritise training options when funds are limited?
- (3) What about training people who work on short term contracts and/or are not on the payroll?

HR tools have been developed in different European countries to help big and small organisations in the cultural and creative sectors become more active in the field of training and workforce development. Skills assessments have been run within companies and at sector levels, and occupational profiles of the different professions making up our sectors are available in different European languages.

Experiments focusing on very small businesses and aiming at supporting them in all HR related instances, including training, have also seen the light and proved very useful. Examples of organisations that decided to invest in training and to make some of this training available beyond their own staff also exist, and open new ways to look at the creative ecosystem and at the large and increasing number of independent workers that makes it thrive.

Universities, arts schools and other initial education bodies are finally more and more interested (and requested by their funders) to better connect with the world of work. Many educational institutions are working on the development of continuous training schemes and have all interests to develop an offer that respond to the sector's needs.

# Skills solutions: inspirations from across Europe

## Training and workforce development in the live performance sector

**L**ive performance institutions rely on a large diversity of professionals to produce their shows and reach out to their audiences. Depending on their size and funding models, they have more or less people on the payroll, but all have to make sure the people they work with have the right skills to work on or off stage in a safe, creative and efficient way.

In Belgium, Opera Ballet Vlaanderen, has renewed its training strategy in 2014, as part of a broader review of its HR priorities. The new training plan has four action streams: the mandatory training actions such as the ones related to safety, the actions aimed at collecting knowledge on the needs of the company (management & employees survey, yearly feedback meetings), the training actions related to the evolutions of the environment (technical, digital, aging workforce, etc.), and the training actions that look at improving the well-being of the employees (prevention of stress & burn-out, of harassment, etc.). Those action lines translate into a catalogue of trainings; some are mandatory (such as for managers) and others accessible to all and taken on a voluntary basis. Making time for training actions within tight production schedules is of course challenging but the commitment of the direction and of managers is indispensable for a training strategy to be implemented and to demonstrate results across the workforce.

### To know more:

<https://operaballet.be/en>

For smaller organisations, sector initiatives – bringing additional funding or know-how to enhance the training offer – can be an important supporting factor. In Flanders, Sociaal Fonds Podiumkunsten (SFP), the 'Social fund for the live performance sector' identifies sectoral training needs, organises short-term trainings and redistributes training grants. It also organises an informal network of HR managers.

### To know more:

<https://podiumkunsten.be/english/118/who-we-are/510>

Another example of a joint sector initiative aimed at developing an open source tool at the service of the entire live performance sector is the European Theatre Technicians Education project. It designed a competence-based course and testing process for a European level 2 certificate on how to work safely on stage. Instead of just testing basic theoretical knowledge the testing process looks at identifying the skills one has acquired through the course. The handbooks for teachers and for students are available for free on the project website and the partners are now working on training examiners and mentors, as well as on having the certification recognised and trusted throughout Europe by using the open badge principle.

### To know more:

<http://stage-tech-edu.eu/>

## Making Creative Apprenticeships work through mutualisation

**T**he CinéFabrique is a French higher education film and multimedia school that provides a free and graduating initial training course of 3 years. Established in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, the school is accessible through a national competitive exam. In every promotion, the school trains 30 students (equal numbers of men and women) in scriptwriting, production, image, sound and editing.

The aim of the school is to allow students to acquire the theoretical and practical knowledge that will make their professional integration easier. The training is attested by a degree issued by the school and by a Licence professionnelle (professional bachelor's degree). The third year offers a dual education programme made possible thanks to an Employers' Grouping (Groupement d'employeurs Cinéma et Audiovisuel). It is the grouping that hires 30 students/apprentices for a duration of 11 months and that organises their rotation within the different companies making up the grouping.

**To know more:**

<https://cinefabrique.fr/en/>

One of the objectives of Creative & Cultural Skills in the UK is to provide employers and training providers with advice and guidance on apprenticeships and entry level recruitment practices. They also support the development of apprenticeship standards by employers and offer expertise in the identification of the relevant standard and training provider to deliver that apprenticeship. Among other services Creative & Cultural Skills has published a Managers' Guide to Apprenticeships which answers in a clear way all the questions an employer might have on the scheme. It is a great example of a practical HR tool developed at sector-level to enhance the skills sets and diversity of the workforce while improving recruitment practices.

**To know more:**

<https://ccskills.org.uk/>

[https://ccskills.org.uk/downloads/A\\_Mangers\\_Guide\\_to\\_Apprenticeships.pdf](https://ccskills.org.uk/downloads/A_Mangers_Guide_to_Apprenticeships.pdf)

In Belgium, mediarte.be – the skills council for the media sector – has developed a programme named 'Stages Média' that makes the link between recent graduates (under the age of 26) and the industry. It supervises internships in terms of recruitment processes and legal matters, as well as makes sure the professional experience is valuable for both parties.

**To know more:**

<https://www.mediarte.be/fr/dossiers/stages/stages-media>

## Better understanding the live performer's competences

Listing the competences needed to perform a given occupation is a very useful tool that can be used in different contexts and by different types of stakeholders:

- (1) For guidance - What are the skills required and the expected levels of proficiency to exercise my job? What professional trajectory can I expect, and which is the most relevant training?
- (2) For upskilling – What are my current skills? Which skills shall I update? Which new skills shall I acquire before applying for a new job or when thinking of a professional transition?
- (3) For prospective purposes at sector level – What evolutions are currently at work in a given occupation? What new skills are needed to respond to those changes, and which training schemes should be developed?

Competency profiles are also very valuable HR tools that help employers organise their activity and distribute tasks among their staff, valorise colleagues' qualifications and identify further training needs.

In January 2018 the CPNEF SV (the Joint Committee for Employment and Training in the French Live Performance sector), composed of the representative employers' associations and trade unions of the sector, developed a detailed listing of the competences, knowledge and know-how of the performing artist. The objective was not to impose a unilateral view of what a performing artist should be, but on the contrary, to offer a tool to think about their work and how it is organised.

In this document, three main 'packages of skills' make up the performing artist's profile (artistic expression, career management, risk prevention and occupational health), alongside two complementary skills packages (development of an artistic project, artistic intervention and cultural action). This description of the performer's competences opens the way to further actions in the fields of skills assessments, training and transitions. Similar competency profiles exist for the technical and administrative occupations of the live performance sector.

### To know more:

<https://www.cpnefsv.org/metiers-spectacle/metiers-artistiques>



# Takeaways and the way forward

## 1. Thinking about competences from the very beginning: entry-level recruitment

**T**he audiovisual and live performance sectors are a popular field of activities that attract every year a large number of young people who wish to make a career in the industry. Entering the field is quite competitive and informal recruitment processes often reduce opportunities for young graduates.

For some occupations and fields of activities, though, especially technical ones, some profiles are still lacking, and skills shortages are expected in the future years for a number of occupations (VFX developers, project managers, fundraisers, etc.).

In general terms, the workforce in our field is considered as overqualified and under-skilled. Upskilling the workforce at entry-level and in the course of the career is therefore an important task to address current needs and anticipate future challenges.

Putting in place formal recruitment processes, using competence-based profiles and integrating new recruitments in an overall workforce assessment is therefore key. Developing apprenticeships is another important way to transform the industry in the long run and to improve the working conditions of the young hires. Solutions to adapt the apprenticeships models to the specificities of our field (project-based activities and seasonality, small-size businesses, etc.) exist and should be shared further. Close links to education providers are indispensable to make sure the skills of the next generation fit the reality of the field while opening new routes of development for our industry.

## 2. Finding manageable solutions at local level: mutualisation and partnerships

**O**ne of the solutions tested in France to facilitate the integration of apprentices in the work processes and schedule of the audiovisual industry is the employers' grouping: the creation of a structure bringing together a number of businesses which then becomes the central interlocutor and legal employer of the apprentices. Apprentices rotate within the different businesses in the course of the year, following the peaks in activity, and therefore acquire different skills in the various professional environments.

Thanks to the possibilities in the law, such groupings can also be used to 'share employees' when resources are not sufficient within one organisation to offer a full-time work contract. Similar systems of mutualisation could also be imagined as an HR support tool and as a place where regular contacts could be maintained between businesses and education bodies in a given region.

### 3. Integrating skills development in the daily life of the organisation

The return on investment of training actions can be immediate or long term but, in any cases, it will be more efficient and easily assessed if it is part of an overall reflection on an organisation's current situation and ambitions for the future.

For larger organisations, integrating a training strategy into their overall development plan and having it piloted by the HR department, is a guarantee of honouring legal obligations regarding training as well as enhancing the quality of the current production, preparing for future evolutions, and accompanying their staff in their professional development and well-being. In many countries arrangements exist to support employers in developing training actions and, in some (UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, etc.), sector initiatives have been created for that very purpose.

Peer-to-peer exchanges, online learning or targeted training programmes to support the acquisition of specific skills that are lacking within an organisation can be part of training strategies for companies with a smaller amount of staff. Such initiatives also empower colleagues to broaden their skills set and to enhance their contribution to the overall development of the company.

### 4. Taking advantage of sector-level tools and sharing resources

The live performance and audiovisual sectors develop their activities in a creative ecosystem going through important transformations. Composed of a limited number of large-scale players and of a constellation of small-size businesses, they rely on the capacity of the creative ecosystem to innovate in the digital environment while continuing to produce qualitative contents for our stages and screens.

Many of the professionals making up the sector are short-term employees or independent workers (self-employed, freelancers, etc.) and a large proportion of the businesses have ten or less employees on the payroll. This means that structured HR policies and training strategies can often be inaccessible, and that professional training opportunities therefore should be offered across the sector in order to develop schemes and tools for all types of creative businesses and workers.

For many years sector-level initiatives have seen the light in different European countries and developed tools to stimulate and facilitate training actions in our field (competency profiles, sector training funds, information services and guides, etc.). Those tools should be better known, disseminated and used by sector stakeholders and new partnerships should be established in order to offer training opportunities to all, including the independent workers upon which organisations increasingly rely to create and produce.

**Creative Skills Europe, the European Platform on Employment and Training in the Audiovisual and Live Performance sectors, is a joint project piloted by social partners of the EU Social Dialogue Committees in the Audiovisual and Live Performance Sectors:**

- CEPI - European Audiovisual Production Association
- EBU - European Broadcasting Union
- EFJ - European Federation of Journalists
- EURO-MEI - media, entertainment and arts sector of UNI Europa
- FIA - International Federation of Actors
- FIM - International Federation of Musicians
- Pearle\* - Live Performance Europe, Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe

**Creative Skills Europe also benefits from the support and expertise of the following national organisations:**

- mediarte.be, Fonds Social du Secteur Audiovisuel & Fonds Social de la Production de films / Sociaal Fonds voor de Audiovisuele sector & Fonds voor de filmproductie (Belgium)
- Sociaal Fonds Podiumkunsten (Belgium)
- Commission Paritaire Nationale Emploi Formation Audiovisuel (France)
- Commission Paritaire Nationale Emploi Formation Spectacle Vivant (France)
- GOC, Expert-centre for the creative industries (the Netherlands)
- ScreenSkills (United Kingdom)
- Creative & Cultural Skills (United Kingdom)
- Career and Transfer Service Center of the Berlin University of the Arts (Germany)
- German Theatre Technical Society / Deutsche Theatertechnische Gesellschaft DTHG (Germany)
- Kulturakademin (Sweden)

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