

Skills for a digital age for Uganda's young creatives



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Description

This document is the second of three reports analyzing the impact of digitalization on the culture and creative industries (CCI) in Uganda for young creatives.

1. *Uganda's culture and creative industries in a digital age: A landscape review* provides an overview of relevant literature and identifies research questions.
 2. This report shares findings from primary research with young creatives and other actors in the sector.
 3. *Skilling Uganda's creatives for a digital age: Recommendations* shares recommendations for skilling of Uganda's young creatives.
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Executive summary

Culture and creative industries provide youth opportunities but digital skills are necessary to fully capitalize on them in the age of digitalization.

Against a background of a lack of formal employment opportunities for many youth globally, the culture and creative industries (CCIs) provide potential for work. Digitalization adds new methods and tools to the way that CCIs operate, affecting the entire value chain, from production to consumption, thereby creating additional work prospects.¹ Notably, digital platforms such as social media and e-commerce platforms facilitate the distribution and consumption of creative goods and services, enabling direct access to a broader global consumer base.² As markets shift online, creatives are afforded greater independence from traditional intermediaries and middlemen (such as publishers or galleries).³ This shift has increasingly transformed CCIs into a viable income source for youth, allowing them to monetize their passions.

At the same time, newer and emerging technologies such as 3D printing, artificial intelligence, augmented reality and virtual reality (AR/VR), blockchain (e.g., NFTs), cloud computing, drones, and the Internet of Things (IoT), are shaping and reshaping creativity.⁴ As these technologies become ubiquitous and open new possibilities, they provide opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment for young Ugandan creatives.⁵ However, they also make skilling a more complex issue for young creatives, particularly when the skills required for one to take advantage of these technologies are not necessarily taught formally, and the creative sector is so fast-moving. Yet, these technologies that enable new ways of producing and distribution in the sector require evolving skill sets and know-how.

1 UNESCO, *Cities, Culture, Creativity: Leveraging Culture and Creativity for Sustainable Urban Development and Inclusive Growth*.

2 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*.

3 UNESCO, *Cities, Culture, Creativity*.

4 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*.

5 Gitta et al., *A Study of the Culture and Creative Industries in Uganda*.

COVID-19 proved to be a turning point in highlighting the need for digital skills.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought many of these production, distribution and consumption challenges to the forefront. The first Africa-wide survey of the economic impact of COVID-19 on CCIs estimated that Ugandans in the sector lost US\$134,360 (Shs 475 million) in revenue in the second quarter of 2020.⁶ It also found that nearly 700 artists were affected when more than 3,000 events were canceled. The most affected subsector was the performing arts (i.e., live music, dance, theatre, and events). A handful of artists experimented with online shows. Some actors created YouTube channels⁷ and started to produce short comedy skits.⁸ Others used TikTok to engage with their audience.⁹ It is unclear if this generated much revenue, but it may have brought other benefits like helping creatives remain connected and visible to their fans and possibly gain new fans both at national and international level.¹⁰ In addition, a survey by KQ Hub Africa, an East African agency and hub for creatives, found that sectors that didn't require a high level of human interaction exhibited greater resilience during the pandemic.¹¹ Specifically, digital media, online gaming, music, and audio-visual content sectors proved more adaptable as they didn't heavily rely on face-to-face interactions, unlike visual arts such as painting and photography. The COVID-19 pandemic illustrated that while some aspects of CCIs lent themselves easily to the digital sphere, others needed to catch up quickly and find new business models to be profitable.

Furthermore, with the imminent implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which will establish the largest free trade zone encompassing 55 countries, it is crucial for young creatives to acquire the necessary skills to tap into this expanded market via e-commerce platforms.

There is a lack of data on the necessary digital skills for youth in CCI.

In a world in which digitalization—and the skills associated with digitalization—are becoming increasingly important in the structural transformation of economies, there is limited research aimed at understanding the nature and extent of digitalization and digital skills gaps in Africa, particularly.¹²

This report attempts to fill a research gap, using Uganda's creative sector as a case study. The report does this by exploring the experiences and challenges of young creatives (ages 18 to 35) in Uganda who use the internet,

6 Buse, "Here's the First Africa-Wide Survey of the Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Cultural Industries"

7 Buse, "Here's the First Africa-Wide Survey of the Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Cultural Industries"

8 African Theatre Magazine, "Ugandan Theatre Grappling with the Pandemic."

9 Gitta et al., *A Study of the Culture and Creative Industries in Uganda*.

10 New Vision, "Ugandan Artistes Resort to Online Shows to Keep Afloat."

11 Ian, "COVID-19 and Its Impact on Uganda's Creative Industry."

12 Bhorat et al., "Digitalization and Digital Skills Gaps in Africa: An Empirical Profile."

and specifically digital platforms, to produce creative goods and services, distribute or sell them and generate revenue from doing so. It also provides some insight into young creatives' perspectives on emerging technologies such as NFTs and Generative Artificial Intelligence, shedding light on the potential impact and opportunities that they may offer creatives.

This report is the second of three reports analyzing the impact of digitalization on CCI in Uganda for youth skilling. In the first report, we conducted a desk review on issues we identified. In this report, we share primary research findings. In the third and final report, we discuss recommendations to the industry.

In this report, we discuss the following:

- 1 What are the benefits and challenges of digitalization that young creatives see?
- 2 What are the types of skills youth use and need as creatives in today's digitized age?
- 3 And finally do available skilling opportunities address the needs of creatives in a digital age?

To answer these questions, we share findings from around 82 creatives, experts, policymakers and other stakeholders we engaged between April and June 2023 across the culture and creative industries (from film-making to content creators) in Uganda. This dialogue included interviews, a brainstorming session with young creatives and a final research validation workshop to share our findings and invite a discussion on the next steps on policy.

We find that:

Digital platforms expand opportunities for young creatives.

- 1 Young creatives recognize the value of incorporating technology into their work and are leveraging digital platforms in ways that benefit them, such as finding customers online or promoting their talents through social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook. "Digital platforms" include a) marketplace platforms, including those connecting buyers and sellers of goods and services, and b) social media and messaging platforms, which allow for informal exchanges and coordination of all manner of economic activity.
- 2 Digital platforms are an avenue to paid work opportunities for young creatives, such as content creators and gamers.
- 3 However, young creatives face relentless pressure to create in an environment where the digital audience is the first critic. Producing new content, innovating, monetizing their work online, and gaining support and recognition from their families and friends can take a mental toll.

Young creatives know the value of having the right skills for a digital age, but skilling challenges persist.

- 1 Young creatives understand the value of digital skills and are reskilling to be competitive and innovative in a digital age. These skills include digital marketing, graphic design, using a range of digital platforms for various purposes, and more. However, creatives express the need for further digital skills like how to code, how algorithms work, and how to achieve the most from digital platforms.
- 2 In terms of existing skilling opportunities, there is a disconnect between formal education and the skills and knowledge creatives need to thrive in a digital age.
- 3 Although various skilling intermediaries (e.g., development partners, arts foundations, and training initiatives by experienced creatives) exist, young creatives believe there are still gaps to be addressed and that activities could be more cohesive. The gaps involve the absence of mentors and access to spaces for practicing and facilitating peer-to-peer learning. Critics point out that formal training institutions prioritize teaching theory over practical skills and have not kept up with the technological advancements in CCIs.
- 4 Skilling initiatives often operate in isolation, lacking cohesion and collaboration. There is a pressing need for a unified effort to skill youth in CCIs, equipping them with the necessary tools to build resilience and succeed in the digital age.
- 5 Creatives express a desire for locally contextualized and peer-led learning. While seeking to reskill or upskill online, they find that much of the content available is better suited for non-African audiences (for example, creatives speak of understanding how light falls differently on different skin tones, or how skills taught in a North American context may not be relevant for the Ugandan context).
- 6 Finally, professionals providing skilling in CCIs express their desire to contribute more, but they require additional funding. This is particularly crucial since most young creatives cannot afford the costs associated with available training opportunities. More so, like creatives, the professionals also require support in understanding the digital transformation in the sector.

Young creatives demonstrate awareness of emerging technologies such as AI, while simultaneously grappling with various analog challenges.

- 1 While attitudes toward artificial intelligence (AI) were mixed, many recognized issues related to safeguarding their intellectual property and navigating the impact of emerging technologies like generative AI and NFTs.
- 2 Young creatives encounter conventional, offline obstacles including a lack of government support, restrictive laws and regulations, irregular or unpredictable income, and, for women, gender-based discrimination.

We find clear calls for action from those actively earning an income from CCI and from others who support CCI. We highlight some of these recommendations here but go into further detail in our third and final report, which can be found [here](#).

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Introduction

“I’m so fortunate to be born in an era where we have social media. I started a friendship with ... (a popular artist), and he tells me stories of what he went through. We’ve been laughing, but in actuality, they are so sad ... how much they had to work to put their work out there. Now you have Instagram, so people know me. I have connected with many artists in East Africa who follow me or even artists here in Uganda, who follow me. Those days you couldn’t easily get noticed. So YouTube helps. ... Because of social media, I’m everywhere. I could reach everywhere.”

Kisakye

Kisakye, 30, is a budding singer in Kampala who hopes to eventually leave her 9–5 office job to become a full-time musician.¹³ She sees social media as a key aspect of her career as a musician. Kisakye’s perceptions of the benefits of social media for earning an income are echoed by many youth around the world today. Like other sectors, the culture and creative industry (CCI) to which Kisakye belongs has been transformed by digitalization. Digitalization offers new avenues for the production, distribution, and consumption of creative goods and services, while reaching a wider range of consumers globally through digital platforms.¹⁴

¹³ Note that all names are pseudonyms (see Appendix D).

¹⁴ UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*.

This report shares the experiences and challenges of young creatives (ages 18–35) in Uganda in a digital age. What are the benefits they see? What are the challenges they encounter? And what are their recommendations for those who support the industry, such as skills providers, development partners, and the government?

In this rapidly changing digital age, new and emerging technologies such as 3D printing, artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality and virtual reality (AR/VR), blockchain (e.g., NFTs), cloud computing, drones, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are reshaping creativity. UNCTAD lists the opportunities these technologies can provide: AI is used to personalize music and film preferences by some online platforms. 3D printing can be used to produce crafts. AR allows for fashion shows to feature apparently invisible models. Blockchain technology can help certify originality and ownership of unique artworks. VR can promote an immersive experience in computer games and performing arts.¹⁵

As these technologies become ubiquitous and open new opportunities, they also complicate the issue of skilling. This report, therefore, explores skilling for young creatives: What skills do youth use and need as creatives in today's digital age? Are available skilling opportunities addressing the needs of creatives in a digital age?

Caribou Digital arrived at this research, in partnership with Mastercard Foundation, as a result of several intersecting paths:

- Globally, CCIs provide nearly 50 million jobs and employ more young people than any other sector. According to UNCTAD, international trade in creative goods and services generates increased revenues for countries. The global exports of creative goods increased from US\$419 million in 2010 to US\$524 million in 2020, while world exports of creative services increased from US\$487 billion to almost US\$1.1 trillion during the same period. This data, UNCTAD notes, shows that CCIs can enhance developing countries' participation in and benefit from new and dynamic growth opportunities in world trade.¹⁶
- For emerging economies like Uganda CCIs offer opportunity for further economic development beyond employment alone.¹⁷ Other benefits include the growth of industries and infrastructure that support creativities.¹⁸
- Increasing access to social media and other online platforms means that youth can express their own sentiments, providing information about what is important to them. CCIs offer immense opportunities for youth as well as broader country development.

¹⁵ UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*.

¹⁶ UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*.

¹⁷ African Union, "Revised African Union Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries."

¹⁸ Henderson et al, "New Economics for Sustainable Development Creative Economy."

- In addition, CCIs offer income-generating opportunities, often without formal skilling and with many of the benefits of digital platforms, such as flexibility and independence. These opportunities are also available to those who may be traditionally excluded from the workplace for various reasons, such as women, those living with disabilities,¹⁹ or other demographics.
- Finally, the Mastercard Foundation views CCIs in Africa as a means to unlock the potential of young African talent if they are provided with the necessary skills and resources to succeed in the rapidly evolving digital economy.²⁰

This research follows Caribou Digital and Mastercard Foundation’s focus on platform livelihoods—the ways young people earn a living through digital platforms.²¹ Caribou Digital has conducted extensive research, including: video diaries on platform livelihoods for 18- to 35-year-olds in several countries across Africa; social agriculture (young farmers using social media to support their agricultural livelihoods)²²; women using platforms to earn a living in Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria;²³ youth with disabilities Kenya and how they use platforms to make a livelihood²⁴; and the impact of COVID-19 on Africa’s young platform workers and sellers.²⁵

The Platform Livelihoods Project is designed to inform the Mastercard Foundation’s Young Africa Works strategy, which aims to enable 30 million young Africans, 70% (21 million) of whom will be young women, to access dignified and fulfilling work by 2030, by offering support in sectors where they can earn income.

As a result, this report aims to understand how young creatives such as Kisakye can maximize their skills and better thrive in a digital age through using platforms. The specific questions guiding this research are:

- 1 What are youth experiences, opportunities, and challenges in the creative sector of platform livelihoods in Uganda?**
- 2 What skills do young creatives in Uganda need to engage in a digital economy?**
- 3 Are available skilling opportunities addressing the needs of creatives in a digital age?**

19 Caribou Digital, Technoprise Global, and inABLE, “Platforms and Youth with Disabilities” (project page).

20 Mastercard Foundation, “Africa’s Creative Renaissance.”

21 Caribou Digital and Qhala, “Platform Livelihoods Framework.”

22 Caribou Digital, Kilimo Source, Learn.ink, and Habitus Insight, “Social Agriculture,” (project page).

23 Caribou Digital and Qhala, “Platform Livelihoods Knowledge Map: Gender.”

24 Caribou Digital, Technoprise Global, and inABLE, “Platforms and Youth with Disabilities” (project page).

25 Caribou Digital and Story × Design, “Platform Livelihoods and Covid-19: Young People’s Stories of Resilience” (project page).

The report is structured in the following way:

The following section provides a brief overview of the creative sector in Uganda. More details are available in a separate desk review.

The third section introduces the experiences of the creatives interviewed.

The fourth section shares the challenges mentioned.

The fifth section discusses the skills gap respondents highlighted.

The final section offers brief recommendations, which we discuss further in a separate brief.

The creative sector in Uganda and the impact of digital platforms

The creative sector is changing fast in a digital age.

A growing number of young creatives in Uganda are turning their passions into livelihoods, and many are using digital platforms like social media and e-commerce to showcase and market their goods and services. The Uganda government recognizes CCIs as a sector with potential to create employment and income-generating opportunities, especially for young people.²⁶ Currently, Uganda has the second-youngest population in the world, and this is only expected to increase over the coming decades.²⁷ There are no recent statistics on Uganda's creative economy, but a 2014 mapping study of CCIs found that the sector provided at least 4.5% of total employment in the country. (The report also noted that the low number could be attributed to high informality in the sector.)²⁸ In 2021, the Parliament Department of Research conducted a countrywide study of Uganda's CCIs and found that many young people were employed in the sector, and the majority operated informally. Most were in crafts, visual art, traditional dance, acting/theatre, fashion and design, and literary works.²⁹

Alongside “traditional” areas like arts and crafts, there are new and expanding categories of creatives, such as content creators and online influencers.³⁰ While Uganda still has some of the highest internet data costs,³¹ content creators are leveraging improved internet and mobile

26 National Planning Authority, “Second National Development Plan (NDPII) 2015/16 – 2019/20.”

27 Musoke, “Uganda’s Big Population Puzzle.”

28 Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, *Report on the Mapping of Culture and Creative Industries in Uganda*.

29 Gitta et al., *A Study of the Culture and Creative Industries in Uganda*.

30 Sylvans, “Nigerian Content Creators Reveal the Secrets to Their Success.”

31 The Independent, “Uganda Internet Most Expensive in World.”

connectivity³² and some affordable data packages by telecoms³³ to cultivate fresh career opportunities. Many of these young individuals possess extensive knowledge of social media and other digital platforms, allowing them to generate income through creating content for brands, influencing their followers to make purchases, and acting as a conduit for disseminating information on important social causes supported by nonprofits and government agencies. Additionally, there is a diverse range of professionals such as designers, gamers, programmers, and interactive media producers who are harnessing various digital technologies to earn a livelihood.

Experts in the industry opine that the creative sector is a gateway out of unemployment for young people in Uganda,³⁴ but stress the need for more guidance and nurturing³⁵ for them to fully realize their full creative potential. According to UNCTAD, globally, producers of creative products face several hurdles including a lack of skills related to market research, digital marketing and branding, website and marketplace design, logistics, payments, and customer service.³⁶ This is the case in Uganda. In addition, the country faces challenges of infrastructure, high hardware costs due to taxation, a lack of regulation, and infringement on citizens' freedom of speech and expression. These factors all impact creativity, but to some extent also introduce or encourage new forms of creativity.

32 GSMA, *Uganda: Driving Inclusive Socio-Economic Progress through Mobile-Enabled Digital Transformation*.

33 Uganda Communications Commission, "Market Performance Report: 1Q22."

34 UBC Television Uganda, "State of Uganda's Creative Industry from Experts Viewpoint."

35 tiv_content, "Uganda's Creative Industry."

36 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*.

Culture and Creative Industries

Culture and creative industries (CCIs) involve knowledge-based economic activities and the interplay between human creativity and ideas, knowledge, and technology, as well as cultural values or artistic and cultural heritage and other individual or collective creative expressions.³⁷ These activities include visual art, music, performance, film, radio and television, publication, advertisement, design fashion, digital content, among others.

Table 1 ▼

Examples of CCIs and their related activities

Cultural and natural heritage	Performance and celebration	Visual arts and crafts	Books and publishing	Audio-visual and interactive media	Design and creative services
Museums Archaeological and historical places Cultural landscapes Natural heritage	Performing arts Music festivals, fairs, and feasts	Fine arts Photography Crafts	Books News and magazines Other printed material Libraries Book fairs	Film and video TV and radio (live streaming online) Podcasting Video games	Fashion design Graphic design Interior design Landscape design Architectural services Advertising services
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Archivists, curators, conservators, restorers Librarians, documentalists, and related professionals Gallery, library, museum, archive, associates and associates of other cultural heritage institutions	Actors Dancers and choreographers Musicians Stage collaborators Instrumentalists, singers, and composers	Artists (painters and sculptors) Photographers Product designers	Writers Journalists	Podcasters Gamers Game developers Animators Film, theatre, and related directors and producers Digital content creators Influencers	Product designers and creators Graphic and multimedia designers Interior designers and decorators

37 UN General Assembly, Resolution 198: International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development, 2021.

Digitalization

Digital platforms: In this report, digital platforms are both marketplace platforms, which host formal marketplaces connecting buyers and sellers of goods and services, and social media and messaging platforms, which allow for informal exchanges and coordination of all manner of economic activity.³⁸ There is currently much interest in the role of platforms and how they are transforming work.³⁹

Platform livelihoods: The ways people earn a living by working, trading, renting, or engaging in digital marketplaces. In this report, the aspects of trading and creating are more prominent (see below).

Trading maps onto e-commerce and social commerce. Individuals or small enterprises offer products and services to customers via marketplace platforms and/or social media. Jumia is a commonly used e-commerce platforms; creatives in particular use Omwoleso, a platform backed by Motiv Uganda.⁴⁰

Creating (including engaging) is what has captured the online world's attention: Instagram influencers and YouTube and TikTok content creators. For example, in Uganda, Uncle Mo, Masaka Kids, and Anne Kansiiime are widely known comedians who have thousands of subscribers on YouTube.

Creative value chains⁴¹ consist of an initial creative idea, which is usually combined with other inputs to produce a cultural work, which then moves through a series of interlinked stages before reaching the final consumer. The stages include: creation, production, dissemination, exhibition, and preservation of the creative product.

Creation: The function of creation concerns the activities related to the elaboration of artistic ideas, contents, and original cultural products.

Production/Publishing: The production of cultural goods and services relates to activities, which help turn an original work into an available work. Production and publishing are connected to the same stage of the cycle, but production is linked to non-reproducible products, while publishing is linked to reproducible ones.

Dissemination/Trade: The dissemination function corresponds to making created and produced work available, bringing generally mass-produced cultural products to consumers and exhibitors (e.g., the wholesale, retail, and rental of recorded music and computer games, film distribution). Dissemination includes the acts of communication and marketing so as to make cultural goods and services available to consumers.

On the other hand, cultural trade activities are those which involve buying cultural products from a third party in order to sell them with no (or very little) transformation.

Exhibition/Reception/Transmission: This function refers to the provision of live and/or unmediated cultural experiences to audiences by granting or selling access to consume/participate in time-based cultural activities (e.g., festival organization and production, theaters, museums, (digital) cinema). Reception is the process by which the product is delivered to the final end consumer (digital cinema, 3D, live performance, or broadcasting).

Exhibition/reception/transmission: The transfer of knowledge and skills (informal learning) through the cultural experience, sometimes through a co-creative process with consumers (e.g., the transmitting of intangible cultural heritage from generation to generation).

Consumption/participation: The activities of audiences and participants in consuming cultural products and taking part in cultural activities and experiences.

38 DFS Lab, RISE Indonesia, and Caribou Digital, *The Contribution of Platform Livelihoods to an Inclusive Digital Economy in Indonesia: Literature Review and Stakeholder Consultations*.

39 ILO, *World Employment and Social Outlook 2021: The Role of Digital Labour Platforms in Transforming the World of Work*.

40 MoTIV, "Omwoleso Offering More than a Marketplace to Creatives."

41 European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Mapping the Creative Value Chains: A Study on the Economy of Culture in the Digital Age*.

Creatives need a range of digital skills to thrive.

UNESCO defines digital skills as “a range of abilities to use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to access and manage information.” These skills “enable people to create and share digital content, communicate and collaborate, and solve problems for effective and creative self-fulfillment in life, learning, work, and social activities at large.”⁴²

In Uganda, as elsewhere, creatives need digital skills. As one expert put it in an interview, young creatives in Uganda “are in a completely digital world” and have adopted new ways of creating “something that can fit on social media like TikTok, WhatsApp, like Instagram.”

The expansion of internet and mobile connectivity in Uganda has led to the adoption and usage of various digital platforms. Uganda has 11.77 million internet users and 30.55 million cellular mobile connections.⁴³ Additionally, there are 2.05 million social media users in Uganda. For creatives, more Ugandans online potentially means bigger audiences and access to a bigger market beyond Uganda—but only if they have the skills to harness the opportunities that such technologies offer. Research by the Ugandan Parliament found that, while the pandemic revealed new opportunities for accessing global markets through the internet, only a few in the sector were prepared for the digital shift due to a lack of skills.⁴⁴

Creative and cultural professionals and practitioners use digital technologies in five main ways:

- 1 For online production, such as the creation of digitized versions of visual artworks and digitized representations of cultural heritage, including virtual museums, online exhibitions, and 3D reconstructions of historical sites.
- 2 For digital marketing and dissemination of digital cultural goods and services such as digital music, digital films and videos, e-books, and digital art, among others.
- 3 To offer and sell digital cultural goods and services online and in digital format;
- 4 To generate revenue through diverse online methods, such as crowdfunding, donations, new business models, and others; and
- 5 To curate cultural production in a virtual collaborative way by engaging online users or audiences.

42 UNESCO, “Digital Skills Critical for Jobs and Social Inclusion.”

43 Kemp, “Digital 2023: Uganda.”

44 Gitta et al., *A Study of the Culture and Creative Industries in Uganda*.

For platform livelihoods, Caribou Digital sees a need for a diverse range of skills, from purely technical ones to a broader set of skills, including entrepreneurial skills, such as leadership, business management, project management, communication skills and networking, financial management, skills related to the sales and marketing of products and services, and those relating to the protection of intellectual property rights.⁴⁵

Table 2 ▼

Illustrative skills ecosystem:
An array of sources, channels,
content, and receivers

Digitalization enables new ways of teaching, and learning and demands new skills.



Sources

Schools
Universities
Training institutions
NGOs
Employers
Peers
Platforms
Edtech companies



Channels

Print/textbooks
Mass media
Face to face
Classrooms
Online courses
Live streaming
Short video
Platforms



Content

Core literacy
Vocational skills
Financial literacy
& business skills
Soft skills
General digital literacy



Receivers

Young creatives

Young creatives in Uganda are actively navigating the digital transformation of CCIs. Although progress may be slower compared to global trends, it remains crucial for them to keep up with the evolving landscape. The following section explores how young creatives are embracing digital platforms as part of their digitalization journey

⁴⁵ Caribou Digital, "Skills for a Digital Age."

Methods and report outputs

The research team planned to produce three reports using the methods further below.

- 1 The first report **reviewed the literature on Uganda's CClIs** to understand how the sector responds to digitalization, what skilling initiatives exist to skill creatives for a digital age, and what sort of economic, social, and political environment creatives operate in.
- 2 This report shares **primary research findings**.
- 3 The third and final report discusses **recommendations to the industry**.

Methods

- A **comprehensive literature review** of available online literature on Uganda's CClIs.
- **Expert interviews with 16 key informants** who work in CClIs, including policymakers, training providers, curators of arts spaces, development partners, and established creatives.
- **One-on-one in-depth interviews with 21 young creatives** representing various fields within CClIs, including literary arts, visual arts, performing arts (such as literature to film, poetry, theatre), fashion, illustration, audio-visual, music, photography, content creation, and influencers.
- A **brainstorming session with 17 additional creatives** to share findings and invite a discussion on skills gaps and policies, held at the National Museum in Kampala. b(from 58 applications) to ensure a diverse range of creative disciplines, including visual arts, music, performing arts, design, and literature. A moderator guided the discussions using a predefined set of open-ended questions. The sessions were audio-recorded by a rapporteur.
- A **final research validation workshop with 25 representatives** from CClIs including policymakers, the Ugandan National Culture and Creative Centre, training providers, established creatives, and academics.

Therefore, a total of 79 individuals participated.

All interviews were held via Zoom, Google Meet, WhatsApp, or in person.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling, a sampling technique where researchers select respondents who are most likely to yield appropriate and useful information.⁴⁶ Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participant's consent.

All transcriptions were then coded and organized into themes and subthemes using Dovetail (an online qualitative data analysis platform). The emerging themes were reviewed, refined, and analyzed to identify patterns, commonalities, and variations in the participants' responses.

The study does have limitations; qualitative research by its nature is not intended to be representative. This study concerns a relatively small number of creatives and is largely restricted to Kampala. No doubt in other geographical areas and depending on the creative's skills, different issues may arise. However, as described in this report, there is little up-to-date literature on the context of CClIs in the digital age in Uganda and, moreover, the skills needed. Therefore, these findings are a critical contribution to the existing literature and provide valuable recommendations for numerous stakeholders to further support and empower young creatives in Uganda.

See Appendix A to D for all guides and a list of interviewees with pseudonyms.

⁴⁶ Campbell et al., "Purposive Sampling."

Experiences: Platforms enable livelihoods, serve as shop fronts, and provide a learning ground.

Platforms support creatives' livelihoods.

While it was hard to get a concrete sense of how much creatives earn online, we found that platforms do offer a form of livelihood to creatives in Uganda. In conversations with creatives, many mentioned how they have used digital platforms to generate income through selling crafts on social media platforms, getting paid to create advertising content for clients, and through gaming. A young man at the brainstorming session shared that he makes money as a professional gamer through brand partnerships and sponsored content from gaming companies. Africa's video gaming industry is projected to grow 12% by 2025 and is already providing opportunities for youth to compete on Pan-African and international levels.⁴⁷

Content creators are another growing category in Uganda and Africa. They belong to what is usually referred to as the “creator economy,” an ecosystem of writers, videographers, social media influencers, gamers, podcasters, skit makers, etc., and the software tools and platforms that enable them to build an audience and potentially make money.⁴⁸ In 2022, an estimated 50 million people identified as content creators worldwide.⁴⁹ Content creators produce entertaining, educational, or captivating content for digital distribution.⁵⁰ They usually offer a distinct perspective or voice which allows them to build a fanbase that they can later monetize by producing content sponsored by various brands. Like influencers, they use social media platforms to share their content; some build their own websites. Social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube recognize creators as a crucial component of their model and have built monetization tools to enable creators to earn from their work.⁵¹

47 Coleman et al., “African Trade Report 2022: Leveraging the Power of Culture and Creative Industries for Accelerated Structural Transformation in the AfCFTA Era.”

48 Adeleke, “Communiqué 16: How to Think About Africa's Creator Economy.”

49 Geysler, “The State of the Creator Economy | Definition, Growth & Market Size.”

50 Gomez, “Content Creators.”

51 Facebook, “Earn Money”; TikTok, “Getting Started on TikTok”; YouTube, “YouTube Creators—Education and Inspiration for Video Creators.”

A content creator shared how she began her journey to making an income online:

“A business reached out to me and said let’s do something together ... they were giving a small commission off the sales they were making from that particular campaign. When I did that is when I thought maybe I should think of ways to actually create something sustainable where I can make money to make a living so that I can really focus on my creative pursuits and hopefully eventually be able to work for myself.”

Alice, content creator

A wide variety of digital platforms supports autonomy and choice for some. Creatives shared how starting out on platforms offers one a chance to pursue their passion in the place of finding a job related to their academic degree. A trained lawyer chose to become a content creator because she wanted to explore her creative side. Susan, an IT graduate, started off as a film blogger and eventually started a podcast. Her work led to a writing gig for an African film review website, and she is currently looking for ways to grow her podcast.

“The podcast actually started out as a blog first. I would write news about what’s coming up and some reviews. So that’s actually what inspired me to start out podcasting. That’s what got me the opportunities. I got to do more writing about film.”

Susan, podcaster

As this report details, creatives use digital platforms in more ways than one, sometimes earning money from them directly and other times using them as an avenue to showcase their skills. Both ways create a path to a livelihood.

Young creatives are strategic about the platforms they use.

Whether musicians, visual artists, creative entrepreneurs, content creators, actors, poets, sculptors, or podcasters, creatives used a range of platforms either for productivity or visibility, or both. While the choice of platforms may vary depending on their specific category (e.g., visual artist or podcaster), social media platforms are commonly used by all creatives. Social media platforms serve as a means to showcase talent, gain visibility, attract and engage audiences, develop personal brands, seek validation from peers, earn income, and be part of a supportive community.

Table 3 ▼

Types of CCI platforms and activities

Digital platforms	What creatives use them for	Corresponding CCI value chain activities
Social media platforms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instagram • Twitter • Facebook • Snapchat • TikTok • Pinterest • Reddit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracting audiences and potential clients by sharing work with followers • Promoting through ads • Selling art and crafts products • Accessing “how to” tutorials from other content creators • Engaging audiences • Communicating with potential clients • Connecting with creatives from the rest of the world • Curating a personal brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation • Production • Dissemination/trade • Exhibition • Consumption and participation
Audio and video streaming platforms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YouTube • Spotify • Soundcloud • Anchor FM • Distro Kid • Afrisounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watching educational or instructional videos • Sharing content and work (especially musicians and film makers) • Cutting out the middleman, like TV or radio by directly creating content for YouTube or Spotify • As online portfolios by sharing previous and current projects • Attracting regional and international recognition • Streaming content (podcasts, video and music) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation • Production • Dissemination/trade • Exhibition • Consumption and participation

Experiences: Platforms enable livelihoods, serve as shop fronts, and provide a learning ground.

Digital platforms	What creatives use them for	Corresponding CCI value chain activities
Communication and collaboration platforms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WhatsApp • Google Meet and Spaces • Zoom • LinkedIn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcast messaging and sharing content on stories (WhatsApp) • Communicating with existing and potential clients • Virtual meetings with clients • Networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation • Production • Dissemination/trade • Exhibition • Consumption and participation
Design platforms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zbrush • Blender • Unreal Engine • Photoshop • Toon Boom • Behance • Adobe Illustrator • Canva 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating and editing content visual content • Designing ads and campaigns • Open-source learning • As online portfolios for sharing previous and current projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation • Production • Dissemination/trade • Exhibition • Consumption and participation
Content Platforms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WordPress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing portfolios and bios • Creating and sharing content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation • Production • Dissemination/trade • Exhibition • Consumption and participation
Learning platforms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skillshare • Coursera • YouTube 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and upskilling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production
Business apps		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • money.com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production

When we put out a call asking young creatives to be part of the brainstorming session, each applicant was told to share what platforms they use as part of the application process. All the 58 applicants who applied to the brainstorming session (of which we shortlisted 20) listed at least more than one social media platform. As shown in Table 3, aside from social media platforms, creatives use an array of other digital platforms. These include audio or video editing platforms, graphic design platforms (e.g., Canva), and music and audio streaming platforms (e.g., Spotify, ANCHOR FM, Tidal).

Table 3 ▲
Types of CCI platforms and activities

At the brainstorming session, all creatives agreed that digital platforms were an important part of their work. Fashion designers and visual artists cited Instagram as a useful display platform. Deborah, a poet, psychologist, and wine enthusiast, uses WhatsApp groups to mobilize wine lovers and Twitter for promotions. Another poet, Barbara, uses Twitter as a platform to share her poetry. A female music artist mentioned platforms like YouTube, TikTok, Spotify, and Tidal as ones she uses to promote her music; others like Fruity Loops and Logic are essential for her music production.

It is through frequent use of these platforms that young creatives learn on the job by creating as they observe their peers or even learning through YouTube as we elaborate further in the skills section of the report.

“Honestly, we thank God for Instagram, we thank God for the content creators who just give us this information for free. There are guys who are not even from Uganda. There’s one I follow, she’s Nigerian, but she’ll give you the ins and outs of how she has managed to curate her content. So you just try and follow slowly, step by step.”

Olga, fashion entrepreneur and content creator

“When I’m online, I make sure if I’m on Instagram or whatever, TikTok, I make sure that I follow pages that teach me stuff.”

Adam, filmmaker

Platforms enable exponential visibility.

As seen by Kisakye’s quote introducing this report, it is in many ways unimaginable for many young creatives in Uganda to think of making a living without the help of social media. In Caribou Digital’s previous research on young Kenyans and how they use digital platforms to earn a livelihood, many said that platforms offer them access to clients who would have been difficult to access independently.⁵² The low barrier to entry and use of platforms means easy potential access not only to a market, but to many different markets through the social networks that followers and friends bring, and therefore exponential potential. A cartoonist shared that posting his work consistently on Facebook led to a job in editorial cartooning after a follower noticed his work and recommended him to a newspaper editor who would later hire him.

“It was key to spread the word on social media, telling people what I do, ’cause a number of the clients who have helped me get money and earn a living have been through social media.”

Ssempe, illustrator and cartoonist

A successful filmmaker also regularly shared his work on Facebook when he had just started out:

“I wouldn’t be where I am without some of the social media platforms.”

52 Qhala and Caribou Digital, *Platform Livelihoods: The Quality of Kenyan Youth’s Digital Experiences across Eight Different Sectors*.

A key part of this visibility is also connecting with others. The young gamer at the brainstorming session shared how Facebook enables him to connect with a community of gamers around the world through which he improves his craft as he plays with various kinds of players at different skills levels.⁵³ Ssempe, an illustrator, emphasized community:

“So you feel that validation and that sense of belonging. Instagram has played a very good big role in building that community but also inspiration and keeping up to date with what people are discussing.”

Ssempe, illustrator and cartoonist

It should be noted, however, that at the validation workshop a policymaker and a founder of a poetry foundation both expressed their concern that young creatives are *“too focused on visibility online”* potentially neglecting other important considerations, such as finding their market, preparing for logistics, business management, developing their talents to establish a stronger and sustainable personal brand, and generally more substantive attention to their careers online.

Platforms are the new portfolios of young creatives’ work.

Respondents also mentioned how digital platforms act as online portfolios for one’s work.⁵⁴ An illustrator shared how when applying for work opportunities, clients can ask for one’s *“social media or website within your application so they can see your body of work.”*

Musicians showcase talent on online streaming platforms such as Spotify and YouTube. Illustrators and graphic designers use platforms such as Behance, a platform where one can showcase work and be discovered by potential clients. Actors and filmmakers use YouTube as a depository for their work, while content creators use the same platforms to show what they have done for other brands or share original content.

53 Gaming is seen as part of CCI as it can be revenue generating based on ads. There is also the possibility of viewers donating, although this gamer noted that that had not happened in Uganda to his knowledge.

54 Arts University Plymouth, *“Top Tips on Building a Creative Portfolio.”*

“I mean all the work I’ve ever gotten as an artist, whether it is installations, has come through social media. If only at least that someone has a space to look at your work and be like, this is what you can do. I’m interested in hiring you to try to do this other thing. And that’s amazing.”

Sam, digital artist

Being online also provides the opportunity to experiment. A poet described how they are combining two platforms—Instagram and Canva—to create experimental material.

“One of the things that I started doing last year is getting my work out there, using Canva, and creating mini digital zines to share on Instagram stories. That went really well. And something that I want to keep doing because I think it really lends itself to my work. But then for like these interactive essays and, and others like more experimental projects, I think I would probably need to put more time into finding other platforms that can support those kinds of projects.”

Hasfa, poet

This returns back to the value of platforms as “ludic learning” for creatives—by being online, creatives can keep experimenting and create a virtuous circle of skill refinement. That said, some creators mentioned needing skills for ensuring the best lighting and sound for good content.

Comments from friends, family, and followers validate career choice.

As a sector not seen as a promising career path by family and society, social media platforms and the visibility they provide offer a chance for creatives to prove to that what they do can be a career option. Almost all creatives shared that their work, whether online or offline, is not seen as a viable way to generate an income by close family and friends. As one stage actor narrated: *“my dad ... he knows a few real estate people, so he wants me to join them. But my worry is that doing that is going to severely affect my artistic career, which is honestly a priority for me right now.”*

For some creatives, it is important that their work is online and visible to those who don't think what they are doing makes financial sense or don't *“understand what I am doing,”* as one poet put it.

“There are parts of it that people understand and support. So like art writing. I think because people can see like articles come out here and there, that's a bit easier. People get that.”

Hasfa, poet

“But then I think also [family] seeing my work online they're like, ‘oh this is like a tangible thing that shows that like okay, you're doing something good.’”

Michelle, creative director

“When I put these films on YouTube the general public of Uganda starts realizing that, ‘Oh, there's people that can actually make decent films.’”

Adam, filmmaker

At the same time, creatives openly spoke about how income can be irregular and unpredictable and how they partly understand their parents' worries. However, they are optimistic that if society appreciated their talent more—by buying their art, attending shows at the theatre, or watching Ugandan films at the cinema—they would be able to prove that their passions can be a sustainable source of income.

Challenges: Monetization, copyright, and AI present complex challenges, but analog issues also persist.

The link between platform presence and income is not always clear.

While platforms provide an opportunity to showcase goods and services, some respondents spoke of earning very little directly from platforms through views or song plays. This is not unique to Ugandan creatives; as Nigerian journalist David Adeleke writes in a blog on Africa’s creator economy, “*while there is already a sizable amount of successful creators (YouTubers, online comedians, beauty vloggers, etc., who make money from their craft), there is no systematic path to success.*” He adds: “*By asking your audience (local audience) to pay for content, you are competing with the necessities of life – food, shelter, health, leisure, etc. It’s tough when most people don’t have substantial disposable income. What’s more? The number of people who do is paltry.*” Views outside of Africa bring in more revenue, he further adds.⁵⁵

High costs also pose a challenge to profit. Spotify, an online music streaming channel, says it is keeping a close eye on the cost of data for consumers and engaging in partnerships with telecoms to lower it. For example, Spotify has zero-rating agreements with Airtel in Nigeria and Unitel in Angola.⁵⁶ But many budding creatives have not yet reached a level where they are nationally or internationally known.

⁵⁵ Adeleke, “Communiqué 16: How to Think About Africa’s Creator Economy.”

⁵⁶ Adegoke, “Africa’s Content Needs Its Distribution.”

At the research validation workshop, a representative from the Uganda Performing Rights Society (UPRS), the body that collects royalties on behalf of musicians, shared that many artists who are not digitally savvy lose money to others like DJs, for example, who upload their music on YouTube without permission.

“Musicians already have their content but other people are gaining from their work. Someone has around 100 songs but they don’t have a YouTube channel or their songs anywhere on the music streaming systems. It is other people, these DJs and others (who upload the music and gain from it).”

UPRS representative

However, like creatives worldwide, many creatives stated they make money indirectly by using their published work to attract potential clients.

“Making money online is not always super direct. Like someone comments under the podcast, ‘Hey, can you come and shoot this thing?’”

Atuhaire, podcaster

“I learned that you don’t go to social media to sell, but rather you just go there to tell people what you’re doing. Someone can follow you in January and only order something from me in December after going through this journey of seeing what you’re doing and posting.”

Ssempe, illustrator and cartoonist

Some creatives are looking for ways to monetize their presence on platforms. Some, like a content creator who runs an online storytelling platform, plan to monetize content on the site through Google Ads. Others are contemplating ramping up paid advertising to attract more audiences and more customers.

One content creator is testing a gifting feature on their website that mimics the culture of giving that is already prominent in the music industry, where the audience gives money directly to a musician on stage:

“Even though [gifting] has been there for years, the platforms have not been very favorable to African audiences to do that. TikTok now has the gift feature where people doing ‘lives’ are given money. We’re hoping to ride that wave and come through with our own way and customize it to the local consumer.”

David, content creator

Creatives, especially content creators, mentioned being misunderstood and, in turn, undervalued and underpaid.

“I still think people have a different perception of what content creation is. It’s not given the weight that it deserves. It’s actually a lot of work. A brand will give you a very small budget and give you a list of expectations because they think you’re just posting.”

Jazz, content creator

“There are a lot of times people see our rate cards and say, ‘Oh, this is too much. You’re only doing this.’ They don’t realize that we have a lot of costs that we incur to create content or that we invest a lot of time building concepts and that a lot of work goes behind this.”

Alice, content creator

New entrants to the sector who might be willing to charge less make it hard for experienced creators, as shared by content creator Bernard *“You’re thinking, let’s have a standard at least, right? Let’s have some kind of bare minimum.”*

As monetizing talent online remains largely challenging, creatives say they find other means to earn income such as organizing events, writing funding proposals for fellow artists, or doing communications consultancy. Creatives frequently mentioned that CCIs have always been associated with irregular and unpredictable income, which has transferred online.

The pressure to produce online content is unrelenting and comes with mental stress.

The multiple pressures on content creators especially are being increasingly highlighted.⁵⁷ In Uganda, too, respondents spoke of the impact on mental health from the pressure to consistently create content, to harassment, to keeping an eye on followers and numbers on social media platforms. One artist described it as “*chasing a social media high.*” Anita, a performer, spoke of the pressures of putting content up on YouTube followed by the distress associated with receiving very few views.

“The pressure to be consistent and produce work every time. And the pressure to ensure that this work is dispersed to people. But if you keep producing and no one is viewing it, you really need to have a strong mental system. And then the fight between audiences, when audiences start, start giving you the pressure of, of you’re not doing this right and yet the other person is doing right.”

Anita, performing artist

“There are days where you get up and you look at the numbers and the numbers are really low.”

Isma, content creator

57 Lorenz, “Young Creators Are Burning Out and Breaking Down”; 7th Empire Media, “TikTok, Boom: Documentary Trailer.”

The pressure to obtain “likes” can also lead to a kind of identity crisis:

“I felt like social media was kind of dictating who I was. And I felt like I had started doing things for the likes and was kind of in a way becoming a sellout.”

Nicholas, content creator

Furthermore, creatives complain about how algorithms are biased toward more popular content creators, leaving those who are still building their followership with few or no views. It is a challenge for those who are just starting out, like musician Kisakye. *“If you post once a month, you’ll be seen by only two people. So that means that you have to post constantly.”*

Isma, a fashion content creator, also complained about the social media algorithm, saying it features people’s content more than links to blogs or websites like his. This affects his numbers, yet clients expect lots of clicks.

At the validation workshop, a well-known content creator and influencer spoke of the need for creatives to collaborate more to relieve themselves of some of these pressures.

“The power of collaboration is something we don’t talk about enough. As an artist, you need to do what you are good at. If you are good at performing item A and this person is good at performing item B, this person is good at performing item C, why don’t we get all of you to perform together so that each person concentrates for what they’re good at, as opposed to requiring somebody who has spent countless hours in studio having a hundred songs requiring them, to start learning how YouTube functions.”

Content creator and influencer

Indeed, some of the creatives interviewed wished they could concentrate on what they do best and hire other people to do the rest, but they lack the financial capacity to do so. Some spoke of the lack of finances to hire influencers or a marketing agency to take on some of the work, for example.

Uganda's young creatives struggle with the concept of copyright in the digital age.

Copyright refers to the legal rights that creators possess over their artistic and literary works, such as novels, poems, plays, reference works, newspaper articles; computer programs, databases; films, musical compositions, and choreography; paintings, drawings, photographs, and sculpture; architecture; and advertisements, maps, and technical drawings.⁵⁸ According to UNCTAD, while digital reproductions, sharing, and new business models like streaming offer value, the application of intellectual property rights in the digital realm remains challenging, as traditional intellectual property rights frameworks were designed for analog environments and require adaptation to the digital era.⁵⁹

In Uganda, the existing Copyright and Neighboring Rights Law (2006) safeguards intellectual works, but it is considered outdated and inadequate in fully protecting the rights of creatives.⁶⁰ Moreover, there is a lack of awareness among creatives regarding their intellectual property rights, and the enforcement of these rights faces significant challenges. The 2022 report by Parliament found that 70% of the creatives that were interviewed “knew of the copyright laws” but only a handful of respondents had “read or knew the details of the law.”⁶¹

Several associations representing creatives in Uganda, such as the Uganda Federation of Movie Industry, Uganda Performing Right Society, Uganda Musicians Association, and National Union of Creative Performing Artists, actively advocate for better copyright protections due to copyright infringement issues and the ineffective implementation of existing laws.⁶² The African Union acknowledges the general lack of intellectual property rights protection in CCIs across the continent and notes it leads to income loss and hinders the sector's growth, as stakeholders and beneficiaries often lack awareness of their intellectual property rights throughout the value chain. Yet, the AU emphasizes, the enforcement of intellectual property rights is crucial for the cultural development of Africa.⁶³

Creatives on the continent could use more support from potential investors including local businesses such as broadcasters, digital content providers, hospitality industry players, telecommunication companies, and entertainment sectors. This support could be in the form of promoting and buying creative products such as art or music.

58 World Intellectual Property Organization, “Copyright.”

59 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*.

60 Kiyaga, Magoola, and Byakatonda, “Motion Seeking Leave of the House to Introduce a Private Member’s Bill Entitled ‘The Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill.’”

61 Gitta et al., *A Study of the Culture and Creative Industries in Uganda*.

62 NUCPAAW, “National Union of Creative, Performing Artists and Allied Workers.”

63 African Union, “Revised African Union Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries.”

Furthermore, this reuse and promotion should be ethical. For example, if a telecom uses a ringtone, the artist should be recognized and adequately compensated (e.g., not a one-off cost but one based on royalties).

Among interviewees, attitudes towards copyright were complex and in some ways contradictory. On one hand, protecting one's work online is not seen as a priority; some saw copyright infringement as flattery. One expert in the animation industry opined that there haven't been that many cases of copyright infringement because there isn't much content yet to copy. Another expert in the visual arts sector said that *"it's just premature to get into copyright because artists are competing just for access, they're competing for audience,"* meaning that creatives would rather focus on making money. An expert and lecturer of drama questioned whether copyright was an "African thing," suggesting that it is "intellectual colonialism" that interferes with the spirit of sharing in African communities. He said:

"We enjoyed your song because everyone was singing it. And up to now, that is what it is. That's why you find self-piracy is a big thing here in Uganda. So, but now if you start protecting my song, and so many of those songs, which we cannot download freely on the internet, and they're great musicians here in Uganda. Great musicians. But we are not hearing anything about them. Why? Because their music is protected."

Drama lecturer

Some were concerned and complained about clients stealing ideas, but stated that they lacked the knowledge and skills on how to protect their work. Others seemed more resigned:

"Once you put your work out there on the internet, you have lost control of it in a way. So you have to put there what you think you can lose."

Ssozi

It is however not uncommon to see photographers on social media asking companies that have used their photos to credit them.

Most creatives complain that Uganda’s copyright laws are not helpful either. Their sentiments are echoed in the findings in the parliamentary report, which found that many actors in the culture and creative industries are dissatisfied with the effectiveness of the institutions that are tasked with enforcing copyright law.⁶⁴ But one artist shared that platforms like YouTube could be relied on more than legal resources:

“When you’re on platforms like YouTube that have AI models that detect your work, they can detect that someone else has uploaded your work and you’re able to kind of like just block it or ask them to take it down. But like in the Ugandan law, I can just make my movie and someone will make the same movie and just change a few things and yeah, there’s really not much I can do.”

Adam, filmmaker

The same report by Parliament states that, in the unit in charge of intellectual property enforcement at the Uganda Registration Services Bureau, only five officers supervise matters on patents, trademarks, and copyright across the country. However, one expert shared that the cost of securing copyright or intellectual rights can be prohibitive for some artists.

“IP comes with a cost. You need the right lawyers, you need the right management agencies to manage your work. You have to incur the costs. It’s like 400,000 Uganda shillings (US\$100). But if you don’t want to run around, you probably will need a lawyer. It goes to 600,000 shillings (US\$163). If you had to spend 400,000 on just registration it would be a big blow if you’re starting out.”

Wabwire, KQ Hub

64 Gitta et al., *A Study of the Culture and Creative Industries in Uganda*.

A few creatives mentioned attending workshops organized between artist organizations and legal firms. Laurean Ntaate, a co-founder of Tribe Uganda, a digital artist collective, mentioned that the company was encouraging animators, illustrators, and motion designers to protect the characters they create. Tribe Uganda hosts the annual DigiArt Festival⁶⁵ which brings together creatives in animation, comics, and video games to showcase their skills and uplift the industry of digital art in Uganda. However, the extent to which these were put to practice is not clear.

There are complex attitudes towards AI, VR, and NFTs.

Most creatives were aware of the encroachment of new technology such as AI,⁶⁶ virtual reality, and NFTs but had mixed responses to what all these had to offer

Many were optimistic about the opportunities that AI brings such as making them work faster. A poet thought she could use it to create some parts of her poetry. A content creator was happy that it could generate content and pictures. A podcaster mentioned how it helps to clean audio. Others felt it could not capture the soul of creativity:

“I think for cartooning, there is still some safety because the drawing has to be good but the thought has to be equally as good, if not better. So it gives you an edge if you can think more creatively however slightly.”

Trevor, cartoonist

⁶⁵ Musinguzi, “Innovation and Investment in Arts, Culture Way to Go.”

⁶⁶ Artificial intelligence (AI) can be defined as the programming of software systems, often using algorithms, to carry out some tasks that have in the past usually required human intelligence, tasks that involved human vision, speech, language, knowledge, and search. Generative AI has the capacity to produce high-quality artistic media for visual arts, concept art, music, fiction, literature, video, and animation. Both are likely to fundamentally alter the creative processes by which creatives formulate ideas and put them into production.

“That’s a nonliving thing. I have many things it does not. I have a soul, I have a spirit. The way I articulate, the way I present my music will always be more satisfying, more healing than what an AI can do. It doesn’t know anything. It just mimics what’s already there. That does not worry me at all.”

Kisakye, musician

Many creatives also expressed worries about AI. Two illustrators shared how they were worried AI would take work opportunities from them. One shared that AI was just an extension of increasing digitization jeopardizing jobs:

“I’m sure AI is taking our jobs. But this is an extension of other tools. For example, Canva. I would say I used to get more graphic design jobs, but then when Canva was introduced, you know, I have less phone calls from people who need me to make posters and flyers.”

Nancy, illustrator

At the brainstorming session, creatives raised concerns over how these new technologies could potentially erode one’s artistic authenticity. A creative was worried that AI would rob artists of the gratification of creating something original, and that quantity and speed of production would be valued more by clients than quality.

However, several see AI as a tool to add to their toolbox and use to their advantage.

“I think AI is a tool pretty much like any other tool. Like, it’s like a calculator. It’s supposed to make your work easier. It’s not supposed to be the one that comes up with the work.”

Adam, filmmaker

Some see the greatest potential in blending technological developments with physical art, such as immersive experiences for gallery visitors.

Ultimately, respondents agreed that new tech should be seen as an opportunity rather than a threat. That said, it also depended on how much AI was understood—one respondent felt it was easier to relate to how AI could help artists, rather than NFTs, which were difficult to understand.

Analog challenges remain, such as lack of access to hardware, production costs, and payment infrastructure.

Even as Uganda’s young creatives adopt digital technologies in efforts to make livelihoods from their creativity, they are still held back by several challenges. Difficulties accessing equipment, such as cameras, was mentioned by a podcaster. A university lecturer states how he would bring a TV from home and ask a student to bring in a Bluetooth speaker. The MP who authored the parliamentary report brought up the case of an organization trying to teach photography. They realized people did not have cameras, so they switched to developing a syllabus around phone photography. However, they realized people could not afford these either, so they had to subsidize the training.

Content creators also mentioned production costs, which include location selection, lighting, and so on. One shared:

“So obviously if you’re shooting something for a makeup brand, there’s a way you have to present yourself. You can’t just wake up. You have to look the image. If you’re shooting something for a drinks brand, you probably need to find places that are aesthetically crazy. So probably get an Airbnb for a day or you know, outfits, concepts. You spend half of that money in trying to shoot the content.”

Jazz, content creator

For those who want to engage in global e-commerce, payments can be a challenge when looking for customers outside of the country. Many say the Ugandan market doesn't appreciate creative talent. But looking to sell outside of Uganda can be tough. An illustrator found it challenging to find a convenient payment method and shared how many creatives have to depend on someone else, usually a foreigner, to receive payments, defeating the benefit of using e-commerce platforms. She explains:

“I’ve tried selling my own things, but the financial systems are not well done in Uganda. Like, you wanna open an Etsy, you need a PayPal account. But with PayPal in Uganda, you always have to connect it with some foreign person’s account. Which is what you tend to see with all of these, like local arts shops making like paper beads or whatever. There’s always a white lady there collecting the money. Personally for me, I would’ve loved a long time ago to like manage my own online platform shop, but I tried and I asked a lot of banks. The only bank I think that came close was Stanbic but still the withdrawing was an issue.”

Nancy, illustrator

Streaming platforms like Spotify seem to be aware of payment issues in Africa and are contemplating using more convenient payment systems for both the audience and musicians. The platform has adopted M-PESA, a mobile app widely used to send and receive money in Kenya.⁶⁷

Other production costs are related to payments for digital platforms to host one's work. Many platforms have free versions but those come with limited options. Creatives who need video, audio, and illustration software say they can't afford it and resort to illegally downloaded versions.

Many creatives are concerned that the government in Uganda has not lifted the block on Facebook, a platform they need to further create visibility for their work. One mentioned how Facebook was his main way of reaching bigger audiences that are unmatched by Instagram and Twitter.

⁶⁷ Adegoke, "Africa's Content Needs Its Distribution."

“I started out when Facebook was still open and it was a very good source of traction for awareness and running ads. We had very many Ugandans on Facebook, so you could easily target that I am targeting Ugandans and in this location. But now that it’s closed, it becomes harder. Twitter is not very successful with ads so I have to rely on Instagram, which reduces the sample space. So I feel like if Facebook was opened, that would help me a lot.”

Ssempe, illustrator

Alongside these infrastructural obstacles, creatives lack spaces dedicated to their sector and their work. A key issue that emerged in discussions was the value of having spaces to create, showcase work, and learn from peers. Spaces take many forms: theatres, art centers, galleries, studios, cinemas—even wall space on buildings. These spaces are training grounds for one to improve their skills. 32° East, an arts center, was mentioned frequently as a space that provided visual artists time and resources to experiment and improve their skills. Motiv Uganda, an innovation hub for creatives, also came up in a few conversations. The French Embassy through its cultural office in Kampala offers its rooftop and basement as spaces for poets, musicians, performers, and visual artists to showcase their talent and earn money. But creatives say more spaces are needed that are thoughtfully designed and spread out through the country.

The report by Parliament also mentions that a lack of spaces is stifling Uganda’s creative industry. It urges the government to construct more public facilities to create a domestic market and enable performers to put on shows at a reduced cost. It further adds:

“In the Uganda National Cultural Centre Act of 1959, regional centers of this kind (mentioned above) were envisioned, but over 60 years later, there is only one national theater. These would promote consumption of creatives and culture products among the people across the country. Such centers would include modern facilities and spaces such as dance studios, music and film productions spaces, stages for drama groups and office spaces for forums/associations.”⁶⁸

68 Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, *Report on the Mapping of Culture and Creative Industries in Uganda*.

This echoes what one creative said about having access to a space where artists can convene.

“Community is important. And it’s not necessarily something you can build by yourself. And not everyone is good at building communities like me, I came here (at Afropocene, a creatives’ space), I found these guys, I’m like, let me sit because I’m not necessarily the best at building. I mean, maybe I can contribute to them, but ... I think it’s always good to be around people who, if nothing else, they at least support you.”

Sam, digital journalist

Female creatives face unique gender-based challenges.

Women creatives expressed a diverse range of experiences in both online and offline contexts. A female content creator shared how she had noticed a lot of body shaming online, especially for content creators, because *“the more you grow, the more audience you have, where everyone is in your space and very rude about it.”* Olga, who owns a fashion brand and uses social media to sell clothes, said that sometimes male customers suggest that she meets them in person, but she refuses and insists on using a delivery rider.

Analog risks continue. Some female visual artists complained about spaces being controlled by male artists who sometimes demand sexual favors from women to exhibit their work.

Similar to Olga’s experience above, a female creative director stated: *“When you’re a young female and you have male clients, there’s always that line that they want to cross. Like, can you stay a bit later? Can you do a phone call at 11:30 PM?”*

A female musician shared that she herself hadn’t faced any challenges yet but knew of artists who have: *“I’ve been very fortunate to work with decent men. I know of a girl whose producer was like, ‘If you want me to cut for you for this price, then you gotta sleep with me.’”*

But she too faces a challenge of her own, being a woman in the music industry. She also shared that because her father attributes music to indecency, she is careful to only share videos online in which she upholds *“what (her father) thinks is decent.”*

A female content creator shared how her and her female colleagues *“are not taken seriously”* when they enter offices to pitch ideas. She said they *“eventually got a male manager to sit for us in those spaces. He gets listened to a lot more than we do, to be honest.”* An expert in the theatre sector shared that she finds it frustrating that she is seen as a woman first and her work comes second:

“Usually when I walk into the room, it’s, it’s ... ‘the woman.’ Like I’m first ‘the lady’ before I am what I do. And so all those questions rise up in people’s and like, ‘Ha, will this one manage?’ And that’s sad. As a woman, I faced, you know, sexual harassment, I faced low pay. And for low pay, you find yourself having to argue that, you know what, I have children, I have people I’m taking care of, which shouldn’t be the argument.”

Female expert

A few creatives shared how being women can sometimes have advantages. A female illustrator shared that because there are only a few like her, she’s gotten more work from clients, especially in the development sector who intentionally hire female illustrators. A content creator said being a female gets her *“pretty privilege”*: *“like people would just want to listen to you because they think you are pretty, you know?”*

Other female creatives said they’ve had to develop a thick skin with time or ignore the misogyny around them. In reality, most of these are challenges women and girls face offline and are simply exacerbated by the visibility of being online.

While technology cannot solve many of these challenges that young creatives face, it still offers more opportunities as previously shared for one to build visibility for their work and even find customers for their work. As many stakeholders pointed out at the validation workshop, young creatives require skills to learn how to better monetize their knowledge and skills both offline and online. These are discussed in the next section.

Skills gaps: Many remain unfilled

There is a disconnect between formal education and skills learned “on the job.”

Academics, policymakers, and creatives alike agreed that formal education in CCIs tended to focus on theory and less on practice:

“There was no point in which our teachers sat us down and said we need to learn how to prepare a portfolio because even if you’re not immediately in the working world, the work that you do on campus is usually what you presented as your first portfolio to a client.”

Nancy, illustrator

“I didn’t really get practical skills at university. Yeah, it was really theory. I got lessons from friends about editing photos.”

Anita, performing artist

In early 2023, to commemorate Makerere University's hundredth anniversary, sixteen scholars from the institution co-authored a book titled *Historicising the Humanities at Makerere: Trends, Patterns and Prospects*. The authors highlight the need to move away from theoretical models of teaching and explore innovative practice in order to equip both students and faculty with the skills to capitalize on the ever-changing arts market under which the creative industry falls. Professor Abbas Kiyimba, a co-author, said the book is relevant in Uganda's current time, especially where the policy thinking is driven towards the sciences.⁶⁹

Research on the skills development and gaps in Uganda's film and television sector found a lack of infrastructure at the few institutions that provide the skills.⁷⁰ One lecturer interviewed for the study said, *"we have a media lab studio but there is hardly any time for practice (close to 400 students)."*

One of the lecturers at Makerere University that we spoke to shared a challenge when teaching performing arts students in a digital age

"When you look at Makerere (University) here, when you talk about digital, we're not yet there. I don't really have internet here. So there's so much that I'm not able to do until I have it."

Alex, lecturer, Makerere University

At the validation workshop, in reaction to the finding that young creatives were using various online platforms to find and gain new skills, there was a recognition to update what is being taught.

"The 'university of now' seems to be on YouTube, on the internet. As we are teaching, people want to learn what they want to learn from the internet because the resources are there. So that the challenge is actually to us, can we have these resources just like our learners are looking for on the internet? Can I create that content?"

Professor, Makerere University

69 Mbangwa, "Makerere Scholars Historicise Humanities, Trends and Prospects."

70 Comunian and Kimera, "Uganda Film and Television: Creative Skills Development and Skills Gap for the Sector."

But creatives need more than just basic digital skills.

Ugandan creatives find that being just digitally savvy is no longer enough. Olga, 30, runs a fashion business and uses WhatsApp and Instagram regularly to reach customers. Over time, she has had to learn video and photography skills to help her create “good consumable content” that attracts clients to her page. In order to build her brand, she is even willing to pay for workshops and training in digital influencing.

As digitalization reshapes CCIs in Uganda, young creatives like Hasfa, Sam, and Alice recognize that they require a broader set of skills to thrive as creatives in the digital age.

“My genie wish would be to learn coding. The poetic part of me finds it interesting enough as a language of its own. But I think it would also help me do some of the really specific things I would want to do on a digital platform so it can be immersive for visitors.”

Hasfa, poet

“You need some financial literacy, you need some business literacy. And that doesn’t mean you become a banker.”

Sam, digital artist

“I think the management of finances is definitely a hard part because now you are working for yourself and you need to figure out, you need to know how to move your money and grow it.”

Alice, content creator

Earlier in this report, we recognized both the UNCTAD⁷¹ and Caribou Digital understandings of skills needed in a digital age. All respondents illustrated the breadth of skills needed, from digital competencies to generic and complementary skills, such as literacy and numerical skills, skills in design, digital marketing, and entrepreneurship. All this illustrates that working online in the cultural and creative industries requires a completely holistic set of skills, not limited to digital competence.

As platform functionality and trends change, there is a pressure to constantly update skills.

Globally, there is an upward trend in online learning,⁷² and young Ugandans too are looking online to learn new skills. Several creatives mentioned how they constantly upskill especially through platforms such as YouTube and SkillShare⁷³ to try and keep up with the trends in the digital world, whether the topics are how to edit videos or how to achieve a broader range for vocals (*“oh my gosh, after that I could really make my voice move”*).

Some pay for courses online. One video producer said that during the pandemic, he paid US\$300 for a course on lighting, performance, and sound. That said, it is also difficult to know where to find trustworthy content, which feels like “looking for a needle in a haystack.” This search can sometimes distract from the actual work, heightened by the fear of missing out on being on the “right” platforms.

Finally, creating content for digital platforms might come easier for cartoonists, visual artists, animators, or illustrators as their work is static and can be uploaded after it is created. But for poets, content creators, musicians, or fashion designers, one needs the skills to make their content ideas shareable online. Yet, most lack the resources to hire professional videographers or photographers; when they have the skills, some find that they need to invest in expensive phones such as an iPhone 14 to capture better video.

71 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*.

72 Purohit, “How Platform Know-How Can Drive Inclusion and Empower Billions.”

73 Skillshare is a learning community for creators.

Intermediaries are filling some skills gaps but efforts are uncoordinated.

There are several creative intermediaries that have stepped in to fill several skills gaps generated by a lack of formal education. Creative intermediaries are individuals or organizations that facilitate the growth and development of creative individuals, and/or cultural and creative industries and projects.⁷⁴ Several actors in the sector support the industry through programs including skills development. The actors include but are not limited to nonprofit organizations, foreign development partners including embassies and UN organizations, the government, associations, arts spaces, creative collectives, local foundations, universities, and training institutes. Some courses are free while others are paid for.

Training opportunities are announced online through social media and organizations' websites regularly.

“The best program that really helped me that I’ve ever participated in was a 32° East program. It was a year-long curriculum where I did classes with other artists. We did so many workshops and then we went on residencies and practiced our art. I got a good full year of just immersing myself in my craft and I didn’t pay anything.”

Nancy, illustrator

In addition, experienced creatives who have noted the gaps in the various sectors within the creative industry have set up upskilling initiatives providing vocational, technical, and business management skills as shown in the table in *Appendix E*. Intermediaries also recognize the need for young creatives to have digital skills and some but not all can provide them.

Please note that while many skills providers are listed in the table, some were not currently running skilling programs by the time of this report mainly due to a lack of funding. Additionally, many offered or still offer mostly in-person workshops, although some adopted hybrid sessions during the pandemic.

⁷⁴ Comunian, Hrac, and England, *Understanding and Supporting Creative Economies in Africa*.

Relevant, peer-led learning remains highly valued.

As mentioned previously, peer-to-peer learning appears to be a popular source of training. However, young creatives say they want to learn from people to whom they can relate (“*I need to follow someone who also understands how Uganda works.*”)

“The way we do our things in East Africa is very different from the way it is in America, for example. I may watch a YouTube channel or a creator in America, and there’s some things that cut across, but a lot of things that don’t apply. The culture is different. The market itself is so different.”

Alice, content creator

“The way light falls on dark people for example is way different from how it is explained among white-skinned people. Knowing that difference is critical in your online education that involves use of light.”

Artist and content creator

One illustrator quipped how he now often seeks out Nigerians, South Africans, and Kenyans as his preferred online educators, by virtue of their context. A poet cited the need for more indigenous African content creators “*who understand our audience.*” Some creatives said online training isn’t always trustworthy, as instructors can be inadequate or the content can be not useful.

At the stakeholder meeting, Angela Emurwon, a renowned Ugandan playwright, also spoke of the importance of creatives having access to resources closer to home.

“What YouTube is not going to give you is the opportunity to make work, to have equipment, to have lecturers who are proficient and experienced and at the top of their game to stand alongside you as you think about who you want to become and what you want to make. And you can have access to these people for one year, two years, three years. YouTube doesn’t give you that.”

Angela Emurwon, playwright

The skills young creatives want, how, and who can provide them

We asked each creative to highlight the skills they need and why. Many mentioned a mix of skills as shown in the skills matrix in Table 4. In addition, we asked creatives to suggest how they would like to learn. They mentioned that facilitated peer-to-peer interaction, online and offline masterclasses, and workshops.

General		Vocation-specific skills	Others	Suggested formats	Suggested providers
Digital literacy	Non-Digital				
Navigating creator tools on social media	Negotiating contracts	Learning how to play various music instruments	Mental health	Peer-to-peer engagements	Experienced creatives in various sectors
Creating engaging videos	Valuing your craft or products		Addiction to social media/internet	Values	
Copyright online	Monetizing talent online and offline		Influencer/content creator responsibility	Workshops	Development partners
Plagiarism	Copyright offline		Personal branding		Training institutions
Laws and regulations	Intellectual property		Tax system		Government
Research skills	Pitching ideas to clients		Proposal writing (grants, funding, etc.)		Digital platforms
Understanding and using AI tools	Financial management		Navigating the creative sector as a female artist (online and offline)		
Creating online portfolios	Time management		Laws that affect creatives		
Social and e-commerce selling	Project management		Collecting royalties		
Content creation, strategy, and planning	Business management and hiring		Placing ads online		
Digital marketing	Entrepreneurship and marketing				
Cyber security	Business registration and taxation				
Coding and programming	Export				
Videography	Investment (NFTs)				
Photography	CCI policy				
Basic computer skills	Sustainable enterprises				
Copywriting	Business leadership				
Podcasting	Audience vs. customer vs. supporter				
Storytelling	Understanding income generation				
Digital security	Design thinking				
	Proposal writing				
	Communication skills				
	Networking skills				
	Self-promotion and personal branding				
	Curating art shows				
	Moderation skills				
	Building a team				
	Financial literacy				
	Creative direction				
	Foreign languages (e.g., French, Swahili)				

Below, we further categorize the skills into sets and elaborate more on why creatives say they want them.

Table 4 ▲
CCI skills

SKILL SET 1

Technical/vocational skills

This set of skills relates to knowledge, practical competencies, know-how, and attitudes necessary to performing a certain trade or occupation in the labor market, in this case, in the creative industry or specific artistic medium. Musician Kisakye said she want to learn more about music so she can sing better. Another musician said they want to learn how to play Ugandan traditional instruments to improve their thinking around music. Actors want more skills to hone their craft, and so do fashion designers.

SKILL SET 2

Understanding platform functionality better

“You have to understand how TikTok works. You cannot just say, ‘I am here on Facebook and the audience is on Facebook and that’s it.’ There is a huge audience on TikTok too.”

Sheila, content creator

“Africa was the fastest-growing music market in the world last year, according to the music industry’s annual source of data. As artists harness their talent and get better educated on the power of streaming, they’ll implement sophisticated marketing strategies, and utilize the valuable data and analytics that we make available to understand their audience better, fine-tune their branding, and tailor their music to specific markets.

Jocelyne Muhutu-Remy, Managing Director, Spotify Sub-Saharan Africa⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Adegoke, “Africa’s Content Needs Its Distribution.”

While all creatives say they regularly use social media platforms for both personal reasons and their creative work, many shared that they have not taken full advantage of what platforms offer. Regular changes to platform functionality keep creatives on their toes. Others say they would like to learn more about the algorithm and how it affects their presence online.

Those who are less conversant with the platforms want to learn about the features that can help them reach more audiences, promote their work through ads, and sell more.

“If you don’t post regularly, the algorithm ignores you.”

Kisakye, musician

SKILL SET 3

A combination of basic and advanced digital skills

“Editing, editing, editing, editing. A bit of the video editing, lighting, color grade. But all those things you need to be able to make your work attractive.”

Nyanzi, podcaster and graphic designer

Creatives mentioned a wide range of digital skills that they need to thrive better online. At the brainstorming workshop Tonny, a graphic illustrator, relayed his need to learn how to document his art process in more compelling ways, including video, so he could build an audience for it online. Barbara, a poet, expressed her need for digital marketing, voiceover skills, and a desire to integrate multimedia outputs in her poetry. She highlighted her need to develop her art performance skills too, along with video editing skills.

Creatives want to learn how to create engaging content through audio too, especially poets and podcasters who rely on it as their main medium. Another participant, an animator and designer, stated his need for internet security skills, perhaps with the support of government IT institutions like National Information Technology Authority–Uganda (NITA-U).

Other skills that were mentioned included photography skills, protecting one's copyright online, creating online portfolios, digital marketing, videography skills to promote their work, and basic computer skills. Some creatives want to learn more advanced digital skills, such as mastering different software, coding, and programming.

“I would really, truly love to learn how to use Blender. It’s what they used to create CGI and all of these really complex visual things in film and also in animation. So learning that would be fantastic.”

Nancy, illustrator

SKILL SET 4

Emerging technologies (NFTs, 3D printing, and AI) and the creative industry

When asked about emerging technologies, creatives mentioned that they had some basic knowledge of them, especially artificial intelligence and NFTs. But they want to learn more about how they can use them. Some want to learn how to write prompts for generative AI. Creatives want to better understand technologies like NFTs and 3D printing and how they can be used in CCIs.

SKILL SET 5

Business and management skills

“I’ve danced for many years and I’ve evolved from being a dancer to a choreographer, to a creative director and now to being an entrepreneur and set up my own arts company production. I have found that it’s not enough to know your art or craft. That there comes a point as an artist where you need to know the business ... Who’s going to buy your art? I’m putting out all these things on YouTube but who’s going to buy them?”

Expert at validation workshop

Alongside digital skills, both creatives and experts in the sector mentioned the need for business, financial, and management skills. Creatives tend to be sole entrepreneurs who cannot afford to hire staff or outsource services. So creatives need skills related to running and managing a business, such as: negotiating contracts, pricing products and services, monetizing talent online and offline, paying taxes, registering a business, building a team, writing grant proposals, and pitching work to clients.

A creative mentioned they were interested in learning how to create environmentally sustainable businesses in CCIs. At the brainstorming session, Joseph, an art director, stressed the importance of learning project management and financial literacy, particularly budgeting. A photographer present noted how he needed to learn negotiating skills as a way to improve his bargaining skills in the market.

SKILL SET 6

Transversal skills

“One of the things I feel I lack the most as a creative and something that would definitely help my podcast is being able to put yourself out there as a person for people. I know a fellow freelancer and she tweets so much. She posts her work online all the time. She is in conversations online. She’s in the zeitgeist all the time and she will never be lacking in deals.”

Susan, podcaster

According to UNESCO, transversal skills are typically not specifically related to a particular job, task, academic discipline, or area of knowledge, but those that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings.⁷⁶

They include critical and innovative thinking, interpersonal skills (e.g., presentation and communication skills, organizational skills, teamwork, etc.), intra-personal skills (e.g., self-discipline, enthusiasm, perseverance, self-motivation, etc.), media and information literacy, and others.

As one creative said, *“It’s no longer just about how good you are. It’s about how good you are and how well you relate with people.”* Many creatives find that they lack some of these transversal skills, yet they are crucial. Creatives also spoke to life skills, such as learning how to take better care of one’s mental health.

Fashion artist Lorenzo expressed his need to learn proposal writing and how to develop an elevator pitch. Lynn, a video content creator, expressed her learning needs as gaining discussion, moderation, and pitching skills, and how to strategize and reach brands. Deborah, a poet and wine trader, said she needed to learn negotiation skills. Sheila, a content creator, wants to learn public speaking. Interpersonal and interpersonal skills such as networking and collaboration came up frequently. Others spoke of wanting to learn how to write better so they can clearly express their ideas.

Barbara, a poet, expressed her need for communication skills focused on English, language learning, digital marketing, voiceover skills, and integrating multimedia outputs in her poetry. She highlighted her need to develop her art performance and video editing skills.

⁷⁶ UNESCO-UNEVOC, “Transversal Skills.”

Personal branding

Important to many young creatives is how to create a personal brand online that can attract clients. Personal branding is the process of defining and promoting what you stand for as an individual.⁷⁷ As Susan above points out, knowing how to present oneself to the world is crucial today. Many creatives said they want to be able to create a brand that can attract potential clients and followers. An expert at the validation workshop shared that many young creatives she works with struggle with developing a personal brand.

Storytelling

“And everybody knows that. Whether it is AI, ChatGPT, whatever technology, Celtx, whatever camera they’ve brought out in the world ... There is one argument, there is no technique that beats the story. They haven’t created that yet. Maybe AI will succeed, but they haven’t.”

Dr. Mulekwa, lecturer

Both creative and experts emphasized the need for better storytelling. Young creatives want to have the ability to tell compelling stories through their work and also about their work. They want to use digital platforms to tell these stories through writing or video and audio.

SKILL SET 7

Policy knowledge on CCIs

Several creatives mentioned the need to better understand all policies that relate to or impact CCIs. Frequently mentioned were laws relating to regulation of the industry, freedom of expression, copyright, and exporting goods. In relation to business, creatives want to learn about policies governing business registration for creatives, royalties, and taxation.

77 Sprout Social, “Personal Brand.”

Summary

This research documented the experiences and challenges of youth in the culture and creative industries in a digital age with a total of 86 insights from creatives, policymakers, and other practitioners. We began this study asking:

- 1 What are the benefits and challenges of digitalization that young creatives see?
- 2 What are the types of skills youth use and need as creatives in today's digitized age?
- 3 And finally do available skilling opportunities address the needs of creatives in a digital age?

We found that while the majority enjoyed their profession, and felt they could earn an income from it, digitalization brought new challenges, including pressure on visibility, constant need to update skills and in some cases, harassment. Some professions such as visual and non-visual artists (musicians, artists, photographers, animators, cartoonists, and filmmakers) within CCIs were easier to adapt online than others (such as performers poets, comedians, actors), but the conversion from being online to tangible income was not always clear.

We found skilling to be a multi-faceted issue, and while creatives could readily state the skills they felt they needed (including soft skills, digital marketing, personal branding, understanding issues of copyright, AI, and other new technology), the issue of who provided the skills and how creatives came across these was more complicated.

Therefore, skills providers were not always contextually relevant, content wasn't always useful, and attempts by the donor community in skilling CCIs in a digital age not always cohesive. In addition, analog challenges were still present, such as the need for payment systems, logistics providers, and offline spaces to foster community.

We conclude this report here, but in our third and final report on this research, we identify key recommendations that arose as a result of this research in terms of how skilling needs could be addressed and who could provide them.

We conclude with the words of a young female content creator:

“The digital space is here and it’s not going anywhere and can really create jobs for young people. Not everybody has to be in the office all the time. We can create jobs for ourselves and just make it a space that has value.”

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Appendices

Sample interview questions

The following questions guided the interviews with creatives and experts. However, as the interviews were semi-structured, each interview took its own path depending on the respondent's interests and opinions. Also included are the questions addressed to participants during the brainstorming session and the validation session

Required skills for the sector

- What are your top creative skills, and how have you developed them over time?
- What other creative skills have you developed over time?
- How and when did you acquire the skills for this?
- What challenges have you faced in your skill development journey, and how have you overcome them?
- Do you think the skills you lack or have yet to acquire stand in the way of your growth as a creative?
- From your own experience, what are some of the most important digital skills that other young creatives should learn to succeed in today's digital age?

Digital tools or platforms

- What digital tools and platforms do you use and for what?
- What other digital tools do you wish you had access to?
- Do you find or get work through digital platforms?
- What opportunities have digital platforms created for you as a creative?
- What challenges do you meet when using digital platforms as a creative?

Economic impact

- Is this your only source of income? If not, where else do you get your income?
- Are you comfortable sharing how much you make in a good month?
- Would you say that you earn enough from it—
enough to cover your monthly expenses?
- What do you think could help you make more in this industry?
- Do you wish you could find other work outside of this?

Sector-specific issues

- How do you choose what brands to work with?
- How do you protect your copyright, offline and online?
- What laws or regulations do you know of that
promote or hinder your creativity online?
- Could you describe your experience of being a woman in
the creative industry, both offline and online?
- In what ways do you think these emerging technologies like
artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and blockchain will impact
your work? Do you see them as a threat or opportunity?

Expert skilling practices

- What skills gaps led you to start this initiative?
- What is your overall impression of the creative industry in Uganda?
- What skills (digital and nondigital) do you provide for creatives? Free? Paid for? Online? In person?
- What would you say are the most important skills for any creative in this digital age in the Ugandan context?
- What are the challenges you face in providing skills to creatives in a digital age?

Brainstorming session

- Do you believe the skills and knowledge you got through formal education or taught yourself are enough to thrive as a young creative in today's digital age? (Yes/No/Maybe, please elaborate)
- List as many skills you think you have and where you learnt them from. (Online or offline, education, or self taught)
- What other skills, digital and non-digital, do you wish you had or desire that would enable you to make more money?
- Who should provide the skills that I desire and why? Should these be free or paid?

Validation workshop

- What do you think are the key skills youth in Uganda need for stronger CCIs in these digital times?
- How is your organization addressing skills gaps?
- How would you imagine different stakeholders working together?
- How do we discuss skilling and policy for rapidly emerging technologies (e.g., AI)?
- If you could do a follow-up study, what could that be on?

Sample participant agreement and consent

The consent form was shared with participants over email and then discussed before interviews started. Participants either signed the consent form or gave verbal consent at the beginning of the interview.

- I am aware that my participation in this interview is voluntary. If, for any reason, at any time, I wish to stop the interview, I may do so.
- I understand the intent and purpose of this research.
- I am aware the data will be used for a research report for international publication.
- I have the right to review, comment on, and/or withdraw information prior to the report's submission.
- The data gathered in this study are confidential and anonymous with respect to my personal identity unless I specify/indicate otherwise.
- I have understood the above form and I consent to participate in today's interview.

Sample stakeholder list

For creatives, we talked to artists across the sector, such as:

- Content creators and influencers.
- Visual and non-visual artists (musicians, artists, photographers, animators, cartoonists, and filmmakers)
- Creative entrepreneurs (creators selling tangible items online)
- Designers (fashion, etc.)
- Performers (poets, comedians, actors)

For experts, we talked to skilling practitioners, such as:

- Founders and directors of skilling organizations
- Lecturers in the formal education system
- Peer-to-peer mentors and influencers
- Established long-term practicing artists
- Representatives in development organizations and embassies
- Government representatives in the art sector

List of interviewees

	Respondent Category	Category	Age
1	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Musician	25
2	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Musician	28
3	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Digital illustrator and graphic designer	26
4	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Illustrator	21
5	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Musician, poet, event organizer, talent management	26
6	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Poet, writer, podcaster	23
7	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Writer, researcher, content creator, wine enthusiast	29
8	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Poet	20
9	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Poet	33
10	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Fashion designer	24
11	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Content creator	26
12	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Visual artist	25
13	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Content creator	25
14	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Singer, songwriter, recording artist.	30
15	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Actor, writer, content creator	35
16	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	YouTuber	25
17	FGD/Brainstorming Respondent	Photographer, filmmaker, podcaster	19
18	Interviewee 1	Theatre	26
19	Interviewee 2	Theatre	25
20	Interviewee 3	Music	30
21	Interviewee 4	Poetry	32
22	Interviewee 5	Content creator	33
23	Interviewee 6	Audio digital	31
24	Interviewee 7	Fashion	29
25	Interviewee 8	Content creator	25
26	Interviewee 9	Digital cartoonist	33
27	Interviewee 10	Fashion	30
28	Interviewee 11	Content creator	27
29	Interviewee 12	Illustrator	34
30	Interviewee 13	Film	33
31	Interviewee 14	Visual arts	24
32	Interviewee 15	Digital/audio	30
33	Interviewee 16	Digital arts	29
34	Interviewee 17	Podcaster and filmmaker	33
35	Interviewee 18	Multimedia	37
36	Interviewee 19	Music	30
37	Interviewee 20	Poetry	31
38	Interviewee 21	Podcaster and graphic designer	30

	Experts	Sector
39	Expert 1	Academia and theatre
40	Expert 2	Visual arts
41	Expert 3	Performing arts
42	Expert 4	Media
43	Expert 5	Content creator
44	Expert 6	Animation
45	Expert 7	Visual arts and technology
46	Expert 8	Performing arts
47	Expert 9	Visual and performing arts
48	Expert 10	Academia and theatre
49	Expert 11	Photography
50	Expert 12	Member of Parliament
51	Expert 13	Development partner
52	Expert 14	Film
53	Expert 15	Literary works
54	Expert 16	Film and television
	Stakeholder workshop	Organization
55	Attendee 1	Cinema Uganda
56	Attendee 2	Content Creator
57	Attendee 3	Gswim
58	Attendee 4	Media
59	Attendee 5	KQ Hub Africa
60	Attendee 6	Uganda Parliament
61	Attendee 7	Soo Many Stories (Publishing)
62	Attendee 8	Femrite Pen Uganda (Publishing)
63	Attendee 9	Uganda National Cultural Centre/Theatre
64	Attendee 10	Lantern Meet Foundation
65	Attendee 11	Mastercard Foundation
66	Attendee 12	Fotea/Uppa
67	Attendee 13	Makerere University
68	Attendee 14	Filmmaker and writer
69	Attendee 15	Uganda Performing Rights Society
70	Attendee 16	Uganda Performing Rights Society
71	Attendee 17	Khama Digital Content Hub
72	Attendee 18	Pollicy
73	Attendee 19	Film And Video Learning Institutions Association
74	Attendee 20	Mastercard Foundation
75	Attendee 21	Rich Diction/Babishai Poetry
76	Attendee 22	Makerere University
77	Attendee 23	Oraqo Arts
78	Attendee 24	Mastercard Foundation
79	Attendee 25	Goethe Zentrum Kampala

APPENDIX E

Illustrative courses offered in CCIs

Please note this is not a comprehensive list; it is valid as of July 2023.

Actor	Sector	About	Skilling programs	Cost of attending as of July 2023
Makerere University	Public sector	Department of Performing Arts and Film, Margaret Trowell School of Industrial & Fine Arts	Also offers a bachelor and Masters of industrial and fine arts degree	\$1740 over the course of three years
Bayimba Cultural Foundation	Private sector	Focuses on uplifting arts and culture in Uganda through cultural exchange and creativity.	The Bayimba Academy offers an intensive two-year professional training program "The Practical Musician" for young Ugandan musicians.	Ranges from \$95 to \$123 depending on group or private lessons, over the course of ten weeks
KQ Hub Africa	Private sector	Media, Art & Culture Organisation and Creative Studio	Runs Skills Lab, an artist development opportunity for intercultural dialogue, collaboration and skills exchange by bringing together in a virtual and hybrid space artists, creatives, cultural practitioners and change-makers from Uganda and the UK.	Free but program is funded by different development organizations.
National Crafts Association of Uganda	Association	Association of Visual artists and handicrafts men and women	Undertakes trainings in various Visual arts and handicrafts disciplines as well as financial literacy	Free if programs are externally supported and sponsored
Uganda Reproduction Rights Organisation	Association	Acts on behalf of authors and publishers of literary works to protect copyright, license users of protected literary works, collect fees, distribute royalties and contribute to the fight against book piracy.	Offers workshops on copyright and contracts	Free but workshops are funded by the International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organisation, NORCODE The Norwegian Copyright Development Association and Ugandan government through organizations like UNCC and URSB
Uganda National Cultural Centre	Government	Statutory body established by the Uganda National Cultural Centre Act to manage the National Theatre and Nommo Gallery	Offers or supports workshops for creatives like the emerging creators intensive workshop	Free to attend
UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)	Multilateral org	Global UN body with a mandate to promote culture, creativity and heritage in member states	Launched the UNESCO–Aschberg project and the open digital road map in May 2023 working with government and artists for 12 months. These workshops, trainings and consultations will be conducted to strengthen the audio-visual industry	Free to attend since Uganda was among the 12 countries to participate with each country getting \$1.5 million

Actor	Sector	About	Skilling programs	Cost of attending as of July 2023
United Nations Development Programme	Development partner	Committed to addressing youth unemployment challenges through equipping youth with vocational skills, increasing the competitiveness of youth within the labor market, building capacities of national institutions to mainstream youth employment, and supporting youth-led enterprises to pilot innovative ideas.	One of the fundamental enablers of UNDP's country programme for Uganda (2021-2025), the Digitalization, Innovation and Smart Cities Programme will accelerate digital transformation by promoting digital literacy and skills development, providing catalytic support within priority public services, and ensuring evidence-based strengthening of the enabling environment for digital transformation.	Free to attend by supporting other organizations with funding open calls and workshops. With the support of UNDP,
FOTEA – UPPA	Private sector	UPPA is a platform for photographers in East Africa to connect, learn and grow.	FOTEA and Oxfam train young creatives between the ages of 22 and 35 in the fields of photography, videography, written word, illustration, audio and podcasting for bootcamp session 'Stories 4 Change' programme.	Free with support by OXFAM UPPA programs like awards, open calls and exhibitions are mostly supported by FES
Swangz avenue	Private sector	Record Label and Artist Management Company	The Swangz Creative Academy skills students who want a career in music, audio, film and graphic design	\$540 over the course of 6 weeks
Uganda Registration Services Bureau	Government	Governing body on artist and creative licenses and intellectual property rights	Has trainings, webinars and workshops like the virtual workshop on Women and Intellectual Property or the Industrial Design IP Protection workshop	Free to attend
National Union of Creative, Performing Artists and Allied Workers (NUCPAAW)	Private sector	NUCPAAW is an umbrella organization for all Artists and their groups with a primary aim of protecting the rights of all stakeholders in the Arts Industry and acting as a voice of Artists and their groups.	Carries out countrywide trainings focusing on bodies governing the creative industry on corporate law regulation and leadership	Free to attend with support from FUE Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE) and different organizations like The National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU) and International Labour Organization (ILO)
Music connects lab Uganda	Private sector	LAB UGANDA is a place to meet, learn about and make music, bring education to youths, foster talent and encourage peace. Also promotes the creative economy in BidiBidi, one of the largest refugee settlements in the world.	The lab offers training in music production, technical and stage management training, as well as providing a stage/ platform for artist to perform	Free to attend with the support of different funders
Vodo Arts lab and Society	Private	Vodo Art Society and Lab ltd is an arts collective and or society of artists of different specializations creating under one roof	Selling and promoting artist work 3 months skilling program from doodling, sketching, color, animation, illustration and storyboard. For digital arts prefer to work with people who have their own equipment/gadgets	\$68 membership fee for skilling over the course of 3 months. These members are then hired and paid for their work. Also partner with different skilling organizations to offer professional skills to creatives

Actor	Sector	About	Skilling programs	Cost of attending as of July 2023
Artfield Institute of Design	Private sector	An arts and design school and creative technology tertiary institution	Provides courses in interior design, 3D animation, motion graphics, visual communication, audio production and multimedia	Diploma courses run for a period of two year
FINE GRAPHICS SCHOOL OF DESIGN	Private sector	An arts and design vocational institute	Around art and design and vocational hairdressing braiding and give financial literacy and marketing online	Tuition is between \$142 to \$270 over the course of 3 to 5 months
Seed House of Fashion School	Private sector	Offers courses in decoration, makeup, crochet making, fashion, bridal, bag making	Special personalized sessions with monthly payment options	Ranges from \$28 for weekend and evening classes to \$55 for weekly classes over the course of a month
Purple Skills Clinic	Private sector	Foundation, to bridge the gap between media students and those practicing their careers.	Masterclasses by professionals for emerging artists in media and aspiring journalists	Unable to contact for further information
Tebere Arts Foundation	Private	The organization supports works of theater that bring professional theater-makers and young artists and or students of performing arts from different universities across the country to perform together	Has emerging artist labs in writing, producing, staging for theater as well as audio drama writing and production	Free training program but with the support of Doen Foundation. Offered over the course of one year. Under this is an audio drama workshop for emerging artists with the support of the Swiss Arts Council
Nagenda International Academy of Art and Design (NIAAD)	Private	A knowledge incubation and skill-based academy where Youth can hone their creative and entrepreneurial skills	Offers diplomas in Fine arts, fashion design, communication design, Textile and Jewellery design, and art education. Also offers certificates in fashion design and Art and Design	Ranges from \$182 to \$212
Kitara Nation	Private	An arts company promoting poetry in secondary schools and higher institutions of learning.	Has workshops for aspiring poets in secondary school and publish poetry by emerging artists	Free workshops and free publications with the support of Africalia
Echo minds poetry	Private	Uganda's first all-female poetry label, which uses poetry to talk about challenges of women and breaking biases of women	Planning to offer classes or trainings for upcoming female poets and performances	Membership is free and has 9 core members but will ask members to join once more members join. The lab currently recruits young poets and trains them at no cost
The Poet's Association of Uganda	Private	An umbrella body that brings together over 32 poetry groups, clubs, labels, poetry companies, all over Uganda and their associated members	For professional growth, skilling, and betterment of the craft of poetry and the spoken word	Free mentorship sessions and Twitter spaces where they host facilitators who mentor attending poets on different skills like writing, professionalism, law and art of performance
Obiamwrights	Private	Association of young writers, poets and screenwriters	Workshop developing scripts and discussions for already published plays	Free to attend program 'book for a book' where they

Actor	Sector	About	Skilling programs	Cost of attending as of July 2023
AfriArt Gallery	Private	A Contemporary art gallery committed to creating a fair playing field and supportive community for young artists by continuously implementing projects that foster their growth through mentorship, visibility, and archiving.	Runs Master and apprentice programs where they pair young creatives and experienced professionals for skills transmission Building digital marketplaces for creative to showcase and sell Runs intensive 3 months residency programs to develop creative skills	Free to artists because self funded by Afriart but the gallery also sometimes works with partners like the EU
32° East Ugandan Arts Trust	Private sector	Multi-purpose resource center for artists in residence, a contemporary art library, computers & editing suites, meeting areas and outdoor workshop space.	Space for artists to create and showcase their work. Also offer mentorship, and 3 months residency programs for Ugandan and international artists. Membership benefits include benefits; access to the library, resource center and outdoor workspace (including WIFI and computers); book one on one drop in sessions for help with applications, portfolios, CVs, and artist's statements; showcase work in the annual members exhibition; take part in workshops and discussions; apply for the artists in residence program.	Membership is \$ 14 per year for professionals and \$ 9 for students Artist residency program is free with the support of a number of funders
MoTiv Tribe	Multi-donor funded initiative	Innovation hub and center for young creatives	Provides space and equipment for artists to create	Free monthly membership access to legal clinics, financial literacy sprints, marketing clinics. Monthly membership also provides access to facilities (10% Discount) Unlimited Access to Co-Working Space Partnership with Mastercard Foundation
Cinema UG	Private sector	Online publication for digital talent database, films, film marketing, film festival publicity, graphics design, online ticket booking, Talent Agency, and film-related workshops.	Film acting workshops script writing, acting, preparation for auditions, directing and creative business management	Free workshops and trainings with support from UCC and collaboration from other organizations which send trainers to work with artists
Tribe Uganda	Private sector	A guild collective comprising digital art illustrators, animators and video gamers based in Uganda. Purpose is to create awareness in the industry and show of sustainability	Annual digiArt festival. The festival was created to bring skills of creatives in animation, comics & video games together under a common objective of uplifting the industry of digital art in Uganda.	Free beginners free and open to anyone but DigiArt exhibitions are free for artists who want to showcase work. This has been self-funded for the last six years. Advanced creatives have to pay a membership fee and can be connected with experts in the industry or specific studios who/ which may charge a fee

Actor	Sector	About	Skilling programs	Cost of attending as of July 2023
YMCA Comprehensive institute	Private sector	YMCA Department of Art and Design	Provides academic programs in industrial arts, fashion and design	Ranges from \$124 for a certificate to \$246 for a bachelors per semester
Faces Up Uganda	Private sector	Empowering youth in refugee and host communities to express their creativity through art	Talks, mentorships, art competitions and Virtual exhibitions. Also online shop We enable children to use their creativity and we share it with the world in the form of artworks, and merchandise on e-commerce platforms and via exhibitions to raise the funds needed to pay school fees for children from financially challenged backgrounds.	Free to attend because they raise school fees for children from the sale of artworks and products.
The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC)	Government	The primary mandate of UCC is to regulate the Communications sector, which includes Telecommunications, Broadcasting, radio communication, postal communications, data communication and infrastructure.	The Content Development Support Programme is an initiative dedicated to supporting the audio-visual Industry in Uganda.	Free to submit or attend as partners with organizations for workshops, trainings and webinars
Goethe-Zentrum Kampala	Development partner	Goethe supports many artist initiatives and also provides space for artist events, workshops and training. Also fund several initiatives in CCIs	Organizes several workshops for artists like the Film possible Ngalabi workshop, Sign language courses by Dead Link Uganda, fashion workshops and business management skills in the creative industry	Free to attend but also collaborate with artists and art organizations to host events where they either charge a fee or share costs of accessing the venue Francaise
Alliance	Development partner	Fund several initiatives for eligible interested organizations	Hosts art events, creative business workshops and delivers creative programs by partnering with or funding different organization	Free to apply
Swiss Arts Council	Development partner	FFund several initiatives for eligible interested organizations	Swiss Arts Council funds some artistic programs in Uganda like audio drama through Tebere Arts Foundation.	Free to apply
The British Council	Development partner	Fund several initiatives for eligible interested organizations	British Council work in Uganda's creative industry focuses on music, visual arts, film and literature and is delivered through partners.	Free to apply
American Embassy	Development partner	Fund several initiatives for eligible interested organizations	Offers funding opportunities for creatives like the Kampala Media Literacy and Countering Disinformation Programs and the Power of Creativity: Professional Development in Ugandan Creative	Free to apply
Media Challenge Initiative	Private sector	A youth not for profit building the next generation of journalists in Africa	Works with aspiring journalists	Recently received funding from the French Embassy to train content creators

Actor	Sector	About	Skilling programs	Cost of attending as of July 2023
Dilstories Film School (Kampala, Kabale and Gulu districts)	Private sector	Dilstories is a film production company focusing on feature films, TV series, short films, and documentaries.	Works with emerging artists to give them internships or 'on the job' training in script writing, producing editing for the Ugandan and African market Run mobile film school in Kabale and Gulu where each trainee spent up to ten months learning the art and technical craft of filmmaking.	Mobile film school training sessions are free since participants do not pay a tuition fee. There is a registration fee, of \$27, which is a contribution to help cater for some of the overhead costs, like feeding
United Youth Entertainment (Gulu)	Private sector	A youth film organization formed in May 2010 by a group of talented youths based in Gulu Town, Northern Uganda.	It's major objective is to use film and other forms of art e.g., poetry, music and fashion design as tools to heal the wounds caused by the 20 year war that affected thousands of youths in northern Uganda. These tools are also being used to address other social problems caused by the war such as Gender based violence, Rape, Alcoholism, Drug abuse, etc.	Free workshops with the support of organizations like YPO Uganda, Hypoheals Spain
Elephante commons (Gulu)	Private sector	Gulu's Innovation Incubator & Community Center Hybrid	Support partners in 8 different areas from business and job creation to education and literacy to creative arts and culture Hashtag Gulu is a hub at Elephante which works with street kids for mentorship, life skills, and vocational training with the end goal being to integrate them into society	Free but depends of partnerships and donations
Mtindo Studio Designs and academy (Gulu)	Private sector	Mtindo is on a mission to unlock employment opportunities for women in Northern Uganda through the building up of the apparel industry	Mtindo academy and studio. The talent built in the academy funnels into the studio and the profits from the studio support the training of more youth in the community.	The one-year program advertises as one-third of the time and half the cost in comparison to traditional programs
The Floor Motion (Gulu, Kitgum, Lira, Adjumani, Omoro, Lamwo, Kampala, Jinja, Mbale)		An artistic brand that is passionate about the growth of dance and art scene in northern Uganda	Started with the aim of providing psychosocial support for artists, especially dancers through workshops and various community engagements	Free with the support of donations and occasional support from partners like Alliance Francaise
INK Liners (Gulu)	Private sector	a space for creatives to share their art with the world.	Hosting events on a regular basis, you will see a wide variety of performances from spoken word poetry, to dances, to music,	Free to attend

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Kharma Digital Content Hub	Private sector	A new initiative by a content creator	Have Content Creators Collective where they invite facilitators who have established brands in the content space to share on networking, pricing, branding and monetization. They also use this opportunity to brainstorm on the association they are in the process of registering. The association will unify space and voices to create more opportunities for capacity building.	Free to attend content creation-focused masterclasses and conversations with key stakeholders and partners like KTA Advocates during their symposium
Ibua Publishing (formerly Lantern Meet Foundation)	Private sector	Ugandan-owned digital brand on a mission to promote storytelling in Africa as a tool to harness the continent's future.	Has labs for short fiction writers, novelists and editors.. Runs Ibua manuscript workshops and Ibua Journal, an anthology of short stories by writers from the Ibua alumni community.	Publishing costs are content specific and participants in the lab pay 40% of the cost of trainings
Femrite (Uganda Women Writers Association)	Private sector	For over 20 years, the publishing house started as an association for Ugandan female writers	Workshops and mentorship programs	Unable to contact for further details
Film Possible	Private sector	Provides year-round support for emerging and established filmmakers	Runs a film making mentorship series, as well as funding, screening and distributing films. Also has a month-long residency with artists from Uganda, Kenya, DR Congo, Tanzania and South Sudan	All programs are free to attend. Availability depends on funding
East African Records	Private sector	Recording studios, music distribution, video and audio production, and events management company	A community-based studio and label in Kampala, Uganda, that supports and develops upcoming regional talent operating in the alternative and experimental space	Free to enroll music production workshops with support from the embassy of France under the FSPI fund
ISBAT	Private sector	Offers Bachelor of science in animation and visual effects and the Diploma in Multimedia and animation	Equip the students with various approaches, methods, tools and techniques of Multimedia and Animation Technologies.	Ranges from \$650 per semester for a two-year diploma course to \$613 per semester for a three-year bachelor course
LivingStone International University (Mbale)	Private sector	School of media technology	Offers courses in media technology, development and communication as well as PR and communication	231 per semester over the course of four years
Afropocene	Space	A Co-Arts space for artists, researchers, thinkers, experimenters, developers and doers	Provide space and community for afrofuturist artists interested in exploring the cultural aesthetics, philosophies of science and history that are borne of the developing intersection of African/African diaspora culture with technology	Self-funded
Rich Diction/ Babishai Poetry	Private	A poetry foundation that coordinates annual poetry competitions for African poets.	Competition and skilling in poetry writing	\$1000 for a full day with twenty or more people training in public speaking, team building and writing speeches for organizations. Includes report and follow up for two months

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African Writers Trust	Private	Coordinate and bring together African writers in the Diaspora and writers on the continent to promote sharing of skills and other resources, and to foster knowledge and learning between the two groups	Offers publishing fellowship programs, manuscript assessment, and professional training workshops. Runs the Uganda international writers' conference	At the time of publication they had no programs running
Yenze Theatre Conservatoire (YTC)	Private	Training institution and casting agent in film and theatre	Provides training in acting, voice and movement to aspiring and professional artists	Tuition is \$81 for a 10-week intensive course for aspiring, emerging and established artists. Organization also complements funds by asking friends and family as well as applying for grants
Global institute of information technology and business	Private sector	Talent development institution offering learning solutions to individuals, enterprises and institutions, enterprises and institutions across the nation	Offers courses in multimedia and animation, film and audio production, graphics and animation, cosmetology and beauty therapy, fashion and design, journalism and multimedia as well as music dance and drama	Ranges from \$136 to \$218 per semester for a certificate or a diploma
The Ghetto Film Project	Private sector	A youth initiative that uses film and other arts to rehabilitate, mentor,	Offers documentary film studies and youth empowerment	Free to attend
Film and Video training Institutions Association	Private	An umbrella organization that seeks to professionalize film educational services, video production and multimedia production from the grassroots to higher education	Came together with the mission to unify and offer skills to creatives from different backgrounds and financial capabilities as well as have a united voice to address the government	Free advice on which courses to pursue and which institutions to gain experience whether at vocational level or university degree
The Ark Film, Radio, Television and Computer Institute	Private sector		Offers courses like journalism (radio, television, film, ICT, Hairdressing and computer	All courses are offered for free on a bursary although payment for registration and requirements are paid for by participants at a cost of \$40
Phimo Media (Kampala and other parts)	Private sector	A film production and training company that mainly produces documentary and fiction films Previously partnered with other organizations like Kampala Film School, and a film festival for youth films in Germany.	Particularly committed to nurturing young talent and telling African stories with a global perspective. Currently in discussion with "Kids first Uganda" to partner and train young people in film making.	Trained young people in documentary film making and produced a short documentary on pineapple farming, it was 80% hands on.
Native Voices International (Kampala, Bundibugyo, Kasesse, Mbale Lira, Moroto, Fortportal)	Private sector	Formerly Native Travel Festival is a Media Arts Organisation	General film art studies	Information could not be found from 2022. Could not contact for further details

Actor	Sector	About	Skilling programs	Cost of attending as of July 2023
Mediavision Academy	Private sector	A tertiary training institute that offers short certificate courses in Film, Photography, Television, Radio production and Video Production.	enabling young people to get hands-on technical experience. The Academy has trained over two hundred and fifty participants through workshops.	\$137 for a certificate
Proline Film Academy	Private sector	Provides youth with training to work in the film industry, whether as Directors, Writers, Producers, Photographers, Cinematographers or any other crew roles.	Offers certificates and diplomas from 3D animation, photography, web design, video and audio production, acting, digital marketing, etc	\$500 for a three months certificate and \$1300 for a one-year diploma
Cinelab Akademie Initiative	Private sector	Documentary film studies and youth empowerment lab	A skills-based audio-visual storytelling lab which equips youth with participatory video techniques to enable the youths to tell their own stories that will impact their communities and open dialogue with policy makers so as to be part of their community's development	\$272 for film making and photography training, over the course of six months
Seedsha film productions	Private sector	film academy working with homeless students and youth living on the streets	Makeup acting editing VFX, camera	Some free workshops ranging from \$136 for 15 days of makeup or VFX course to \$218 for editing course between one and two months
London Media Academy	Private sector	Documentary and TV training school	Diploma in journalism and mass communication, video production and film making,	Unable to contact for further details
Film Impact Movement	Private sector	Film production training institute Film training and forums	A social development organization which empowers underrepresented visual-artists, filmmakers as well as marginalized Communities of vulnerable youth, girls, women and special interest groups; to create, and share their narratives and community stories by connecting with other filmmakers and creators.	Programs, trainings and all activities are being conducted for free. Since the organization is not being funded, and they don't have any external income, participants are asked to purchase an organization T-shirt which costs \$8. This is also an entry point for the participant to become an associate member of the organization.
Uganda Christian University (Mukono)	Public sector	School of journalism, media and communication	Equip Christ-centered media professionals with skills	Ranges from \$137 to \$400 per semester depending on whether the program is a diploma or master's degree
Kyambogo University	Public sector	Department of Music and Performing Arts	Provides academic programs in music and performing arts	Ranges from \$110 to \$250 per semester depending on whether course is a diploma or Bachelors
Kampala film school	Private sector	A subsidiary of Kampala University. This was the first film school founded in Uganda.	The art of filmmaking course from writing, producing, editing to animation	Ranges from \$300 per semester (certificate) to \$545 (two-year diploma), and \$682 per semester (three year bachelor's degree)

Actor	Sector	About	Skilling programs	Cost of attending as of July 2023
Uganda Film and Television Institute		Was the first Film, Television and Radio Institute in Uganda,	Training in the fields of Journalism, Film Production, Radio Production, Television Production, Information Computer Technology Applications, Photography, Professional Digital and Analogue Video editing	Unable to contact for further information
African Institute of Music	Private sector	A learning community and Christian university that is committed to music education and performance	Provides certificates, diplomas and bachelor degrees in music production as well as pre college programs	\$220 for a certificate and semester costs range from \$250 for a diploma and \$400 for a bachelors
Tesi Fashion school	Private sector	Fashion and design school	Focuses on garment construction and design	\$696 per year for a two-year diploma
ESTA School of Beauty and fashion designing	Private sector	Cosmetology school	Offer courses in hairdressing, hair styling, facials, manicures and pedicures, baking and tailoring	Ranges from \$80 (one-month short courses), \$136 to \$273 (two months short courses), \$245 to \$400 (professional 3 months courses)
ESOM School of Music	Private sector	Offer affordable lessons to students from various socioeconomic backgrounds as well as group sessions for those who may not be able to afford individual courses	offers certificates in Music Production, Guitar, Piano/Keyboard, Film and Video Production, Sound Engineering, Saxophone, Djing, Drums, and Violin.	Ranges from \$72 to \$240
Oraqo arts	Private sector	Using choreography and dance with multidisciplinary teams to create artistic productions	Workshops in dance and choreography	Free for basic creative coaching projects with refugee youth to help put together a production. This is currently self-funded Other trainings for children and teenagers are paid for.
Grooming a Successful Woman with an Intellectual Mind (GSWIM)	Private sector	Through Intellectual Property training, GSWIM empowers women to be innovative and creative to their maximum potential.	Would hold workshops and training on topics like Women in business and IP as a tool for business development. Worked with women making arts and crafts	At the time of publication, they were No longer running programs. Used to be free when funded/supported by World Intellectual Property Organization but they longer work together
Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Creative Industries (UGAPAFOCI)	Private sector	UGAPAFOCI is a nonprofit organization with membership only open to members of parliament.	Its main objective is to influence policy and mainstreaming of culture in the planning processes. In talks about creating the first creative ministry in Uganda	One on one skilling and discussions with members of parliament, embassy representatives and NGOs working with creatives

