



Nottingham Trent
University

Nottingham Business School

The Big House programme:

Creative Unblock 2023

Information Pack



What is the Creative Unblock programme?

Creative Unblock is a short programme to help designer-makers, artists and craft-workers in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire understand how to price and sell your work.

The programme is aimed at those new to business or who have been trading a while but are struggling to sell work. Our 4 workshops, plus peer group sessions, are supportive, friendly and essential to getting traction in your emerging craft business!

The Creative Unblock programme is run by **The Big House** programme at Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University, and is funded by the **European Regional Development Fund**. Because of the funding, there is no charge to join the programme!



The Creative Unblock programme will help you with:

- working out the 'value proposition' of your work
- having the confidence to price your work correctly
- understanding how best to market yourself and your work
- how to approach galleries and other retailers to sell your work
- taking the best product photos you can
- being part of a group of like-minded artists / designer-makers

**Introducing your expert facilitator, Ben Rawson...**

The Creative Unblock workshops will be lead by Ben Rawson, FRSA. Ben is a Retail, High Street, and Online Retail Consultant.

Ben has substantial practical experience of the artist / craft market from both sides – as a creative & photographer selling art works worldwide and as a retailer. Between 2014 and 2019 Mark ran his own retail space called 'Made in Nottingham', supporting creatives and artists in getting their products onto the high street. Made in Nottingham was recognised for work in supporting SMEs by winning various awards, these included:

- 2015 SCEPTRE – Short Term Retailer 2nd place
- 2016 SCEPTRE – Short Term Retailer Winner
- 2016 INTU Nottm – Best window display
- 2017 The Small Awards – High Street Hero
- 2017 Small Business Saturday – Top 100 UK Businesses

Ben currently works with the Nottingham Tourism Centre in sourcing products for them to sell, designing and implementing product displays including featured window displays to showcase the products on sale - this has seen over 40 new suppliers and 350 new products being added to their shelves. Overall, Ben has a brilliant eye for understanding what sells and how to sell!

Ben will also be joined by Adrian Williams. Adrian has been a Business Advisor for The Big House programme for a number of years, helping creative and digital businesses on their entrepreneurial journey and has experience in the craft sector as a cabinet-maker.

To apply to the Creative Unblock programme, you need to meet the following criteria:

- You have a finished artistic product – or products - ready for market / retail, or are very close to this point.
 - Your product could be in any medium and could include for example; painting; prints; textile design; mosaic; wood; ceramics; photography.
 - The product can be hand-made by you or outsourced but if outsourced, it must contain a significant element of design by you
- You live in Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire.
- You have registered your business as a sole trader (or Ltd)*.
- You can commit to attending all the sessions in the timetable.

* Note – if you haven't yet registered, you can still apply BUT priority of places will go to registered business. If you are unregistered and apply but are unsuccessful in gaining a place, we will sign post you to start-up business support.

Places will be awarded on a competitive basis and we anticipate the maximum group size to be 12. *The deadline for applications: Monday 9 January 2023 (5pm).*

2023 Programme dates

The proposed dates and programme are outlined below. Dates are subject to occasional alteration due to operational circumstances.

Workshops will take place face-to-face and will be located in Nottingham city centre. Peer group sessions will run online.

| Date | Contents |
|---|---|
| <p>Tues 24 Jan 09.30am – 12.30pm</p> | <p>Workshop 1: Creating your perfect strategies to plan for the future</p> <p>We will start by using a really helpful tool – the Business Model Canvas ('BMC'). This workshop gives practical knowledge of how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete your BMC • complete a SWOT & SMART analysis • create a marketing strategy and calendar |

| Date | Contents |
|---|--|
| <p>Tues 7 Feb 09.30am – 12.30pm</p> | <p>Workshop 2: Grow your business with the perfect pricing strategy</p> <p>Getting the price right for any business is essential, so in this session we will look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how products are priced relative to cost and context • what to consider when pricing products, including the cost of selling through the high street and at fairs • how value is perceived by customers and to make the most of having a range of products. <p>You will be asked to bring a sample of your products to discuss and review your current pricing.</p> |
| <p>Tues 14 Feb 09.30am – 10.30am</p> | <p>Peer-to-Peer group session 1 (online)</p> <p>A chance to review where you are, ask questions, and share learning around running a craft business.</p> |
| <p>Tues 21 Feb 09.30am – 12.30pm</p> | <p>Workshop 3: Market your business effectively by making better pictures & videos with your mobile phone</p> <p>Better pictures means more trust from potential customers and increased sales! This is very much a practical workshop, so the majority of the time will be spent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking photos, videos, and getting them ready to post to social media • building on the marketing strategy with details of best practices of how to use social media |
| <p>Tues 7 Mar 09.30am – 12.30pm</p> | <p>Workshop 4: Grow your business with galleries/shops and get noticed for trade</p> <p>In this workshop you will build a knowledge of the best way to approach retail outlets, trade shows, and galleries in a way that will get your products noticed and potentially stocked with the outlet. During the workshop you will look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good and poor applications to stores from other creatives so you can see the dos and don'ts • test applications for some of the large trade shows to help you get used to the information that is needed |
| <p>Tues 14 Mar 09.30 – 10.30am</p> | <p>Peer-to-Peer group session 2 (online)</p> <p>Another chance to share experience and tips within the group and ask for suggestions and support from others.</p> |

What if I can't attend all the sessions?

Creative Unblock is a programme that requires time and commitment. If you are unable to attend all the workshops and peer-to-peer sessions (excluding emergency or ill-health), then the programme is not for you.

How do I apply?

To apply for a place on the programme, you need to complete the following stages:

1. **Check the dates and ensure you can commit** to attending all the workshops and group peer mentoring sessions. Your application includes committing to attending the programme for the duration.
2. **Complete the online Application form here:** [Creative Unblock 2023 application](#)

Once you have submitted the online application form it will be assessed, and you will be either be accepted or declined. Please allow up to two weeks for a decision to be made.

Good luck with your application!

