

getting down to business

a collection of essays and experiences from
the Knowledge Transfer Programme in London's
museums, libraries and archives

1 December 2010



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The collection is organised in such a way as to invite you to make your own meaning round it, so more like a string of beads on a necklace than as an orderly hierarchy from policy makers to practitioners. We've tried to give the reader some breathing space, a few surprises, some resonances, the odd slightly startling juxtaposition, and no doubt we've left open some serious questions.

This report is available for download from <http://www.mla.gov.uk>.

For more information, contact Andrew Holden, Director of Engagement, London, MLA (Andrew.Holden@mla.gov.uk).

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foreword

London is a city of immense cultural and commercial success. As well as being home to many national treasures and hundreds of museums, libraries, galleries, heritage sites and universities, the capital is one of the world's great business centres and a place for constant innovation.

Crucially, the relationship between business and cultural institutions works both ways. Just as the latter has benefited from economic success in terms of sponsorship and business advice, so too can subsidised cultural assets bring tremendous benefit to business. They can help businesses and entrepreneurs to learn from past knowledge and experience, develop ideas and innovate, provide education and training opportunities, and provide inspiration. Institutions such as museums, libraries and archives can do even more in the future to maximise this role, by thinking about new approaches to collecting and presenting knowledge; making connections; and building partnerships with business partners.

This report, the result of a two-year research and pilot programme, is an attempt to explore and address these opportunities. The result makes for a fascinating collection of insights and stories, illustrating the many ways in which London's businesses can profitably work with its museums, libraries and archives. As the sector faces tough challenges over the next few years, I hope this report will also illuminate some new opportunities.

Munira Mirza | *Mayoral Advisor on Arts and Culture*

In the current economic climate, finding innovative ways to ensure London emerges triumphant from the recession is vital. And the capital's cultural institutions are doing just that, by engaging the brains of the business world as well as their wallets. Enterprising museums, libraries and archives are to be congratulated for establishing links with businesses and developing new income streams, work that will help drive innovation and ultimately our economic recovery.

Boris Johnson | *Mayor of London*

the knowledge transfer programme

Museums, libraries and archives are both holders of knowledge - in their people and their collections - and sites where that knowledge is exchanged between professionals; between collections and visitors; and among the wider community, including businesses and business people.

In the hunt for new income streams, how can cultural institutions offer businesses more than a marketing opportunity? Some of the questions that this programme asked, and started to explore answers to, include:

- * How can local libraries support businesses like artists in becoming more successful on the high street? - *see vignette: legal advice and Marigolds.*
- * How can those responsible for corporate archives ensure their business value and relevance is recognised? - *see vignette: a living archive.*
- * How can small museums and archives develop new long-term relationships with local businesses and find new ways of engaging them with collections in a way that supports day to day business? - *see vignette: a bit like Father Christmas.*
- * How can businesses and the cultural sector look beyond preconceived ideas of each other and reorganise their work and working relationships towards building new cultural business strategies and leadership? - *see the commissioners, and passim.*
- * How can business-support agencies and cultural policymakers oil the wheels to stimulate easier relationships between these two worlds and increase the instances of successful knowledge transfer and business innovation? - *see the academics.*

Short timeline:

- * The programme has its origins in around 2005, in a general investigation into the economic impact of the Museums Libraries and Archives (MLA) sector.
- * In 2007, with encouragement from the London Development Agency (LDA), MLA developed a programme focussing specifically on the role of collections in stimulating innovation within businesses.
- * In 2009 four pilot projects, engaging more than 100 professionals from museums, libraries and archives, tested the applicability of practical ideas for knowledge transfer between businesses and the cultural sector.

You'll find inspiration in what follows, inspiration that's drenched in perspiration, and you'll probably notice that quite a few shoes need re-heeling and resoling. What you won't see are some of the many hidden acts of generosity. Take the City Business Library, mentioned once, in tiny print in a list at the end. It was they who hosted the kick off session for the Modern Local Business Library pilots, and then (we know through email correspondence and passing comments) continued quietly to offer support to the pilots on business databases.

There are also stories of brokering and persuasion not told here: how Islington Libraries, for example, found a vacuum during their research, and brokered a whole new set of connections between greening of local businesses and the greening of the Council. There's a lot of companionship, many small moments of practical entrepreneurship where rolling your sleeves up and putting on the Marigolds counts as much as negotiating a new design idea. There's a great deal of dogged slogging and this is as important as the flashes of excitement.

We hope that this will be a sufficient introduction to invite you, whoever you are, to get involved in a lively debate that shapes a new conversation about the relationship between businesses and museums, libraries and archives.

Victoria Ward | *Sparknow Founder and Partner*

Getting down to business is a report that brings together a collection of personal reflections, archive fragments and illustrations that offer many points of view on these pilot projects. Each piece has been chosen because it also holds ideas that could be adopted by practitioners, policymakers or strategists from both the cultural and the business worlds.

The idea for the organising principle for the report came from Mark Ravenhill's 'Shoot, Get Treasure, Repeat,' a series of 16 plays originally performed at the Edinburgh Festival at 2008 and then simultaneously over a month in different locations in London. Each is around 20 minutes long and they stand alone but are each in some way about the war on terror. His aim was 'to create an epic out of a series of small encounters'.

Sparknow conducted the original research that led to this pilot programme and assumed a bridge building role for the pilot programme.

places and projects

It seems right to start by laying out the places and projects that have been part of this impetus towards a new knowledge transfer map of London.

1 | the exchange programme

A series of six workshops over six months for 12-15 business, museum, and archive participants stretching and testing ideas of knowledge transfer and cultural strategy for business.

The role of a museum in a business network | *London Transport Museum, April 2009*: transport; stakeholder management; the edges of knowledge transfer; sketchbooks as a management tool.

Public-facing use of an archive | *John Lewis, May 2009*: retail & fashion; building the archive into the fabric of place and product; the role of heritage and history in business vision; values and strategy.

The value (or not) of corporate social responsibility | *Foundling Museum, June 2009*: corporate social responsibility; employee engagement; the role of objects and places in inspiring imagination and building identity.

Retro-innovation | *London Metropolitan Archive, July 2009*: small and medium sized businesses; the relationship between archivist and business owner; innovation building on the past; changing meanings in archives over time.

Unexpected angles & surprising collaborations | *University College London Collections & Museums, September 2009*: science and technology; handling

Ideas about what might (or might not) constitute knowledge transfer, using the London Transport Museum (LTM) as an illustration:

- * It's an effective hub of a network of people and organisations involved in transport in London.
- * It has a stakeholder manager and has individual contracts with each stakeholder.
- * Business partnerships are based on an understanding of each other developed over time and need a goal that benefits both.
- * Through its relationship with museum and resources, an LTM stakeholder is able to reach its stakeholders and these people might in turn be drawn to the LTM exhibitions.
- * The role of the museum is a leverage point for both, to reach to wider audiences beyond the immediate reach of either, with a new kind of conversation.
- * There has to be something more than a transaction, a deal. For example, in its relationship with a company using archive materials on posters, the LTM imposed certain standards on the way the materials were used, and so used the closeness of the relationship to insist on certain standards. Something has to change as a consequence of the encounter for it to be knowledge transfer.

KTP archive | *record of exchange programme event one*

partnerships; museums and archives in organisational change; the big difference a small museum can make; using the physical spaces of museums and archives to invite in nomadic workers and working travellers.

Opening the bridges | *Wellcome Collection, October 2009*: the collection originator as entrepreneur and bridge builder; the qualities & skills of a bridge builder; what's next?

2 | the modern local business library

Four projects were each granted £4,000-£6,000 to try out a new relationship between businesses and the local library.

Haringey worked two routes to building closer relationships with the local artistic community. The first was to build a referral system through the banks. The second was the Picture Windows project, using temporarily empty shopfronts to mount exhibitions by local artists.

Islington researched local businesses, by going to them and inviting them in, and by liaising more closely with other parts of the council, to profile more accurately the business offer that they could develop or facilitate.

Redbridge used its proximity to the Olympic 2012 sites, and the increase in locally based knowledge workers as a result of the recession, to build relationships with local business networks, like Business Link, Job Centre and prime local businesses to take advantage of 2012.

Waltham Forest planned to work with eight local businesses to introduce them to the library knowledge base, and to facilitate network and business or breakfast meetings outside normal opening hours, also bringing in outside speakers.

In this report you'll find Elena Pippou writing about the Haringey Picture Windows project and Caroline Rae telling of the struggles to get things started at Waltham Forest.

3 | the innovation fund

10 small projects each granted £2,000 to museums and archives to experiment with a new product, idea, relationship or service.

Broadcasting Bethlem | *Bethlem Archives & Museum* worked with Seneca Productions so that they could better use their services in a documentary about archives.

Making your Mark: | *London Metropolitan Archive* worked with two young designers, through the Prince's Trust, to learn skills to use the Greater London Council (GLC) archives to make posters and postcards and build local business relationships.

On the Ball: in Business with Spurs | *Bruce Castle Museum* worked with the Spurs archive to put on a special exhibition, inviting Spurs and the community to see the importance of the archive in the new football ground.

Pictures for Posters | *Church Farmhouse Museum* worked with the archive and local business, inviting businesses to choose a picture of their building which could then be put up in their organisation.

Picture Library | *The Embroiderers' Guild* planned to provide a bespoke service providing access to their unique collections for commercial use, stretching beyond the current educational audiences.

Room to Discover | *Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons* developed soft skills business training modules around their collections, curatorial expertise and spaces.

Delivering Change: resources to support business transformation | *the British Postal Museum & Archive* worked with managers in the business to identify how archive materials and resources can be used to support business transformation.

Designers Meet Archives | *University of the Arts* worked to open the collections to small creative and design businesses.

Stefania Ricci at the Hunterian Museum, Paul Sherreard of the London Metropolitan Archive and Hugh Petrie at Church Farmhouse have all talked here about some of the challenges and successes in their innovation fund projects.

The Golden Age of London Theatre | *Westminster City Archives* worked with theatre practitioners to help them use the extensive West End theatre archive.

Embedding the Whitechapel in East London's Artists' Practices | *The Whitechapel Gallery* wanted to extend the use of the archive by local artist-educators in their artistic practice.

4 | information literacy 2.0

A train the trainer one-day module was devised to help librarians engaging with businesses to:

- * think through new approaches
- * develop a two hour coaching and support product that can be used to equip businesses better to use information sources and expertise.

It was run twice, for about 30 people in total.

The Whitechapel Gallery was also used as the venue for the innovation fund kick-off session, and this is touched on in the essays by *the producer* and *the futurist*.

Lesley Robinson writes about the design of the information literacy training. Information literacy is also touched on in other essays and extracts, in particular in the *LMA vignette: who's Arthur Scargill?*

the librarian

Caroline Rae writes about the challenges of one of the modern local business library pilots.

In support of our libraries service plan and the London Borough of Waltham Forest's sustainable community strategy, we had what seemed a comprehensive strategy for the coming year. Looking back it's difficult to see why developing relationships with businesses wasn't in the plan.

In late Spring 2009 MLA London called on libraries to submit proposals on how they would run a pilot project with local businesses. We decided to apply and keep the project small. We would engage with eight businesses and have a conversation with them, introducing them to the library and spending one to one time showing them how to access information and use our online resources. As an added-extra we envisaged running out-of-hours networking sessions for local businesses. If our application was successful, we would use the £4,000 to increase our IT resources and to publicise the service.

After an optimistic first meeting in June with the other three boroughs chosen for the pilot, our first aim was to have the IT up and running and then move on to introducing local businesses to the library and setting up the networking events.

By September we had some temporary PCs in place and business customers could access COBRA. But almost immediately it became apparent that it wouldn't be as straightforward as first thought. Before our submission to the MLA, our information staff had approached around 50 local businesses, all of whom felt that they could gain something from a dialogue with the library service. Come September and those supporters vanished! They still agreed it was a good idea, just not for them.

COBRA (the Complete Business Reference Adviser) is an information resource for anyone running or starting a business, writing a business or marketing plan, or conducting research into a new market.

At the start of October our days and nights of cold calling and emailing started to bear fruit. Within a day or two we had two networking events booked and meetings arranged with other contacts for future events. By mid-October we had our IT in place with full functionality just in time for our first evening event, an HM Revenue & Customs advice session on becoming self-employed. This was quickly followed by a Business Link event about marketing on a small budget while planning had started with two partners for a large event in January.

November dawned and we hadn't conducted any business induction sessions. Then finally our phone started ringing and our emails pinging! Businesses who had attended our events came back and the word spread. Contacts from local business forums started recommending us and by 30 November we had introduced nine businesses to the library - we had beaten our target!

That was the beginning. We have continued to introduce local businesses, have established a programme of business events for the remainder of the year, held a very successful event with two local partners which attracted 60 local business women, developed our own feedback and further information forms and generally changed the emphasis of our dialogue with local businesses. Now if a customer asks for a book on business information, we know that it won't be a short conversation...

Caroline Rae | *Library Supervisor, Walthamstow Library*

Some of the useful things that libraries learned:

- * Spend time and design effort on publicity materials.
- * Go out to people in their offices and workplaces rather than expecting them to come to you - you'll understand them much better.
- * Do practical things, such as sending out reminders about events to keep them in people's minds.
- * Spend time working out how to get council colleagues on board.
- * Make simple guides and leaflets that will invite people to get involved (a local arts map, an online resources leaflet).
- * Think laterally about ideas for inviting businesses to use the library spaces.
- * Everybody's a business, so see everybody as a business audience.
- * Chance encounters and apparently irrelevant conversations matter, so manufacture situations where these could happen.
- * You need a clear focus and a personal passion to make it work.
- * Innovation is incremental and relatively easy.

KTP archive, lessons learned session | *British Dental Association, December 2009*

Caroline ran the Waltham Forest modern local business library pilot, which resulted in 19 one to one inductions, over 130 people attending events, and 65 businesses on a database asking to be kept in touch with events at the library.

the commissioners

The research in the first phase of the project highlighted a lack of knowledge and understanding of each other's motivation, habits and connections.

understanding each other

Leaving aside the obscure policy jargon about knowledge transfer and innovation, the MLA sector is used to seeing business as Gradgrindian or interested only in the kudos of an association with culture and ticking the corporate social responsibility box. The services it does provide to businesses are often unrecognised as such. In return business people may have little inkling of the skills and assets within cultural organisations which are generally marketed only to tourists, families or school parties. The pilot projects quickly focused on the importance of enabling a clearer understanding between these two worlds.

fragility

As in many other areas of innovation within the cultural sector, entrepreneurialism is often heavily dependent on the energy of individuals, capacity and a large dose of serendipity. Starting just as the recession was beginning to bite brought this home. Recruiting to the pilots from both business and the MLA sector was tougher than anticipated, with the economic climate cited as a reason for not being able to devote precious time to something seen as slightly left-field. Alternatively, it could be that the increasing pressure on the cultural sector to become more commercially-minded in this new environment will actually create new incentives to embrace the potential of working with businesses in new ways.

breaking the boundaries of knowledge transfer

This project came about at a time when the London Development Agency was exploring different approaches to knowledge transfer. Whilst knowledge transfer has its origins in the university sector, the LDA wanted to identify other parts to the knowledge base in London. The MLA's initial research into economic impact demonstrated there was untapped potential among cultural institutions to stimulate business innovation. Museums, libraries and archives had the potential to access different types of business that might find it more difficult to engage other parts of the knowledge base, but would naturally turn to collections as a starting point. In particular the LDA was excited by the role that the sector could play in stimulating innovation in one of London's key sectors: the creative industries.

redefining the knowledge transfer process

But not only did this project break the boundaries of the knowledge base, it has also redefined our understanding of knowledge transfer. We were of course expecting that the MLA sector would work with business to help create innovation in new products and processes, but what has been most interesting about the project is how it has uncovered knowledge transfer in other areas, for example the impact cultural spaces, professionals and collections can have on staff and organisational development, from leadership training to brand image.

plus la meme chose

And yet, in many ways, aspects of this project were the same as other knowledge transfer projects, most notably in the processes involved - the recognition that it's not just about the assets within the knowledge base but about the people. There are two points here. Firstly, the skills brought to bear in a knowledge transfer transaction are in some ways more important than the knowledge assets themselves. Secondly, policymakers talk glibly about the market for knowledge (with a supply of knowledge from our knowledge base and demand from businesses). But it is critical that the mechanisms and processes are in place in

'In the literature of the knowledge economy it is often necessary to talk about knowledge as if it were a tradeable and bankable commodity.

This neglects what to us are its most important features: knowledge is embodied in the knower, and for it to be transferred, a relationship of understanding must form, however briefly, across a gap. When we talk about knowledge transfer we are saying that one person has changed as a result of encountering another, either in person, or through their work.

There are two kinds of change that benefit the person crossing over into the museum, library and archive spaces. There is the direct transfer of knowledge, where people gain information and understanding that is useful to their work, and then there is the cultivation of insight, where a spacious and richly appointed intellectual environment promotes reflection and inspiration and leads to better use of knowledge both old and new.'

Sparknow | Findings, Knowledge Transfer Programme, MLA London

between to allow the exchange of knowledge (i.e. the transaction) to take place. Hence the importance of the bridge builder role, which many participants talk about so vividly or imply in the pieces that follow.

in conclusion

Whilst there's no magic recipe for creating the imaginative capacity which is at the heart of opening up understanding between these two worlds, as several participants have commented, we can seek to 'exercise the imaginative muscle' which lurks within everyone.

Andrew Holden | *Director of Engagement for London, MLA Council, SRO for the Knowledge Transfer Programme at MLA London*

Judith Rosser-Davies | *Senior Project Manager, Business Development, London Development Agency*

'Bridge builders' - people who understand both worlds and can act to catalyse, cajole, persuade, nudge and challenge in both so as to bring about early and exciting changes and open new channels of communication.

Sparknow | *Findings, Knowledge Transfer Programme, MLA London*

The London Development Agency was the main funder of this project.

vignette your bodies not your cash

Caroline Ellis reflects on changes to The Women's Library's planning process in a conversation with Victoria.

At the time I was going to the Exchange Programme sessions we were writing our audience development plan. One of our audiences is businesses in the City. How we wrote the plan changed as a result of the programme. I talked to different people, thought of different ways of getting into businesses. Before, we'd always thought we'd get in through the marketing department, but perhaps sometimes the archive is the way in, provided we're not in competition. There's corporate social responsibility, which I hadn't heard of before the programme. Or maybe we could use women's groups as a way in.

You go in through the women's group or social responsibility and you're going for something different. If you go in through marketing you're going in to get something out of them, rather than saying 'what is this third thing we can build between us?'

It helps us get away from them thinking that we're just coming for money. We're here for your bodies, not your cash. The relationship is on a different footing straight away.

Caroline Ellis | *Head of Special Collections, London Metropolitan University, The Women's Library*

Three ideas about points of entry, which sprang from the 'More than Money' workshop at the Hunterian Museum in March 2010, were:

- * *Embroiderers' Guild* deepening quality-assurance thinking by providing the analogy of detailed craft work such as embroidery as a way for the quality assurance team in a business to rethink its own processes.
- * *Design Museum* helping businesses think beyond the experience economy to ideas about a transformation economy by integrating events, exhibits, talks and publications in a way that challenges business thinking.
- * *Hunterian Museum & Musical Museum* building three-way alliances that tackle a subject afresh. For example, connecting the Music Museum, local businesses and Age Concern to fund and host tea dances, or the Hunterian Museum working with nutritionists and supermarkets to explore nutrition in the museum setting.

Caroline was an exchange programme participant. This comes from recorded interview with Victoria on a visit to the Women's Library after the project.

vignette a living archive

John Entwisle talks to Julie Reynolds about his role as the archivist for Thomson Reuters.

I am a reassuring repository for the soul and integrity and essence of Thomson Reuters...in this age of technology, where it is now uncool only to have a Blackberry and not to have an iPhone (it's all iPhones in Canary Wharf now) we are in an impersonal society. There is a spiritual need, a human need and I fulfil that need at Thomson Reuters.

John is called on by colleagues to retrieve information - fast, accurate information, perhaps with a 30-minute deadline. This throws temporary assistants, more used to 24-48 hour or even weekly turnarounds, not used to working at the same kinds of speeds that the business expects of itself.

John is trusted deeply for his rich and lengthy knowledge, gained over 25 years working on Thomson Reuters' history publications and archive and he is conscious of the need to also perform his role visibly.

I've learnt to be a slight showman. I try to make sure that there is something on the edge of my desk, a very interesting photograph or document which is not confidential. I know that when people go past they'll have a look, and that's good for the archive. They ask you about it, they comment about it and say; this is interesting, what is this?, or I didn't know we did that, or who's that?

These objects around John represent a different era of Thomson Reuters. He has two desks rather than one so that he can communicate the archive and the knowledge that it contains to his colleagues through the senses of sight and touch:



John looks out over his customers. He is an exchange programme participant.

I'm allowed two because it is seen that I need more space for putting items down. When you walk around you will see that people only have their telephone, their keyboard and their screen and one other item around them, that is all. A workday for other staff members involves their computer and iPhone as communication tools; there is no need for hardcopy documents. Being able to walk past my desk on the way to get a cup of coffee is a welcome tactile interaction with the living archive. It's always worth having a few items that will attract people's attention. Here people are very intelligent and they think, so are likely to have their attention attracted by something like that.

He can often be seen at social events, AGM's and other gatherings to answer questions on the company's pioneering heritage where he can provide the information quickly. Almost every important visitor who comes through Thomson Reuters' doors will have John on their visit schedule. The CEO introduces him as the soul of the organisation. He is the 'computer' of knowledge transfer who physically archives Thomson Reuters' data that he disseminates to the right places.

His role as a curator of knowledge as an individual is the most important factor here, not how or how much information is catalogued in to the archive itself.

Julie Reynolds | *Sparknow bridge building team*

Daragh Fagan, General Counsel, EMEA, Markets Division who has known John for three years talks about how he has drawn on the artifacts in the archive to tell Thomson Reuters' story and how it can be used in a bridge building capacity:

When Thomson and Reuters merged I realised that the grandfather of David Thomson (the now Chairman of Thomson Reuters) was Lord Thomson of Fleet, whom at one point in his working career was a director at Reuters in the 1950's. I was able to ask John to find artifacts in the archive recording Lord Thomson of Fleet's time at Reuters. John selected some lovely pictures of Lord Thomson Fleet in boardroom meetings at the old Reuters building on Fleet Street. We were then able to present these framed pictures to David Thomson on his first visit to the London office for a board meeting. This touched him greatly. The gifts from the archive were a physical and cultural symbol of the two organisations joining together.

the business consultant

Because I was not working towards a pre-determined output I felt enabled to be creative with the learning; I felt geared for innovative thinking from the outset.

Because the programme was about building bridges I became so practiced in making connections between business and museums, libraries and archives that it is now part of my natural thought processes. Participating on the project has had two specific outcomes for our work. The first involves engagement with the history of the products, services and ideas that sit behind any new business. We are now experimenting with embedding this thinking directly into the business planning process. This has expanded the range and depth of our customers' business plans and has already had some interesting outcomes. One client is developing a plan to work with a museum and archive partner to teach school children about the history of social walking, which will link to his 'walking bus' business for London. The Mayor's Office was so impressed that they made him one of 15 'London Leaders' - a team to enable environmental change across the capital.

The second type of outcome is the encouragement of businesses to value the uses of history, artefacts and old knowledge in new plans; many of our clients are involved in innovative regeneration programmes and I am looking for the potential of collections and partnerships in every initiative.

Since the programme I have approached a large retail-based client who is interested in partnering with museums and archives to create a retail museum and play space. I am working with a client who was opening a Buddhist centre in London; now the centre is also to be open to the public as a museum and library

of eastern thinking. And I have commenced discussions with those shaping Greenwich's changeover to a new royal borough. We are exploring how local businesses might work with the museums and archives of Greenwich to ensure that they make the appropriate links to their local history in time for the historic event.

My company is also benefiting directly. We were awarded a substantial contract to produce a feasibility study for a new social enterprise business that will contain, amongst other things, an archive and collection - built and manned by the local community with the advice and help of MLA London. This is great news for the 2012 legacy, and the educational, cultural, and economic prosperity of East London.

The work resulting from the MLA knowledge transfer programme so far will have increased the turnover of my business by at least 18% by the end of next year, will have helped create 15 new jobs and 20 volunteering opportunities, will have created a new online collection and archive for South London, and a new community collection and archive for East London. It has opened up opportunities for me to help our clients improve their financial, educational and cultural outcomes and it has helped add value to every client we work with.

The programme is finished but its impacts will have a lasting effect; I take my learning into meetings, awards judging, strategy planning sessions and day to day conversations. I made some good friends and I was reengaged with the feeling of wonder - not easy to measure, but pretty important to me.

Katharine Ford | *GK Partners*

Katharine was an exchange programme participant.

the researcher

Let's begin at the beginning. This programme set out to understand how museums, libraries and archives can contribute to the knowledge transfer agenda: it's worth briefly stating what that means.

At the heart of knowledge transfer is the idea that businesses can use external stimuli to help them innovate. Originating in the science and engineering departments in universities, and gradually spreading to less technology-focused areas, knowledge transfer has greatly contributed to universities' ability to generate income and have a positive economic impact on their local communities.

We wanted to see whether this model could be extended to the vast wealth of knowledge in London's museums, libraries and archives, both within the academic sector and beyond. So, with LDA funding in place, we set out to commission a piece of research which would lead to a series of pilot projects, each one designed to test and develop the knowledge transfer capacity of London's museums, libraries and archives. And this is where the project began to evolve. We originally thought that we were going to commission a bread-and-butter economic evaluation of the possibilities inherent in cultural sector knowledge transfer, with the ultimate output a neat, bottom line figure.

However, the project proposal that really stood out for us began from the premise that such a task was not particularly useful. Sparknow argued very convincingly that the process of knowledge transfer is so particular, so dependent upon its situation and context, that it's almost impossible to extrapolate from a few examples to an overall economic impact. Instead they proposed to look at

individual incidents of knowledge transfer, and from those to discover the kinds of circumstances that allow effective interactions between businesses and the sector.

From Sparknow's initial report we developed four pilot projects. These were designed to test our conclusions and to show what could be achieved when museums, libraries and archives consciously focused upon working with businesses. We wanted to see whether small interventions could achieve significant changes, and most importantly whether we could place business interaction on the map as an important job for the sector. The rest of this report will tell you whether we succeeded or not. I would simply like to add a few words on some of the things that have struck me as we've worked on these pilots over the past year.

The first thing is the enthusiasm and open-mindedness with which the sector has participated in the pilot projects. One of the things we found in our initial research was that 'engaging with businesses' is almost never part of a curator, librarian or archivist's job description. Nonetheless, it quickly became clear that there was an enormous, and often unexploited, interest in understanding more about how the sector can support business innovation. I think that many pilot participants would say that their perception of how businesses worked and where museums, libraries and archives can make a difference has developed greatly over the course of the project.

It was somewhat harder to engage on the business side. I think that this was, at least in part, a function of the economic circumstances - the start of our project coincided with the big hit of the financial downturn. When recruiting for the exchange programme, I had a lot of interested business people who were nonetheless worried about taking half a day a month away from their desks - presumably concerned that it would have been cleared for them when they returned! Many of the museums, libraries and archives working on the Modern Local Business Library and Innovation Fund programmes also found it very hard to engage with businesses. Interest did not always translate into action, and there is clearly some work still to be done on this side of the equation. It might have been useful

to work more closely with a business development organisation, to establish our credentials in this area.

The final observation I'd like to make is the extent to which this project itself has been a process of knowledge transfer and innovation. Sparknow have taken great care to construct workshops that explore techniques as well as subject areas, so participants have gone away with practical tools to change the way they work within their own organisations. With this work, we have always tried to practice what we preach - holding our project meetings in the British Library and the Foundling Museum as well as MLA London's offices. I've certainly taken away some working practices that I hope will stay with me.

As well as engaging some pretty big players along the way, from John Lewis to Thomson-Reuters, we have managed to develop a compelling story of what can happen when the cultural sector engages with business on its own terms: the pitfalls, the triumphs and the learning which, I hope, will inspire others to continue the journey that we've begun.

Ellen Collins | *Research Officer, Research Information Network, British Library*



KTP archive | Participants at the More than Money event at the Hunterian Museum in March 2010. They are using the 'edges of knowledge transfer' matrix to find where they think the boundaries of valuable and repeatable knowledge transfer lie. Using large and small paperspaces creates a 'third space' for good conversations, This is the same tool that was used at the first advisory group meeting for the first phase of work.

Ellen led the work for MLA London and is now on the advisory group.

vignette who's Arthur Scargill?

The Making your Mark project was all about exploring images from London Metropolitan Archives that celebrate London's iconic status in the heritage of UK music and politics. During the project, two designers - Joe Naud and Michael Clarke - spent time researching in the archive to source a series of images. They then worked with the LMA's Image and Design team to create materials they think will appeal to a wide audience.

We worked with people under 24 in need of a job, getting them to use our archive to produce a set of images, posters, postcards for us to sell and for them to persuade local businesses to stock as giveaways or items for sale.

We worked with the Prince's Trust as a partner organisation where young people could come to learn digital media skills. We wanted to work with up to five, ended up working with two and a half young people. One of them was in, was out, was in, was out. I think that if we did it again and people promised time, only a percentage would commit. That's just the way it is.

The posters are composite images from a whole range of photographs in our archive, all from the 80s. We talked at the outset about what themes the young people wanted to use in their research. They wanted to get across the idea that people were being motivated by music, and politics were being driven by people. That comes out well in both posters.

The graphic design process was one of the key aspects of the knowledge transfer. About 40% of the overall budget was used to make this part of the project happen. Without this funding we would not have been able to access the expertise of the graphic designers.

Paul Sherreard | *email correspondence about knowledge transfer impact*

the trainer

Lesley Robinson designed and delivered the train the trainer programme we called Information Literacy 2.0.

This piece of the knowledge transfer programme aimed to create a group of people who can help businesses to become more effective seekers and users of information. This involved training a minimum of 10 librarians from different library authorities to deliver a training programme that would:

- * help business people to use information more effectively in their jobs
- * introduce business people to the knowledge and information in libraries
- * help business people to see libraries as a place they can work.

The sign up rate to the one-day course was excellent. In fact, I trained nearly 30 librarians over two days. It was apparent from early on in the sessions that the librarians were gaining a significant amount of knowledge from each other. Some had extensive training experience, others had much less but the practical nature of the course assisted the process of shared learning.

One inhibition I was particularly aware of was that the participants felt limited in delivering training to business people because they felt they did not have the range of resources to offer. With restricted budgets, they subscribed to few fee-based online services and relied mostly on free or hard copy resources. They also felt as if they could not probe the business person for what they were really trying to find out as it might stray into the area of giving opinions and advice, rather than facilitating research and signposting.

To cure all these fears, I developed four case studies that took the participants out of their comfort zones. I posed scenarios which they would not ordinarily deal with but which were not beyond the bounds of their knowledge. The cases helped the participants work together to understand how they could approach research differently and manage the flow of information and questioning between the librarian and the business person.

The four cases were designed to help:

- * a young entrepreneur decide how to grow her business online
- * a managing director understand his competition
- * a charity think about the changing needs of sponsors
- * a man who has been made redundant and wants to either retrain or set up his own business.

One approach to helping bring the cases to life was to split the participants into teams and have some of them become the enquirer and the others to become the librarian. They then adopted the personas of the characters in the cases and acted out the enquiry process. It was a revelation to see how people got into character but also how they asked more probing questions and gave fuller, more rounded answers than they had before. This 'stepping into character' brought the process to life.

By the end of the day, the participants had devised a two-hour modular training course to deliver to business people, and had the added benefit of using the programme to develop their staff in research and enquiry techniques.

The programme was run again for Manchester Libraries who are planning to collaborate and build a similar training programme to be delivered across the Manchester region.

Lesley Robinson | *Lesley Robinson Consultancy Services*

the economists

MLA's knowledge transfer programme investigated ways in which knowledge could be acquired or developed as a result of changing the way that the public interact with museums, libraries and archives. Its outputs were new ways to make use of heritage collections to provide public and private value to society.

It was every bit as much a work of applied research and development as the invention of a new drug, a faster car or a better light bulb - and just as valuable to society.

One might think that projects of this nature would be entitled to the tax relief and grants that science-based firms routinely receive. Actually, government rules specifically exclude it. Unfortunately, the arts and even the social sciences remain archaically separated in policymakers' minds from the methodical methods of 'hard science'.

MLA's project confounded both stereotypes. It was as creative about method as it was methodical about creativity. It deployed the structured techniques, which Sparknow had tested in other environments, to unleash the creativity of the participants and provoke them to produce new ideas on how libraries and collections might interact with society.

The methods required for Research and Development in this sphere are different from those the public associates with traditional science. Yet it worked, it produced results, and these results will now be tested in wider settings.

Misconceptions associated with the mythical world of hard science had to be consciously overcome. What was missing was the idea that a museum or a library is not just a store, but first and foremost a place where people interact. They interact not with objects but with humans: with each other, with the curators, and with the custodians of the objects. They also interact, indirectly and through the objects, with the humans who first created, discovered or selected them. Museum, library and archive collections are, in the last instance, a repository of the thoughts and lives of those who made them. Our contact with these past and present lives can be a trigger for creativity - *if* this human relation is brought to the fore.

This understanding led to a series of very different discussions:

- * What kind of training would the curators and librarians need to assist participants in finding their way to the ideas, inspiration, and knowledge they required?
- * What other activities might take place in the redesigned or newly-designed housings for the collections? Mere exhibition and passive viewing, or organised commentary, meetings, group visits, and apparently unconnected activities which make use of the conviviality of a space inhabited by these objects?
- * What kind of spaces would facilitate such interactions?

Objects, we began to understand, can catalyse these interactions but in themselves they are inert. What we needed to conceptualise is what the *humans* would do when they walked into the space that housed them.

If these lessons can be absorbed by policymakers, we feel this project may have repercussions well beyond the already useful projects to which it has given rise.

Hasan Bakshi | *Director for Creative Industries, NESTA, Visiting Fellow at the ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation at the Queensland University of Technology and Honorary Visiting Professor at City University*

Alan Freeman | *Economist, GLA and visiting fellow at the University of Manitoba*



The third exchange programme event, on corporate social responsibility and employee engagement, was held in the Picture Gallery at the Foundling Museum. The hospital, whose story the museum tells, was set up in the 18th century to take abandoned children off the streets and put them into employment. It was funded, among others, by Handel and Hogarth.

Alan is on the advisory group.

This article is written in a personal capacity and neither author claims to represent the views of either NESTA or GLA.

the museum director

I feel like a bit of a charlatan discussing our experience of knowledge transfer. Although we had written into our Strategic Plan that we sought to establish commercial partnerships, this was more of an aspiration than a clear action plan. What actually happened was a series of fortunate events- more serendipity than strategy.

Our first partnership came via our contacts in the Engineering Department, who had links with a Canadian company, Arius 3D, seeking to set up a high-end 3D colour laser scanner somewhere in Europe. They wanted to work with a university with whom they could develop a long-term relationship, and they were attracted by the idea of scanning some of the objects from our Egyptian archaeology collections in the Petrie Museum, to demonstrate the potential of 3D colour scanning to other museums and cultural organisations.

For us this partnership offered the opportunity to experiment with the practical, pedagogic and professional issues around 3D scanning. To date the relationship has enabled us to attract well over £150,000 of research funding to explore the uses of 3D scans in museum and heritage contexts. Just as importantly it has helped us to build relationships both with other departments within UCL, such as computer science, and to establish an external profile for cutting edge research in this area.

We've recently renewed our relationship with Arius and have developed a new partnership with a related company, IET. The aim of this relationship is to build a 3D image library, again based around the Petrie collection, and to promote this



An object being scanned: the white cube controls light and colour

through 3D virtual touring exhibitions. This is a particularly exciting development; exhibitions with few, or no, real objects in them have the potential to travel to completely new venues and reach quite different audiences to those that might visit a traditional touring show. As a university museum, the research dimension is also important to us.

So these partnerships are helping our service develop in completely unexpected and interesting ways. Our colleagues have been invaluable in this respect. Academic colleagues in Engineering provided the initial contact and have been enormously helpful in keeping the relationship on track. The support and enthusiasm of University College London's (UCL's) Director of Business Partnerships, who can call on excellent legal advice, has been essential in diplomatically negotiating the underpinning agreements.

Any museum is going to have colleagues or friends they could work with. My advice is to start building your internal networks with those people likely to be able to introduce you to the right partners.

Finally, I think it's worth saying that I certainly had some unhelpful and inaccurate preconceptions about what business partners would be like. I imagined cold-eyed, hard-headed people simply out to make money, when in fact, of course, our partners are visionary people who get just as excited by ideas, and by amazing collections, as we do. So don't be afraid to get to know them!

Sally MacDonald | *Director, UCL Museums, Collections and Public Engagement*

Sally is on the advisory group and hosted the fifth exchange programme event. It explored unusual partnerships and collaborations through Sally's case study and by handling the collections of the Grant Museum of Zoology and Strang Print Room. This essay is based on her contribution at that event.

vignette a bit like Father Christmas

Church Farmhouse Museum in Hendon spent their innovation fund money on a relationship with a local printer. They took archive photos of buildings, made posters, and invited shops to show these posters as a way to help them understand the value of engaging with their heritage and see what the museum and archive could do to support them. This email talks about local impact.

Hi Victoria,

Thanks for your email.

The reactions to the project were overwhelmingly good: going round with the posters and pictures was a bit like being Father Christmas. It helped us to build bridges between the museum and the greater and smaller businesses. A number of them were very interested in being involved in some way with the museum in the future.

Keeping it simple made it easy to make connections from this often-reticent part of the Borough's community. Above all it worked as a calling card for our service.

One of the things that was specifically said (by two of the participating members) was that they were tired of being approached for money in a direct way in these very hard times but were very pleased to help in any other way.



One of the posters made, using an archive photo of a local business.

Interestingly, Pizza Express, who occupy a 15th/16th century building in Whetstone, want an A2 information board about their building. The manager has said that she wouldn't mind it having a permanent reference to Church Farmhouse Museum. It will need further negotiation but we couldn't hope to pay for this sort of advertising in such a popular restaurant.

Best of all was the Railway Tavern in the Hale. This is a local pub and we were able to present them with a picture of the original licensee (Hinge) standing outside the house in the early 1870s. Getting history into the community is what my job is all about, and this was a real pleasure.

On Saturday I went round the five different locations where the posters had been exchanged and found four of them still had the posters in their windows.

That's not all. Because of the project the Peabody Housing Trust included us in their recent bid for the Heritage Lottery Fund 'Skills for the Future' programme. They were looking for a community heritage organisation to take one to two trainee Heritage Officers on work placements for around six months. The trainees needed to gain experience and knowledge in the areas of oral history, archiving, curating, interpretation and exhibition management, digital media and its usage in audience development and volunteer management.

Although we can't prove a link I suspect that our better visitor figures are linked to this exercise.

Hugh Petrie | *Local Studies and Heritage Officer London Borough of Barnet, Church Farmhouse Museum*



I was quite put out that Winkworth hadn't put their posters up. However they must have been waiting for a moment when they could get proper frames. The posters are now up in the window in a very obvious spot. You can see the framed picture on the shop wall. Clearly, different businesses react differently, but I am very pleased as this company is one I want to develop an idea from (house histories are an obvious link between the estate agents and archives).

Hugh Petrie | *email correspondence about business impact*

Hugh ran the innovation fund project at Church Farmhouse Museum.

the curator

The exchange programme was a place where I, as a curator, acted as a bridge builder, researching and recruiting participants, developing networks and designing materials.

I interviewed, listened, gathered in and eventually archived dialogues, questions and experiences of participants from the exchange programme. And then there were the collections themselves. One of the key questions we asked ourselves in the exchange programme was:

How can the physical spaces and objects of museums and archives invite nomadic workers and working travellers?

The workshop, Unexpected Angles and Surprising Collaborations, is the strongest in my mind. It was hosted by UCL Museum and Collections and looked at knowledge-transfer through objects. It was an exciting event to curate, not least because the participants used the rare and eclectic collections in the Grant Museum of Zoology and the Strang Print room. The workshop explored the less obvious collaborations that could stem from elements of UCL's collections. Practical exercises focused on how to develop a methodology that could be carried over to each participant's collections. Everybody enjoyed this tactile and practical approach to coming up with new ideas and thinking.

It was a nice design challenge for me as curator to present the raw materials of knowledge-transfer from the UCL collections for the participants in surprising ways. I created sketchbook stickers to provide context and background on the case studies used in the exercises and to illustrate the objects.



One of Julie's stickers.

As part of the workshop participants split between the two collection spaces and undertook an exercise, which was provided on a sketchbook sticker. Part of this exercise was to get the participants thinking about knowledge transfer projects through drawing, looking and stretching the imagination through interaction with specific objects from the collections, which were introduced by the curators. This was a huge success. Dr Nina Pearlman from UCL commented afterwards:

‘In the couple of hours of the workshops, we had just started to uncover the real question - the session could have gone on for longer to really develop and probe.’

It was a privilege to gather and archive these exchanges. In the last workshop, hosted at the Wellcome Collection, we decided to finish with participants talking about the objects each had brought along to represent their thoughts about the programme. This followed from the first session where they were asked to bring an object to represent themselves and the start of their journey.

For me one of the most poignant moments was one participant placing her full sketchbook in the circle of objects:

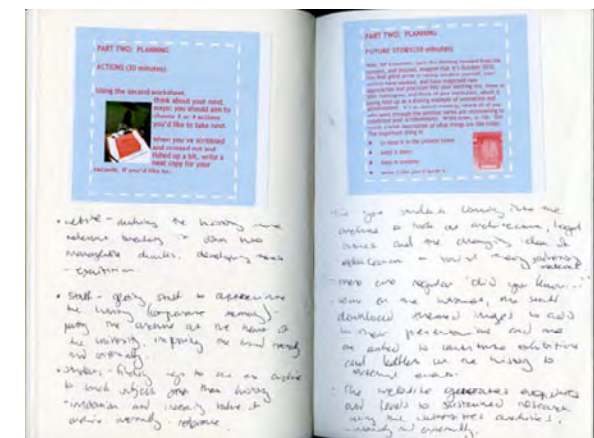
‘My sketchbook is full, I will use this as a professional tool from now on.’

This was the perfect end to the session, as this participant had initially found using the sketchbook a hard concept to take on.

Julie Reynolds | *fine artist, curator, researcher and Sparknow associate*

Questions from the original prospectus for the UCL event:

- * What sparks an innovative or unexpected collaboration between a museum or archive and a business, and how do you make it work?
- * Can a small museum make a big difference?
- * How can the physical spaces and objects of museums and archives invite nomadic workers and working travellers?



Anna McNally's sketchbook.

Julie was one of the Sparknow bridge building trio and was responsible for the knowledge transfer Time Capsules and narrative research database. She curated and designed the knowledge transfer assets of the exchange programme.

vignette a meeting place, not a visit

Back in 2007 as part of the programme, Ellen Collins and Victoria Ward interviewed Alan Freeman. That interview was very influential in designing the pilots, in particular the exchange programme.

Alan spoke about how there is increasingly no such thing as a non-creative industry: creativity is a permanent aspect of the process. Even in apparently ordinary jobs in a production line this is so. The typical mode of creative production is now the team not the assembly line; each part has its own cultural autonomy, working together to a script.

Those people need inspiration because they'll carry out their jobs not by following the manual but by interpreting and identifying with others who have done the same thing. Each member of the team will have to be continuously drawing on and renewing personal creative resources. Knowledge transfer is human. It's between people in the presence of things, not about standing people in front of things.

The shift, then, is for the museum, library or archive to become a meeting place where people come together and work in the numinous presence of the materials, rather than making a visit to the collections: a place charged with intellectual curiosity that invites and unlocks new forms of work and possibility.

It was with this in mind that we arranged sessions such as those that took place in the Grant Museum of Zoology and the Strang Print Room at the UCL Collections.

Alan Freeman and Hasan Bahkshi have written here
as *the economists*



Objects and an instruction worksheet in the Grant Museum of Zoology | exchange programme event 5, UCL, September 2010



artist | Lev T Mills

title | *Out-Loud Silent*

medium | *photo etching, etching and aquatint*

date | 1969

© the artist

In the Strang Print Room, home of UCL Art Collections, prints and drawings were explored in the fifth exchange programme event, *Unexpected Angles and Surprising Collaborations*.

Dr Nina Pearlman, manager of the UCL art collections, introduced the exchange participants to UCL Art Collections and the objects that had been selected for the workshop. These included works by students from the Slade School of Fine Art (1960s); old master prints (late 15th and early 16th century); prints relating to the French Revolution and neo-classical plaster-casts by John Flaxman.

Nina also introduced drawing in sketchbooks:

‘It’s a different way of looking and helps you see things you wouldn’t otherwise have seen.’

In groups of three, participants chose a single object on which to work through a series of sketchbook exercises. They were asked to work on their own and then in pairs to observe and sketch the objects in the collection and ask themselves:

- * What do the objects look and feel like?
- * What ideas, conversations, feelings do they trigger?
- * How could these objects be used for unusual knowledge transfer?

The overall objective was to start to identify the kind of conversations that could be opened up by looking at objects in a group in a new yet non-inhibiting environment. We were looking specifically for conversations that would be relevant to organisations.

We noticed that the encounters with the works prompted immediate discussion within the groups, and with Nina's prodding the individual participants became engaged with their sketchbooks. Then, following a demonstration by Nina, one of the participants was instructed in handling a print. She washed her hands and under supervision positioned the mounted print on the table. Nina then revealed a hidden text on the back of the print itself. This opened further dialogue in the whole group about the context and origins of this particular print.

The group felt that the physical make up of The Strang Print Room was particularly conducive for encouraging discussion, as it was not charged with their own organisational culture or anything similar to it. The Strang is a creative space for learning that combines archive, research and teaching in a single display. It is this particular make up that facilitated the conversations that can and cannot be had in the workplace, and allowed objects to be used in a subtle way to explore the more complex emotions around difficult subjects.

Julie Reynolds | *Sparknow bridge building team*

Dr Nina Pearlman | *Manager, UCL Art Collections*



KTP archive | Strang Print Room, September 2010

the professor

I was almost embarrassed to be invited to speak at the London Metropolitan Archives, because the LMA is just a stone's throw from City University yet after 20 years as an academic at City I had never actually visited the very impressive LMA before.

The event was one of the exchange programme events and went by the title of Retro-innovation, exploring challenges around small and medium business archives, and how innovation can build on the past and on collections. My brief was to explain our experience in a business school in drawing on ideas and facilities provided by MLA institutions.

We've tried hard to steer away from the idea that this is about 'creativity' in a creativity box, and towards the notion that the imagination is a muscle that needs to be exercised more regularly and applied to business challenges. To do this, we have developed two learning methods that are taken directly from the fine arts/cultural studies world.

The first is the use of artist-style sketchbooks to encourage business students to carry out what we call basic and deep reflection. The second is the use of museums, collections and art galleries for learning about management. The participants at the LMA event had already been encouraged to use sketchbooks as an aid to reflection and I was able to explain both the theory behind this as well as to draw on our many years of experience with this method.

Our MBA elective "The Business Mystery" uses the fine arts as a lens onto management. There are no lectures - this is not about the Shakespeare School

of Management, but rather undergoing experiences stimulated by art and artistic ideas.

So, for example, we visit the Hunterian Museum to explore how medicine evolved as a science while management still has to do so. We visit the Cabinet War Rooms to absorb the atmosphere of crisis management. We go to the National Portrait Gallery to examine portraits of leaders and see what clues they give the students about leadership over the ages and through different institutions and sectors, and what this might mean for business leadership.

It was particularly gratifying for me, both during and after the workshop, to hear very positively about the sketchbook experience; as this is something we have researched and pioneered hoping it would be useful for practitioners.

You'll be pleased to know that while I was at the LMA, I joined, and I've worked with Richard Wiltshire to see how we can incorporate the LMA into our MBA electives. We've planned a module where we identify businesses, and Richard will source around 20 artefacts from the history of each business to be made available to groups of students who can then work on them to select a smaller number (five to 10) around which to answer questions such as:

- * What meaning did this artefact have to the business at the time?
- * What relevance might it have to the business today?
- * What surprising new knowledge transfer and business value do you think this artefact could generate in the business today?

We must try and deepen the information literacy of graduates, and undergraduates entering into the business world. They rarely get to handle physical materials these days and so simply have no tactile relationship with the world of archives because they're working virtually and from second hand sources all the time. This shortchanges both them and the business.

Clive Holtham | *Professor of Information Management and Director of the Cass Learning Lab, Cass Business School*



KTP archive | Deborah Turton from the BPMA using her sketchbook at the Wellcome Collection Opening the Bridges, October 2009

Clive is a member of the advisory group and his current research enquiries are into sketchbooks as a tool for the knowledge worker, and into the importance of slowness in organisations.

the special collections manager

At the first exchange programme event, each participant was asked to bring an object that represented their hopes for the programme. I brought along a packet of seeds, chilli seeds to be precise, full of potential and waiting to be given new ground on which to grow to their full spiciness!

This reflected my view that knowledge transfer was about sharing information; enriching other people's professional lives and one's own; allowing potential to be reached; seeking out new opportunities to add value and make something new, which wouldn't have happened without a spark of exchange between partners.

From the very first session on the programme, at the London Transport Museum, my understanding of knowledge transfer was challenged and I gradually came to appreciate that moments of transfer happen on a trajectory, as part of ongoing conversations. The key is to notice them and to apply the learning of the moment to professional practice. People are, of course, the essence of any knowledge transfer or exchange. The partners on the programme did indeed engage in a cornucopia of eclectic conversations, especially over a glass of wine at the end of the day, which showed that they were open to new ideas and ways of working.

During the exchange programme the opportunity came along to bid to the Innovation Fund. My involvement in the programme helped me to formulate a project with a fellow manager at the University: to offer Business Innovation Days to small design companies who would not normally be given access to our collections. Through work placement, industry contacts and alumni we built up a



KTP archive | Sarah Mahurter at the final exchange programme event at the Wellcome Collection, October 2009

While the programme was running the British Postal Museum and Archive, also on the exchange programme, and University of the Arts London liaised over an exhibition of posters from BPMA. It was held in the gallery adjacent to the University's Archives and Special Collections Centre. This liaison facilitated a point of knowledge exchange between the two organisations: the poster designs represented in the pre-planned exhibition curated by BPMA were complemented by the work of Tom Eckersley, held at the University.

mailing list of 40 companies who were sent flyers about the scheme and invited to an evening launch event. At this, we explained the scheme and gave them supporting literature, which included a shiny new guide to all the archives and special collections held at the University. On the monthly Business Innovation Days between November and June we have received visits from over 30 companies, including Fortnum & Mason. The LCC Archive has a number of items designed by Edward Bawden, who also designed for Fortnum & Mason. Their archivist, brand manager and corporate designer came to visit for inspiration and ideas for new product packaging. Following this, the knowledge transfer consultant from the University's Enterprise Office took an interest in the relationship and joined the University's archivist on a return visit to Fortnum & Mason's archive. This was followed up with suggested areas where Fortnum & Mason's interests or needs match the University's expertise. We hope to continue this relationship in the future.

By the end of the knowledge exchange programme, I had come to better understand knowledge-transfer through the challenging workshops, conversations and reflections required by each session.

To represent that growth, my final object was a selection of colourful, grown chillies, bought from a market stall, delivered in a brown paper bag, ready to be used as an ingredient in an exciting culinary dish.

This metaphor sums up what I gained from the programme: that an open view, lateral thinking and an enthusiasm to embrace unexpected partnerships has the potential to lead to real exchange of knowledge and new approaches to work in the cultural sector.

Sarah Mahurter | *Manager, University Archive and Special Collections Centre, University of the Arts*



My chilli seeds (original object brought along to the first workshop) have grown. But my chillies are various shapes and sizes, some unexpected, some colourful and all hot and spicy ingredients for whatever comes next.

Sarah Mahurter | *sharing her final object at the Wellcome Collection, October 2009*

Sarah was an exchange programme participant and ran an innovation fund project.

vignette Churchill's dentures

Before the knowledge transfer programme we had been toying for some time with the idea of marketing the MacRae Gallery - an exhibition gallery which is also our flexible learning space - in a way that would generate more income whilst developing audiences.

Taking part in the knowledge transfer programme and interacting with the other participants was the catalyst; it allowed us to focus on the hidden potential of our collections. We identified a number of exhibits whose qualities and histories could be used as part of a series of Soft Skills modules to run in the Hunterian Museum. The modules are:

- * Building Confidence
- * Customer Service
- * Training Diversity
- * Prejudice + Social Inclusion
- * Identity + Self-Awareness
- * Managing Loss + Transition
- * Presentation Skills + Public Speaking
- * Problem Solving
- * Team Building + Group Dynamics

The idea for the Building Confidence module came from the thought that both individuals and businesses are lacking confidence in the current recession and that the Hunterian Museum's collections could offer an innovative way into re-examining what confidence means in a business context.

The Building Confidence session illustrates how confidence building is based on a chain reaction that can be started by shared investigation and curiosity using the exhibits. It



Skeletal partial upper denture, with gold base, platinum clasps and mineral teeth, made for and worn by Winston Churchill, c. 1941.

Dentures like the one worn by Winston Churchill are normally made to fit as closely as possible to the palate of the wearer. A well-fitting plate is held in place by the suction between the palate and the denture, as well as the clasps which hold the denture in position relative to the surviving teeth. Churchill's denture was different. **To preserve his natural lisp**, his denture was designed to leave a gap between the plate and the roof of his mouth. Churchill's dentures were designed by his dentist, Wilfred Fish. Most of the actual manufacture was carried out by Fish's dental technician, Derek Cudlipp.

shows the potential that the Hunterian Museum collections offer for learning and knowledge transfer. Through an examination of a handful of objects on display in the museum, participants develop their thinking about the parallels that exist between the role of the specimen when it was created and the relevance that these ideas now have on present day business and everyday life.

Some of the specimens used to bridge concepts and ideas are Churchill's dentures; a prosthetic nose and glasses; portraits of past presidents of The Royal College of Surgeons of England; images of pioneering plastic surgery to repair WWII wounded soldiers' faces; an 18th century experiment to transplant a human tooth onto a cockerel's head.

The taster module lasts about 90 minutes, but is better run as part of a full training day. We've run the Building Confidence taster module twice and these are some of the comments at the end of the sessions:

'I loved the fact that the training highlighted artefacts that I had never noticed before - and I have been to the museum several times!'

'I have to admit that I thought connecting surgical artefacts with generalised training was a bit of a stretch! How wrong I was!'

'I particularly enjoyed the stories behind the thought-provoking objects as this led to an examination of the wider issues.'

For each module we have put together a complete package - information on each module including a list of suitable objects and handout, and details about hiring the MacRae Gallery. We are marketing the packages to a variety of businesses as well as to training providers. We are working with our internal conference and events team to promote the modules to existing clients, local support agencies such as InHolborn Business Improvement District and the cultural and heritage community.

Stefania Riccini | *Visitor Services Manager, Hunterian Museum at The Royal College of Surgeons of England*



A painted silver prosthetic nose, mounted on a spectacle frame, mid-19th century. This false nose was worn by a woman who had lost her own as a result of syphilis. She wore it for many years to give the appearance of normality. She later presented it to her physician, stating that she had remarried and that her new husband preferred her without it.

- * Examine the role of all the people involved in these two histories in relation to the two objects that were made, i.e. the patients, their doctor/dentist and the husband: how did confidence building take place?
- * Is there a person or an object that plays more of a dominant role?
- * What other factors contributed to the success of these stories?

Stefi was an exchange programme participant, as well as developing soft skills training as an innovation fund project. The Building Confidence module was run as part of the 'More than Money' workshop funded by Renaissance that was held at the Hunterian on 4th March 2010.

the local authority arts officer

Without funds from MLA's Knowledge Transfer Programme we would not have been able to get Picture Windows off the ground. The scheme involves using empty shop fronts to display art created by local creative businesses and arts venues sometimes considered 'off the map' by visitors.

Picture Windows provides a perfect opportunity for Haringey to:

- * enhance links with the creative sector
- * make use of empty council-owned shops
- * support and celebrate the creative talents within Haringey
- * diversify library visitors and in particular the Wood Green Library Business Lounge.

For artists and local venues Picture Windows provides opportunities to:

- * showcase products
- * have a high street presence
- * become more businesslike
- * attract new audiences.

We worked with eight arts/creative businesses, showcasing their products and referring them to the Business Lounge in Wood Green Library, where they had access to business advice, networks and other resources.

Elena developed a checklist as a planning tool to help artists develop their business, organisation and marketing skills. It starts at day zero minus six months and includes items such as:

- * confirmation
- * press & PR
- * distribution
- * preparation for hanging the show
- * hanging the show
- * private view.

Details such as reminders about flowers, ironed tablecloths, making sure you have a comments book, and a corkscrew, as well as practical guidance on the length of press and PR items, are all included.

Step 1 | All Onboard? This involved engaging other departments, specifically Property Services, Legal and Economic Regeneration.

Stage 2 | Identifying Properties Owing to time and budget constraints, we decided to use council-owned empty shop fronts.

Stage 3 | Legal This resulted in two leases being drawn up. One allowed Haringey Libraries to lease the empty shop from Haringey's Property Services. The other allowed Haringey Libraries to sublet each shop to an artist. This is where 95% of the funds went.

Stage 4 | Engaging Artists We developed a database listing interested artists and creative industries ready to move into a shop once the paperwork was complete.

Stage 5 | Moving In! November 2009, the first shop was ready, two local artists, Kiki Machado & Edwige Bernanoce, were invited to set up an exhibition called Discarded Beauty. With help from our department, the shop was cleaned, the windows were dressed and... the show went on!

Stage 6 | The Eight Artists The overall outcome is for Haringey-owned shops to be rented as quickly as they become available. The scheme makes the shops look attractive, encouraging new businesses to move in to the area.

Picture Windows has been a rewarding and successful experience for Haringey both internally as a council and externally amongst our artists. It has allowed us all to learn from each other and share skills and knowledge. It has also facilitated a greater understanding of the environment in which each of us works. The project has engaged a wider audience than we ever expected, and although it is too early to determine the overall impact of the project, the feedback is positive and the possibilities of the scheme grow and grow.

Elena Pippou | Arts, Culture & Marketing Officer, Haringey

Elena was responsible for one part of Haringey's modern local business library project. The other part worked with local banks. Under the directorship of Diana Edmonds, Haringey also ran an innovation fund project in which Bruce Castle worked with Tottenham Hotspur Football Club.

vignette legal advice & Marigolds

Victoria records a visit to the Picture Window project.

The Picture Window plan was to work with local shops and landlords, taking advantage of the recession turnover in leases, to provide local Haringey artists with a shop in which to show their work. It turns out Elena had chanced on this idea long before the Haringey pilot came up as a possibility. A while back, she'd paired up two artists for a show: a photographer who'd found some mannequins that had been tossed out onto a Paris street, and taken these and photographed them in different and rather romantic poses; and a visual artist who also works with found objects like old posters and envelopes, scrapped wrapping paper, making collages and patterns of new kinds out of old stuff. This had emerged the idea of discarded beauty for Elena- the potential to take broken or chucked things and breathe new life into them with an aesthetic and a clear vision.

discarded beauty

So, although Haringey have called the project Picture Windows, Elena's secret plan is to shift to calling it Discarded Beauty, and to seed this idea into every aspect of the project: disused, shabby shops, perhaps in a rather derelict recession-hit High Street, become a focal point for new creative energy and conversations as a series of temporary exhibits is staged there. Later on in the conversation Elena mentioned that the strength and simplicity of her original idea translated into these new settings was one of the main things that had got her through some of the tougher moments, and that this, in her view, is a key attribute of bridge building.

I was a few minutes late arriving at the Front Room and went through to the back to find Elena thoroughly spread out: phone, camera, notebook, tea, carrot cake, deep in conversation on the phone, scribbling away. I was quite happy to wait and watch a full on nomadic knowledge-worker, and told her this when she got off the phone.

When we'd settled in, she started by telling me that she was 'learning every single day'. They're constantly still going back and forth to the original concept, adapting it, handling legal documents and so on. There are huge numbers of lessons to learn, she said, and three conditions that have made the project a success are:

- * a very practical, hands-on approach to taking on the obstacles
- * having a boss of long standing with council clout
- * perseverance and risk taking.

not stuck behind a doorbell in South Islington

So this started as a personal story for Elena, her own ambition to bring arts and crafts to the high street:

‘Why should the arts be stuck behind a doorbell in South Islington? Why can’t they be welcoming and everywhere?’

And, she says, the other piece of that story, apart from her own convictions about what mattered, was resourcefulness, grabbing any and every opportunity to bring the idea into being. So, for example, even before the idea of pop up shops and art galleries started to filter into the recession space, Elena had already noticed how a friend of a friend set up temporary firework shops around Bonfire Night and pinched the idea of being able to move in and out quickly and not hang around, borrowing spaces that lay dormant.

Then as the credit crunch started to see retail space emptying out, she saw another opportunity ‘perfect, this is exactly what I need’. And it was around then that the pilot money came up for grabs, and she grabbed it.

It also helped that she was well established in her job at the hub of a creative network in Haringey. She’d been going round Haringey meeting artists, excellent artists bursting with creativity and innovation, and she saw this as a chance to facilitate that. And she’s uncompromising. Just because the budget’s limited doesn’t mean you can’t do something consistently, to a high standard and with an aesthetic. Things can be cheap and brilliant.

being a step towards

One thing Elena has noticed is the importance of being a step towards. To the Council she is a step towards the artists, and presents the face of upholding an uncompromising standard, an aesthetic, in pursuit of a creative ideal. To the artists, she is a step towards business and bureaucracy, and she represents a rather business-like face, getting them to understand the nature of their commitment,

getting down to business



The first property, down the Stroud Green Road, N4, before it was made over.

understanding their creative urge but not letting this distract her from the need for things to make good business sense all round.

She's also had to strike compromises to get stuff to happen. So, to cut the knot of protracted legal to-ing and fro-ing, in the end she abandoned the idea of using the whole shop and agreed to start with shop windows, which puzzled and worried the legal people less from the insurance point of view.

towards a sustainable concept

The concept that has emerged and is still settling is, in its first phase, to borrow Council property that has been repossessed or is lying empty, two properties at a time, anywhere in Haringey, paint it black, put up a banner on a couple of hooks, clean it out, and then invite a series of artists to be resident in the window for three weeks at a time, with a one-week turn around. This could be a single artist or pairs of artists and it could be any kind of art. There are about 12 artists booked, running up until the spring. They know when they are booked but not necessarily where.

Something that she and others had noticed was the unexpected reversal of referrals. Instead of Wood Green business lounge referring artists out to be exhibited in picture windows, picture windows is magnetising an otherwise rather tired high street space by making the conversations there more vivid and interesting, and providing a talking space in which people are sharing stories that would otherwise stay hidden. This liveliness, the living presence of the project and all the interactions bringing it about, is creating the conditions in which people are being referred back from the high street to the possibility in the library rather than the other way round.

It would be interesting to create a knowledge transfer map out of this one project, and perhaps this is a good place to create one microcosm, a tiny miniature that illuminates the whole.

[One of Elena's..] Being willing to negotiate with determination with the legal people who suggest a 25-page contract by batting back a five-page alternative from a private gallery or an example of a much shorter Camden contract for a similar kind of project. But to be doing that one minute and rolling on your Marigolds the next minute to get on your hands and knees and pick up the old post, or stand in the freezing cold, breaking your nails as you try and unpeel old posters and from a shop front.



Getting ready for the first pair of artists

legal advice, marigolds and washing up liquid

Without the MLA London money, nothing would have happened. The idea would have been there, but it would have lain dormant through lack of funds. It gets spent on a bit of legal advice, hooks, paint, washing up liquid, rubber gloves. And these things are the oil that greases the wheels of the project and gets them to start to spin.

When I spoke with Judith and Ellen later, they were both delighted. That's just how the money should have been spent, they said.

Victoria Ward | *Founder & Partner, Sparknow, from fieldnotes from visits to modern local business library projects, November 2009*

Victoria led Sparknow's bridge building team. This essay comes from fieldnotes from visits to the modern local business library projects, November 2009. A side effect of this is that Elena has now asked Victoria to get involved in speaking at some local events to be held at Hornsey Library.

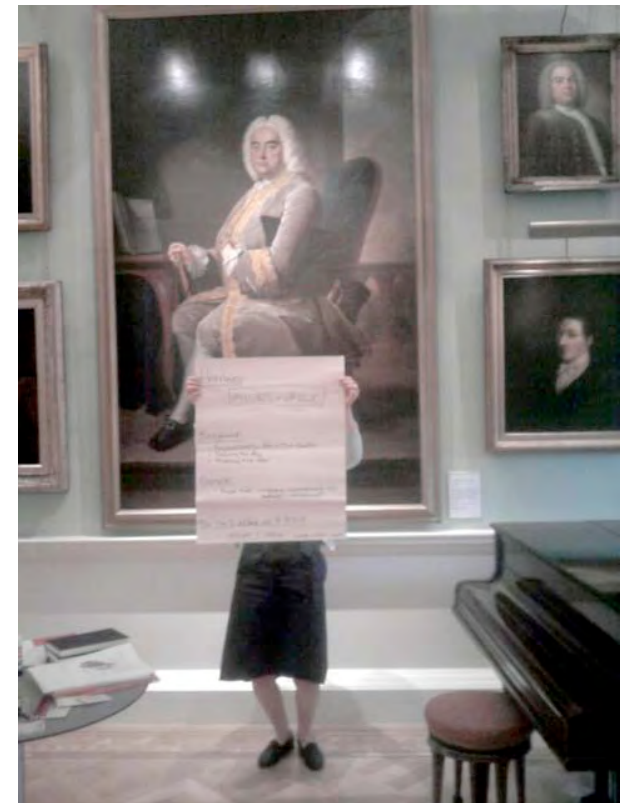
the communicator

Art and collections in organisations takes on many purposes, from wallpaper in the boardroom to a valued asset. How this asset is valued, what value it adds, also takes on many guises and is clearly not only about price accrual over time.

I had the opportunity to work for many years with the communications team of a bank that had an unusual and adventurous collection of contemporary art. Some pieces were from big established names, some from young unknowns. Most were displayed in places where staff and clients could see them, live with them, and engage with them.

I remember times when I would need to present to the senior-most at the bank in glorious plush office spaces high up in tall buildings, dotted with art. And in those moments of intense stress and anticipation, times when one is wound up like a coil but kept waiting in corridors, I built strong imprints of some of this collection. Pieces became projections, objects of transference, places to park my angst.

These images became part of the whole tapestry of impressions and relationships I recall when thinking of this organisation. Having moved on, I remember the art as special. And many people thought of it that way. More than just a static collection waiting to be sold on it was part of who we were, woven into the brand, the collective landmarks, part of the way things feel around here. These corporate collections help everyone tell a story about who we are, what we want to be. They have a life beyond who owns them. They become both personal and organisational at the same time.



Fiona Hoppe holds up a worksheet in front of Handel in the Picture Gallery at the Foundling Museum where we talked about art, collections, employee engagement, corporate social responsibility and the role of collections at times of upheaval and loss.

When the bank was taken over the art went. And people missed it and said so out loud. The fact that it went was a sign and symbol of a different understanding of the world, an un-shared territory with the new owners who prompted the removal (art distracts from the purpose of commerce). The empty walls and removed sculptures became a tangible way of feeling that something fundamental had changed, shifted, and of articulating the grief and anger around change.

One anecdote I heard recently about this comes to mind: the collection used to rotate, so new items would appear on a regular basis. At the threshold of the takeover, a regular rotation of the collection took place. And the items on display this time were a source of contention and discomfort. No one fully appreciated that this was our art being moved around. The pieces were seen as their art being taken over, and everyone found these pieces aggressive, nasty, not like us. Again, one projects a lot during stress and change. Having nothing to project onto is the worry, not the need to do so.

So, back to value and commerce. Bringing together a particular business environment with a particular piece of art sheds colour on both, creates a space to think differently and perhaps find different solutions as a result. In the same way we sometimes remember things when we stop thinking about remembering them, art can bring that otherness into office space and unlock ideas, start different conversations that weave back to commerce via other places.

Sabine Jaccaud | *corporate change and communication specialist*

In a catalogue of selected works from the ABN AMRO collection, a preface from Hank van Os (Professor of Art and Society, University of Amsterdam) recalls a team building trip to Siena with senior managers of the bank. As their guide, he observed that ‘bankers turn out to be much more interesting people to talk about art with than your average art historian’ because their experience is more raw, unburdened by professional jargon.

Sabine worked closely with Victoria to design the exchange programme and prospectus. She contributed to the event on employee engagement and corporate social responsibility at the Foundling Museum in June 2009. This essay reflects her contribution at this event.

the evaluators

The knowledge transfer programme was innovative; willing to take risks, and leveraged an impressive amount of input from a relatively limited investment. It succeeded and sometimes over-achieved in terms of basic outputs, despite the real challenges of the recession, and did so through high levels of commitment and attention to detail.

Participants reported significant personal development and that they felt inspired to attempt organisational development. The experiential and developmental programme design demonstrated the value of a broader understanding of knowledge transfer. Resources generated include the approach, materials, and advocates and goodwill.

Despite reservations that the programme could have exercised stronger guidance and thus led to more concrete results in some of its pilots; it has nevertheless succeeded in showing the real potential for knowledge transfer to develop between museums, libraries and archives, and business. MLAs can learn how to engage, how to understand businesses and the people who make them up. They can learn to move from 'what can I sell them' or 'what can I get', to thinking from the perspective of business people about what they want and need. Most of what has been delivered by the programme should be part of the core business of MLA training, provision, and the development and support provided by bodies like MLA.

Some key conclusions drawn from evaluating against the overall business logic model:

- * Economic impact for London - minimal, though some exists, and there is potential for more to be achieved.
- * Strategic added value specially for MLA sector - some has been achieved through skills and strategy development though this is not on a fundamental level, however potentially the benefits will continue as approaches continue to be employed.
- * Changed relationship between MLAs in London and businesses - achieved for participants, and this could clearly be rolled out on a wider basis.
- * Financial sustainability of MLAs continuing to work with businesses - tools and approaches have been delivered to support this through participants. There is little evidence of direct financial benefits as yet, which are likely to be at a low level until the approaches in the programme are mainstreamed in organisations or the whole sector.
- * Skills development - clearly delivered, although the focus (also highly successful) was equally on personal development.
- * For business: new products and processes developed - minimal impact but over time, and with further engagement, this seems very likely to be achieved, leading also to some impact in sales and turnover/profit.
- * MLAs clearly do see value in the bridge builder model, both as a separate role and as a core way of doing business.

Arguably the biggest impact was in changed relationships and attitudes amongst participants, leading to a long-term community of people with an interest in MLAs and businesses working together effectively - this also appears to be replicable.

Key strengths | The programme inspired people and provided a varied but strong level of support, (particularly for the Exchange Programme) which demonstrated a positive multiplier on initial investment. Transactional targets were massively

exceeded, and networks were used and developed very well. The high level of effort put into delivering the programme was crucial and produced activities that were new, fresh, innovative, and interesting.

Problems, issues or weaknesses | There could have been more support and time on IF and MLBL. There was a lack of baselining and monitoring, as well as general awareness of outcome measures; and a lack of a developed vision of how the activity in the pilots would lead to wider system change, or how the pilots would be rolled out (or made part of the core MLA offer).

Relationships and attitudes | The programme got MLAs thinking about how they needed to approach businesses, led to changes in attitudes, and created valuable insights around the value of MLAs and the business aspects common to all organisations. Networking was created among participants, although there is no guarantee of permanency and more support will be required to continue to develop this valuable resource.

Bridge builders | This proved to be an extremely effective model and the individuals in the roles were very strong facilitators. Furthermore, the fact that so many participants want to be ambassadors and are developing their own bridge building role shows that programme bridge builders have effectively led by example.

Assets | A number of useful checklists and tools have been developed and are already being used in March. Goodwill, and potential ambassadors, have been created - but there is no overall scheme for roll out as yet.

Impact and economic impact | Due to the nature of the programme in creating inspiration, development, networks and new offers, it is too early to say with any certainty, though it appears that knowledge transfer activities and some networks/contacts will continue to have an impact. There are clear examples of early wins and outputs, however it must be understood that this was never the main focus of the programme. This is appropriate for a pilot programme, however a stronger outcome focus could have been beneficial.

Continuation of programme | The existing programme clearly has the potential to be ‘tightened up’ (using the lessons learnt) into a replicable, outcome-focused programme on a much wider scale. The major challenges would be in achieving wider system change and senior-level engagement.

Ben Taylor | *Managing Director, RedQuadrant*

Carl Ulbricht | *Consultant, RedQuadrant*

RedQuadrant did the evaluation of the pilot programme in 2009.

vignette green and white inside

‘If you cut me in half I will be green and white inside.’ This is how Judy Faraday introduced herself at the second exchange-programme event. Here are her reflections.

As an archivist, knowledge transfer is something I see every day in the artefacts, documents and pictures in our collections. Retailing is cyclical and the archive demonstrates trends and fashions that can be re-examined to plot future development. But the archive is not only useful for tangible commercial benefit. The Partnership has always used its history to help those working in the business today to define who they are and why the business operates in the way it does. We use the archive just as much to explore the way forward as to reflect on the past to help new entrants to engage with our heritage and understand our business model.

We are fortunate to have two major collections: the business documents and related material; and the other, a textile archive dating back to the 1790s.

Partners use the material for a range of different projects from staff induction to product design. The archive tells the story of the Partnership, explains the events, products and people who have influenced the development of the company. It creates a feeling of continuity which instils in many Partners a sense of belonging and a common purpose. Of course the archive is not the only thing to create this, our profit sharing scheme and staff discount are obvious attractions to working in the business, but for many Partners it goes much deeper than this.

Take, for example, the weekly staff magazine. A constant source of information since 1918, The Gazette charts changes and developments and continues to bring information to Partners today. We can trace the way issues such as the welfare of



During the Second World War John Lewis Oxford Street was completely destroyed in a bombing raid. This teacaddy, with the money fused to the metal box by the heat of the blast, is a physical reminder of the way the staff pulled together, how the customers were kept informed of the shop's future and the plans which were executed to keep the business afloat. It is a reminder to Partners today that the business was sound and could withstand such a huge blow. 'If we did that 60 years ago, we can survive this recession.'

staff were clearly important even in the 1920s, and that the foundation of the Partnership's social awareness predates the current emphasis on corporate social responsibility. The archive demonstrates the Partnership's ethos and explains our current policies, making them relevant and putting them in historical context both for us and those charities and organisations that work with us.

The textile archive has proved a great source of inspiration for designers both inside and outside the Partnership. Licensing images from the collection of over 25,000 designs to textile and other designers creates an income that supports the preservation and digitisation of the collection. A design originally created in 1803 was used by our architects to provide the exterior finish to our department store in Leicester. It shows the link between the early days of our business as a draper in London when fabrics were our core business, and the history of Leicester with its long tradition in the textile and manufacturing industries.

Product design has also benefited from knowledge transfer between the archive and the current stock assortment. Designers from our Home assortment visit the archive on a regular basis and a competition is held annually to encourage young designers to create rugs inspired by the archive, with the winning design going into production and being available in the stores.

Merchandise on sale in the stores today reflects our past. Whether it is anglepoise lamps, safety matches, or mens' shirts, the archive provides the basis on which our commercial success can move forward. Using our archive gives us a commercial advantage which we can develop internally at low cost. Our archive is a secret weapon in the daily challenge of a fast moving retail environment.

Judy Faraday | *Partnership Archivist, John Lewis*

Judy is on the advisory group. John Lewis hosted the second exchange programme event which explored the themes of building the archive into the fabric of place and product and the role of heritage and history in future vision and strategy. This essay is based on her reflections at that event.

the producer

Retro-innovation was the theme of an exchange programme workshop held at the London Metropolitan Archive in July 2009. This looked at how archives inform today's business strategy.

The term retro-innovation had come from Fiona Lickorish at the Department for Environmental, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in the first rounds of research. So we persuaded her, together with Anna Nally who was then working at Lloyds archive, to become the joint subjects of the day's main task. Fiona would provide the business programme and Anna would provide a series of resources themed round the subject from the Lloyds archive which, with the TSB collection, has a particularly strong set of farming records.

We worked up a structured exercise to show how an archive might pitch its content as a resource for business innovation. The exercise used material from Lloyds Banking Group's historical archives to explore how Defra might prioritise the highly topical subject of UK food security within its planning process. It demonstrated the value of selecting archives to fit a specific business need and their potential appeal beyond the marketing department.

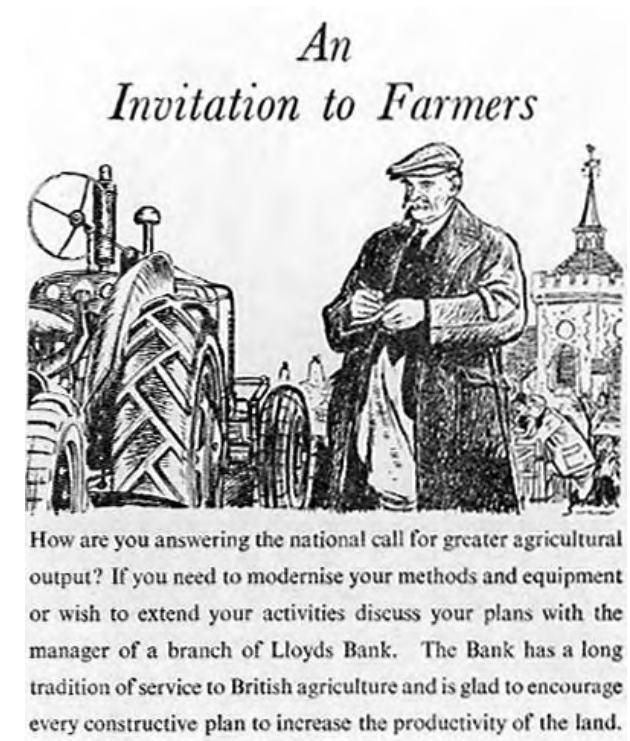
This was a commentary on the national and international 'misfortune', particularly the agricultural depression, in 1878:

'At home and abroad the lesson we are taught is one of caution, and until confidence is restored, few transactions are likely to be entered into beyond the supply of immediate wants.'

Phoenix Oil Mill Company | *Monthly Circular* (1878)

'We often gain as much insight from looking back at what used to be commonplace as we do from imagining the future, and I often think that we could be working with heritage organisations to make more use of - and prove the value of - their collections and knowledge.'

Sparknow | *Findings, Knowledge Transfer Programme, MLA London*



The exercise was a light bulb moment for many participants who suddenly realised the value of selecting archival material to target a specific business need. This new approach broadened their ideas of entry points into a business - not just the marketing department.

Building on the idea of the future being innovated out of the past, we decided to use timelines, place, and scenario building techniques to kick off the Innovation Fund programme in July.

Future stories of museums were imagined at the Whitechapel Gallery by Innovation Fund participants under the watchful guidance of Andrew Curry, our friendly and distinguished futures professional. It was a fascinating process to see how the past provides the vital context for our imaginings of any future world.

Under the magnificent tapestry of Picasso's Guernica, participants first annotated a timeline with historical moments from the world of culture plus an external world above the line of Beatles and moon landings to anchor the decades. The line went back to 1950 and beyond, in fact right back to the 17th century, at least twice as far as we wanted the group to imagine a future museum/archive to be in 2025 to give the future organisation context.

Fiona Hoppe | *Associate, Sparknow*



the timeline constructed by participants at the innovation fund kick off event at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, July 2009

Fiona was part of the Sparknow bridge building trio and produced all the exchange programme events. She also produced the Innovation Fund event at the Whitechapel in July 2009 and More than Money at the Hunterian in March 2010

the futurist

Andrew Curry explores the role of the past in the future.

‘When I say the word Future, the first syllable is already a part of the past.’

Wisława Szymborska | *The three strangest words*, translated by Ian Firla

Good futures work is always embedded in the past:

‘We need to find the memory of the past to shed light upon the future.’

Michel Godet | 2001, *Creating Futures*. London, *Economica*

Similarly, James Dator observes that one of the strands of the future will be elements of the past which have become submerged in the present but will reappear in the future.

In my work I often find myself building timelines, sometimes as far back as the 19th century (sometimes earlier). But the quality of both the future and the past, and the way we choose to interpret each of these, is also important.

In her fine work on conceptualising the future, Barbara Adam (2005, *Futures Told, Tamed, and Traded*, ESRC In Pursuit of the Future Project) has made alliterative distinction between futures told, tamed, traded, and transformed. The first two refer to the oracular futures of the pre-industrial world, often embedded in notions of cyclic change. The rest are versions of the futures produced by the era of modernity, informed by an assumption of progress- a world in which we can calculate our futures through the miracle of the actuarial sciences.



The Bloomberg Commission: Goshka Macuga: The Nature of the Beast was the inaugural exhibition in re-opened Whitechapel Art Gallery in 2009. The exhibition was in the former library reading room. Macuga evoked the presentation of Picasso's Guernica, paint still drying, on its European tour in 1939. A full size tapestry of the Guernica, commissioned by Rockefeller in 1955, woven by Jacqueline de la Baume Dürrbach, hung at one end of the gallery. A blue curtain and carpet echoed its normal hanging place in New York, outside the United Nations Security Council. A circular board-table, with a glass top, and objects from the Whitechapel Gallery archive were in the centre of the room. For the year that the exhibition was up anyone could book the board table for a meeting, free of charge, with the one proviso that all public meetings be documented and the documents, recordings, images, ephemera and correspondence then be folded into the exhibition archive.

All these resonances were behind our choice of the Whitechapel as the place for the futures day that kicked off the innovation fund projects.

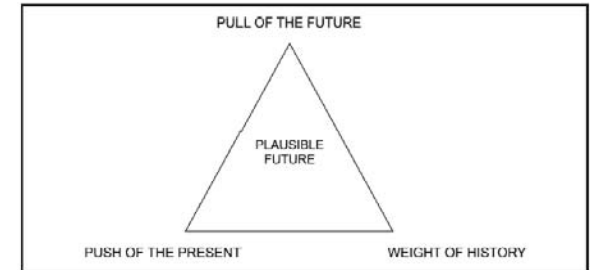
But old forms of knowledge are not destroyed by modernity; instead, they have been pushed into the shadows. Part of the futures project, therefore, is to recover these different ways of making meaning. And if the notion of progress rips us out of our contexts, then we have to place ourselves back within our histories.

Applying this can seem hard, but it shouldn't do. Sohail Inayatullah (2008, 'Six pillars: futures thinking for transforming', Foresight Vol.10, No.1) offers a useful model in which past, present and future combine (and compete) to shape the future. The present is about the trends we see around us, and the future is built from our competing images of the coming age. The past, the shared history, asks us to think about continuities and discontinuities.

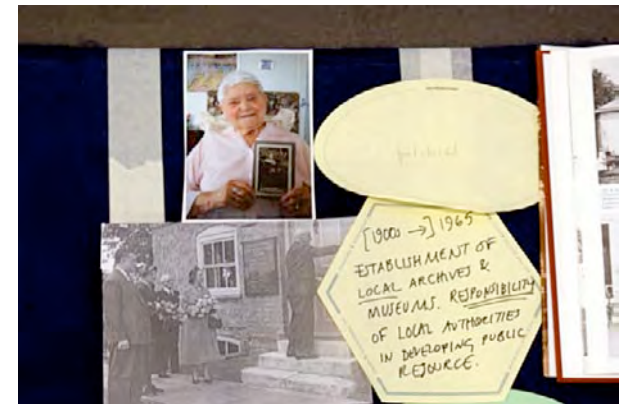
But the quality of the past is also important. It may seem a 'weight', as in the diagram, but weights have different qualities. They may be burdens, which we have to carry, or they may drag us down (one thinks of the climatic scene in the film, 'The Piano'). But weights can also be anchors which secure us and make sure that we don't float away.

And this interrogation of the past produces a second question about the quality of the future - or futures - that exists in the past. Sohail Inayatullah writes of the 'used future', the secondhand future, imported uncritically from another culture and another discourse. Asian cities, for example, have tended to follow the same pattern of urban development that western cities did generations ago, as if channelling the New York urban planner Robert Moses.

Legacy futures, in contrast (the phrase is from Jamais Cascio - 'Legacy Futures: Open The Future') are ideas about the future which have been around so long that they have trapped us in their embrace, even though the ideas and metaphors that created them have all but vanished. The idea of the jet-pack may be satirised these days, but the world that made it, of unlimited energy and extensive personal freedom, still informs much public policy and a surprising amount of corporate planning.



Model courtesy of Sohail Inayatullah



From the timeline at Whitechapel Art Gallery

And then there are the ghost futures, which have been dismissed from consideration because they haven't yet emerged but which may be, as the saying goes, 'patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper'. Keynes' oft-derided prediction - actually about the year 2030 - that we may only work for 15 hours a week, comes to mind.

As we say the word 'future', the syllables slide into the past. Yes: and as we speak, all of our pasts - social, cultural, linguistic, political - wrap themselves around the future.

Andrew Curry | *Director, The Futures Company, London*

Andrew specialises in futures and scenarios work and gave his time and expertise to design and run an initiation event for Innovation Fund participants at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in July 2009

Andrew can be contacted at
andrew.curry@thefuturescompany.com

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what's next?

Borrowing from President Bartlett in the West Wing, as he storms through his massive workload, what's next?

This has been a determined three-year campaign of action, research, knitting and weaving and alliance building to form a constituency that crosses museums, libraries, archives and businesses and hierarchies within them. There has also been significant momentum among many of the participants including:

- * the business network evening organised around the Identity Exhibition at the Wellcome Collection by one of the exchange programme participants, that wove the exhibition and its curator into the evening's proceedings
- * the artists in Haringey still on a rota of old and new exhibits, while Elena battles with the logistics of holding a private view in-shop for which its not insured, because only the shopfront was included in the legal arrangements
- * the exchange participants intending to reconvene, perhaps at the latest exhibit at the Baring Archive, which brings together artists, historians, a designer and the archive, and has been developed by Barings Archive together with the University of the Arts
- * Victoria and Julie have been commissioned to write a book on 'the knowledge muscle' exploring cultural strategies and leadership for 21st century business
- * The very process of assembling this collection of essays and archived fragments, which has found hidden stories and surprises.

Lehmann brothers fell in mid September 2008, just as the original knowledge transfer report was launched at Peter Jones (part of the John Lewis Partnership) in

Sloane Square. Over two-and-a-half years there's been a massive shift in the economic landscape as businesses come to realise that to stay the course they must make meaning as much as they must make money. Now we're looking at a reconfiguration of the cultural and political landscape in Britain, and at new efforts to align and understand knowledge management, knowledge transfer, knowledge workers and the knowledge economy.

That's not including the unknowable business effect of new technologies, social media and their knock on impact. The Library of Congress in Washington has just announced that it is to archive all public Twitter messages, an announcement that crashed the Library of Congress website (the previous time it crashed was when the Starr report on Clinton was published). What's an archive then? Anyone?

Cultural leaders and organisations, not just in London but nationwide, can place themselves at the very heart of the rebuilding of the British knowledge economy and now is the time for them to take up that position at the centre of things.

The new Government has placed philanthropy and greater entrepreneurialism at the heart of its cultural policy in a world of shrinking public resources. While many donors will continue to be happy supporting causes because they believe in them, the experience of our participants shows how museums, libraries and archives can have an edge over their competitors,

We'd like to see a vibrant community of practice across all the participants in, and contributors to, the knowledge transfer programme, one that extends to, and folds in their own networks too; a challenging conversation that cuts through from the frontline of cultural services to the centre of policymaking. We'll continue to press for investment, both of public and of private sector money, into events, skills, projects, and ideas that will build a long term foundation for expressing, and acting on, the inexpressible gift that cultural resources offer all businesses and business people.

Andrew Holden, Judith Rosser-Davies & Victoria Ward

a list of people, places & organisations who played a part

Here's a list of the people, places and organisations who've contributed during 2009.

1 | places that hosted events

British Dental Association | who thoughtfully provide apples not biscuits in their meeting rooms, and some rather pointed illustrations of dental implements on the walls too.

City Business Library | who hosted the kick off event for the Modern Local Business Library pilot

Foundling Museum | especially the glorious Picture Gallery, to which we got upgraded when a corporate awayday was cancelled for an exchange programme event

Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons | hosted the More than Money workshop and let us try out their Building Confidence module

John Lewis Partnership | who gave us a proper cream tea too, and brought objects from their archive for us to look at

London Metropolitan Archive | who hosted an exchange programme event and provided archive objects for us to view

London Transport Museum | who hosted an exchange programme event and gave us all free tickets to go round the museum

MLA London | of course

UCL Collections | especially the Strang Print Room and the Grant Museum of Zoology so we were lucky enough to experience the Aladdin's cave before it closed for its move, and discovered the delights of the Print Room Café

Wellcome Collection | who also kindly laid on food, and had a curator take Mae Keary's professional network through a special guided tour of the Identity Exhibition after the exchange programme had finished

Whitechapel Art Gallery | who hosted the Innovation Fund kickoff event

Not to mention various cafes we met in during many planning meetings, of which we can recommend the Royal Festival Hall's 6th floor members' area.

2 | people who contributed their time and energy

Kate Cavelle, Deutsche Bank | shared her viewpoint as Director of Corporate Citizenship UK with the exchange programme

Rachel Collins, Wellcome Collections | helped us design, run, and provide excellent food and drink at the final exchange programme event

Goretti Considine, City Business Library | hosted the Modern Local Business Library kick off event and continued to provide technical and practical support to the pilots

Justine Cooper, London Transport Museum | shared the challenges and insights from her unique role as a museum stakeholder manager

Andrew Curry, The Futures Company | helped design and run the Innovation Fund kick-off event at the Whitechapel and wrote a piece for this report

Andy Ellis & Adrian Cooper, The Public Catalogue Foundation | shared their case study with the exchange programme

Judy Faraday and Susan Donovan, John Lewis | hosted an exchange programme event



The Print Room Café at University College London

Paul Hobson and Lucy Bailey, The Contemporary Art Society | shared their case study through interview and with the exchange programme

Professor Clive Holtham, Cass Business School and Learning Lab | spoke of sketchbooks, personal knowledge management and the design of his MBA programme

Sally McDonald | shared the UCL experiences of partners with businesses and *Natasha McEnroe and Dr Nina Pearlman* | gave their time and expertise to help us run an exchange programme event where collections were at the heart of the work, and Sally also wrote a piece for this report

Iain Robertson, Sotheby's Institute of Art | provided an insight into the role of corporate art in current conditions

Richard Wiltshire, LMA | hosted an exchange programme event and shared his experiences of the challenges of selecting and managing a small business archive

3 | participants and project teams

Bethlem Archives & Museum | Caroline Smith

BMA Library | Jacky Berry

British Postal Museum and Archive | Deborah Turton, Vicky Parkinson, Laura Dixon & Sue Barnard

Bruce Castle Museum | Rob Waite & Deborah Hedgecock

Church Farmhouse Museum | Gerrard Roots & Hugh Petrie

City of Westminster | Georgia Vossou

Defra | Fiona Lickorish

Embroiderers' Guild | Jane Sweet

EnAct Consulting | Tom Peyton

The Fleming Collection | Selina Skipwith

Foundling Museum | Janet Broadhurst

FONDA | Ian Pape

GK Partners | Katharine Ford

Haringey Libraries | Elizabeth Cruz, Diana Edmonds & Elena Pippou

Hub Islington | Holly Hunter

Hunterian Museum | Jane Hughes & Stefania Ricci

Islington Libraries | Maureen Black, John Smith

Lloyds TSB (moved to *City of Westminster*) | Anna McNally

London Metropolitan Archive | Jan Pimblett & Paul Sherreard

London Transport Museum | Caroline Warhurst

Redbridge libraries | Joe Daggers, Deirdre McGonagle & Rose Meredith

Scott-Keary Consultancy | Mae Keary

Thomson Reuters Archive | John Entwisle

University of the Arts | Sarah Mahurter

Waltham Forest Libraries | Lorna Lee, Manny Manoharan & Caroline Rae

Whitechapel Art Gallery | Gary Haines, Michael De Guzman & Zoe McLeod

Women's Library | Caroline Ellis

4 | current advisory group members

Susan Amor | Arts & Humanities Research Council

Julian Barker | Sky

Geoffrey Bond | Geoffrey Bond Consultancy

Tom Campbell

Ellen Collins | British Library

Judy Faraday | Partnership Archivist, John Lewis

Alan Freeman | GLA

Catherine Hillis | London Councils

Clive Holtham | Cass Business School and Learning Lab

Sally McDonald | UCL

Michael Reynier | London Higher

Gaby Rose | Grant Thornton, formerly Business & IP Centre, The British Library

Judith Rosser-Davies

Gini Simpson | Queen Mary Innovation

5 | project delivery team

MLA London | Ellen Collins & Andrew Holden, who directed the work and gave Sparknow just the right looseness of rope

London Development Agency | Judith Rosser-Davies, the LDA was the major funding partner and invested significant staff time in the programme

The London Museums Hub | supported museums' participation in the programme with funding from Renaissance

Sparknow | the bridge building team

Lesley Robinson Consultancy | Lesley Robinson, who designed and delivered the information literacy training

RedQuadrant | Ben Taylor & Carl Ulbricht, who did the evaluation

6 | photography

Photos kindly provided by contributors to this report and from the knowledge transfer library curated by Julie Reynolds.

The Sparknow bridge building team 2009

Paul Corney | helped Ellen with the tender for the information literacy programme and provided quality assurance of design and delivery of the training programme.

Roger Doughty | handled the finances.

Philip Gibson | designed and edited this report.

Fiona Hoppe | was in the core bridge building team for the exchange programme; researched each event; handled logistics and recorded feedback and insight; conducted reflection interviews for exchange programme participants at the end of the programme; produced all aspects of the Innovation Fund kick off at the Whitechapel and designed the materials for, and handled the logistics of, *More than Money*.

Sabine Jaccoud | worked with Ellen and Victoria to design the exchange programme event and prospectus and contributed to the exchange programme event on corporate social responsibility and the role of collections at times of upheaval, on which she wrote a piece for this report.

Julie Reynolds | used her background as a fine artist, curator and researcher to add to all aspects of the bridge building programme; took responsibility for the research database; designed materials for the events; marketed; curated each event; and continues to conduct research into this area.

Victoria Ward | led the bridge building team and worked with Philip to design, research and write this report.

