Crafts Council research strategy 2018-22

Executive Summary

1 Introduction

The Crafts Council research strategy seeks to provide a framework and priorities for our research programme 2018-22.

The purpose of the strategy is:

- To specify what the Crafts Council aims to achieve through its research programme;
- To set out how we will achieve the ambitions of the strategy;
- To describe the priorities for research.

Appendix 1 gives a full list of Crafts Council research reports. Appendix 2 sets out the ethics and quality policy.

2 Aims

The Crafts Council's research enables us:

- To produce an evidence base about the sector and its role;
- To formulate policy positions and to provide leadership and voice through our advocacy work, demonstrating the social, economic and cultural value of craft to Government, policy-makers, funders and investors and the opportunities and challenges craft can address;
- To focus the support we provide to makers, audiences, and organisations promoting craft, designing and delivering programmes to enable them to thrive creatively and as a community.

3 Impact of Crafts Council research

We have achieved recognised impact on policy and practice, for example in the following areas:

- Our higher education research prospectus, launched in March 2017 to encourage research collaboration, has generated conversations with over 30 institutions and already resulted in three new research projects/partnerships and applications to the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).
- Findings from *Innovation through Craft: Opportunities for growth* have:

- o Generated four partnership proposals to the AHRC Clusters Programme;
  - o Informed our contribution to the Creative Industries Council's sector deal proposals;
  - o Influenced our engagement with key national and international organisations, such as Innovate UK, Nesta, V&A, RSA, Calvert22, Milan Triennale; and led to initiatives such as Make:Shift Ireland, and partnerships in Asheville, North Carolina.
- Craft education data influenced recommendations in publications such as *CreateUK* and *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth*; data is being used by education institutions to inform course planning in craft;
- Our collaborative PhD partnership on professional practice development with King's College London has generated findings that are already informing our talent development programmes;
- The Head of Research and Policy has also contributed three submissions to academic publications and journals about craft policy.
- We inform further research: our research publications were cited 60 times in academic books and journals during the period of our 2015-18 research strategy.
- Our findings have informed business planning, for example in shaping our focus on exports in our professional development programmes.

Our research evidence has been used by press and media outlets, in particular the evidence from our Studying Craft series (Pomegranate and TBR 2014 a, b, c, d and e, TBR 2016a and b) which was quoted widely in national press and television. Website searches of our recent reports generate at least five pages each of website references.

4 Research model and approach

Our research enables us and our target audiences to develop policy positions that inform our advocacy work, in turn generating new evidence needs, as expressed in the following virtuous circle:


advocacy → research

policy
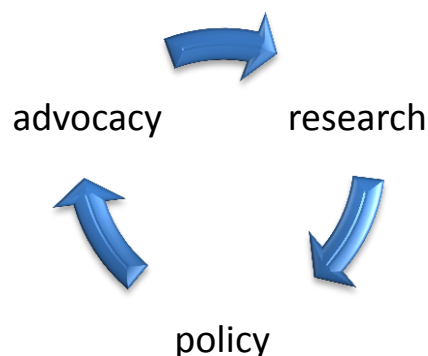
The Crafts Council undertakes research in the following ways:

i. Our research programme: this is our principal source of primary data, and also includes analysis of secondary data about the craft sector;

ii. Evidence of trends in practice, materials and tools to inform our exhibitions and collections programme, our acquisitions policy and our innovation programme;

iii. Audience research to inform our exhibitions and collections programme, our regional strategy and our communications.

iv. Monitoring and evaluation (qualitative, quantitative, formative and summative) to inform planning, review and delivery of our learning programmes, events and exhibitions.

This strategy focuses on the first of these types of research.

The following model represents the inputs and outputs of the research programme (figure 1):
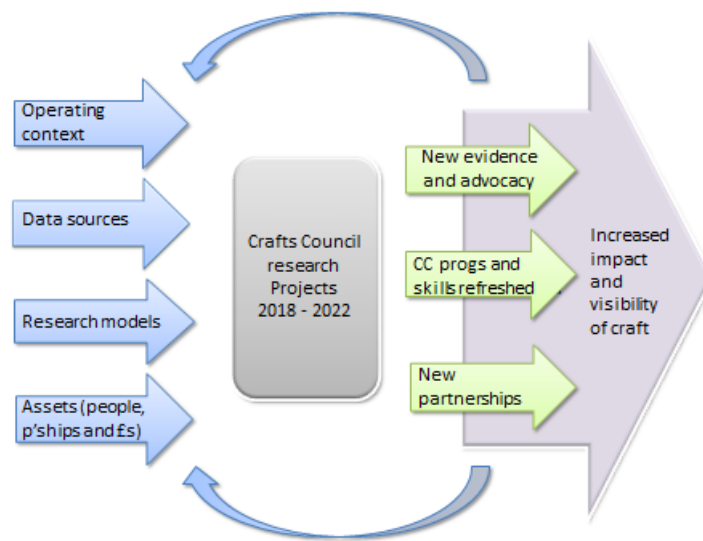
5 Intended research outputs and outcomes 2018-22

The Crafts Council business plan confirms the following Research and Policy outputs over the four year period:

- Two externally commissioned research reports;
- Four research summaries per year, either of research findings (for example, book chapters), or findings deriving from partnerships (eg Crafting professional practice through Higher Education, a collaborative PhD between King's College London and Crafts Council);
- Further research outputs deriving from partnership bids in response to identified need;
- Ten policy briefs per year.

6 Future priorities

The context for Crafts Council research and policy is described in the Crafts Council's 2018-22 business plan operating context, which highlights the growth in craft participation and production, set against the crisis in craft education and training and the challenges of funding. Whilst the visibility of craft is growing, reflected in the increasing recognition of craft's role within creative industries' growth, this is set against uncertainty about how Brexit will impact on the craft sector.

Within this context, Trustees have agreed the following priorities areas for the 2018-22 research programme:

- Craft exports data –survey of Directory makers and alumni to be published annually
- Market for craft
- Value of craft
- Innovation: evidence of impact of craft innovation
- Craft education and training trends
- Diversity in craft
- Haptic engagement
- Craft demographics

Appendix 1: Crafts Council research reports 2010 – 2017

The following is a full list of Crafts Council research reports available on our website:

Ball, L., Hunt, W. and Pollard, E. (2010) Crafting Futures: a study of the early careers of crafts graduates from UK higher education institutions, London: Institute for Employment Studies/ University of the Arts/ Crafts Council

Bennett, J (2015) Trends in craft education and the value attached to craft, in Making Futures. Vol. 4. ISSN 2042-1664. Plymouth College of Art

Bennett, J (2017) Back to the Future in London Essays, Centre for London

Bennett. J (2018) Our Future is in the Making: Trends in Craft Education, Practice and Policy in Luckman, S., Thomas, N., (2018) Craft Economies, London: Bloomsbury

Brown, J. (2014) Making It Local: what does this mean in the context of contemporary craft? London: Crafts Council

Burns Owen Partnership, (2012) Craft in an Age of Change, London: Crafts Council, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Wales and Craft Northern Ireland

Crafts Council (2016) EU Referendum Survey, London: Crafts Council

Crafts Council (2014) Our Future is in the Making - An Education Manifesto for Craft and Making London

England, Lauren (2017) Crafting Professionals: Identity, Entrepreneurship And Higher Education, Year 1 Summary (a collaborative PhD between King's College London and Crafts Council), London: Crafts Council

Full, Wayne (2015) Researching Craft: An analysis of Research Excellence Framework impact case studies relevant to craft, London: Crafts Council

Gaskill, K. and Collet, C. (2016) Biosalon: How will the intersection of design and biological fabrication open up to new ways of 'making' and 'crafting' in the future? London: Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts, and Crafts Council

Greenlees, R. (2013) New Routes to Sustainability – strategies for realising craft's potential in Making Futures. Vol. 3. ISSN 2042-1664. Plymouth College of Art

KPMG, Knowledge Transfer Network, University of Brighton (2016) Innovation Through Craft: Opportunities for growth, London: Crafts Council

Morris Hargreaves McIntyre (2010) Consuming Craft, London: Crafts Council

Schwarz, M. and Yair, K. (2010) Making Value, London: Crafts Council

TBR (2016a) Studying Craft 16: update on trends in craft education and training, London: Crafts Council

TBR (2016b) Studying Craft 16: Data workbook, London: Crafts Council

TBR and Pomegranate (2014a) Studying Craft 2: update on trends in craft education and training, London: Crafts Council

TBR and Pomegranate (2014b) Studying Craft 2: Data workbook 2, London: Crafts Council

TBR and Pomegranate (2014c) Executive Summary of Studying Craft report 1, London: Crafts Council

TBR and Pomegranate (2014d) Studying Craft: trends in craft education and training Full Report 1, London: Crafts Council

TBR and Pomegranate (2014e) Studying Craft 1: Data Workbook 1– February 2014, London: Crafts Council

TBR (2014) Measuring the Craft Economy. London: Crafts Council

TBR (2013a) Defining and measuring craft: Definitions 1998 – 2012, London: Crafts Council

TBR (2013b) Defining and measuring craft: Proposals for a way forward, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2012a) How Makers and Craft Organisations are Using Social Media, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2012b) Craft & Enterprise, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2012c) From Cell to System – Making Innovation Work, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2011a) Education Literature Review, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2011b) Craft and Higher Education, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2011c) Crafting Capital: New technologies, new economies, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2011d) Craft and Rural Development, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2011e) Craft & the Digital World, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2011f) Craft and Wellbeing, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2010a) Craft & Environmental Sustainability, London: Crafts Council

Yair, K. (2010b) Consuming Craft, London: Crafts Council

Appendix 2: Crafts Council ethics and quality policy

In order to provide effective leadership, it is imperative that the Crafts Council uses its limited resources to produce research which not only provides useful data and resources, but which is also of a consistently high standard.

In proposing and preparing each project we are committed to ensuring that the following conditions are met and that we produce research for which there is:

- Strong evidence of need in policy, practice or sector knowledge;
- A robust methodology appropriate to the research questions and subject of study;
- Expert advisers are involved in the development of concept as well as steering the project as field work, analysis and report writing are conducted;
- Consideration of the ethical implications of the research through a framework which addresses:
    - the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of participants, observing the principles of confidentiality and privacy;
    - issues of informed consent from participants: we will secure informed consent from participants (including, where relevant, parental consent) in research projects and ensure they understand our research purpose, scope, uses and dissemination;
    - sensitivity and security of data collected; transparency on the purpose and possible uses of the research;
- A clear relationship to future business planning and programmes; and
- A strategy for dissemination and evaluation to maximise the value of the research to participants and stakeholders.