CREATIVE HUBS ACADEMY

Created in partnership with

nesta Hivos people unlimited BRITISH COUNCIL

CREATIVE HUBS ACADEMY IS A LEARNING PROGRAMME PROVIDED BY NESTA, BRITISH COUNCIL AND HIVOS. THE PROGRAMME IS FOR LEADERS OF COLLECTIVES OR "CREATIVE HUBS" THAT SERVE COMMUNITIES AND CREATE CHANGE IN THE FIELDS OF CREATIVE, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL INNOVATION. THE CORE OF THE LEARNING PROGRAMME IS A **THREE-DAY CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP**, FOLLOWED BY A PERIOD OF **LEARNING IN ACTION** AND **TWO-DAY COACHING RETREAT**.

We've worked directly with creative hub leaders to understand the challenges of building a sustainable hub, and have created this learning programme to develop the key skills needed on this journey. The programme provides a structured and supportive environment for participants to step back from their day-to-day-work and gain new skills and insights to help them shape and grow their hub offers.

WHO THIS PROGRAMME IS FOR?

Creative Hubs Academy is for hub leaders who have typically been in the role for a few years. Participants go through the programme as a cohort in order to share experiences and learn from each other.

PART 1 CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP

The workshop is comprised of a series of learning modules that guide and support learning, while giving participants plenty of time to ask questions and practice new techniques. Throughout, there are presentations, networking with experienced hub leaders, and opportunities for participants to receive constructive input from experts and their peers on the challenges they face. The workshops are led by an experienced creative professional and learning facilitator.

DAY 1

Day 1 is focused on the participants' **mission:** why they do what they do, what challenge they're trying to tackle, what change they're trying to create. They look at this from both an individual and a hub point of view. By the end of Day 1, participants have clarified at a high level what their purpose is, who they're doing it for and who they're doing it with. Exercises include: Vision and Mission, Hub Culture, Stakeholder Mapping and more.

DAY 2

Day 2 introduces ways that participants can improve the **impact** of their hub for different audiences and users. It also tackles the issues and challenges that are core to the hub's mission. By the end of Day 2, participants have set out in detail a path which connects their hub offer, users and impact measurement to keep them on track. Exercises include: Hub Pitches, User Research, Measuring Impact and more.

DAY 3

Day 3 draws the already completed work together. The final sessions reveal how the three days of work have built the basis for a new or refreshed **business plan**, and participants finish confident about their plans for the future. Exercises include: Content Curation, Hub Business Models and Sharing Futures. Participants also create a structure action plan to work through, during the Learning in Action phase, before reconvening at the Coaching Retreat.

PART 2
LEARNING IN ACTION

After the workshop, participants return to their hubs to begin putting their plans into action. The local programme team will connect with the cohort online to facilitate activities to support the hub leaders' development. This might include mentoring, collaborations, skills exchanges, events, and access to online learning resources and webinars.

PART 3 COACHING RETREAT

The Coaching Retreat brings participants back together, three to six months after the capacity building workshop.

AT THE RETREAT TEAMS:

- Revisit some of the key insights from the three day workshop, review the action plans that were taken back to the hubs, and receive feedback
- Attend surgeries on particular topics, chosen by consensus before the retreat
- Develop advocacy strategies on particular topics, to build greater collective influence and impact on local stakeholders and policy makers
- Continue to grow their network through structured sessions and showcase moments.

The aim of the Coaching Retreat is to unlock deeper insights into what effective actions and behaviours look like in realising plans, as part of continuous development as hub leaders.

SKILLS FOR LEADING HUBS

Through our research with creative hubs, we've identified three skills development areas that are key for hub leaders to be successful, and the Creative Hubs Academy participants are pushed to develop these throughout the programme:

LEADING

Creative hubs come in many shapes and sizes, and strong leadership is central to sustaining any kind of successful hub. Great hub leaders create opportunities, mobilise resources, and demonstrate value to their teams and audience. Examples of this skill in practice might include uniting a creative community, increasing the diversity of their hub's users, or bringing new skills into their team.

INNOVATING

Hubs are centres for innovation and running a hub involves testing ideas and systematically improving them, connecting long-term vision with short-term achievable tasks. It is also critical to closely link planning and delivery with vision and strategy. Great hub leaders are flexible, resourceful and opportunistic and possess skill, tenacity and dedication.
Examples of this skill in practice might include brokering new collaborations, developing new offers for their hub or pooling resources.

CONNECTING

Hub leaders in physical and digital spaces connect creative practice with business and audiences. This involves engaging diverse stakeholders, generating multiple incomes from varied sources, learning to seize opportunities and creating the space to be independent, critical and socially engaged. Great hub leaders connect and bring people along, processing different perspectives and creating shared interests.
Examples of this skill in practice might include conducting research to better understand their community needs, or curating content to increase the visibility of their work and bringing people with them.

CORE LEARNING MODULES

Participants develop these three skills areas through a series of 30-45 minute sessions.

The core themes include:

1. TEAM LEADERSHIP

Exploring participants' motivations, goals and aspirations as leaders so that they can reflect on how their actions affect their wider team and ethos. We also look at how participants can manage their space, team, users and volunteers successfully by putting new behaviours and habits into place.

2. BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Identifying the types of connections participants need to make with different partners, supporters and influencers, in order to inspire new ideas, pool resources and create opportunities for their network.

3. DEFINING A BUSINESS MODEL

Breaking down the different parts of a hub's current model in order to uncover challenges, prioritise where to spend effort and resources and identify opportunities for expansion or diversification.

4. SERVING A COMMUNITY

Taking a user-focused approach to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of different communities, and using this to build an offer which has relevance, appeal and coherence.

5. COMMUNICATING AN OFFER

Helping participants define and clearly articulate the vision for their hub in order to help secure support while staying true to core values - whether this is to appeal to potential tenants, or attract sponsorship, in-kind resources, grants, investment, loans or match-funds.

6. CREATING IMPACT

Exploring how to monitor and communicate the social, cultural and economic impacts that participants want to create, to not only stay focused on the communities they want to serve and the positive change they want to make, but to recognise what isn't working.

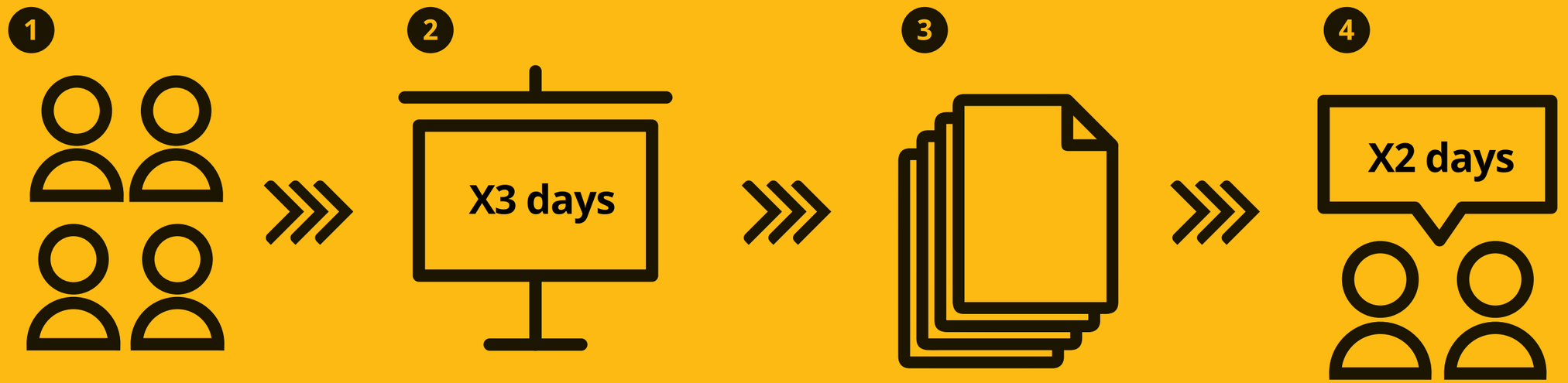
7. CURATING CONTENT

Looking at the hub's content as an asset/tool for marketing and communications, thought leadership, advocacy and influence, and exploring how to arrive at and articulate themes to apply across content.

8. HUB CULTURE AND INCLUSION

Developing a culture of creativity by exploring how to become more inclusive and embracing a range of different people's values and beliefs. Being more inclusive of diverse users, values and content will increase a hub's ability to support the community and create impact.

CREATIVE HUBS ACADEMY
Programme Design and Delivery



PARTICIPANT SELECTION

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP

LEARNING IN ACTION

Online resources / homework / mentoring / peer learning

COACHING RETREAT

British Council & Hivos Country Programmes
Locally led programmes could includes: Skills exchange, mentoring & coaching, funding and grant prizes

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