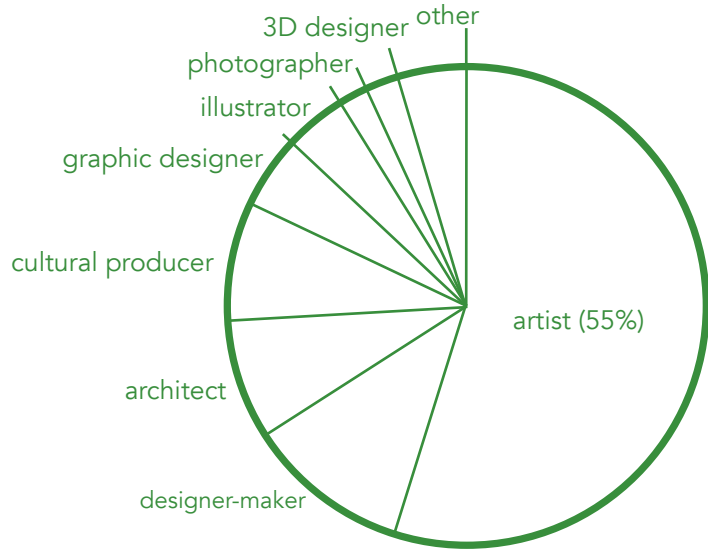




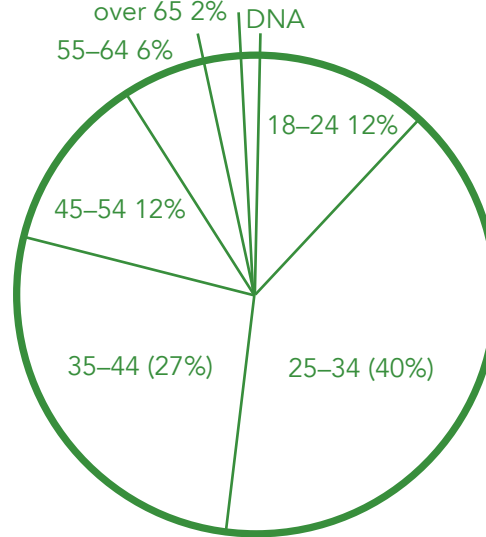
Birmingham Production Space

Survey Results 2014

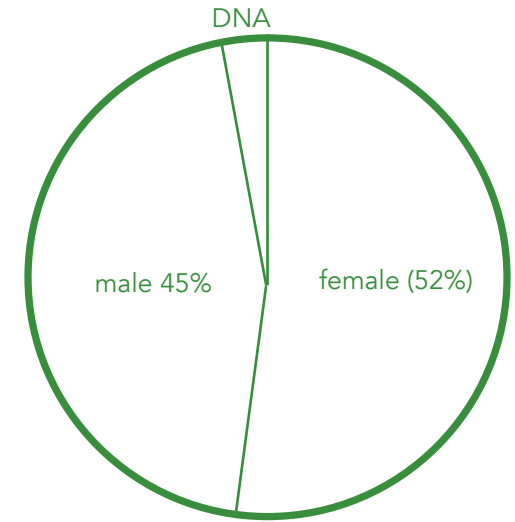
What do you do?



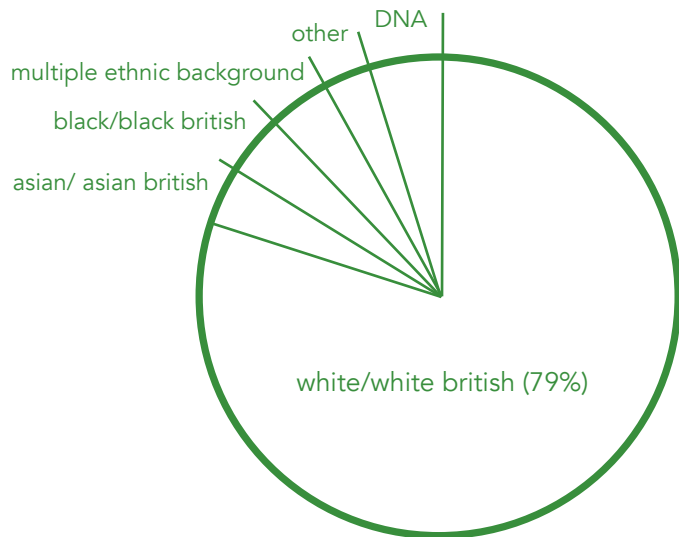
How old are you?



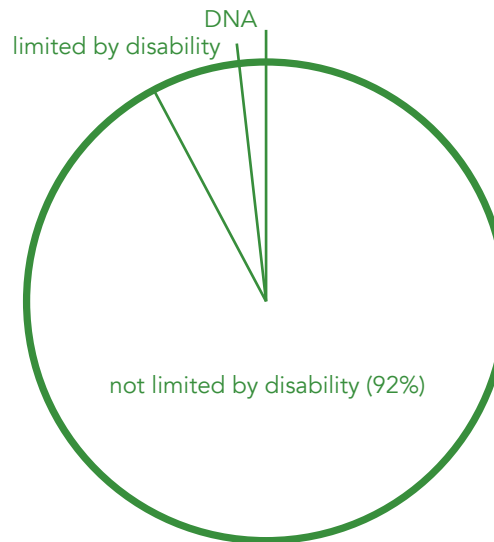
Gender



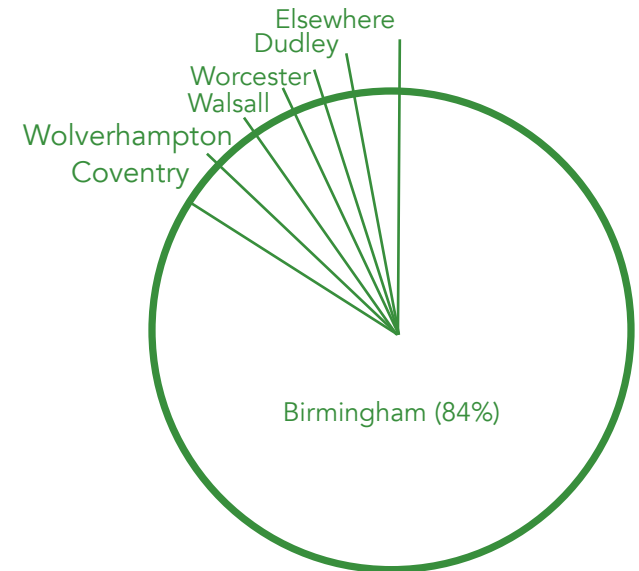
Ethnicity



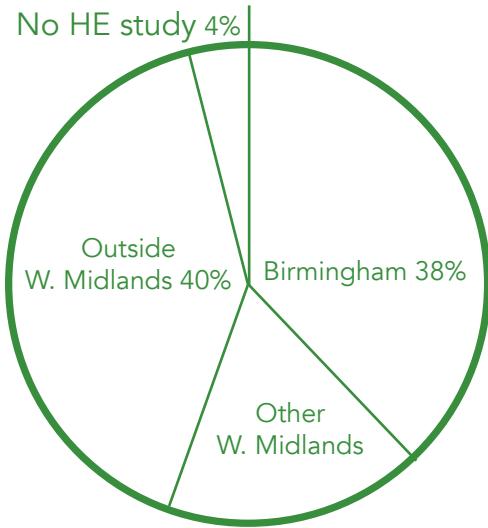
Disability



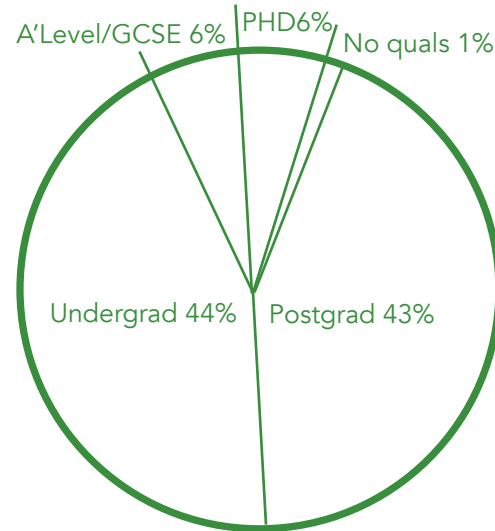
Living in



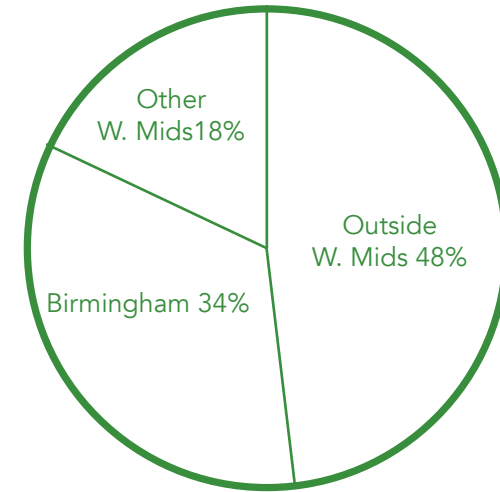
HE Study undertaken in



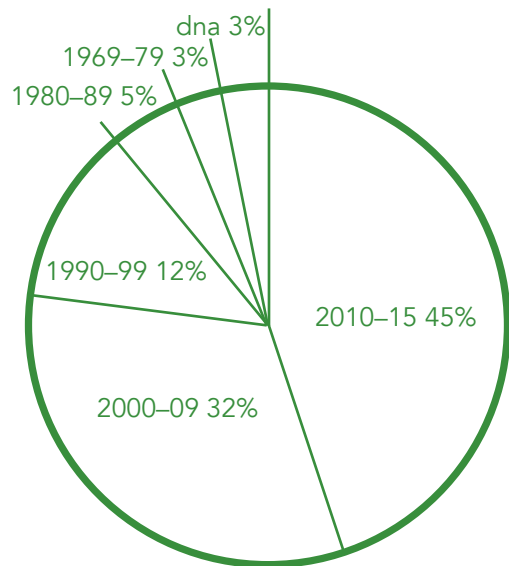
Highest Level Qualification



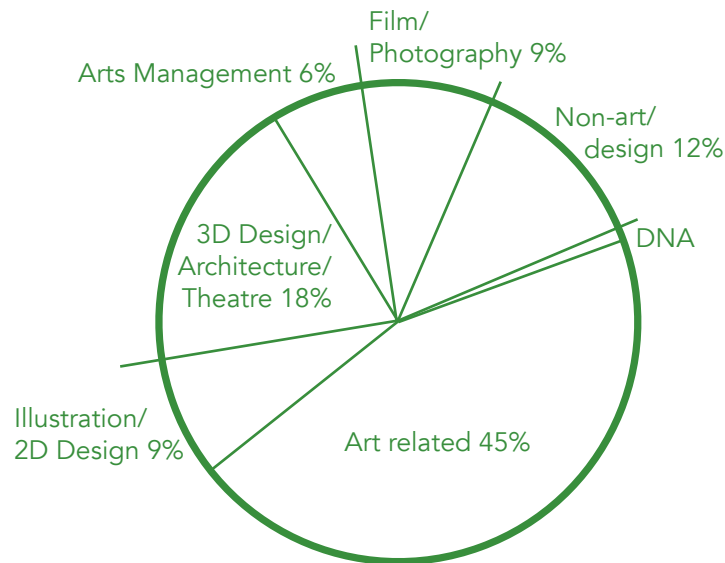
Gained where?



Completed in



Subject Area



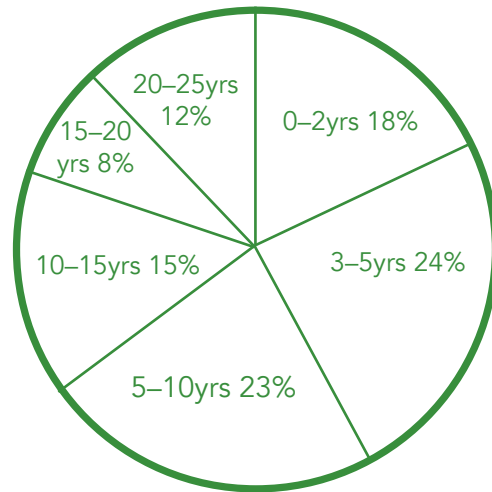
Notes:

HE Study: This question referred to any HE study ie some respondents might have studied for an undergraduate degree in Birmingham, but studied for a post graduate qualification elsewhere, or vice versa.

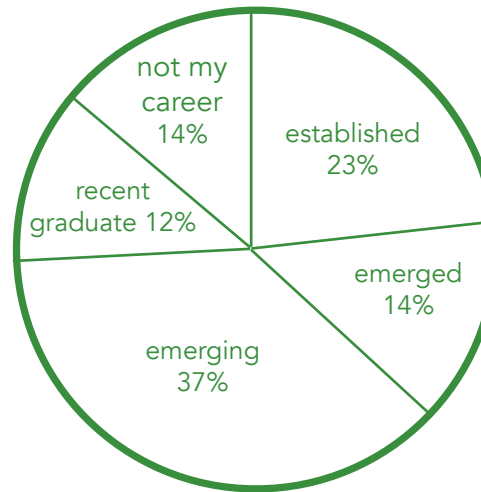
The survey revealed a sizeable proportion of active practitioners study for some, or all, of their HE level qualifications outside the region and then choose to establish careers here.

45% of respondents completed their highest level qualification in the last 5 years, interesting in relation to the ages of respondents 67% or whom were over 25, suggesting some recent graduates might be excluded by a tendency to aim support at under 25's.

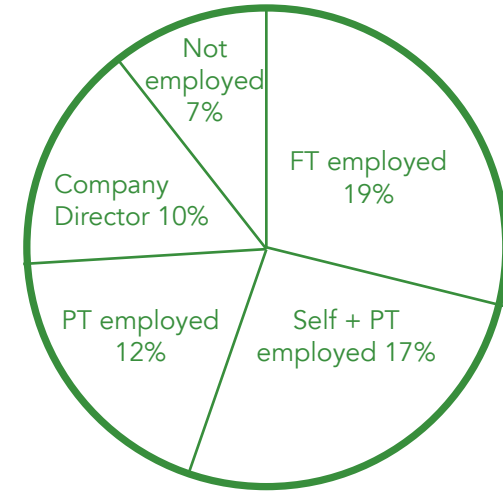
Length of practice



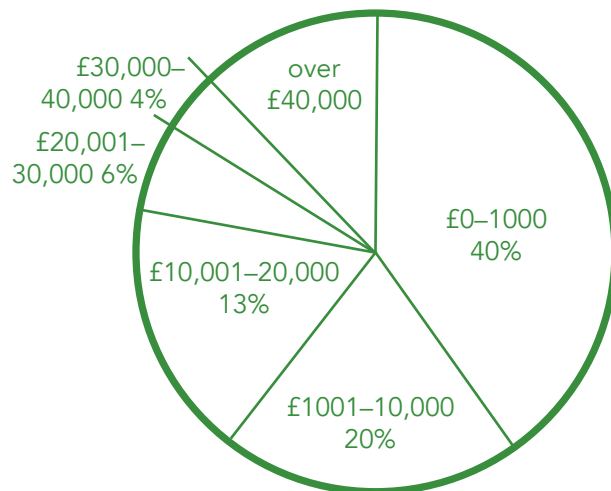
Career level



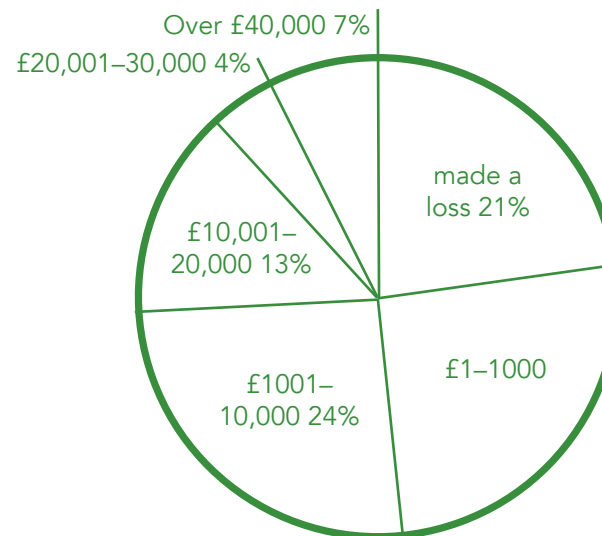
Employment



Annual turnover from creative work



Annual profit from creative work



Notes:

Career level: Of those who identified as 'established' almost half had been practising for over 10 years. Of those who identified as emerging almost a third had been practising for more than 5 years.

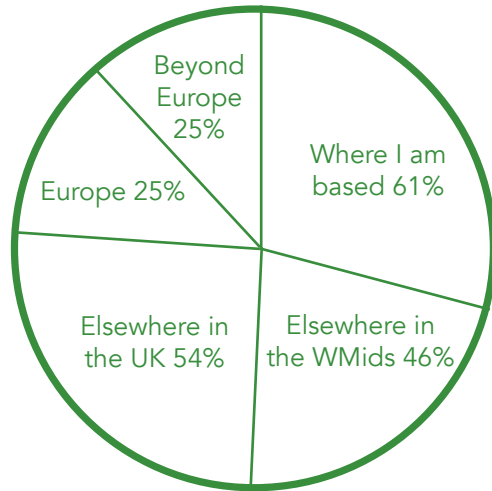
Annual profit: 80% of those who made a loss identified themselves as artists, as were 50% of those who made £1001-10,000.

All those who made over £40,000 were mostly architects.

Only 2% of respondents had commercial representation. Though this was not relevant to 14% of respondents practices this doesn't imply routes to markets are limited for many.

From 2012 where has your work been seen or commissioned?

10% had not shown work, the remaining 90% were able to select multiple answers



Work environment

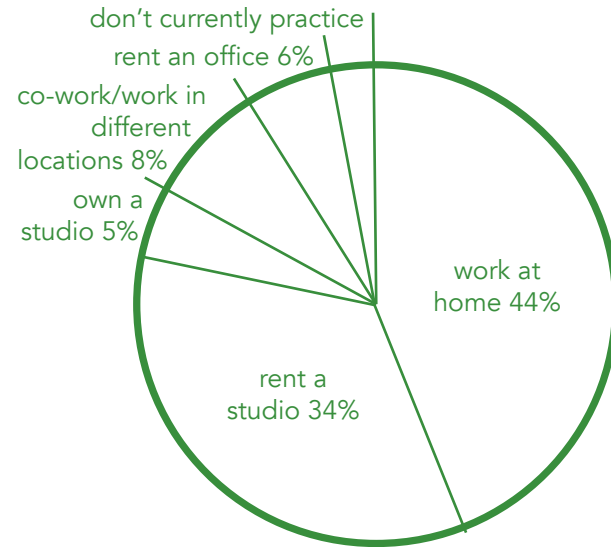
39% work in unheated workspaces
NB this included 71% of rented studios

29% do not have hot running water
18% do not have internet access
50% do not have insurance

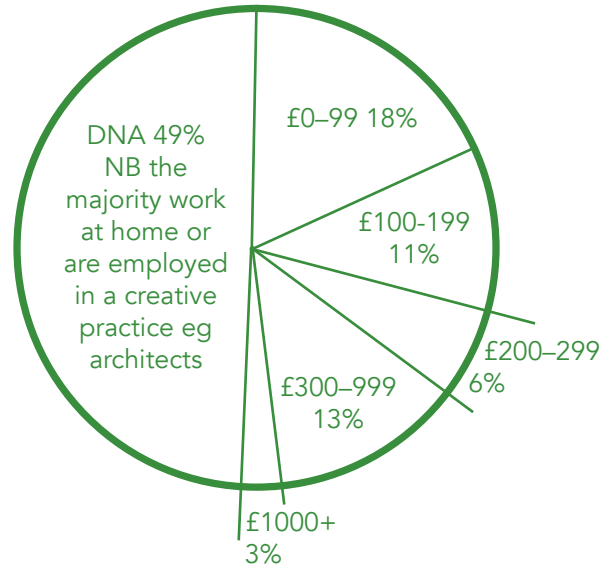
47% work alone
24% work alongside people from their discipline
26% work alongside people from other disciplines
3% work alongside non-creatives

Of those who work with other people:
25% described their workspace as very active
18% described their workspace as active
12% described it as inactive

Where do you work?



Monthly workspace overheads



Describe your workspace

35% of respondents had office or desk space within their workspace

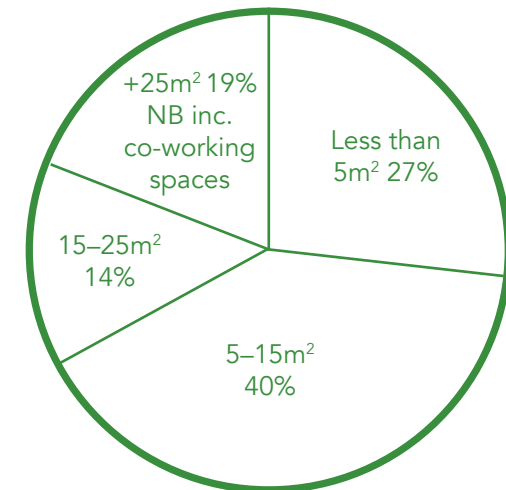
Most respondents' described their workspace as multi functional with spaces including:

21% Dirty making space
20% Clean making space
20% Workshop space

85% of those who rented studios were in shared space or working near other people.

22% of respondents described their workspace as an office, desk space or a laptop/computer.

Size

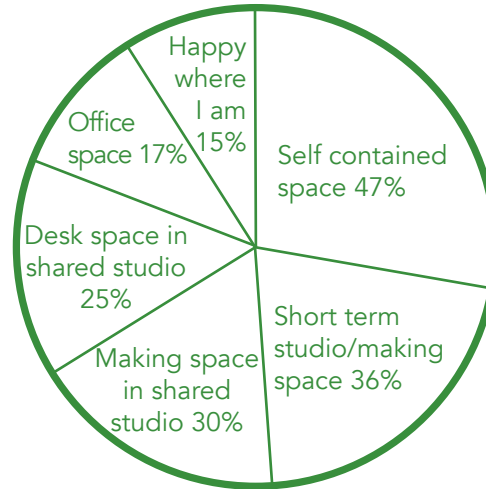


On a scale of 0–10 how do you rate your workspace?

1% a perfect ten.
 39% rated 7,8,9
 41% rated 4,5,6
 16% rated 1,2,3
 3% rated rock bottom 0

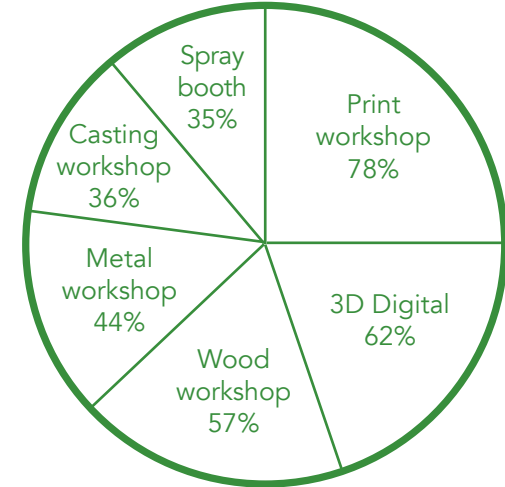
What kind of spaces would you find useful?

(multiple answers allowed)



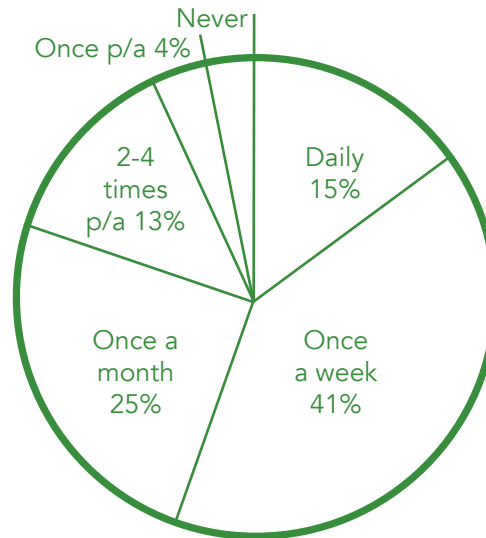
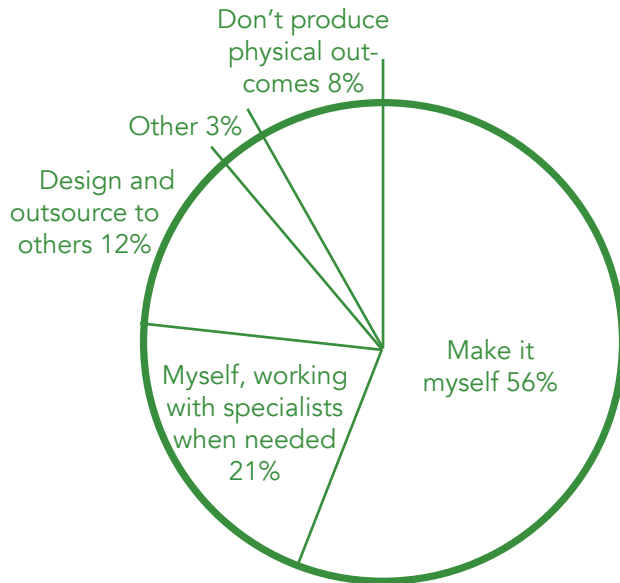
What workshops would you use?

(multiple answers allowed)



How do you usually make work?

How often would you access these facilities?



Can you currently access these facilities?

11% didn't need to access workshops.
 55% said they could not.

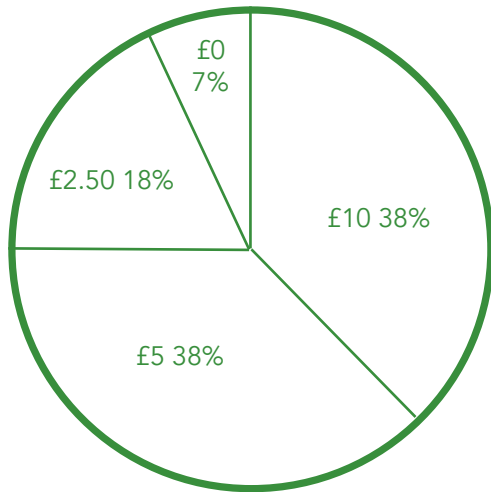
Key barriers:

Cost of equipment and outsourcing particularly during experimental phases; lack of signposting, access and availability; current provision not able to support production of larger scale work; lack of training and support to develop knowledge and skills; not knowing how, who or where to ask.

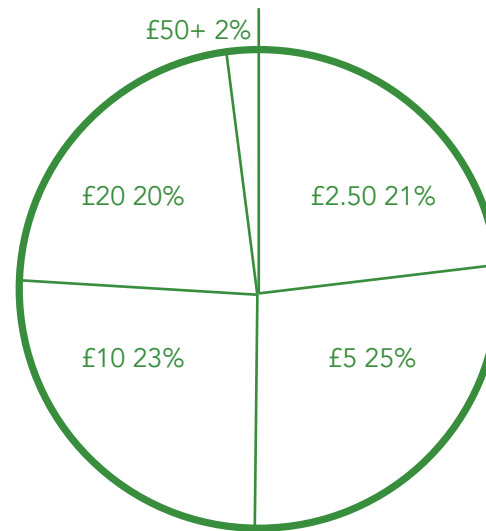
Other facilities people suggest including:

Meeting space; events space; networking/social space; crèche or childcare facilities; education space; space to present, photograph and test work; rehearsal space; greenscreen space; framing facilities; sewing machines; ceramics; access to software; darkrooms; editing suite; sandblasting; outdoor yard space; large scale digital printers; textile based processes.

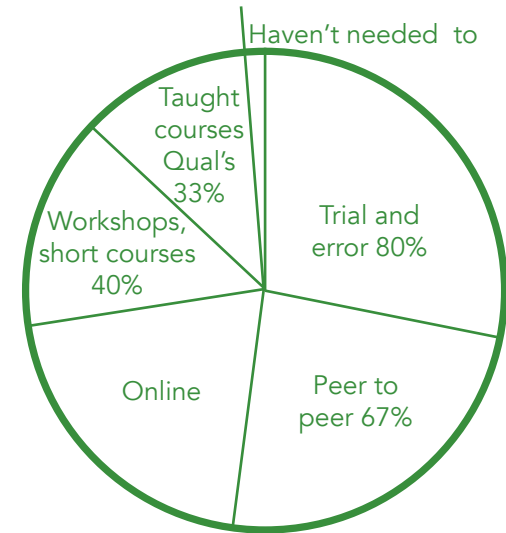
What would you pay per month for Production Space membership?



What is a reasonable daily fee for access?



How do you develop technical and practical skills



Ease of skills development and training (10 is very easy, 0 very difficult)

1% 10
 15% 7,8,9
 54% 4,5,6
 32% 0,1,2,3

Main barriers:
 52% Lack of availability
 15% Poor signposting
 11% Finding things locally
 9% Cost
 10% Quality of provision
 3% Lack of time

The Birmingham Production Space Survey was online from the 19 October–30 November 2014. During this time 1137 visited the survey and 165 people completed it. The survey was aimed at artists, designers, makers and cultural producers working in the West Midlands.

Thanks to everyone who took the time to contribute.

I'm writing not as a designer-maker but someone in an auxiliary role. I think suitable workspaces are few and far between; there seem to be plenty of artists' studios but less for craftspeople or creators and also actually not much joint office space for people like me. Perhaps combine the two?!

My workspace is good for the administrative side of producing but less suitable for meetings. Also, a neutral, cost effective flexible space for ad hoc talks, rehearsals, workshops etc is hard to find without paying commercial rates. Many organisations are generous about sharing their space but for some activities there isn't a brand / values / artistic alignment so that can prove challenging.

My current workspace is based on confidence or lack of, in feeling comfortable around WM creatives. I find it cliquy, difficult to integrate and sometimes intimidating. I know there are fabulous spaces out there, but it seems to be a 'who you know' issue.

We are in the ridiculous situation of having a 'clean' space and 'dirty/storage' space on opposite sides of the city. Only the 'clean' studio has internet and the 'Dirty' studio is in a dangerous and depressing building. The studios are in buildings where the costs could go too high or the buildings could get taken from myself & other tenants with fairly short notice.

I would much prefer to have access to a workspace where I encounter other people and have facilities for producing sculptural work, however I cannot afford additional rent costs etc and my working away on residencies would complicate things as well.

Comments

My current space has excellent light and is very convenient but I'd love an affordable studio in an artist studio complex which looks to build a sense of community and is inclusive of all levels from amateur to professional.

There are very few affordable choices, and even less if you need ground floor space

I rent my current space because I can afford it as it is only £50 per month. However it is very cold without heating and no hot water.

Even though my space is clean and spacious, it is not yet set up professionally.

I would much prefer to have access to a workspace where I encounter other people and have facilities for producing sculptural work, however I cannot afford additional rent costs etc and my working away on residencies would complicate things as well.

It is difficult to commit to a workspace when income fluctuates year by year. Some years I might be able to afford decent warm workspace, but other years I can't.

I realise, as a student studying for a PHD, access to studio space within the School of Art is a privilege. During the run up to my first solo show, aware that I needed more suitable space and in a bid to establish some kind of set up post-university, I looked at several studios for hire in Birmingham. I don't usually consider myself naive but I was genuinely shocked at the complete lack of professional level studio space available. No heating, bad lighting, freezing. No access to workshop equipment. Little provision for safely storing work (or equipment). Now I'm close to finishing studying it is a more pressing issue to find suitable workspace, particularly as I would ideally like to remain in Birmingham. The only alternative has been to apply for residencies elsewhere for which a studio is provided.

Although I am an Artist / Maker of predominantly sculptural 'objects' the only work I can feasibly do from my rented home is 'clean' office based work (planning, research etc). Anything on a larger or messier scale I try and do outdoors weather permitting and until recently would use university facilities for my MA work (now completed). In the past I have rented a studio but found I did not use it enough to justify the monthly costs and would often be there alone. I want a flexible workshop style space that I can use when needed and that is shared with other creatives to both keep costs down and also allow for potential collaborative working. I know the mac offers artist passes to use their workshop facilities on a monthly basis and this is something I am considering.

There are lots of dilapidated former industrial units that would make fantastic studio spaces.

There are a lot of us! I am based in the Custard Factory and find it hard to find out who is there. I'd like there to be an artists list somewhere.

I travel worldwide and never cease to be astonished and disappointed by the lack of networking/encouragement/opportunity within the creative fields in Birmingham. I base myself there because it is home but most of my work is elsewhere so really this is an inconvenience currently.

This sounds amazing. At the moment the majority of design in Birmingham is not really seen as a creative discipline. It's not a craft, it's just digital marketing or something like that. I'm sure there are so many designers who would far prefer to work across other disciplines in a creative space like this rather than resort to joining a generic agency churning out the same limp RAR100 work as everyone else just because they don't know what else to do as a designer.

It can be isolating working on your own, but having a studio based at home has allowed me to carry on my practice much more successfully alongside a lecturing job and raising a family than if I had had a studio elsewhere, as I had done previously.

Current space is good and allows the freedom to work as and when I need to. But dialogue and interaction with other studio artists is sporadic and lacks any real opportunity for collaborative or collective projects shows etc, and no real connection between member activity and the programme of the organisation. The building has limited production facilities, but meets basic needs and is cheap.

It's not really suitable but at present I can't afford to move into a 'proper' work space and have the option of making larger pieces.

I don't live in Birmingham, but I would definitely consider coming to work there if there was a practical and comprehensive and affordable production space there. Many people would I suspect, and it's not far from London.

I'm the administrator for a company that makes community-engaged artwork; our making space studio is a multi-use space that we use for other activities. In terms of our making needs, we need on average two months of making time in the space per year. In principle we could downsize our operations to be purely office based, but access to making space on a short term basis is very hard to acquire. To ensure we have access to making space when we do need it we hire it throughout the year, and ensure as many of our activities as possible make good use of it to justify the cost.

I would like affordable studio space that has heating and warm running water

I would pay more for a more vibrant and social location but the next step up is too high for someone currently practising as an amateur, ie next step is at least £200 a month plus rates/electricity etc. as I need private, not communal, space.

It took a lot of moving around studios to get to my current space. I have found other provision in the city to be practically unusable during the winter, or very uncomfortable to be in from Dec-Jan. This has an impact on a working practice and often ends up with paying for a space that you do not use & working from home. I am lucky now to be part of a space where the landlord has taken very seriously the upkeep of the building, and has consistently improved it, he is very much part of the space and is actively encourages the growth of the studios. This is in stark contrast to other experiences I have had in the city in the ten years I have worked here. Studios have a very important role to play in not only making work but also in disseminating it, they should act as a hub for other activities. At present this is not happening as much as it could in Birmingham.

There is a lot of time spent on graduates when many people are not. There is a huge swathe of kids coming up to 16 it would be good if older people could be there as guides. There is a lot if work to do bridging the gap.

I think this is a great idea. If it's just for makers then brilliant but I think there is a gap for the hoards of freelancers who need/want communal space to work. All we need is a desk, an internet connection and a kettle. To be surrounded by creatives could help our practice too....do artists and managers spend enough time together? Probably not.

We need more workspaces and studios to promote 'making' but it needs to be affordable.

My primary interests from a new fabrication space would be access to high quality tooling, which is currently out of my budget, access to large spaces to test build customers projects and interesting discussions/lectures/training which open my eyes to new ways of doing and making from a practical perspective.

I feel as though many new graduates are discouraged from setting up as self-employed designer makers because they feel as though they no longer have access to the facilities and equipment they used at university to produce their work.

Would really love access to an informal social area, that I can drop into when I have time, where I can see others making

BIRMINGHAM NEEDS THIS SPACE!!!