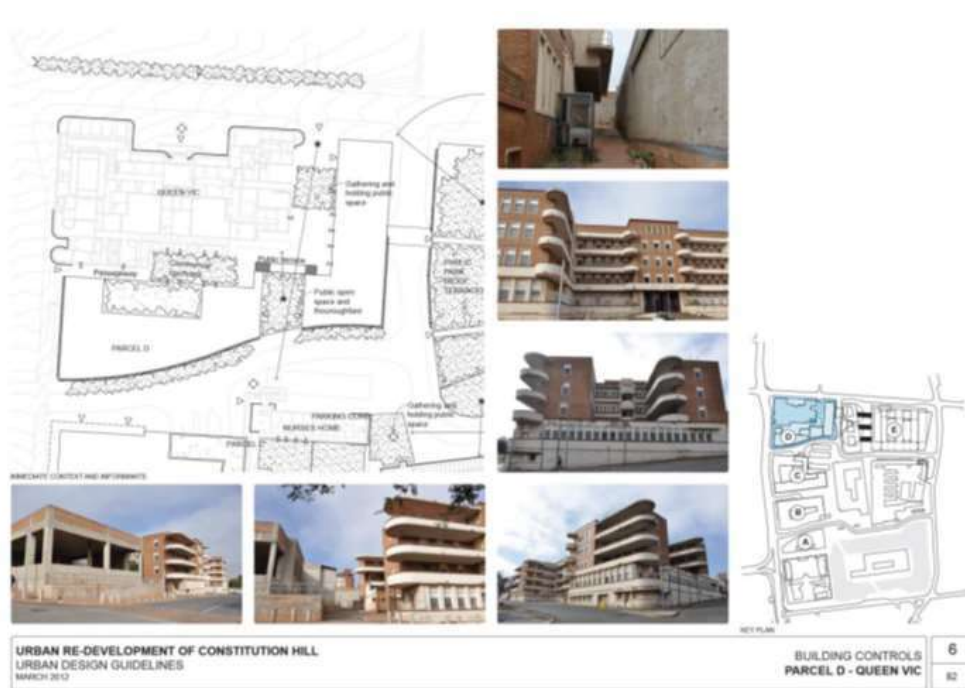


THE CREATIVE UPRISING HUB:

Transwerke Studios: From birth to new life

Taking an abandoned building in the City of Johannesburg and breathing new life and hope for entrepreneurship and creativity

A case study on how one of the first maternity hospital in Africa is being turned into a creative hub for the development and support of creative entrepreneurship in Gauteng.



TRANSWERKE STUDIOS, JOHANNESBURG

Written by Mariapaola McGurk

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Mr M J Mulaudzi (Group Company Secretary)
Reg. No. 2001/005330/30. VAT no: 4720208034

A subsidiary of the Gauteng Growth and Development Agency



INTRODUCTION:

CONSTITUTION HILL

Constitution Hill is a living museum that tells the story of South Africa's journey to democracy. The site is a former prison and military fort that bears testament to South Africa's turbulent past and, today, is home to the country's Constitutional Court, which endorses the rights of all citizens...Constitution Hill is also a place of contrasts: of injustice and justice, of oppression and liberation. Our precinct is testament to the importance of preserving sites of atrocity for posterity, and also to recreating them so that they can serve the purposes of the present and serve to mould the future.

(ConstitutionHill.org.za)

Constitution Hill Human Rights Precinct received National Heritage status in 2017 as a precursor to a World Heritage Site application. The Constitution Hill Human Rights Precinct has been submitted to UNESCO for World Heritage listing as part of a serial nomination – “The South African Human Rights, Liberation Struggle & Reconciliation Route” by the Department of Arts and Culture and the National Heritage Council. The South African Liberation Heritage Route constitute a series of sites linked together by a common historical narrative of the liberation struggle and experience.

THE CREATIVE UPRISING HUB

The development of a cross-discipline creative hub at Constitution Hill aligns with the vision of preserving and acknowledging atrocities of the past; while creating a better and more equal society for the present and generations to come. The Creative Uprising is an ambitious long-term vision of turning Constitution Hill into a creative hub supporting creative entrepreneurs, youth, and other creative hubs of Gauteng. Creative Hubs are not simply studios where artists work, but rather a contemporary response to how we engage, work, share ideas and teach one another. A creative hub is a space where ideas and innovation are developed, alongside critical and creative thinking. It is the development of a community, and in South Africa, an opportunity to really find solutions to inequalities and lack of resources. The Creative Uprising Hub has a variety of physical and digital components, with the intention to offer relevant support to creative entrepreneurs.





The Creative Uprising Hub at Constitution Hill

Developing a cross discipline creative hub means that the hub needs to have a range of support structures in place that speak to the different sectors. The Creative Economy is a complex space with a variety of sectors that fall within it; a generic incubation hub will not suffice for the nuances and specialisations needed within those sectors. For example: a musician and a visual artist developing their careers do not need the same types of resources, support or networks; however, both may require creative entrepreneurship training. The musician may need to have access to a recording studio and/or a sound engineer; the visual artist may need mentorship and access to contemporary artists for mentorship and capacity building.

For this reason, the Creative Uprising Hub is being developed with an openness to collaboration and engagement so that there are a range of specialists from these different sectors to help in the development of relevant support structures.

There is also an openness to creative entrepreneurs, themselves, contributing; they often know exactly what they need in order to elevate their businesses and careers. The diagram above outlines the different sections of the Creative Uprising Hub.

A brief outline of the sections:

- **Transwerke Studios:** a physical building offering low-cost studios, programmes and other support structures
- **Flame Studios:** A Music Hub with cutting edge recording equipment and the vision to both generate income and develop up and coming musicians.
- **Speak Truth to Power:** A venue dedicated to creative and critical thinking where corporates, creatives and the public will be invited for workshops and debates, to challenge their perceptions and ideas.
- **Products of Origin:** The Movement Store (a museum shop) to be opened in 2021/2022 with a programme called the Movement Incubation Programme that will offer opportunity to creative product developers to grow their business, technical and personal knowledge while also having the opportunity to sell products at the Movement Store, online platforms and craft markets.
- **Festivals, Exhibitions and Events:** 2 annual festivals: The Basha Uhuru Festival and the Human Rights Festival, a minimum of 10 exhibitions annually and a range of events: all with the intention of offering platforms to creatives either through access to market, work, or the development of their concepts and ideas.
- **Membership:** Currently there are 460 members of the Creative Uprising Hub. To become a member you simply fill in an online form which allows us to get insights into what types of creatives we are engaging and what their needs are. Membership is free and currently only includes a monthly newsletter with upcoming opportunities and events. There are plans to develop this platform further and creative partnerships with corporate and government to further this platform.
 - Some Facts about the members:
 - 43% own a company
 - 57% are freelancers
 - 70% are either micro enterprises (less than 10 employees); or work alone
 - 40% of members are visual artists, followed by fashion (32,5%), Design (33%) Photography (26%), Music 24%, Craft (19%), New Media (18%), Arts Education (18%), Film (17%), Advertising (17%), Performance art (15%), Animation (6%)
- **Programmes:** To host programmes annually that offer a variety of developmental support for creative entrepreneurs. This would include: capacity building, business & entrepreneurship, technical support, 4IR development, incubation, residencies, etc.

This case study will focus on Transwerke Studios; a four story building which Constitution Hill started managing in 2017.

IMAGES OF THE CREATIVE UPRISING HUB:



FLAMES STUDIOS



RESIDENCY PROGRAMME
WITH THE BUBBLEGUM CLUB



THE ARTS ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SACII, SEDA AND JULIE MILLER CONTEMPORARY



CARE4CREATIVES CAMPAIGN



STUDIO 21 WINNING RESIDENTS FOR 2021/2022



TRANSWERKE TENANTS:
AFRIKANSWISS WITH CELEBRITY CLIENTS.

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THE BASHA UHURU FESTIVAL
CREATIVE CO-LAB SESSIONS



HUMAN RIGHTS FESTIVAL AND THE SITE TOUR.
MURAL BY MR EKSE: ARTRIGHT PROJECT
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH VANSÁ



THE CREATIVE UPRISING HUB
SITE TOUR & OPEN MIC
SESSION IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH GUSHER



CONSTITUTIONHILL

EVENTS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ESTABLISH AND NEW CREATIVE ORGANISATIONS OFFERING THE PLATFORM FOR GROWTH AND EXPERIMENTATION



STUDIO 21
RESIDENCY
PROGRAMME
OPEN CALL



CONSTITUTIONHILL



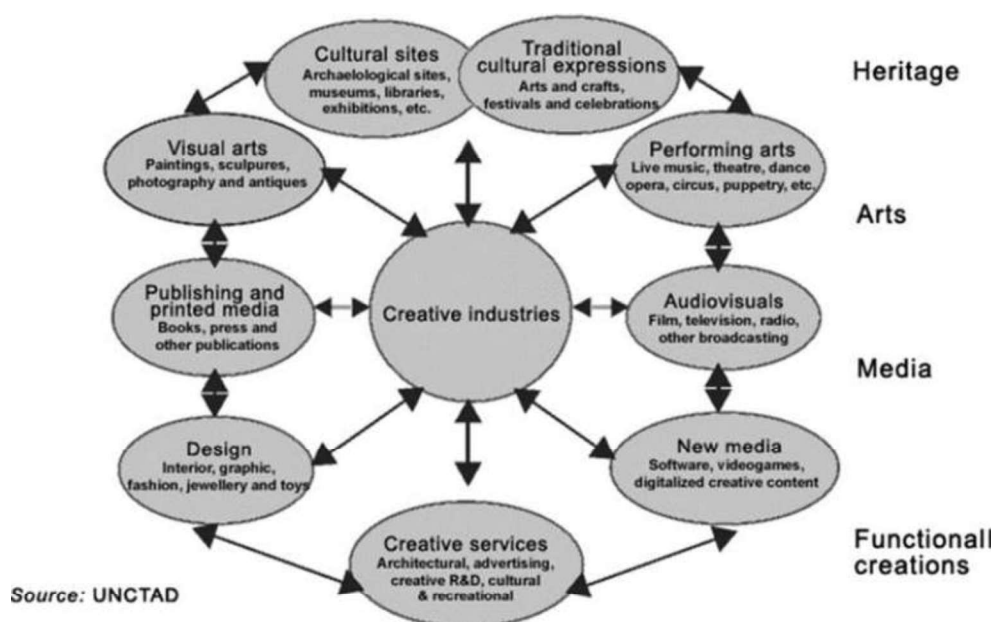
OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEMALE CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS



CREATIVE HUBS AND THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

The Creative Economy is quite a new term that challenges the notion of 'economy'; it is a structured network that relates to all the activities within the sectors of the creative industries. If one is to offer development and support to creatives of Gauteng, it is necessary to fully understand what the Creative Economy is, how it functions and what type of support would be relevant and impactful.



(UNCTAD, 2008, 14)

THE CREATIVE ECONOMY SECTORS

The value of the creative economy is not just about traditional economic components; but an innovative approach to society's upliftment socially, culturally and economically, explained further by Ries:

Contrary to what critics say, the creative economy is not only a collection of sectors wrapped up in a new category, but it is the symbol of a new economic cycle, which emerges as a response to long-standing global problems. It encourages and serves as the foundation to new business models, organisational and institutional processes, and relationships between economic and social agents.

Within this new paradigm, which has culture as essence and technology as a driving force, the organisation of markets in networks, the partnerships between social and economic agents, the prevalence of the intangible aspects of production, the use of new technologies for the production, distribution and/or access to goods and services, and the uniqueness in production, for it is strongly anchored on singularity, are traits of this model, which assumes that sustainability is based on well-being and socioeconomic inclusion.

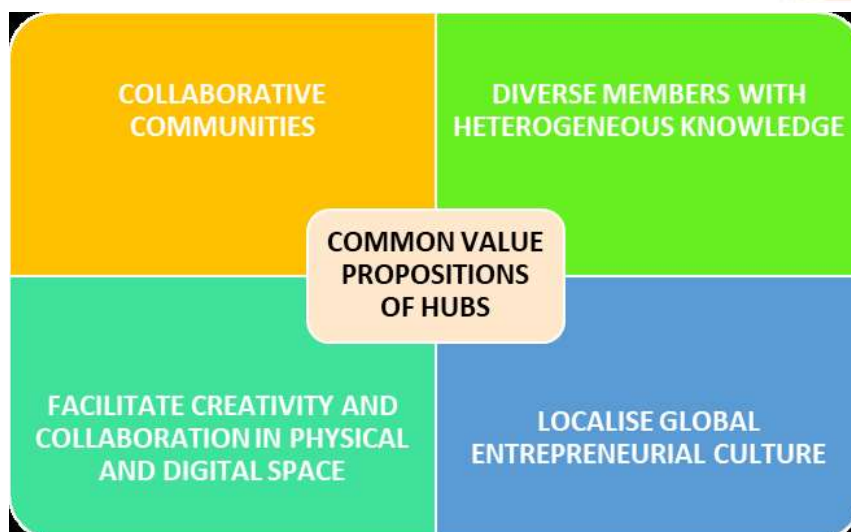
(Ries, 2008: 47)

To develop the Creative Economy, we must be willing to grow in this 'new economic cycle' and accept that new business models; new approaches to hierarchy and process, must be considered and explored. Innovation is impossible without experimentation and the possibility of failure; or succeeding in ways that were not considered initially. That acceptance of process, experimentation and of potential change is essential if we are to grow the Creative Economy of Gauteng and South Africa.

CREATIVE HUBS

Creative Hubs are a concept that is growing globally as a response to needs within the creative economy. There is no 'one size fits all' and the hubs are, in most cases, developed in response to the needs and requirements of creatives within a specific community. They do all, however, share a similar ethos and intent. They are not in competition with one another and believe in the value of community development and upliftment. In a study by Toivonen and Friederici (Toivonen & Friederici, 2015) they found the following 4 commonalities of value proposition between all hubs.

1. HUBS BUILD COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITIES WITH ENTREPRENEURIAL INDIVIDUALS AT THE CENTRE.
2. HUBS ATTRACT DIVERSE MEMBERS WITH HETEROGENEOUS KNOWLEDGE
3. HUBS FACILITATE CREATIVITY AND COLLABORATION IN PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL SPACES
4. HUBS LOCALISE GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE



https://ssir.org/articles/entry/time_to_define_what_a_hub_really_is#

The nature of a creative hub is different to an incubator. Creatives are not all part of a programme or attending a series of workshops ; but rather a sense of community, place and knowledge sharing is created. Creative hubs have shown to positively impact the sustainability of creative entrepreneurship through offering access to market and machinery, access to space, networking, events, community and access to capacity building and skills development workshops.

‘[m]ost will have a property element, but they will rarely be a single, isolated building. Within its neighbourhood, the hub may occupy one space, but its support activities will range across a variety of local institutions and networks. But importantly, they support communities of practice, not for profit and commercial, large and small, part-time and full-time activity – they are not just incubators for small businesses, but have a wider remit. Creative Hubs will form a network that will drive the growth of creative industries at the local and regional level, providing more jobs, more education and more opportunities...’

(Dovey and Pratt, 2016)

TRANSWERKE STUDIOS: From birth to new life

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY TO THE BUILDING

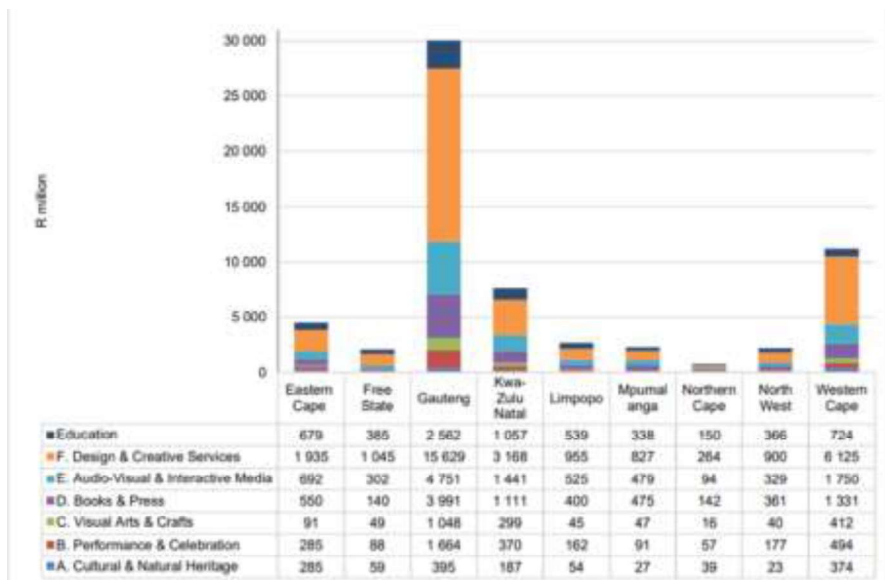
Constitution Hill is based in the City of Johannesburg and is a subsidiary of GGDA (Gauteng Growth and Development Agency) who have the mandate to

... be the implementation arm of the Gauteng Department of Economic Development and to assist the department to lead, facilitate and manage sustainable job creation and inclusive economic growth and development in the Gauteng City Region.

<http://ggda.co.za/>

Gauteng is the creative epicentre of South Africa (SACO, 2017) and is therefore an ideal location for the development of creative entrepreneurship. The figure below shows the contribution of each province to the creative economy. Gauteng dominates with the highest contribution of Cultural and Creative Industry (CCI) to the national GDP of 2,87% (SACO, 2017: 161). The creative economy is one of the nine priority sectors for the province.

Contribution of CCI domains to GDP by province



(SACO, 2017: 161)

Contribution of CCI domains to GDP by province

Transwerke studios is a 10 195m², four story building that is part of the Constitution Hill heritage precinct and belongs to Gauteng Provincial Government. The building is currently in the process of being transferred to Constitution Hill. In light of the heritage precinct status of Constitution Hill all developments on the site need to be approved by the Chief Justice through the Constitutional Court Building Committee of Justices. These criteria and rights were fashioned to ensure that the nature of the development would be in keeping with the historic character of the site and with the Human Rights ethos of Constitution Hill as a whole. The Constitution Hill Master Plan sees the Hill developed on two pillars: Art and Justice. The Creative Uprising Hub falls within the Arts pillar but with the fundamental values of our constitution at the heart of how the hub is developed and grown: *democracy, equality, reconciliation, diversity, responsibility, respect and freedom.*



QUEEN VICTORIA MATERNITY HOSPITAL 1939

The building was designed in 1939 by acclaimed architect Gordon Leith as the Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital. It closed when the maternity section was incorporated into the new Johannesburg Hospital, now Charlotte Maxeke. It was then turned into 80 residential flats but was closed in 1983. In September 2017, Transwerke received a 'Black Plaque' from the Gauteng Heritage Action Group.

Black plaques are meant to shame heritage building owners into stopping rampant decay in buildings that should be treasured as historical landmarks.

(2 Summers, 2018)

It may have worked as in 2018 Constitution Hill cleaned up the ground floor of the building and allowed creatives to have studios on site; and so began the development of the Transwerke Studios. A location deeply imbedded in the apartheid history of South Africa is now bringing new life to both the building and the legacy of this living museum.



THE COURTYARD: A COMMUNAL SPACE FOR CREATIVES

VISION FOR THE BUILDING

The 5 year goal of this building is to renovate all floors and have a four story, 80 studio building dedicated to creative organisations, creative entrepreneurs and offering opportunities for the growth and sustainability of micro and small creative businesses. The hub will offer a range of support structures focused on the following elements:



- **The Transwerke Studio Support Programme:** Low-cost studios with the option to barter.
- **Programmes:** A variety of programmes developed through partnerships with experts within different sectors of the Creative Economy.
- **Open studios and other events:** Access to market through events and open studios. This element will only be realised fully after Covid-19.
- **The Let's Get Formal Computer LAB:** A computer lab with 10 computers, access to wi-fi and support. This room is dedicated to creative entrepreneurs getting entrepreneurial support as and when needed; as well as a formal programme that will take place annually. This room is dedicated to issues such as:
 - How do I register my business and what are my options?
 - How to I get a business account?
 - Do I need to be vat registered?
 - How do I pay PAYE – do I need to?
 - What is a statement and how do I create one?
 - How do I register on the CSD government data base system so I can apply for tenders and quotations?
 - How do I do an annual financial statement?
 - How do I professionalise my proposal, etc.
- **The BASHA LAB:** The Basha Lab will be a makerspace dedicated to the introduction of 4IR machinery and equipment to creative entrepreneurs. The first set of machinery has been bought, including: 3d printers, laser cutter, Vinyl cutter, large scale printer, etc. This space will be developed, alongside workshops, so creatives can realise and access 4IR machinery for the benefit of their businesses.

GROWING THE CREATIVE ECONOMY FROM THE GROUND UP



THE MOVEMENT INCUBATION PROGRAMME: PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

As explained above, new working models are critical to the development of the creative economy and key to that is for institutions to realise that micro enterprises and creatives need to be seen as partners and collaborators rather than beneficiaries. This may seem like an irrelevant element but how one engages with a partner is very different to how one engages with a beneficiary. Partners or collaborators come together as equals, with each party having an offering to contribute; beneficiaries and benefactors do not come on an equal standing - with the benefactor giving, and the beneficiary receiving. This has an impact on power dynamics and introduces hierarchy. Constitution Hill may be offering a range of support to creatives; but in return ConHill is having the opportunity to reach its targets and deliverables by having creatives engage and contribute to the development of the hub. Both parties are benefiting from the engagement. All elements need to have this fundamental approach which shifts how we work and who contributes to the development of the concepts and ideas.

Transwerke Studio Support Programme is exploring key shifts in methodology which allow a mutually beneficial approach, rather than a top down approach:

The Transwerke Studio Support Programme

The majority of creative enterprises in South Africa, similar to social enterprises; are micro in size with a turn over of R500 000, or less per annum (Lovasic & Cooper, 2019). In a survey done on creative and social enterprises of South Africa; the following interesting facts about creative enterprises were found:

- The most important leadership skill for success is: **TECHNICAL SKILLS FOR AREA OF WORK**
- Top constraints on financing: **NETWORK ACCESS AND INVESTMENT READINESS**
- **THE VAST MAJORITY OF** creative businesses that took part in the survey receive no grants.
- Leaders of creative enterprises are **YOUNG, DIVERSE AND EDUCATED**

(Lovasic & Cooper, 2019)

This study showed the similarities between social and creative enterprises, which often seem to overlap in their intention to positively impact community; and in particular a focus on youth development. That being said, creative entrepreneurs are often not generating high profits and therefore struggle to cover all their overheads while also having a positive impact on their communities. The Transwerke Studio Support Programme is an exploration of finding ways that the building can be sustainable while offering low-cost studio to creatives. The thinking process of 'partnership' rather than 'benefactor' led to an exploration of new methods where all parties contribute to the growth and sustainability of the studios.

Studios being rented out at Transwerke Studios are not being done with a generic 'lessee', 'lessor' approach but rather with the realisation of how much creatives can contribute to the regeneration and development of the city and the growth of the Creative Uprising Hub. The programme is called '*The Transwerke Studios Support Programme*' and all creatives have the option to pay straight low-cost rent (which includes Fibre and rates) or bartering part of their rent. The studios are rented out from R1500 – R5000 depending on size but if creatives choose to barter they have the following 2 options:

- **OPTION 1: OFFER YOUR SERVICES TO CONSTITUTION HILL**

- This option works well for graphic designers, videographers, photographers, etc. and offers ConHill access to services. The second benefit is that creatives can show other potential clients the work they have done for this globally recognised museum and gain potential leverage for future work and the growth of their businesses.

- **OPTION 2: GROW THE CREATIVE ECONOMY WITH US**

- *Creatives often do not have much spare money, but have a wealth of knowledge, passion and creativity to give. This option intends working with creatives to grow the creative economy together through the following ways:*
 - Host workshops where you teach other creatives your skills. Some workshops we have hosted so far or are planning to host soon:
 - poetry workshop,
 - how to work with denim,
 - Story board writing,
 - Fashion planning and design,
 - Proposal writing,
 - How to get your music out there online,
 - Become a mentor to younger creatives within your field. Some mentorships we have done or are planning to do:
 - Visual arts mentorship for one month – work alongside a visual artist in their studio and get feedback on your work
 - Shadow a musician and see what they do in the industry
 - Host exhibitions/events that allow other creatives to access your markets and database. Some events/exhibitions we have done:
 - Monthly solo exhibition showcasing creatives
 - Monthly events showcasing fashion, food and visual arts

The bartering approach allows for creatives to partner and contribute to the overall concept of the hub, while allowing for the hub to develop much faster, and with small budgets. Creatives bring a sincerity and relevance that institutions cannot/seldom do and this approach allows the institution to offer the platform even with low budgets; while the creative benefits through lower rental costs. This initiative started in January and has allowed for the hub to be buzzing with activity and opportunity even though we do not have an allocated budget to this programme or a dedicated team.

All parties bring their strengths and resources to the project in a partnership with a shared vision and intent.

FUNDING



Currently there is no/low dedicated budget to the development of the Creative Uprising Hub from Constitution Hill and the work being done is with limited budgets and resources; but a belief in this initiative and its potential impact. The funding comes sporadically and through proposals for specific programmes or initiatives. In 2021 we will be opening the first floor of studios to creatives with the vision of the entire building being in operation by 2025.



If we are to start considering creatives as our partners, then there may be new methodologies we can implement to achieve our goals. One of those methodologies is to creatively use what is within your reach. What can we do right now with the resources we have? Rather than waiting for a comprehensive budget to be available – what is possible today? This approach leads to innovative solutions that link to collaboration, action and impact. If we are to approach the Creative Uprising Hub in this way it also allows for the development of the hub to be process driven and not defined before even beginning. This approach is complimentary for collaborations and partnerships in the development and allows for the silo approach – so often evident within government – to be tackled and broken down one idea at a time. The creative process is a known approach to creative development and is how Transwerke Studios is being developed, including funding and budgets.



The creative process is the evolution of an idea into its final form through a progression of thoughts and actions. The creative process involves critical thinking and problem-solving skills. From songwriters to television producers, creative individuals generally go through five steps to bring their ideas to fruition—preparation, incubation, illumination, evaluation, and verification

(masterclaff, 2020)

In practical terms this approach has led to the following:

- **What do we have?**

There are many elements that are low hanging fruit which the Creative Uprising; and in particular – Transwerke Studios, has. We have salaries and there are a team of people employed. We have a building that can be used on the ground floor and needs renovations on the first, second and third floors. We have many studio spaces that can be used for a variety of elements.

We have walls that could be painted and contribute to projects and the overall aesthetics of the building. We have furniture in storage which could be used to develop different spaces within the building. We have a small budget that can go towards developing programmes. We have a network of potential partnerships that we could approach to offer various support to one another without having to be funding based. We have creatives; both based at Transwerke and a waiting list of creatives wanting to move into Transwerke.

- **What could we do with all of this?**

We can think like a creative and 'DO', 'ACT', 'EXPERIMENT'. Take the low hanging fruit and turn them into action: think of ways that the studios could be best utilised, partnerships implemented and get the ball rolling.

Budget should not lead to action – Action should lead to budget.

It is through a creative process that one can explore ideas and see where budget is really required. That motivation for budget will be specific and outcomes based; it will also not be the only action taking place within the project.

Recently the MEC of Economic Development for Gauteng stated:

Constitution Hill is in the process of reinventing itself as a creative industries aggregator focused on youth self-employment, as a complement to its role as the anchor of a redeveloped inner-city precinct that will be spearheaded by GGDA.

(MEC Parks Tau Budget Speech June 2021)



This statement could assist with the development of the Creative Uprising Hub and large infrastructural needs – like the renovations to the second, third and fourth floor of the building. Although low hanging fruit is an element of this development; as is using creative methodologies; projects of this scale require large support for the infrastructural requirements in order to succeed. The MEC of Economic Development in Gauteng seeing the vision and the potential of ConHill as a creative industries aggregator is key to the development of the Creative Uprising Hub.

CONCLUSION

The approach to the development of the Creative Uprising Hub is to think creatively and innovatively, while working with what we have and the support we receive. This is how the creative economy functions: work with the elements that are in front of you, prove the model and build it; show the results and garner further support. The project grows through the needs and requirements of creatives, allowing them to give input and direction to the overall vision. This hub will be developed with creatives and not just for them. It has a long way to go but the results are already visible – even at this early stage.



THE CREATIVE UPRISING HUB SITE TOURS

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