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***Creativity powers  
socio-economic  
advancement,  
and can only  
be developed  
through creativity  
education.***

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**MASK Create**

Annual Report for 2021-22



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Cover image: MASK artist Alpha Odhiambo, *Models dancing*, 2021, acrylic on canvas

Quotation: MASK Create

## Report of the Trustees

The Trustees/Directors of the charitable company MASK Create (formerly, Mobile Art School in Kenya, MASK) for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006 present this report with the financial statements for the year ended 31 January 2021. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

## Objectives and activities

### Introduction

Keith Simonton in his book *Origins of Genius* writes: 'A civilization enjoyed a golden age when it overflowed with first-rate creative minds, experienced a silver age when the creative activity descended to a less notable level, and suffered a dark age when creators became few and far between.'<sup>1</sup>

Major economists such as Paul Romer, John A. List, Alfred Marshall and Joseph Schumpeter placed creativity at the centre of economic development. We at MASK place creativity at the centre of education and socio-economic systems. Teaching creativity can make education the most powerful force for change and transformation.

Since the beginning of human history, everything that has driven development in science, technology and culture has been the work of creative people. They imagine new possibilities, break new ground and shape the future.

We salute creative people, and we are here to encourage and support them.

### The objects/purpose

MASK's objects, as set out in our Memorandum of Association, are to advance the education of young people and communities in creativity and innovation, through the arts and other means, including by provision of teaching assistance.

### Beneficiaries

Our beneficiaries (target audiences and service users) are:

- young people (YP) aged 4 to 25, individually and collectively;
- educators and education authorities;
- communities and the public.

### Vision (why we do it)

Our vision is a world where all people harness their creativity for personal empowerment and the advancement of society.

<sup>1</sup> Dean Keith Simonton, *Origins of Genius. Darwinian Perspectives on Creativity*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p 1.

**Mission (how we do it) is to:**

- develop creativity education (CE) practice;
- strengthen YP's capacity for creativity & innovation;
- effect long-term changes to society so creativity can thrive in perpetuity.

**Aims, goals and objectives (what we do) are:**

- to develop pedagogy and teaching/learning resources, and support educators to foster creativity in the classroom;
- to deliver opportunities to YP to make an impact on their lives and the lives of their communities;
- to engage with communities locally, nationally and globally to change perceptions and embed the value of creativity in broader socio-economic systems.

**Where we work**

MASK's work began in Kenya in 2007. It has since scaled up across borders. We have reached our beneficiaries in:

- Africa, 15 countries – Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe.
- UK – London, Margate, Edinburgh, Romford
- USA – Washington DC, San Diego
- France – Paris
- South Korea – Seoul



**Pink markers** – the locations where we have reached YP, teachers and communities: UK, USA, and Africa. **Green markers** – the locations where we have reached education, policy and business communities: UK, USA, France, and South Korea.



## Our definitions

**Creativity** is the ability to generate novel ideas/solutions/opportunities that solve problems and advance society. It is rooted in the capacity to *connect* information across domains, and is powered by *visual* cognition.

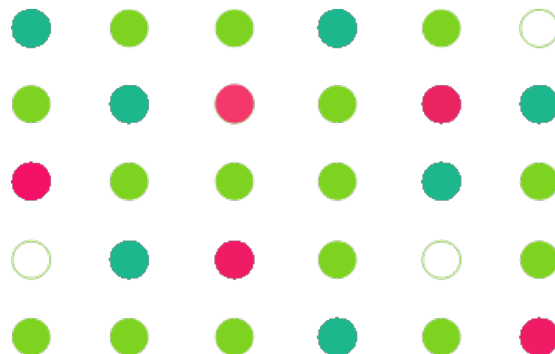
**Innovation** is an outcome of creativity. It is implementing novel ideas in practice. Innovation always brings change, whether radical or incremental.

Creativity is *not* the sole prerogative of art. Being creative does not mean being able to draw, paint or play a musical instrument. Creativity effects all areas of human life: science, technology, business, economy, politics, society, culture, and daily lives.

Creativity is not simply a byproduct of increased intelligence. Creativity is a distinct higher-order cognitive process of its own.<sup>2</sup> Albert Einstein called creativity 'a true intelligence'. Edward de Bono believed it is 'the highest form of intelligence'. People need to use both, their knowledge *and* their creativity.

These words are synonyms of creativity and innovation: *improvement, resourcefulness, problem-solving, self-sufficiency, self-efficacy, thinking, inventiveness, imagination, ingenuity, discovery, hypothesis, intuition, independent thinking, excellence, intelligence, adaptivity, initiative, power, emancipation, change, value-creation, vision, individuality, risk-taking, personal effectiveness, genius, inspiration, talent, changing paradigm/status quo, design, 'eureka!' and 'aha!' moment.*

**Creativity education (CE)** is an education that enables students to acquire the capacity to create and innovate. Creative students are those who can solve problems by generating innovative outcomes.



<sup>2</sup> John S Allen, *Creativity, the Brain, and Evolution. Creativity: Adaptation or a byproduct of increased intelligence?* Psychology Today, 2010.



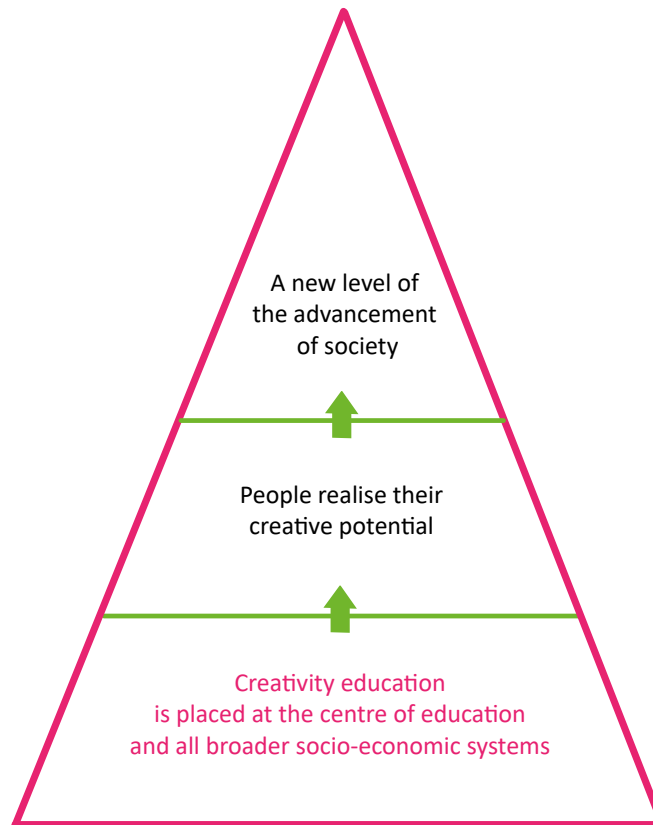
### **Ensuring our work delivers our objectives**

MASK Trustees review the objectives each year and after major activities to ensure that they remain focused on the stated purpose and benefit our beneficiaries. Trustees refer to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance. They monitor and evaluate these quantitative and qualitative outcomes:

- number of users, their location, age, gender, background, etc.;
- input from partners (e.g. audiences reached via media campaigns or exhibitions);
- quality of services and output (e.g. access, skills, users' feedback and case studies);
- partnerships and community engagement and feedback.

## MASK Theory of Change

Creativity drives human evolution. By placing creativity at the centre of education and all broader socio-economic systems, humanity can realise its creative potential and reach a new era of advancement.





## **MASK Theory of Change in the context of human evolution: creativity is not just the means but the purpose of evolution**

Three billion years ago, simple organisms developed sensitivity to light. A visual system began to form and acted as the catalyst for the development of the nervous system.<sup>3</sup> Neurons specialised in visual information<sup>4</sup>, which led to organisms' specialisation, their efficiency and survival. Interacting with the brain in a continual feedback loop, the visual system became responsible for memory, emotions and planning. Starting 385 million years ago, the ability to see helped fish to evolve into animals living on land.<sup>5</sup> Animals that could recognise colours and 'faces' and visualise mental maps and their prey's movements were more successful in feeding, hunting, fighting and mating.

Human evolution is the evolution of creativity. Two million years ago, early hominin species *Homo habilis* faced an evolutionary crisis. To survive the challenging environment, they had to improve their tools and visualised the first historic innovation – Oldowan stones – for cutting meat and bones. This marked the beginning of human evolution. Their brain grew to 700 cm<sup>3</sup> in volume, twice the size of the brain of their ape predecessors. One-and-a-half million years ago, seeing the benefits of innovation, *Homo erectus* made creativity a central feature of their conscious behaviour. They invented more effective tools – axes and cleavers. Their brain size increased to 900 cm<sup>3</sup> in volume. *Homo neanderthalensis* produced more advanced spears and javelins. Communities recognised the link between creativity and survival, protected their creative members, and the 'creative genes' passed on to the next generations.

Forty thousand years ago, *Homo sapiens* visualised a whole variety of new and specialised tools to extract a variety of resources. They produced sewing needles and harpoon points from fish bones, created artworks, and designed networks for exchanging goods over long distances. Their brain size grew to 1200-1500 cm<sup>3</sup> in volume, about the same size as the brain of modern humans.

Over the last 100 years, there has been a profound increase in human intelligence. The average IQ has climbed 24 points. In 2005 researchers discovered two gene variants that control brain development, which mean that the people who carry them may have cognitive advantages. The increase in intelligence is not due to biological evolution – the time span is too short for that – but to the increasing rates of innovation which radically alter our attitudes and the ways we live and work.<sup>6</sup> Creativity has a powerful effect on our brain development. Human evolution is a continual interaction of innovation and intellect.<sup>7</sup>

### *Meeting new challenges*

Technology rapidly transforms human civilization. Rates of progress in this century will be about 1000 times those in the 20th century.<sup>8</sup> This renders obsolete the roles we are familiar with today and brings new forms of work and skills. The future demands people with strong creative skills who can understand, adapt and innovate new technology to solve challenges and build a prosperous world for all.

Today, we face an evolutionary crisis in the same way that early humans faced one two million years ago. To survive the evolutionary crisis, early humans improved their tools. To adapt and gain advantages this time, we must improve our creativity.

We need a new education that can fortify people's capacity to innovate. An education that can lead to emergence of a new humanity where curiosity and passion will replace fear and greed, and success will be measured not by how many things are bought and owned, but how many things are designed and discovered. A humanity where everyone will realise their creative potential, not just a minority, and where creativity will be recognised as not just the means, but the purpose of evolution.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Arp, *Scenario Visualisation. An Evolutionary Account of Creative Problem Solving*, MIT, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> 'Brain and Culture' lecture, U. Alexandrov, Russian Academy of Science. Kultura TV, 'Academia' series, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Malcom MacIver, Lars Schmitz, Ugurcan Mugan, Curtis Mobley, *Massive increase in visual range preceded the origin of terrestrial vertebrates*, The University of Chicago, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Restak, *The Naked Brain*, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> According to the Gene-Culture Coevolution Theory, evolution is a continual interaction of environment and organisms in a feedback loop: environment selects organisms (by causing genetic mutations in neurons and neuron processes in the brain that get inherited), the new organisms affect the environment (various niches), and so on. This theory extends on Darwin's theory of biological evolution which states that environment selects organisms.

<sup>8</sup> Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*, 2006.



## MASK Creativity Learning Model

*"Survival in the 21st century will be very, very difficult, and without creativity it is not possible."*

Dr Manu Chandaria MBE, Africa's leading industrialist and MASK supporter

When we founded MASK, we aimed to address current problems in education and anticipate its future challenges and opportunities in order to improve outcomes for our young people (YP). Worldwide, even if they attend school and focus on literacy and numeracy, hundreds of millions of YP reach young adulthood without basic skills. How and why many countries are not yet achieving 'learning for all' represented a real learning and moral crisis.<sup>7</sup>

MASK's solution to this crisis was creativity education (CE) that was fully embedded in mainstream education. We believed that precisely because creativity of YP remained largely unaddressed 'learning for all' remained illusive.

Studying existing CE practice, we tried to improve it based on our own practical research. Our research was represented by a cyclical process of: 1) we defined and diagnosed problems; 2) designed solutions (policy and programmes); 3) implemented; 4) evaluated; 5) adapted; and 6) delivered objectives. Final interventions were hybrids, drawn on our research and global evidence.

Our approach was focused on these three points. First, we identified the gap that caused low learning. Second, we built partnerships that can better align incentives toward a better learning, especially for the most disadvantaged. Third, we committed to innovation and agility, using feedback loops for continuous improvement. None of this is easy, but achieving education's promise depends on taking up the challenge. The outcomes of our work went beyond the particular cases of those whom we help directly.

We helped address these main educational challenges and improve education system by the means outlined below:

1. *New knowledge.* MASK has developed a model for learning that addresses critical issues of education (skills, pedagogy, and learning environment) that can be of operational significance to educators and policymakers in Kenya and internationally.
2. *Output.* We have created a significant creative output in the form of a) learning materials produced by MASK, including training programmes, exhibitions, seminars, manuals, and articles; and b) more than 15,500 creative work - artworks and innovative ideas - produced by our young people (YP). This output can be of use to educators and policymakers. For example, it can help foster youths' sense of power, purpose and connection; suggest frameworks for future policies; help develop young contemporary art culture; and be used by schools as a learning resource.
3. *Education partnerships.* We have been forming partnerships between a cluster of schools that show outstanding results in CE to improve information and school leadership, strengthen incentives, encouraging innovation, and build coalitions and closer collaboration. **biennial conference to encourage closer collaboration between creative schools.**

## Awards

In 2020, MASK received the '**Most Innovative Learning Organisation 2020**' Award of SME News Greater London Enterprise Awards (UK) for our contributions to the sector and 'a testament to our excellence, commitment and dedication'.

In 2022, we received the '**Top Website 2022**' Award of THEGOODESTATE (USA) for content, research, services, and communication.

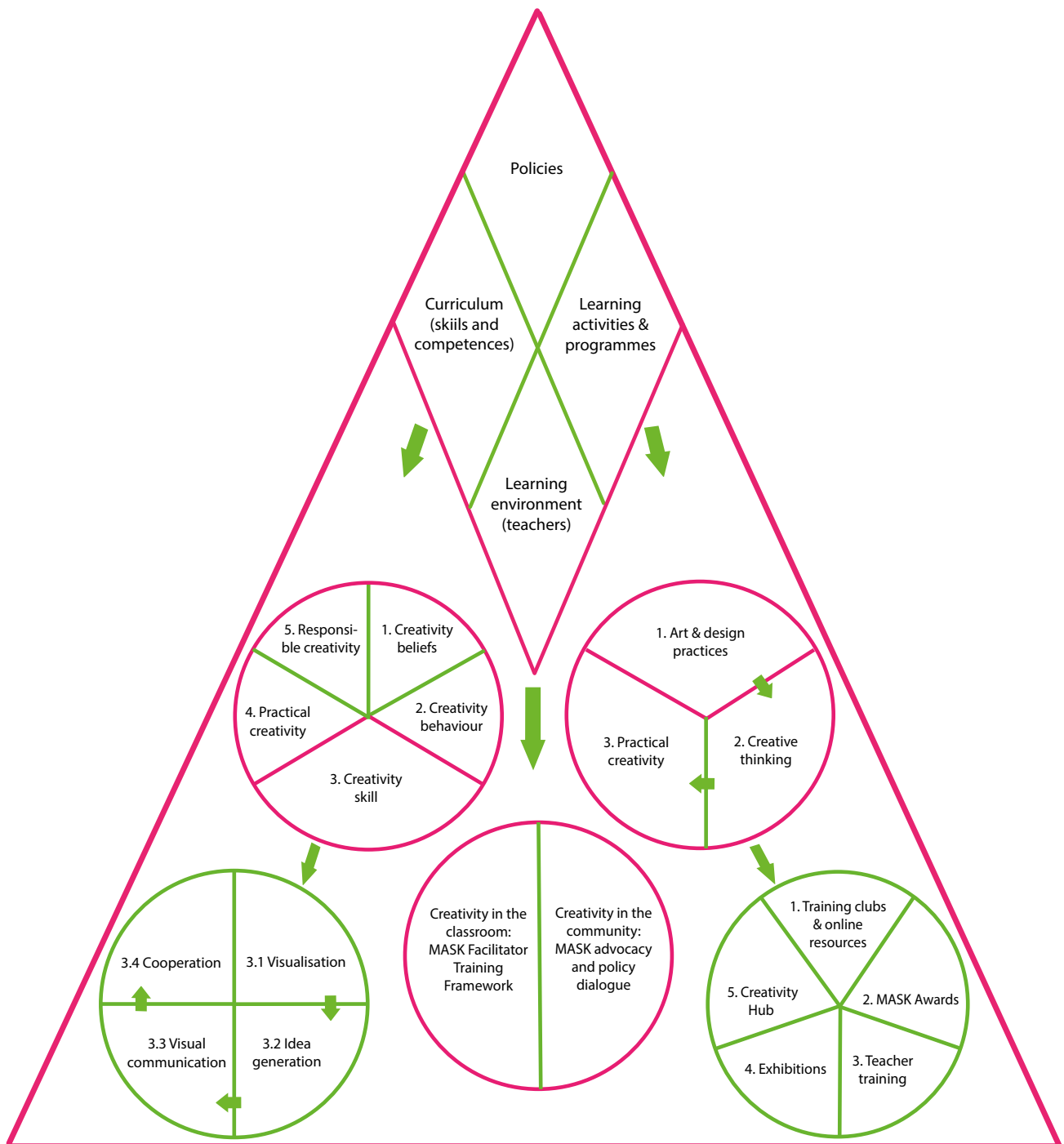


MASK Create - the United Kingdom

Most Innovative Learning Organisation 2020: MASK

MASK's creativity learning model consists of policy, curriculum, learning activities and programmes, and learning environment framework.

The diagram below describes it.



Below, each element of the model is explained in more detail.

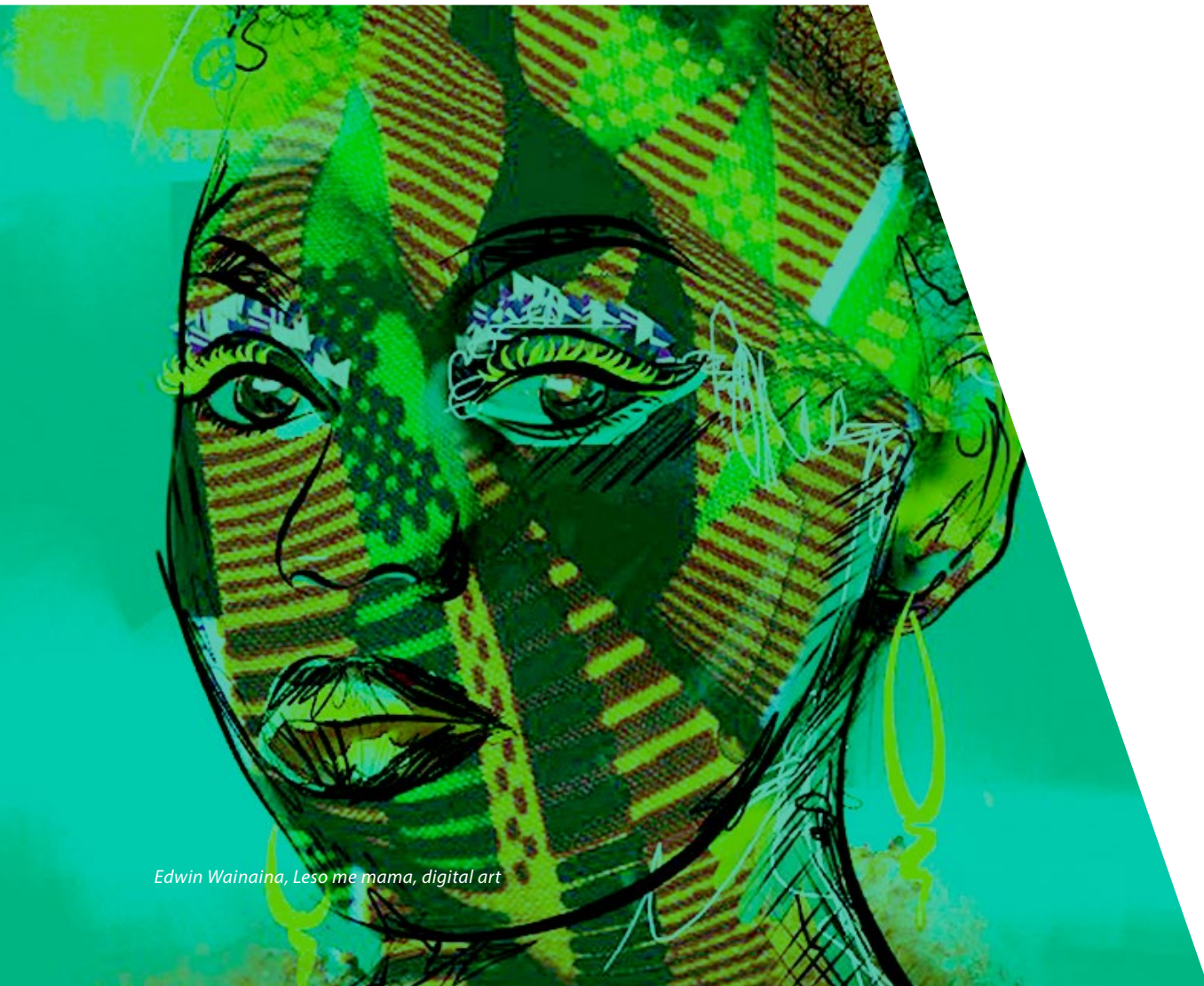




## Policy framework

Our creativity education (CE) policies are summarised in these groups:

1. Creativity should be placed at the centre of education and all broader socio-economic systems.
2. Creativity is a skill that should be learned directly and from an early age.
3. Creativity is powered by visual cognition. Art practices are essential for learning to innovate.
4. Creativity is about being responsible for the future. It must be selective on the basis of the best outcomes for all.
5. CE requires both, creativity in the classroom and creativity in the community.
6. CE should enable collective as well as individual creativity. Generating and turning ideas into reality is the work of team creativity.
7. CE should be available to all. People with creative skills must not be in the minority. Only when everyone can be creative will the entire world prosper.



Edwin Wainaina, *Lesome mama*, digital art

## Curriculum framework

Our curriculum is a set of these knowledge, skills and competences facilitated by our learning activities, programmes, and environments.

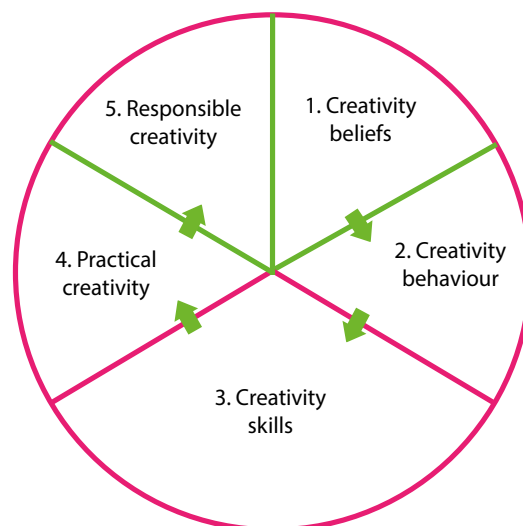
### 1. Creativity beliefs

Students develop positive beliefs about creativity and learn to see it in the context of the bigger picture of change; they commit to creativity learning.

### 2. Creativity behaviour

Students learn how creative people *act*. They develop creative personality traits, which we place into two main groups:

- Creative individuals experience joy from the creative process. Traits in this group include: curiosity, passion, courage, independence, confidence, and aspiration to excellence.
- Creative people are attracted to resolving difficult problems where their own effort is the determining factor in finding solutions. They want to prove that the 'impossible' can be done. Traits in this group include: hard work, persistence, resilience, responsibility, strong mental energy, and humour.



### 3. Creativity skills

Students learn:

- visual cognition/visualisation (forming and transforming mental images; imagination);
- idea-generation (connecting mental images into new patterns and combinations);
- visual communication (expressing and representing thinking visually);
- cooperation (generating ideas in teams, team-creativity).

### 4. Practical creativity

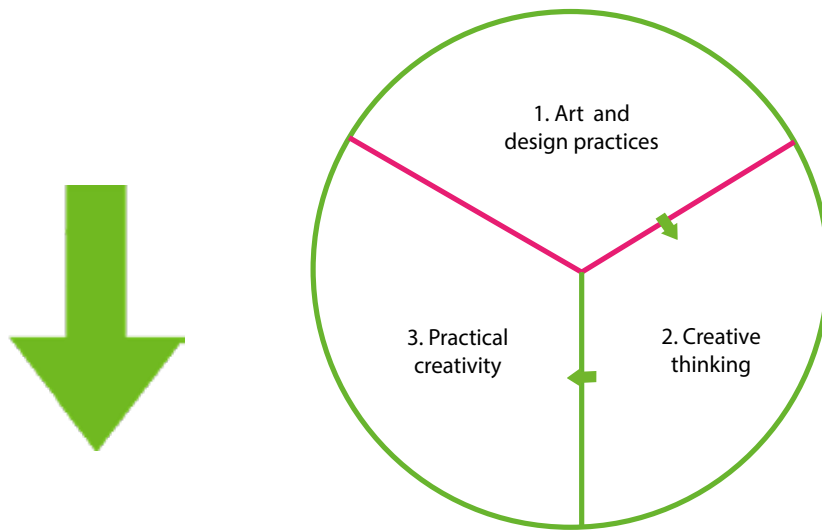
Students practise applying creativity in real life. They improve problem-solving skills, leadership, entrepreneurship, and work-readiness/employability.

### 5. Socially responsible creativity

Our students learn that innovation can produce social and ecological ills and that unethical innovation can hinder humanity's capacity to harness creativity for a brighter future. Our students learn how *not* to unleash innovation selfishly and haphazardly by testing their ideas against the long-term personal, social, cultural and ecological implications.



## Learning activities



Our approach to creativity learning activities consists of a combination of the following:

1. We teach creativity as a subject.
2. We strengthen creativity *and* enable students to apply it in real life.
3. All our learning activities are imbued with a strong visual element.

### 1. Art practices

Art practices are essential to creativity education. This is because creativity is powered by visual cognition.

By art practices we mean experiment and exploration in these categories:

- paintings, drawings, sculptures, installations, films, videos, digital technologies, creative writing;
- designing and making objects (such as toys, clothes, furniture, jewellery, architecture, etc.) using a range of techniques and materials, including recycled and found materials;
- music, singing, and performance.

### How art engenders creativity

Before anything is invented it needs to be imagined/visualised, first. When making creative connections, creative people think primarily with the help of their visual system. It forms and transforms mental images and connects and integrates them into new ideas. We call it *visual cognition/thinking* or *visualisation*. Visual cognition/thinking is the working mechanism that underlies the creative process.

The more adept individuals are at visual thinking, the better they are at generating original ideas. According to the Centre for Mind and Brain at the University of California, visual cognition significantly affects how we think. More than 85% of human thinking is mediated through vision; in young children this percentage is higher. 'Innovation begins with an eye,' said IDEO Founder Tom Kelley. 'The soul never thinks without an image,' pointed out Aristotle.



Nobel Prize scientists report that 98% of their discoveries began as images.<sup>9</sup> Mathematician Jacques Hadamard described his thought processes as largely wordless, accompanied by mental images of the solutions to problems. He surveyed 100 of the leading physicists of his day, and their responses to how they work mirrored his own.<sup>10</sup> Albert Einstein wrote: 'The words or the language, as they are written or spoken, do not seem to play any role in my mechanism of thought. The physical entities which seem to serve as elements in thought are certain signs and more or less clear images which can be "voluntarily" reproduced and combined'.<sup>11</sup>

Mental images are the medium, 'the flesh and blood', of creative thinking. However, to be useful to the creative process, mental images must have these properties and characteristics:

- be hinted at or abstract (rather like objects painted by Impressionists in just a few brush strokes);
- have structure;
- have meaning (images fused with ideas).

The creative process is three phases:

- **visualisation:** observing, interpreting & selecting information, and forming & transforming mental images;
- **idea-generation:** connecting & integrating images into ideas, refining and planning to implement them;
- **communication:** expressing & representing thinking visually.

Creativity is a skill that can be taught and learned. Practising art from an early age is the prime source of advanced visual thinking. These are the ways in which art shapes creativity:

1. *Visualisation.* We are constantly faced with a staggering amount of visual information on which we base our thinking and behaviour. To cope with its complexity, our visual system must be highly adept at understanding and processing it, and our image-processing skill must operate at advanced speed and level. By practising art, we learn to observe the information that surrounds us, discover dynamics between shapes, lines, colours, textures, sizes, distance and movement and their meanings; and translate what we see into mental images. We learn to evaluate images, select and organize them according to our goals; and abstract them and discern their structures and patterns.
2. *Idea-generation.* To generate new ideas, we need to be able to transform, connect and integrate mental images into new identities. By making art, we experiment, discover and invent; manipulate materials and techniques; test hypotheses and analyse the results; improvise, sample, model and prototype; and refine ideas. We learn to deal with failure and gain confidence.
3. *Communication.* Once new ideas have been developed, we need to communicate/represent them visually. By making art, we learn the principles of visual communication such as emotionality (to create is to feel), meaning-making (fusing images with concepts), and composition.

Art is not an add-on. It ensures deep learning across all subjects and competences. When YP actively participate in art, both in and outside school, their creativity strengthens and therefore they are four times more likely to demonstrate higher academic performance; three times more likely to show leadership<sup>12</sup>; and are among the most employable in their adult professional life<sup>13</sup>. The Ready to Innovate report states: 'It is clear that the arts provide skills sought by employers of the third millennium' (The Conference Board, 2008). Art has an unlimited power to change the minds and behaviour of those who experience it and therefore makes a significant difference to the lives of individuals and society.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Michalko, *Cracking Creativity*, Ten Speed Press, 2001.

<sup>10</sup> Jacques Hadamard, *The Psychology of Invention in the Mathematical Field*, Dover Publications, 1945.

<sup>11</sup> 'A Testimonial From Professor Einstein', Jacques Hadamard, *The Psychology of Invention in the Mathematical Field*, Dover Publications, 1945.

<sup>12</sup> Adema Roach, 'Living the Arts through Language + Learning: A Report on Community-Based Youth Organizations', Americans for the Arts, 1998.

<sup>13</sup> James Catterall, Susan Dumais, Gillian Hampden-Thompson, 'The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies Research Report', National Endowment of the Arts, 2012; Richard Deasy, 'Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development', Arts Education Partnership, 2002.

## 2. Creative thinking

To connect images/ideas, creative individuals deliberately force their thinking patterns into modes that differ from the norm, using various 'provocation' tools and tactics. With enough experience and practice this process becomes 'at will' and 'on demand'. It is this process that Steve Jobs meant when he said, "Think different."

Our students practise these tools and tactics:

- forming analogies and associations;
- making connections and combinations;
- reversing assumptions;
- resemblance thinking;
- collective thinking;
- and Edward de Bono techniques ('Six hats technique').

## 3. Practical creativity framework

Our students practise applying creativity in real life. Using our *Five-Step Practical Creativity framework*, a step-by-step guide to the innovation process, they learn how to solve real-life problems that affect their daily lives.

*MASK Five-Step Practical Creativity framework:*

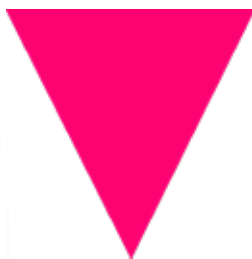
1. *Identify a problem.* Learning the principles of problem-statements that encourage creative solutions.
2. *Brainstorm solutions.* Forming teams, setting goals and directions for specific innovations, learning idea-generation strategies, and brainstorming solutions.
3. *Evaluate.* Learning decision-making strategies and evaluating solutions against specific goals and criteria.
4. *Communicate.* Practising the principles of overcoming resistance to change, and the rules of visual communication.
5. *Implement.* Implementing solutions and exercising entrepreneurial and leadership skills.

## Structure

Our students can be grouped by age/class or learning activity. We often take training beyond the traditional classroom into the outdoors, galleries and communities.

A typical workshop structure includes:

- displaying learning materials (e.g. posters)
- performing a learning activity;
- exhibiting/sharing learning outcomes;
- revising skills learned and planning next workshop's activity.



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*Before I started with MASK I did not know I was creative. MASK helped me to become an entrepreneur and a leader and to think outside the box.*

Joel, 18

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## Learning environment

The creativity learning environment should combine these two key elements:

1. *Creativity in the classroom.* Skilled facilitators are essential to CE. MASK has developed a facilitator training framework. Our facilitators come from all walks of professional and community life; some of them are our former students.
2. *Creativity in the community.* Effective CE demands communities that value and practise creativity. MASK engages and works with communities through exhibitions, workshops, seminars, and publications.

### **MASK facilitator training framework**

The diagram below describes our training framework.



We train our facilitators to deliver experiences that are structured, practice-led, and interactive.

These are the roles of facilitators:

- **Enjoyment.** Facilitators ensure that learning is enjoyable. At the beginning of every workshop they reinstate the Koinonia principles<sup>14</sup>: 1) maintain friendship and collaboration; 2) be curious and express ideas openly and honestly; 3) suspend judgement, do not belittle ideas, welcome 'crazy' ideas. They ensure friendliness, playfulness and good humour; and the ability to see the powerful skills to be learned behind the fun is essential. Facilitators build trust so students feel supported and accepted without any hint of judgment or harsh criticism, and give praise and acknowledge efforts. Students are active, move freely during the workshops, work individually or in temporary 'task forces' and learn from each other.
- **Support.** Facilitators provide opportunities for success at an early stage of training to increase students' enthusiasm and satisfaction and build their confidence and self-esteem. Learning activities must be clear, challenging, focused, dynamic and visual. Facilitators give students time to develop their creative responses and do not intervene in their creative processes too early. They help students to cope with the creativity versus conformity conflict by asking them to explain what they wish to accomplish and providing constructive feedback.
- **Reward and share.** Facilitators celebrate and reward creativity. They help students share their creative output with each other and with their communities, since creativity can be 'caught' as well as taught. They organise displays and exhibitions.
- **Experimentation.** Facilitators enable students to experiment and discover, challenge their own ideas, and take evaluated risks. They speak about role models and demonstrate their own inner dialogue during the creative process. They motivate and challenge students by asking stimulating questions such as, 'what can be?' and 'what if?' They encourage a positive attitude to 'half-baked' ideas. They help students understand that new ideas are delicate as they form, can be killed by a sneer, a yawn or a frown, and need to be evolved quite far before their practical use is apparent.

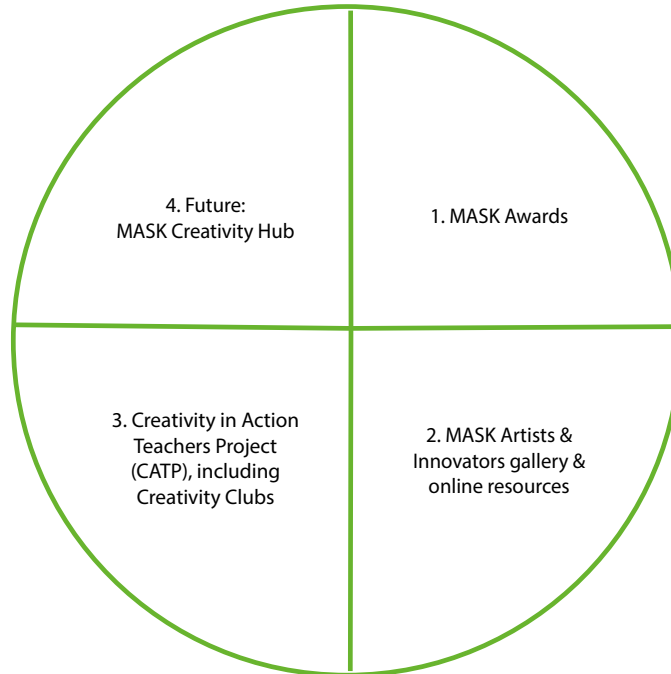
As part of 'Reporting', facilitators track the progression of our students, negotiate with them the criteria for success, and help them self-assess where they are and what they need to do to get to the next level. They keep photographic and video logs, and help students to record their learning experiences.



<sup>14</sup> The Koinonia principles, which means 'spirit of fellowship', were principles of debate by which the Greek philosophers bound themselves when they conversed and debated.

## Programmes

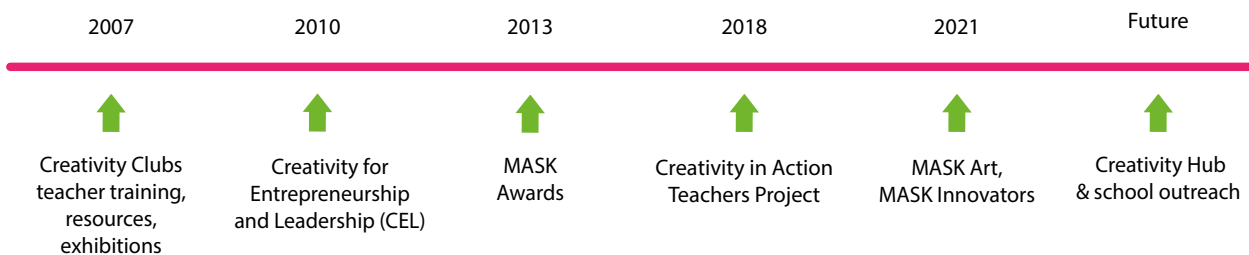
MASK's programmes are:



The overall experience of our users is that:

- our young people receive training and development opportunities;
- teachers and educators receive training and teaching resources support;
- communities (including business and policy) have the opportunity to engage with creativity through our events and exhibitions.

This diagram shows the timeline of the introductions of the programmes:



Each programme is outlined below.

## 1. Creativity Clubs; Creativity for Entrepreneurship and Leadership (CEL); and online resources

### Creativity Clubs

Duration: 45 min workshops once/twice a week

At our Creativity Clubs, we use a combination of our *art* and *creative thinking* learning activities to challenge, stimulate and strengthen students' creativity.

### Creativity for Entrepreneurship and Leadership (CEL)

Duration: 1-1.5 hour workshops once/twice a week

On our CEL programme, students learn to innovate, that is, to apply their creativity in practice. We use the *MASK 5-Step Practical Creativity framework* to equip them with the tools, attitudes and abilities they need to solve real-life challenges. They improve their problem-solving and entrepreneurial skills, develop their leadership qualities, and increase their employability. They experience success and empowerment.



MASK Creativity Club workshop at Lariak Secondary School, Kenya



## Case study: Joel

*"Before I started with MASK I did not know I was creative. MASK helped me to become an entrepreneur and a leader and to think outside the box."*

Joel, 20

Joel joined our Creativity Club at his school in a remote Kenyan village when he was sixteen and stayed with us for three years. At the very first workshop Joel surprised both himself and us. Having painted a great picture, he exclaimed in disbelief, "I did not know I could do this!" Inspired by his unlocked talent, Joel soon became actively involved in the running of the Club. In fact, due to him, the Club became almost entirely student-run.

In 2010 Joel attended the MASK Creativity Camp, which encourages students to continue learning creativity after they have left school. Campers received a master-class from renowned Kenyan artist, Kivuthi Mbuno, and attended an exhibition at the Nairobi Gallery. Attendees got to meet the Kenyan Minister for Culture, William Ole Ntimama, and his Culture Director, Gladys Gatheru, and discuss the need to practise art in school. Some time later, we received an email from Joel telling us that he had painted a mural in Nairobi, and had been commissioned by a local restaurateur to paint murals in his establishments. With the money he made, Joel rented a room outside Nairobi where he gave local children free art lessons.

Joel eventually had to go back to his village to look after his mother. "When I returned to the village, I noticed an unused borehole and land that belonged to a school. I offered the school's headteacher to start a vegetable farm on the land where pupils could learn farming, the vegetables could be sold to the school for lunches, and the money raised used to take the children to the Nairobi Museum." The headteacher agreed and began paying Joel a small salary. Joel wrote: "People would be more creative if they took risks."

Joel also began teaching art to the children at the school. But he began by teaching the parents first: "I gathered the parents to tell them about the goodness of art. It is important to explain to parents how art, and the creativity that art develops, improve their children's chances."

Over the years, Joel started several small businesses, including a gym and a motorbike delivery. He faced many obstacles along the way, but he is resilient and persistent. His persistence paid off. His village elders invited him to their meeting and asked him for 'good ideas' on how to improve the community. This is a rare privilege, as young people are excluded from such meetings, often making them feel unvalued, and voiceless. Joel felt empowered and engaged: "I am respected now! I feel I make a difference."

In 2012, Joel represented MASK at UNESCO's International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP) 'Planning With Youth' policy forum in Paris. From a podium, he spoke to a conference of 200 people from around the world. The forum's organizing committee wrote: "Joel put an important issue on the agenda in terms of the role of creativity and art in education. It was great to see how Joel interacted with policy-makers and academics to get his point across."

"Creativity keeps my mind, spirit and emotions always engaged," says Joel.

For more inspiration, read [MASK Stories](#) on our website.



## Online resources

We provide online resources to allow worldwide accessibility. These comprise:

**Articles** in national and specialist press, such as:

- Newspapers: *The Star* and *The Standard* (Kenya);
- Magazines: *Childhood Education: Innovations* (USA); *AD* (National Society for Education in Art and Design, NSEAD, UK); *Private Sector* (Kenya Private Sector Alliance, KEPSA, Kenya);
- Blogs: Results for Development Institute (USA); Royal Society for Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (UK);
- Web podcasts: The US Library of Congress (USA);
- Reports: for the UNESCO IIEP and UNESCO KNC conferences.

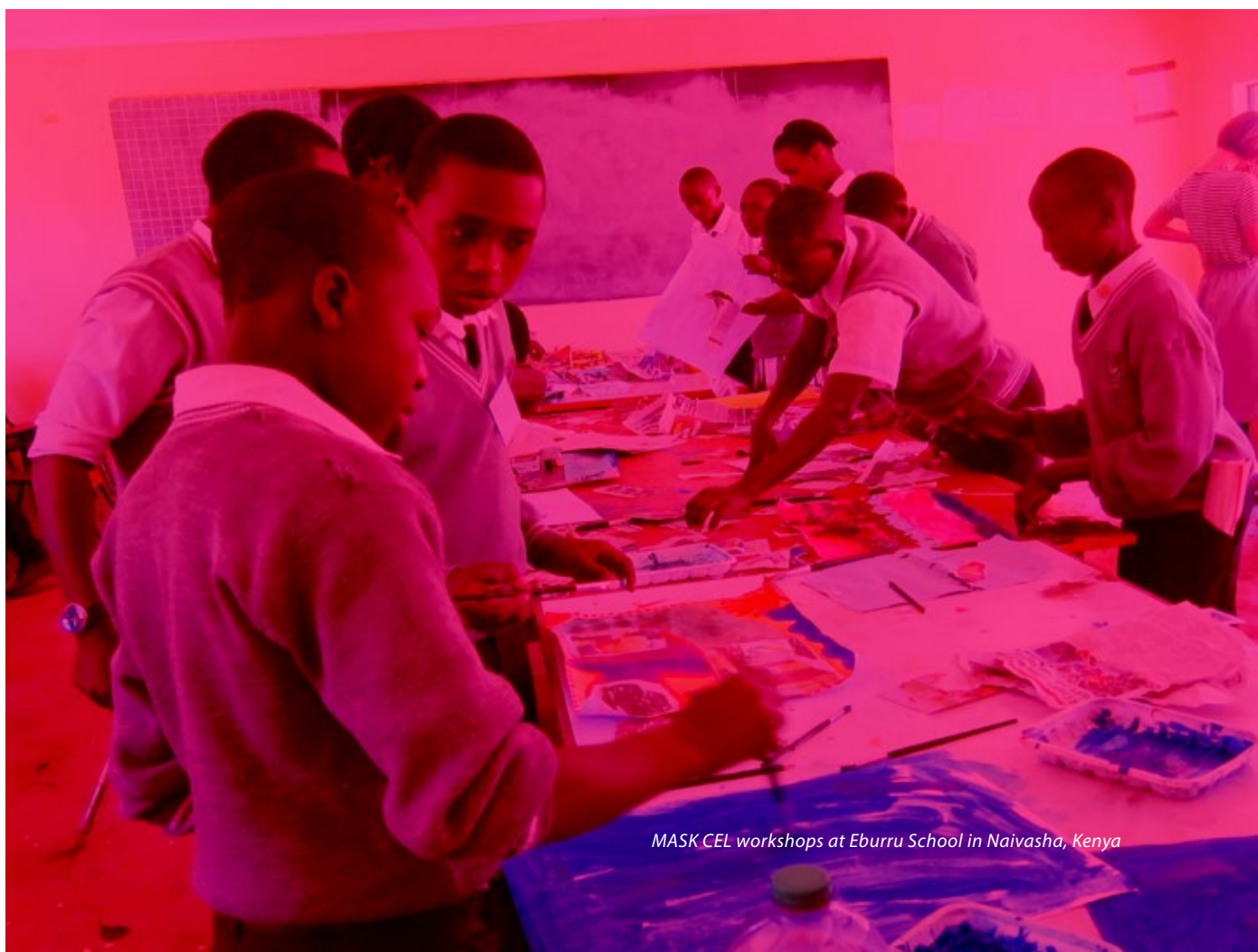
The articles are usually grouped into these themes:

- 'What is creativity?' Articles about the nature of creativity and what it means to be creative.
- 'Art for creativity'. Articles about the essential role of the arts for creativity learning.
- 'Creativity and society'. Articles about the positive outcomes for society.
- 'Creativity and business'. Articles about the role of creativity in the workplace.
- 'Young people - the creative nation'. Articles that promote our young people (YP) as role models.

**Online galleries.** Our Art and Innovation galleries offer technical advice and facilitate professional development of our YP.

**Learning/teaching manuals.** Once CATP materials are produced they will be available for download.

**E-learning.** We develop online Creativity and CEL Clubs for users anywhere in the world to access.



MASK CEL workshops at Eburru School in Naivasha, Kenya

### Case study: Hellen

Our students have gone on to become high-performing employees at top global companies such as Unilever. Be inspired by Hellen's story.

*"MASK developed my habit for innovation and empowered me beyond my dreams."*  
Hellen, 23

Hellen attended MASK training at her school in a remote village in Kenya for three years. After finishing school, Hellen became a MASK volunteer, running a Creativity Club at a local school for deaf children.

Continuing her education, Hellen studied analytical chemistry at college, where she invented a new drug that her college intends to patent. After graduating, Hellen secured a job at a pharmaceutical company in Nairobi and, within months, was promoted to a supervisory role "to lead an all-male team that has been at the company for ages", aged only 22. She credits her success to creativity: "Coming to the job, I suggested more effective ways of doing things and got noticed."

Shortly after, Hellen moved to a large company where she was responsible for the design of new analytical procedures. In her spare time she bought some land where she tries out some of her agricultural innovations. Because, she says, "MASK developed in me a habit of innovation."

A few years ago, Hellen secured a job with Unilever in Nairobi after a highly competitive recruitment process with over 200 candidates. She explained that, "80% of the questions asked by the interviewers were about problem-solving. They wanted to know how candidates approach it." When offering the role to Hellen, Unilever's Human Resources Manager noted that she stood out for her 'creative attitude'.

Hellen is now confident about her future.





## Resources for employers

We offer organisations the support and opportunities listed below:

1. Companies can tap into our database of innovative candidates and engage them as interns or employees.
2. They can introduce our programmes, 'Lead Creativity. Manage Innovation' and 'Team Creativity' into their employee training plans to stimulate creativity in their current employees.
3. They can help change future generations' innovation skills by donating cash or benefits in kind. MASK acknowledges companies who help by bringing their names to the attention of our audiences.

Our former students have been employed at Unilever East Africa, Unilever's Heroes for Change, and the Nyandarua National Polytechnic in Kenya.

"... the ability to think creatively, question how processes could be improved and identify solutions for a raft of new challenges ... are developed and nurtured through a creative education."

Rick Haythornthwaite, Chair of Ocado and of the Creative Industries Federation and Creative England

"Creative skills drive business transformation and regional growth and have a tangible impact on local communities. The application of such skills is ... a catalyst in healthcare, local services, sustainability, and regeneration."

Professor Steven Spier, Vice-Chancellor of Kingston University



## 2. MASK Awards

*Art shapes creativity. Creativity shapes innovation. Innovation shapes the world*

In 2013, in accordance with the Guiding Principles, National Goals, and Objectives of the Kenya education reform of 2012, MASK established a national platform for schools and young people (YP) under age of 25, MASK Awards, to:

- identify and reward YP's creative talents to develop skills and culture;
- promote innovation and entrepreneurship for the nation's development;
- make creativity education (CE) more widespread and ensure its quality and equity of access.

Participants enter online their best **art** on any theme, or **innovations** that solve social challenges. In 2021-22, the innovations themes were: 'School of the Future', 'Young Entrepreneur' and 'Environmental Activist'; over 500 solutions to these challenges were received.

Winners are awarded cash prizes (totalling 300,000 KSH (£2,500)) or paid internships at a prize-giving ceremony in Nairobi. Selected entries are then exhibited at leading institutions around the world.

The programme reaches participants directly via its Media Partners - the Royal Media Services (Citizen TV and HOT 96) and the Radio Africa Group (the national newspaper *The Star*). MASK Awards is accredited by the Kenyan Ministry of Education. The panel of judges includes leading academic, entrepreneurs and art professionals.

Starting in Kenya in 2013, it now reaches 15 countries in Africa - **Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.**

It received more than 15,000 entries, awarded more than 350 prizes, and reached over 650,000 people globally through its exhibitions at the Nairobi National Museum, Saatchi Gallery, Turner Contemporary, the US Library of Congress, and other venues.

MASK Awards is a platform where:

- our young beneficiaries from different backgrounds and countries meet and share their ideas and talents, learn from each other, and form networks and collaborations, unleashing collective creativity and defining future approaches to culture and social challenges; they do it in a safe and supportive space where they can be provocative and ground-breaking;
- our youths spur their professional development and connection to businesses and policymakers; find meaningful employment; prizes have helped them to purchase materials or equipment;
- we reward schools that deliver outstanding CE to build and spread CE good practices.

MASK Awards is an innovative intervention that has resulted in substantial gains of learning by ensuring YP and teachers are motivated. Countries can use the MASK Awards model as starting points for their own innovations.

*"MASK makes us more innovative and leads us to the inventions that can make the world a better place."*  
John Mutahi, 20

*"MASK Awards helped me become more confident in bringing out my entrepreneurial ideas which can help me earn money for the future."* Dani, 18

*"It is very encouraging to see the level of interest expressed through a large number of entries by the young from very diverse locations across the region. We believe in your MASK Awards cause, in growing creativity amongst our younger generation, which will encourage innovation and the creation of a better future for them."* Carol Wachira-Wanyama, Citizen TV



“

*Thank you, MASK, for your amazing work and great effort you put in to ensure growth and nurturing of creativity in Kenya. You are indeed the driver of change in our society.*

Simon Kariuki, 24

”

*A winner of the 'Under 15' category in Art receives her prize on the stage*



## MASK Awards timeline



*"The MASK Awards experience is an absolute game-changer for my creative occupation."*

Agnes Mwandawiro, 21



Alan Rivers awards a prize to the Children of Gods Relief Institute

### 3. Creativity in Action Teachers Project (CATP)

Throughout, MASK has worked closely with the Kenyan government to help build its capacity. We have organised presentations and exhibitions at these institutions. We offered frameworks regarding the 'Creative Arts' subject examination, and using art for studying non-art subjects, including peace-building. The KMoE authorised and quality assured our programmes. The KICD authorised its Director of the Creative Arts to be a MASK Awards judge.

These Kenyan government institutions we have worked with included:

- The Kenyan Ministry of Education (KMoE)
- The Kenyan Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)
- Teachers Service Commission – Kenya (TSC)
- The Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the embassies in France and USA
- The Kenyan Ministry of Youth and Sport
- The Kenyan Ministry of Culture and Heritage
- The Nairobi National Museum
- The Office of the Deputy President of Kenya
- regional and district directors of education (Nairobi, West Laikipia, and Naivasha) in Kenya
- Kenyan schools

In 2017, Kenya adopted the new Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) which focuses on seven key competences, five of them being about CE ('Critical thinking and problem solving', 'Imagination and creativity', 'Learning to learn', 'Self-efficacy', and 'Communication and collaboration'). In effect, CBC placed creativity at the centre of education, the policy that is at the heart of MASK's vision.

In 2019, the KMoE asked MASK to support the development of teaching materials and a teacher-training framework to improve the methods of teaching creativity in Kenyan schools. Following our discussions with the TSC, we have created a programme 'Creativity in Action Teachers Project (CATP)', which will achieve its aims by:

- Stage 1. Producing a creativity handbook and teacher-training manual. This includes consulting the end-users (students, teachers, tutors and the KMoE/KICD/TSC) to ensure the materials meet the curriculum needs. This process will be monitored according to a work plan agreed with the KMoE, KICD and TSC. The materials will need to be accredited by the KICD for distribution to schools.
- Stage 2. Using the materials to train 150 tutors drawn from 30 teacher-training colleges and 50 staff members of TSC. The training will be coordinated and monitored by the TSC.

CATP can have a long-term impact by the following means:

- Accreditation of the materials will allow distribution to schools for years to come.
- Training tutors and TSC staff will ensure a large number of teachers benefit (i.e. potentially 12,000 graduates annually) and the training's sustainability.
- The potential to influence the teacher-training curriculum and school inspection manuals in Kenya.
- The East African Community (EAC) intends to harmonize the school curriculum across its countries, and if they adopt the Kenyan approach, our materials can be utilised in the EAC too.
- The potential to disseminate the materials to the UK and beyond.



#### 4. Events and exhibitions

We engage in community advocacy and policy dialogue work through public exhibitions, seminars, talks, awards, and publications by partnering with academic, cultural, and media institutions.

This work helps us to:

- advance our young beneficiaries' education, skills and employability; increase their participation in global art and innovation discourse;
- share our best practices and resources with the education community and scale up our work;
- engage with and influence communities to raise awareness and change perceptions.

For the full list of collaborations, please see APPENDIX.

“

*Without Creativity and Art, the world would come to a standstill and we humans would be unwell.*

Regina Mwihaki, 17  
Anne Njeri, 16

”

*Exhibition at a MASK Creativity Club workshop at Lariak School in West Laikipia, Kenya*

## 5. MASK Creativity Hub

MASK has a vision for a Creativity Hub in Kenya that will become a 'Centre of Excellence for skills development' in accordance with Kenya Vision 2030. It will help MASK promote its idea of 'School of the Future' and impact the education system in Kenya and beyond. It will also enable MASK to become more financially sustainable in the long term.

The Hub will:

- have a large space for art exhibitions, training, and seminars/conferences;
- have well-equipped studios where students can make art and innovation prototypes;
- have residencies for artists and innovators;
- have a meeting space where Hub users can socialise;
- operate school outreach 'artmobiles' to deliver training in local schools;
- forge links with international educational, cultural and business organisations.

The MASK Creativity Hub will be housed in an inspirational building to motivate future generations. This is one of the ideas how it might look (drawing by MASK Awards participant from Kenya, Mike Blake).





An acrylic painting of a woman's face, rendered in a realistic style with soft lighting. The woman has dark skin and her eyes are closed. Her face is wrapped in numerous strands of white string that crisscross over her features, particularly around the eyes, nose, and mouth. The background is a solid, vibrant blue.

“

*MASK developed my habit for innovation and empowered me beyond my dreams.*

Hellen, 23

”

## Public benefit

### MASK's story

**MASK Create (MASK)** was set up by London-based artist Alla Tkachuk in 2007. While on a painting trip to Kenya, she began working with schools in remote areas of the Rift Valley and discovered that the aspects of education that engender creativity were virtually non-existent. Having consulted local teachers and NGOs, she founded MASK (formerly, **Mobile Art School in Kenya, MASK**). Its Creativity Clubs were met with great enthusiasm. Schools began providing venues and teachers, and the Clubs were soon taking place in more than 25 schools.

In 2013, MASK pioneered its MASK Awards to celebrate young creativity in Africa. Supported by the Kenyan government and the national press, the Awards have reached thousands of participants across 15 African nations and global audiences of over 650,000 people in Nairobi, London and Washington DC. In 2017, the Kenyan Ministry of Education recognised creativity as a 'core competence' and asked MASK to support its efforts in enabling teachers to implement the reform.

MASK has been acknowledged internationally too. Its work has been presented at leading institutions, including UNESCO and the US Library of Congress. It organised creativity education (CE) seminars at the University of London and the Woodrow Wilson Center. Its work has been recognised by Harvard's School of Education and Michelle and Barack Obama. In 2020, it was awarded the 'Most Innovative Learning Organisation 2020' by *SME News*, UK.

Over the last 15 years, MASK has developed a CE model and delivered training to thousands of young people (YP) in Africa and beyond. It has supported educators and engaged with dozens of communities. From humble beginnings carting art supplies up dusty tracks in Kenya, MASK is now one of leading organisations in the field of CE helping equip young people with creativity they need to shape a brighter future for all.

### The problem MASK addresses

MASK addresses the problem of education, where teaching creativity is marginal or absent.

This problem:

- disadvantages YP by stifling their creativity, leadership and entrepreneurial skills and increases unemployment;
- prevents education from keeping up with global changes and creates a skills gap and skill mismatches;
- hinders communities' ability to solve challenges and achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

MASK's solution is to embed creativity within mainstream education and broader society in order to benefit:

- YP – by enhancing skills and empowerment;
- the economy – via an upskilled workforce;
- communities – by creating productive citizens, growth and transformation.

The outcome of MASK's work has produced results for YP, educators and communities, and has the potential to advance education and therefore the future.



## Scale of the problem

### ***Creativity and education***

Education is a powerful force for a brighter future, if it enables creativity. 'How effectively education fosters creativity is now at the centre of the relationship between education and future economic prosperity'.<sup>15</sup>

However, current education systems have not kept pace with global changes and fail to prepare YP for future jobs.<sup>16</sup> Based on models that were put in place over a century ago, they still emphasise teaching YP to become good 'workers' and perform repetitive tasks, rather than good 'thinkers' who are able to generate original solutions. Outdated 'traditions' and the inertia of institutions create roadblocks to developing talent.

Many policymakers still believe that literacy and numeracy lead to economic prosperity, while creativity does not. They fail to recognise that success in STEM-related fields depends on creativity. Despite the focus on literacy and numeracy, many children are still leaving school without essential skills, we believe precisely because their creativity remains largely unaddressed.

Schools prioritise teaching knowledge, but sideline creativity. As Ken Robinson stated, 'schools educate children out of creativity, destroying 75% of their innate creative ability; and universities get rid of the other 25%'.<sup>17</sup>

CE remains elusive in many regions of the globe. There is a lack of CE pedagogy. Creativity as visual cognition has not been recognised, and the arts as an essential tool for creativity learning have been neglected.

In Kenya, although there has been a major shift in the school curriculum that recognized creativity as a 'core competence', teaching 'Creative Arts' in schools is still problematic. 'The value of the arts was not recognised'<sup>18</sup>. There are misconceptions that 'creativity is only for artists', 'art is a luxury' or 'leisure', or that 'creativity cannot be taught'.

### ***Creativity and communities***

Societies progress when they champion creativity, and the value of creativity is embedded in all socio-economic systems. Supporting creativity leads to prosperity and transformation; suppressing it leads to stagnation and resentment.

According to research, if YP are denied the opportunity to be creative, they become anti-social. Supporting creativity helps them to grow into productive citizens.<sup>19</sup>

Today, not all communities facilitate YP to reach their creative potential.

<sup>15</sup> 'New Vision for Education' report, World Economic Forum, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> 'Realizing Human Potential in the Fourth Industrial Revolution' report, World Economic Forum, 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Ken Robinson, 'Do Schools Kill Creativity?' video, TED, 2006.

<sup>18</sup> 'Summative Evaluation of the Primary and Secondary Education Curriculum' report, KICD, 2010.

<sup>19</sup> Gail Lewis, 'The need to create: constructive and destructive behaviour in creatively gifted children', Northwestern State University, Gifted Education International, Vol. 7, 1991.

## ***Creativity and the economy***

Creativity is key to employment, enterprise and leadership, as explained below.

### ***1. Employment***

Business leaders see creativity/innovation as a fundamental element of sustainable success and growth and consider acquiring/developing creative talent their top concern.

According to LinkedIn, creativity/innovation is the number one skill the jobs market demands. This demand will rise sharply as automation plays a bigger role in the future workforce. This has been underscored by organisations such as the World Economic Forum<sup>20</sup>, McKinsey Global Institute<sup>21</sup>, The Confederation of British Industry<sup>22</sup>, Kingston University<sup>23</sup> and many others. Dr Edward de Bono stated that 'only five hours of creativity training given to unemployed youth increases their employability rate fivefold'.<sup>24</sup>

However, 57% of employers indicated that they had difficulty finding qualified applicants with the desired creative skills; only 24% of employers reported that new workforce entrants with four-year college degrees brought 'excellent' creativity/innovation skills.<sup>25</sup> This is because children whose creativity has been eroded will struggle to be creative as adults. A longitudinal study by G. Land and B. Jarman showed that creativity can deteriorate if it is neglected: at the age of five, 98% of children displayed strong creativity; at the age of 10 this had reduced to 30%; at the age of 15 it was only 12%; and at the age of 30 only 2% displayed strong creativity.<sup>26</sup>

Companies seldom support education for creativity in schools, where it matters most. MASK therefore works with the business community to encourage its commitment to CE.

### ***2. Enterprise and eradication of poverty***

Entrepreneurship is the most powerful force for eradicating poverty and creating opportunity. Creativity is key to entrepreneurship. Currently, nine out of ten start-ups fail. A lack of creative problem-solving skills is one of the key reasons for enterprise failures.<sup>27</sup>

### ***3. Leadership***

According to the IBM 2010 Global CEO Study that surveyed more than 1,500 CEOs from 60 countries and 33 industries worldwide, creativity is key to developing leadership qualities. Chief executives believe that future challenges in the global economy can be overcome by instilling creativity throughout organisations; and that creativity – more than rigour, management, discipline and integrity – is required to successfully navigate an increasingly complex world.

<sup>20</sup> 'The Future of Jobs', World Economic Forum, 2016.

<sup>21</sup> 'Skill Shift: Automation and the Future of the Workforce', McKinsey Global Institute, 2018.

<sup>22</sup> 'Education and Skill' survey, The Confederation of British Industry, 2016.

<sup>23</sup> 'The Future Skills League Table' report, Kingston University, June 2021.

<sup>24</sup> Edward De Bono, *Why So Stupid?*, Blackhall, 2003.

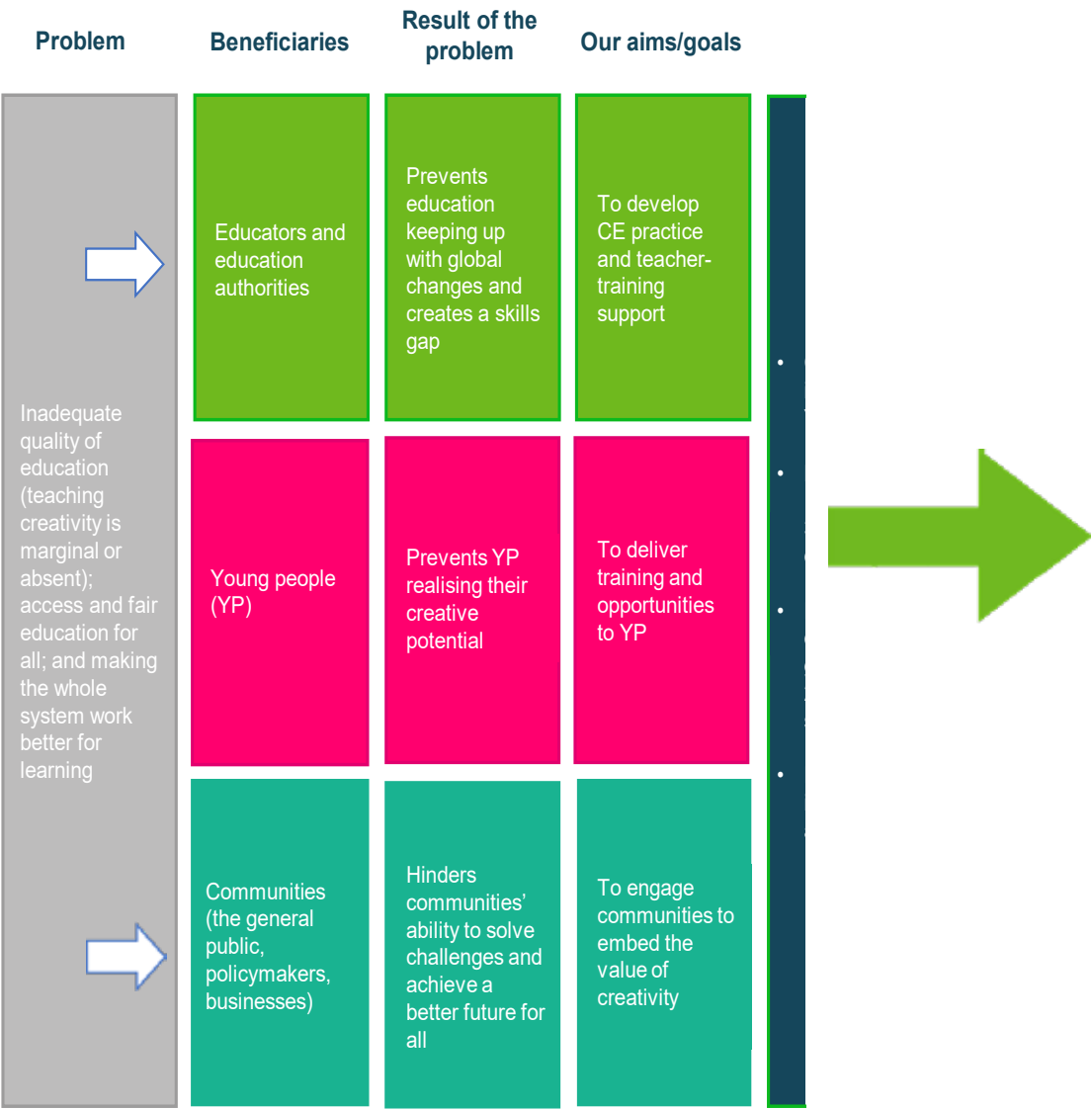
<sup>25</sup> 'Ready to Innovate' report, J. Lichtenberg, C. Wook, and M. Wright, The Conference Board, 2008.

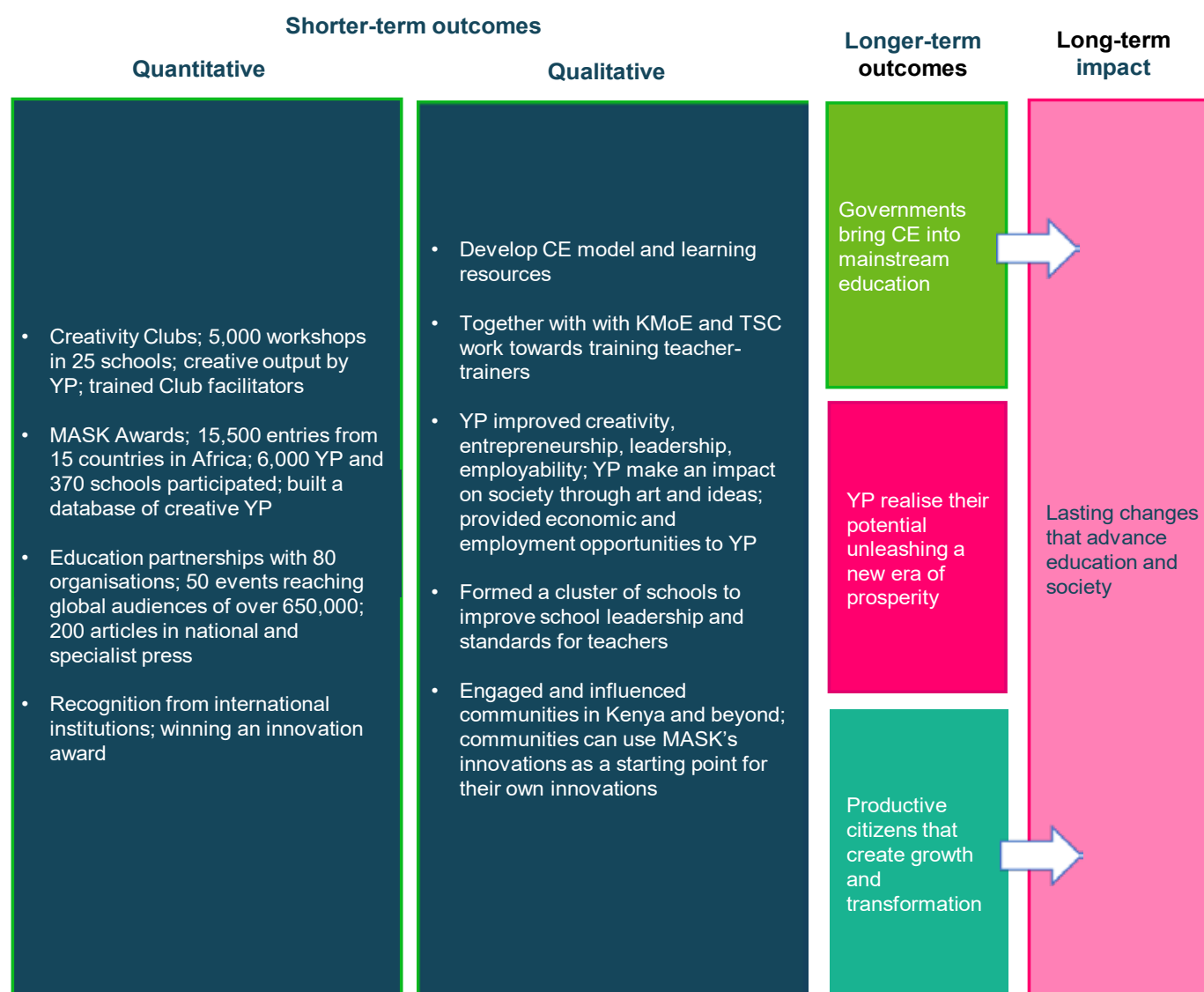
<sup>26</sup> George Land and Beth Jarman, *Breakpoint and Beyond: Mastering the Future Today*, HarperBusiness, 1993.

<sup>27</sup> E. Griffin, 'Why Start-ups Fail', *Fortune Magazine*, September 2014.

**MASK public benefit**

MASK addresses the problem of education, where teaching creativity is marginal or absent. MASK developed a creativity learning model and embeds it within mainstream education and broader socio-economic systems. The outcome of the MASK work has produced results for young people, educators and communities and has a potential to advance education and therefore a brighter future.







## Transformation

MASK has achieved the following quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

**Quantitative outcomes** – MASK has reached over 800,000 people globally. It has:

- established Creativity Clubs in 25 schools in Kenya; run over 5,000 workshops; directly benefited 15,000 children and YP and, indirectly, an estimated 90,000 (as direct beneficiaries pass on their knowledge and skills to up to six others in their family or community); facilitated the creative output of 5,000 works by our schools; trained 60 Club facilitators;
- pioneered international MASK Awards; awarded 350 cash prizes; received more than 15,500 entries from 15 countries in Africa; more than 6,000 and 370 schools participated; 48 schools received awards; MASK Awards' exhibitions reached over 650,000 people globally; its promotional campaigns in national media reached over nine million people in Kenya;
- built a database of creative youth from which companies can recruit;
- collaborated with over 80 organisations in Africa, UK, USA and beyond; held over 50 exhibitions, seminars and talks at leading cultural and academic institutions; published over 200 articles in national and specialist press in Kenya, UK and USA;
- gained recognition from institutions such as UNESCO IIEP and UNESCO KNC, the Kenyan Government, Global Education Innovation Initiatives at Harvard University, Center for Education Innovations at the Results for Development, HundRED, SOAS University of London, The US Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Center, Saatchi Gallery, Turner Contemporary, and from Barack and Michelle Obama; been awarded the 'Most Innovative Learning Organisation 2020' title by *SME News* (UK); become an Affiliate Member of InSEA; and featured in academic dissertations: *'The impact of art education in the developing world: a case study of an NGO in Kenya'* by B. Glen, Institute of Education, University of London, 2011, and *'Illuminate. Creativity for Change'* by A. Vettraino, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, University of Dundee, 2020.

**Qualitative outcomes** – MASK has:

- developed CE curriculum, policy and teacher-training frameworks, programs, and learning materials to achieve better standards and goals;
- worked with the Kenyan Ministry of Education (KMoE) to implement our programmes; worked with the Teachers Service Commission-Kenya (TSC) to develop a plan to train teacher-training tutors and TSC staff members;
- improved YP's creativity, entrepreneurship and leadership; they became innovators, artists and entrepreneurs; they secured quality jobs at companies including Unilever East Africa and the Nyandarua National Polytechnic; they have made an impact on wider society: their art develops contemporary culture, and their ideas help to solve social and ecological challenges;
- formed a cluster of schools to improve incentives, school leadership, standards for teachers, and accountability;
- partnered with the business community in Kenya to provide internships for our YP (at Unilever's Heroes for Change and Mabati Rolling Mills in Nairobi);
- engaged and influenced communities in Kenya and beyond.

**We hope to produce these long-term outcomes:**

- governments bring quality CE into mainstream education;
- YP realise their creative potential, unleashing a new era of prosperity and wellbeing;
- the value of creativity is embedded in broader cultural and socio-economic systems.

**And this long-term impact:**

Lasting changes to education and society that ensure quality CE thrives in perpetuity.

## Sustainability

### Business model

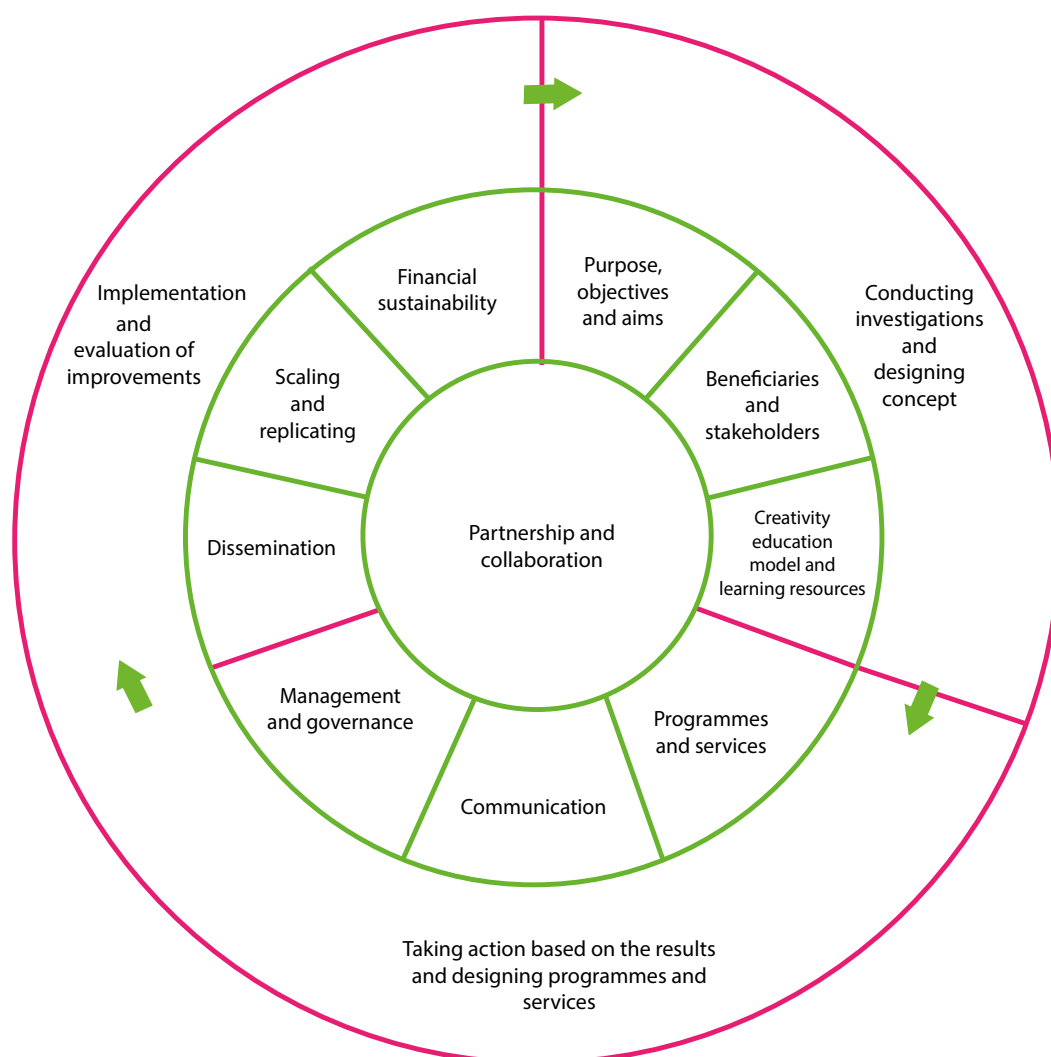
Our business model is transformation through partnership and collaboration. MASK has collaborated with over 80 organisations in Kenya, UK, USA, France and South Korea to reach beneficiaries, deliver and scale up our programmes and opportunities, increase organisational capacity, and ensure our financial sustainability, transparency and accountability.

Collaborations include:

- local, national and specialist press and media;
- learning institutions, such as schools, universities and galleries/museums;
- Kenyan governmental organisations;
- companies;
- volunteers;
- trusts and foundations.

The table in the APPENDIX details MASK's main partnerships.

The MASK business model diagram below describes how we create and deliver our value.



## Equality and inclusiveness

These principles are embedded in all MASK's work:

- Creativity education must be available to all. It must be impartial.
- Creativity must not be a privilege of social class, nationality, race, sex, gender, ability or income; it must not benefit one group to the detriment of another.
- Gender equality should be implemented during all training in terms of how creativity is learned and expressed by boys and girls.

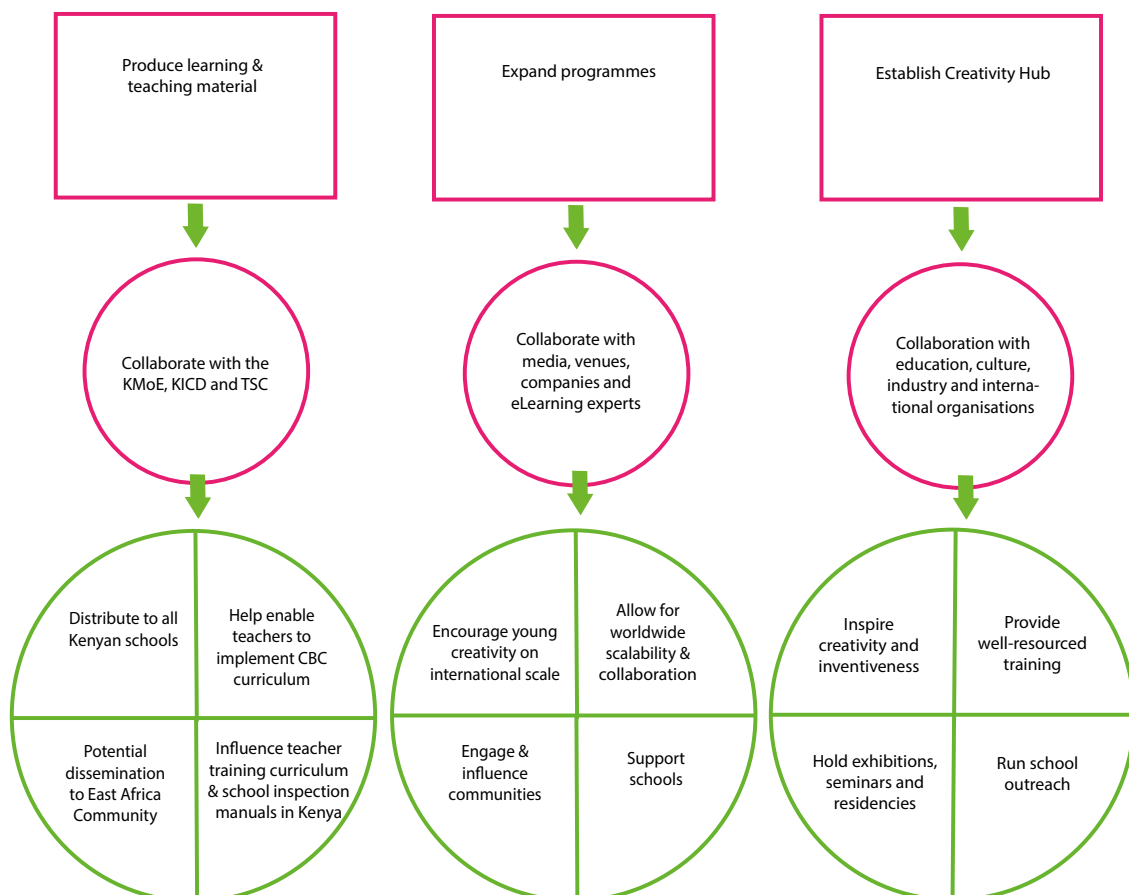
## Scaling and replicating

Having begun in Kenya, we have reached beneficiaries in Africa, UK, USA, France and South Korea. We have proved that our solutions are cost-effective and scalable, and demonstrated the potential to impact across Africa and beyond.

In the next three-to-five years, we hope to achieve these outcomes:

- produce learning and teaching material, disseminate it to schools in Kenya, and upskill teachers in collaboration with the Kenyan Ministry of Education;
- expand our programmes, including MASK Awards, to reach more beneficiaries;
- establish a Creativity Hub, a centre for creative excellence in Kenya.

The diagram below summarises our priorities, partnerships and outcomes.



## Wider impact

### Global Goals for Sustainable Development

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development challenges can be resolved only if the next generation of YP can come up with new solutions. MASK's work in embedding creativity within education is critically important to meeting the Goals. Goal 4 ('Quality Education') which states that 'Education liberates the intellect, unlocks the imagination' clearly aligns with MASK's vision and existing methods. Find out how MASK supports each of the Goals here: <https://mobileartschoolinkeny.org/About/mask-global-goals.html>.

### Kenya

Kenya Vision 2030 aspires to transform Kenya into a newly industrialising, middle-income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens. Kenya has a real chance to succeed in this Vision as it introduced the new curriculum in 2017 which recognised creativity as a 'core competence'. MASK's work supports the new curriculum.


### UK

In the UK in 2013, the new National Curriculum put knowledge at the centre of schooling (and replaced the pupil-led ways of working with a teacher-centred educational culture), arguing that 'shared knowledge is the best way to achieve social justice in society', and 'a knowledge-rich education is a driver of true meritocracy'.

However, it was clarified that a knowledge-rich curriculum considers the development of human creativity and appreciation of the arts as a vital goal of a knowledge-rich curriculum.

"We believe that independence of mind, not compliance with socio-economic expectations, is the goal of a good education," School Standards Minister Nick Gibbs quoted Hywel Jones of West London Free School in his speech 'The importance of knowledge-based education' at the Houses of Parliament in 2017.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Department for Education recommended to 'develop programmes that celebrate each young person's creative achievements' and 'provide training and development for teachers'.



*Nicole Riziki, Flying from all my worries, photograph*



## Achievement and performance

### Charitable activities

We launched our annual MASK Awards programme in January 2021, which has been a success despite the Covid-19 pandemic that closed all Kenyan schools in March-April. The Awards received more than 1,600 entries from 52 regions in Kenya and 14 towns/regions in six other African countries: Zimbabwe (Bulawayo, Bindura); Morocco (Touzounin, Tata, Berrechid, Douar El Kasba, Casablanca); Nigeria (Lagos, Okemesi Ekiti/Ekiti State, Kano State, Delta, University of Nigeria, Pako/Bariga); South Africa (Johannesburg); Rwanda (Kigali); and Cameroon (Yaoundé).

We have continued to:

- build our online Art and Innovation galleries, including finalising the legal framework, selecting artists and innovators and designing the website;
- develop CATP materials;
- promote our cause, participation, and learning opportunities through our social media;
- create employment opportunities for our young people. One winner of the MASK Awards 2019, Danielle Wijenje, starts an internship donated by Unilever's Heroes for Change in Nairobi in June 2022.

However, Covid-19 has continued to affect our work this year, too. The MASK Awards 2021 prize-giving ceremony had to be cancelled and is postponed until October 2022. We also cancelled our Director's mission to Kenya during which we hoped to organize an exhibition of our artists in Nairobi; meet with the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Kenyan Institute of Curriculum Development and Teachers Service Commission for CATP material consultations; train our ambassadors; and discuss our plans for a Creativity Hub and employment/internship opportunities for our young people with our Kenyan business partners.



*MASK Awards 2021 participant Paula Nyandat, 19,  
Covid unfiltered, ball pen on paper*



*MASK Awards 2021 participant Esther Mulata, Installation fashion, mixed media*

## Financial review

### Financial review

Against the backdrop of limited resources and insecurities over funding, it has continued to be challenging to plan or develop services. Nevertheless, with the aid of sound financial management and support, MASK generated a positive financial outcome for the period with a net increase in funds of £14,815 (2020/21 £4,890).

This year MASK raised in total £56,599: £21,899 in cash and £34,700 in in-kind donations.

### Principal funding sources

Trusts and Foundations:

The Linbury Trust, UK, £3,000 (2020/21 £0)

Rivers Foundation, UK, £9,000 (2020/21 £10,000)

The Nobility Project, USA, £2,415 (2020/21 2,665)

Companies:

Mabati Rolling Mills, Kenya, £4,892 (2020/21 £0)

Other:

Personal donations, £2,570 (2020/21 £1,975)

### Reserves policy

The Trustees have examined requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the charity. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be between three and six months of the expenditure. Budgeted expenditure for 2022/23 is estimated at £50,000 and therefore the target is £25,000 in general funds. The reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of the charity and the Trustees are confident that at this level they would be able to continue the current activities in the event of a significant drop in funding and the present level of reserves available to the charity therefore meets this target level.

### Future plans

The charity plans to continue the objectives and activities outlined above in the forthcoming year subject to satisfactory funding arrangements.

## Structure, governance and management

MASK's governance model ensures we are transparent and accountable to all stakeholders. This chapter details all aspects of the governance model.

### Governing document

MASK is a UK charitable company limited by guarantee. It was incorporated on 28 January 2008 and registered as a charity on 23 March 2009. It was established under a Memorandum of Association, which lists its objects and powers, and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the charity being wound up, members are required to contribute £1.

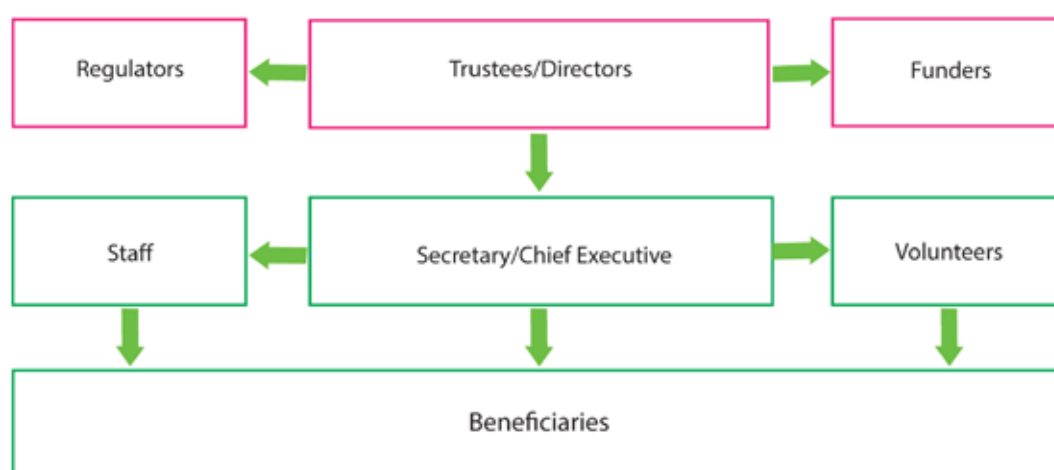
## Governance structure

The Trustees/Directors form the governing body that takes overall responsibility for the charity, its strategic direction and policies. They ensure that MASK meets its purposes set out in the governing document; submit reports to regulators, generate income and partnerships. They build staff capacity while maintaining boundaries with staff and volunteers to avoid conflicts of interest.

The charity has one non-governing member (the Secretary/Chief Executive); the Trustees are also members of the charity. Except for the chairman of the meeting, who has a casting vote, every member has one vote on each issue.

Strategic and operational leadership of the charity is delegated to the Secretary/Chief Executive who defines strategic goals and key performance indicators and ensures that services are delivered to meet them; provides day-to-day operational management and supervision of staff and volunteers; and advises the Trustees when decisions need to be made.

The diagram below shows MASK's governance structure:



## Appointment of Trustees

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits (financial or otherwise) from the charity.

MASK seeks to ensure that the group of Trustees is diverse and reflects a wide range of skills.

All new Trustees must familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates, which includes:

- The governing document (Memorandum and Articles of Association);
- The Code of Conduct for Trustees;
- Organisational policies (Data Protection, Privacy, IP, Confidentiality, Expenses, etc);
- Resourcing and current financial position (latest published accounts);
- Plans and objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan;
- Safeguarding. The charity obtains a standard DBS check on all trustees, employees and volunteers who are in roles that are eligible for these checks.



## **Related parties**

In so far as it is complementary to the charity's objects, the charity is guided by the national policies of the countries in which it operates.

## **Risk management**

The Trustees have conducted a review of the major risks the charity is exposed to. A risk register has been created and is updated annually. Where appropriate, procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. External risks to funding have led to the development of a Strategic Plan to diversify MASK's range of funding and activities. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of authorisation procedures. There are no current legal or regulatory threats to the project.

## **Financial controls**

The charity has appropriate financial controls in place which are reviewed annually to ensure that they are up to date and effective. The Trustees have reviewed its financial controls during the financial reporting period and are satisfied that the charity's risk management policies and procedures adequately covered activities and spending outside England and Wales.

## **Reference and administrative details**

Registered Company  
Number 06484985

Registered Charity  
Number 1128734

Registered Office  
3A Alderney Street, London, SW1V 4ES, UK

Name and objects  
The charity changed its name to 'MASK Create' on 23 August 2021 (former name 'Mobile Art School in Kenya, MASK'), and its Objects on 28 March 2022 to reflect the changes MASK has undergone over the last 15 years.

Website  
[maskcreate.org](https://maskcreate.org)

Trustees  
Mr T J Dann FRSA (Chair)  
Prof J H Gruzelier  
Mr B K Wambui (appointed 16.3.21)

Secretary/Chief Executive  
Ms A Tkachuk BEng MSc FRSA

Independent Examiner  
Ms M E Ryan FCCA Chartered Certified Accountant, Ark Accountancy, 31 Cheam Road, Epsom, Surrey, KT17 1QX, UK

Team  
6 volunteer-staff based in the UK  
54 MASK Ambassadors based in Africa

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on 14 May 2022 and signed on its behalf by T J Dann – Chair

## Independent Examiner's Report

### Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of MASK Create (MASK) ('the Company')

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 January 2022.

#### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's Trustees of the Company (and also its Directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

#### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mary E Ryan  
ACCA  
Ark Accountancy  
Chartered Certified Accountant  
31 Cheam Road  
Epsom  
Surrey  
KT17 1QX  
UK

Date: 28 April 2022

## Statements of financial activities

	Notes	31.1.22 Unrestricted fund £	31.1.21 Total funds £
<b>Income and endowments from</b>			
Donations and legacies		21,899	14,641
Investment income		-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>21,899</b>	<b>14,641</b>
<b>Expenditure on</b>			
Charitable activities			
Programmes		7,084	9,751
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>14,815</b>	<b>4,890</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>			
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>		<b>26,216</b>	<b>21,326</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>41,031</b>	<b>26,216</b>

## Balance Sheet

On 31 January 2022

	Notes	31.1.22 Unrestricted fund £	31.1.21 Total funds £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash at Bank		41,031	26,216
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>41,031</b>	<b>26,216</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>41,031</b>	<b>26,216</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>41,031</b>	<b>26,216</b>
<b>Funds</b>	5		
Unrestricted funds		41,031	26,216
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>41,031</b>	<b>26,216</b>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 January 2022.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 January 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 14 May 2022 and were signed on its behalf by T J Dann – Chair.

## Notes to the financial statements

### 1. Accounting policies

#### Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019); Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

#### Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

#### Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

#### Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

#### Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

#### Donated goods

Donated goods are measured at fair value (the amount for which the asset could be exchanged) unless impractical to do so.

### 2. Investment income

	31.1.22 £	31.1.21 £
Deposit account interest	-	-

### 3. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

There were no Trustees' remuneration, expenses, or other benefits for the year ended 31 January 2022 nor for the year ended 31 January 2021.



#### 4. Comparatives for the statement of financial activities

	Unrestricted fund £
Income and endowments from	
Donations and legacies	14,641
Investment income	
Total	14,641
Expenditure on	
Charitable activities	
Programmes	9,751
Net Income	4,890
Reconciliation of funds	
Total funds brought forward	21,326
Total funds carried forward	21,216

#### 5. Donated goods, facilities and services

	2022 £	2021 £
Seconded staff	33,000	33,000
Use of property	1,200	10,000
Other	500	2,500
Total	34,700	45,500

#### 6. Movement in funds

	At 1.2.21 £	Net movement in funds	At 31.1.22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	26,216	14,815	41,031
Total funds	26,216	14,815	41,031

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Income resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	21,899	(7,084)	14,815
Total funds	21,899	(7,084)	14,815

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.2.20 £	Net movement in funds	At 31.1.21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	21,326	4,890	26,216
Total funds	21,326	4,890	26,216

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Income resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	14,641	(9,751)	4,890
Total funds	14,641	(9,751)	4,890

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.2.20 £	Net movement in funds	At 31.1.22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	21,326	19,705	41,031
Total funds	21,326	19,705	41,031

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movements in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	36,540	(16,835)	19,705
Total funds	36,540	(16,835)	19,705

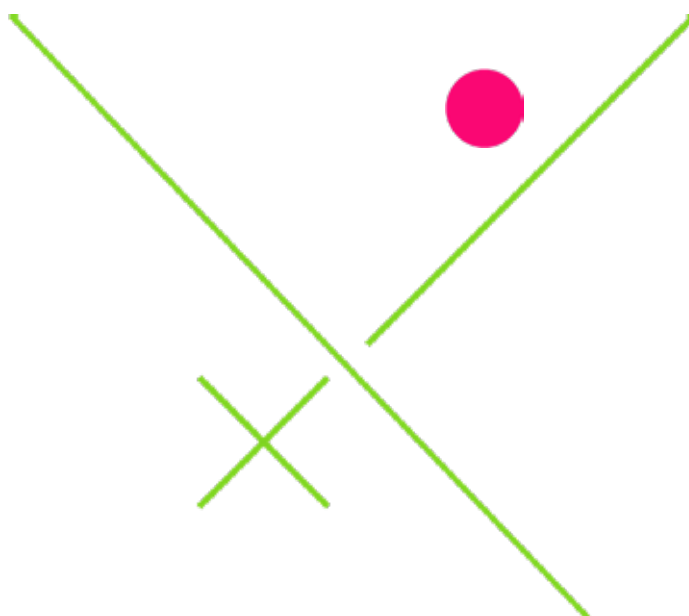
#### 7. Related party disclosures

Donations in kind were received from the company secretary of £34,700 in the year.

## Detailed statement of financial activities

*This statement does not form part of the statutory financial statements*

	31.1.22 £	21.1.21 £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	21,899	14,641
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	-	-
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	21,899	14,641
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Charitable activities	6,734	9,401
<b>Support costs</b>		
Governance costs		
Independent examination	350	350
<b>Total resources expended</b>	7,084	9,751
Net income	14,815	4,890



## How you can support MASK

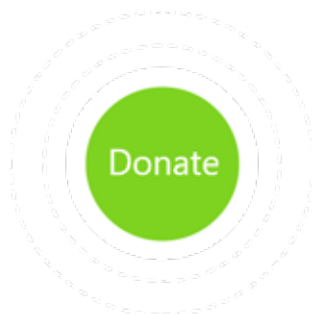
MASK is a UK registered charity (No 1128734) and its ongoing success relies on generous donations of funding, time and resources. Please continue to support MASK and help us to advance the education of young people and communities in creativity and innovation.

You can make a cash or in-kind donations on [MASK Total Giving page](https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/donate/mobile-art-school-in-kenya) - <https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/donate/mobile-art-school-in-kenya> - to support:

- MASK Awards cash prizes. We hope to increase the total cash prize to 1 million KSH (£7,000);
- production of learning and teaching manuals;
- Creativity Hub in Nairobi;
- an 'artmobile' (a van) for our school outreach in Kenya.

You can also:

- Companies: make MASK a part of your Corporate Social Responsibility policy;
- Art galleries: let us use your space to hold an art exhibition;
- When shopping on Amazon, sign in at [Smile Amazon](#) and choose MASK as your charity. Amazon will donate 0.5% of your item(s) price to us at no cost to you;
- Become a volunteer or an ambassador;
- [Join our community](#) to receive news and updates on programmes and opportunities;
- Follow us on social media and help spread the word. MASK is on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).



## Acknowledgements

MASK Trustees extend a warm thank you to:

- our ambassadors in Africa;
- our UK volunteers Irog Olarou, Sofia Carreira-Wham, Cheryl Lanyon, Guna Freivalde, Matthew Dewhirst, and Ulan Harrison-Davies;
- Andrew Skipper, Clare Sheridan, and the following organisations that gave us their financial and in-kind support which has enabled us to do our work:

Rivers Foundation (UK)

The Linbury Trust (UK)

The Nobility Project (USA)

Citizen TV and Hot 96 Radio (Kenya)

*The Star* (Kenya)

Mabati Rolling Mills (Kenya)





## Appendix

This table details MASK's main partnerships.

COUNTRY	PARTNERSHIP
Kenya	
Kenyan schools	<p>We collaborated with these Kenyan schools in Sipili, Naivasha, Giglil, Narok, Samburu, and Amboseli. They provided rooms and teachers for our workshops and exhibitions:</p> <p>           Baawa Nursery School            Bishop Githirwa Secondary School            Bishop Ndingi Secondary School            Eburru Secondary School            Elkong Narok Inchurra Primary School            GG School for Mentally Challenged Children            Green Park Nursery            Hanne Howard Trust            Kaharati Primary School            Kekopey School            Kio Primary School            Kio Secondary School            Kongoni Primary School            Lake Naivasha High School            Lariak Day Secondary School            Lariak Primary School            Makutano Primary School            Mirera Primary School            Mirera Secondary School            Naivasha Children's Shelter            Naivasha Safe House            Naivasha Unity School            Rubiri Primary School            Shining Stars Primary School            Shompole Primary School            Sipili School for the Deaf            Sipili Secondary School            Soysambu Primary School            Unity Primary School            Young Roses Primary School         </p> <p><b>Exhibitions:</b></p> <p>           January–February 2006   December 2008            January–February 2007   March 2009            January–March 2008   March 2010            August 2008   June 2015            October 2008   July 2016         </p>



*MASK workshops at schools*



*MASK first art exhibition in a Masai village in Narok*




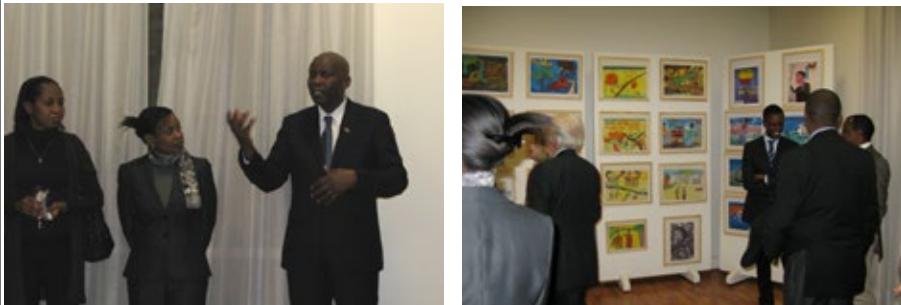

*MASK walking exhibition in Naivasha*

District Education Authorities

The collaboration with the Ngarua Division Education Officer, West Laikipia, and the Naivasha District Education Office, Naivasha, led to authorisation letters, school introductions, and provided quality assurance for MASK school activities. MASK participated in the West Laikipia Education Day in 2008 and 2009, and delivered talks to community leaders and teachers.







*Alla Tkachuk addresses community leaders and teachers at the West Laikipia Sipili Zone Education Day*





<p>Local NGO Centre for Conflict Resolution-Kenya (CCRK)</p>	 <p><i>MASK exhibition on the walls of the CCRK office in Sipili, West Laikipia</i></p> <p>This collaboration was key at the early stage of our work. It provided MASK with resources, information and know-how that helped us to deliver training to schoolchildren and communities in Samburu, West Laikipia and West Pokot. It led to a number of local exhibitions and partnerships with schools, authorities and media.</p>
<p>The Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>The Embassies of Kenya in Paris and Washington DC, and The Kenya High Commission in London</p>	<p>The collaborations facilitated MASK exhibitions at the High Commission in London in 2008, and the Embassy in France in 2010. The Education Attaché of the Kenya High Commission in London, Margaret Lesuuda, opened the exhibitions at the Saatchi Gallery and ROSL in London in 2013 and 2014. A further collaboration with the Embassy in Washington DC and the Woodrow Wilson Center resulted in a seminar at WWC in 2011, opened by the First Secretary of the Embassy.</p>  <p><i>Ambassador the Hon. Elkanah Odenbo opens the exhibition at the Embassy of Kenya in Paris in 2010</i></p>
<p>The Ministry of Education (KMoE)</p>	 <p><i>Senior Assistant Director of Quality Assurance of the KMoE, Mr Majani Alex Tom, opens the ceremony and awards a prize in 2017</i></p> <p>MASK closely collaborates with the Ministry of Education (KMoE). The KMoE authorised MASK's work and promoted it to KICD and TSC. In 2017 and 2019, KMoE Senior Assistant Director of Quality Assurance, Mr Majani Alex Tom, and the Regional Director of Education – Nairobi, Mr Obiero Jarred, officially opened MASK Awards as representatives of the Cabinet Secretary and Permanent Secretary of the KMoE.</p>
<p>The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)</p>	<p>MASK has collaborated with KICD since 2007. Together with the KICD Director General, the Director of the Creative Arts, Dr Jennifer Wambugu, and the Director of Science, we discussed the importance and nature of CE and the role of the arts; the 'Creative Arts' examination; using arts as part of peacebuilding in schools, which was implemented in a number of schools; and organised displays at various KICD events. Dr Jennifer Wambugu is one of our MASK Awards judges.</p>
<p>The Teachers Service Commission Kenya (TSC)</p>	<p>We have been collaborating on production of a tutor manual and training.</p>
<p>School of Art and Design at Nairobi University</p>	<p>SAD and MASK collaborated on organising MASK Awards prize ceremony at the University in 2014, and two training workshops for SAD students in 2015.</p> <p>"Your success as designers will be determined by your creativity and innovation. But how do you innovate? How do you come up with ambitious and cutting-edge designs that inspire and bring change? Let's discuss some of the techniques and strategies that can help you to generate new ground-breaking ideas." Alla Tkachuk.</p> <p>"You gave us an amazing talk on creativity that made me rethink my whole strategy on how I approach my work." Brian Jangima, student at SAD.</p>








	<div data-bbox="475 174 922 472">  </div> <div data-bbox="475 472 715 506"> <p><i>Student workshops at SAD</i></p> </div> <div data-bbox="938 174 1378 472">  </div> <div data-bbox="938 472 1246 506"> <p><i>MASK and SAD lecturers discussion</i></p> </div>
<p>Maasai community in Amboseli National Park</p>	<div data-bbox="475 533 922 831">  </div> <div data-bbox="475 831 855 864"> <p><i>Alla's tent in a Maasai village in Amboseli</i></p> </div> <div data-bbox="938 533 1378 831">  </div> <div data-bbox="938 831 1235 864"> <p><i>Art workshop with Maasai ladies</i></p> </div> <div data-bbox="475 875 922 1173">  </div> <div data-bbox="475 1173 794 1207"> <p><i>Creating Maasai contemporary art</i></p> </div> <div data-bbox="938 875 1378 1173">  </div> <div data-bbox="938 1173 1353 1240"> <p><i>Building art gallery/shop with the community in 2010-11</i></p> </div>
<p>The Nairobi National Museum</p>	<p>This partnership facilitated a MASK Awards exhibition of more than 700 artworks in 2013. As well as the venue, the Museum provided technical support and promotional assistance.</p> <div data-bbox="475 1346 922 1644">  </div> <div data-bbox="938 1346 1378 1644">  </div> <div data-bbox="475 1659 922 1957">  </div> <div data-bbox="938 1659 1378 1957">  </div> <div data-bbox="475 1957 1353 2036"> <p><i>First row: MASK Awards exhibition at Nairobi National Museum. Second row: (left) winners James Kungu, Margarita Onyango and Jaini Hitesh Shan with UK High Commissioner; (right) Founder of Rivers Foundation, Alan Rivers, with students of Children of God Relief Institute Art Club</i></p> </div>









Rahimullah Museum of Modern Art (RAMOMA)		The Museum organised a large retrospective exhibition of MASK's works in 2010. It was well attended by the public and MASK students, who travelled from their villages to see it.
	<i>Exhibition at RAMOMA</i>	
The Ministry for Culture and Heritage		The collaboration led to a meeting between MASK students and the Minister William Ole Ntimama in 2011 where students presented their works and discussed the need for creativity education through art in Kenyan schools.
	<i>The Hon William Ole Ntimama; Director of Culture, Gladys Gatheru; Alla Tkachuk and MASK students</i>	
The British High Commission in Nairobi	The Commissioner, Dr C. Turner, opened the MASK Awards 2013 prize-giving ceremony at Nairobi National Museum in 2013.	
The Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Kenya		MASK exhibition 'One Year After the Violence' was well attended and covered by the Kenyan Television Network in their youth programme, 'St8up', in 2008.
		
	<i>MASK exhibition at the Embassy; MASK Director is interviewed for the Kenyan Television Network</i>	
The American Chamber of Commerce, Kenya	MASK gave a talk on the link between CE in schools and economic growth for the members of the Chamber in Nairobi in 2013.	
NTV Kenyan national TV channel		MASK was invited by NTV to speak about art and creativity in Kenya on NTV Live in 2011.
	<i>MASK Director interviewed by NTV</i>	
A community in West Pokot		The community facilitated MASK workshops in the community in 2009.
	<i>Carting art supplies up dusty tracks in Kenya</i>	

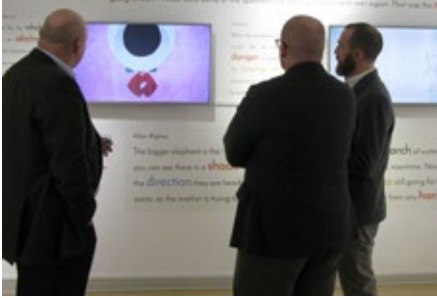




<p>Kenyan Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and the <i>Private Sector</i> magazine</p>	<p>MASK organised a talk for KEPSA staff members in 2014 and published six articles in their <i>Private Sector</i> magazine. "Thank you for the great presentation on Innovation and Creativity. It was a very insightful reflection and we all benefited from it. Look forward to continued collaboration." Ehud Gachugu, KEPSA.</p> <p><i>MASK workshop at KEPSA</i></p>	
<p>Unilever East Africa and its social mobilisation programme Heroes for Change</p>	<p>Collaborating with Unilever, we secured two internships for MASK Awards winners in 2019. The CEO of Unilever's Heroes for Change awarded the prizes.</p> <p><i>The CEO of Unilever's Heroes for Change presents award to John Gift, 20</i></p>	
<p>Mabati Rolling Mills</p>	<p>Our partnership with MRM has provided vital funding for our programmes for the last four years. In 2021, they donated six three-month, fully paid internships for MASK Awards winners.</p>	
<p>The Royal Media Services (Citizen TV, Hot 96 radio, Viusasa TV)</p> <p>Radio Africa Group (the national newspaper <i>The Star</i>)</p>	<p>These decade-long productive partnerships help promote MASK programmes and opportunities to a large number of YP, teachers and the public across 58 regions of Kenya and beyond. <i>The Star</i> and Citizen TV offer MASK free advertising space worth over £100,000 annually.</p> <p><i>MASK Awards advert in The Star, Citizen TV, and Radio Hot 96</i></p>	
<p>Dr Manu Chandaria MBE and the Chandaria Foundation</p>	<p>Dr Manu Chandaria MBE, Africa's leading industrialist and philanthropist and MASK supporter, opened our MASK Awards ceremony at Nairobi University in 2014, introduced MASK to KMoE and other key Kenyan institutions, and made donations.</p> <p><i>Dr Manu Chandaria awards prizes to Ben Vic, winner of a music prize, and to Rubiry Primary School</i></p>	



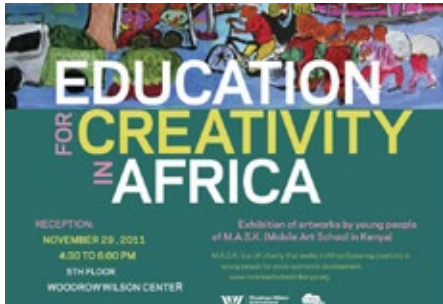



<p>The Parliament of Kenya</p>	 <p>Member of Parliament the Hon. Steve Kariuki opened the MASK Awards ceremony in 2015. In his opening remarks the MP told the audience of children, their parents and teachers that creativity empowers young people.</p> <p><i>The Hon. Steve Kariuki and MASK Awards winner Alan Kipto, 4</i></p>
<p>Anjarwalla &amp; Khanna LLP (A&amp;K)</p>	 <p>A&amp;K's partner, Wangui Kaniaru, and Director, Roddy McKean, attended the MASK Awards 2019 prize-giving ceremony in October 2019, and hosted an exhibition of MASK artists at A&amp;K's HQ in Nairobi in December 2019.</p> <p><i>Wangui Kaniaru and Roddy McKean at the MASK Awards Ceremony in 2019</i></p>
<p>Michael Joseph Centre at Safaricom</p>	<p>This partnership ensured free venues for MASK Awards prize ceremonies and exhibitions from 2015 to 2019.</p> <div>   </div> <p><i>The view of the stage at the MASK Awards 2019 ceremony</i>      <i>Rose serves her wonderful food at MASK Awards 2019 ceremony</i></p>
<p>Volunteers</p>	<p>Dr Francis Appolos, Teresia Ngina, John Ngumo, Watson Mwangi, Mutisya Raymond and Elsardt Kigen; fifty-four MASK Ambassadors; and many more.</p>  <p><i>MASK Ambassadors at MASK annual meeting in Nairobi in 2019</i></p>






United Kingdom	
<p>The Centre of African Studies at SOAS, University of London</p> <p>Institute of Education, University of London</p>	<p>Collaborated with the Centre of African Studies and Institute of Education on a seminar 'Art Education in Kenya', held at Brunei Gallery on 10 March 2011.</p> <p>Speakers were: Alla Tkachuk, Donald Maingi (Birkbeck College), Mercy Kagia (Kingston University), Dr Nicholas Addison (Institute of Education). The Chair was Professor Chege Githiora (SOAS).</p>  <p><i>Image of the seminar</i></p>
<p>The Saatchi Gallery</p>	<p>Collaborated with the Saatchi Gallery's Education Department and organised eight MASK exhibitions from 2011–19, including the highly acclaimed 'Early 21st Century Young African Artists' show in December 2018-January 2019.</p> <p>The exhibitions were opened by celebrated artists Michael Craig-Martin and Ibrahim El-Salahi, and Saatchi's Directors of Education. They were visited by an estimated 720,000 people.</p>   <p><i>MASK's 'Early 21st Century Young African Artists' exhibition was attended by Sotheby's Director of African Art, Hannah O'Leary; Vice-Chair of the African Centre, Oba Nsugbe QC; Founder of ArtLabAfrica; collector Robert Devereux; and the Education Director of Saatchi Gallery, Nadine Wright</i></p> 
<p>Turner Contemporary, Margate</p>	<p>In partnership with the gallery, MASK organised three exhibitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MASK exhibition in 2016;</li> <li>• 'Every Day is a New Day' group show. MASK exhibited alongside Phyllida Barlow and Michael Armitage and the Turner Contemporary's art competition 'Portfolio' in 2017;</li> <li>• 'All Art Should be Social Art', a five-year retrospective exhibition in 2018.</li> </ul>  <p><i>'Every Day is a New Day' show</i></p>  <p><i>MASK's 5-year retrospective exhibitions at Turner Contemporary</i></p>








<p>University for the Creative Arts (UCA)</p>	 <p><i>Vice Chancellor of UCA, Professor Simon Ofield-Kerr, at the Private View</i></p> <p>Communicating through online blogs, eight MASK artists and eight UCA computer animation graduates produced a series of animated paintings.</p>	<p>The blogs, paintings and animations were exhibited at the 'Transformation/ Mabadiliko' show at the Zandra Rhodes Gallery in 2016. This exchange gave our YP the opportunity to work with UK young artists, collaborate in online space, and create new cutting-edge pieces of art. For MASK, this was an opportunity to integrate ICT into our CE practice. Terry Perk, MA Curatorial Practice, and his students curated our Saatchi Gallery show in 2017. Brian Johnson, Leader at MA Design Innovation and Brand Management, and student Yujia Huo facilitated the design of our new logo.</p>
<p>University of the Arts London</p>		<p>This collaboration helped MASK develop a virtual interactive exhibition of our retrospective show at Turner Contemporary to give a more meaningful experience to our YP in Africa. The collaboration was facilitated by Sophia Phoca, Dean of Art at Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon Colleges, and MA Collection student Jie Qiu.</p>
<p>The National Gallery</p>	<p>Collaborated on our advocacy project, 'The Great WALK of Art', in 2015–16.</p> <p data-kind="ghost"></p>	
<p>Doyle Wham Gallery Afrikan Gallery The Viewing Room</p>	<p>Collaborated on five exhibitions of MASK artists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Visual Tapestry'. Group art exhibition, including MASK artists Louis Nderi, Margaret Ngigi, and Staice Shitanda, 20 July to 7 August 2020 at Afrikan Gallery.</li> <li>• 'Murky Waters'. Solo art exhibition by Margaret Ngigi, London, November to December 2020, and 'New Faces in Contemporary African Portraiture'. Group show with Staice Shitanda, October 2020, at Doyle Wham Gallery.</li> </ul>	
<p>Rivers Foundation</p>	<p>This partnership has been crucial to the establishment of MASK Awards, MASK's success, and the lives of our YP. The Founder Alan Rivers supports the MASK Awards cash prizes and travels to Kenya to open its prize-giving ceremonies. "MASK does an important job in showing young people the joy of creativity," he commented.</p> <div>   </div> <p><i>Alan Rivers awards prizes to winners at MASK Awards 2018, Nairobi</i></p>	
<p>The Linbury Trust</p>		<p>This partnership lies at the foundation of MASK. The generous support by Lord and Lady Sainsbury has been pivotal to MASK's success.</p> <p><i>Lady Anya Sainsbury and Alla Tkachuk at MASK exhibition at Saatchi Gallery in London, 2013</i></p>

<p>The Royal Overseas League (ROSL)</p>	<p>Together with the ROSL, MASK organised three exhibitions in 2013, 2014 and 2015, including 'Incognito' at ROSL. The exhibitions were opened by the Kenyan Education Attaché, Margaret Lesuuda, and the Founder of the 1:54 African Art Fair, Touria El Glaoui. ROSL's magazine <i>Overseas</i> featured articles about MASK and used an image by one of our artists for its cover.</p> <div data-bbox="477 367 920 665">  </div> <div data-bbox="935 367 1378 665">  </div> <p><i>The Attache Margaret Lesuuda, Director of ROSL Roddy Porter, and Director of 1:54 Touria El Glaoui</i></p>
<p>United States</p>	
<p>Woodrow Wilson Center (WWC)</p>	<p>MASK, WWC, and the Kenyan Embassy in the USA organised an exhibition and a seminar called 'Creativity Education in Africa' in 2011. The exhibition was opened by the Director of African Programmes, Steve MacDonald, and the First Secretary of the Embassy, Nairimas Ole-Sein.</p> <div data-bbox="477 983 920 1285">  </div> <div data-bbox="935 983 1378 1285">  </div> <p><i>Poster and a display in the seminar</i></p>
<p>The African Division of the US Library of Congress, Washington DC</p>	<p>Collaborated with the African Division to present MASK Awards in 2013 and 2014. "MASK is a fantastic programme. The level of creativity and the standard of the artworks submitted to the MASK Awards by Kenyan children and youth is very high." Eve Ferguson, Director of African Division.</p> <p><i>MASK Director presents at the Library of Congress</i></p> <div data-bbox="935 1341 1378 1644">  </div>
<p>The Embassy of the Republic of Kenya in Washington DC</p>	<p>The collaboration helped to engage and present MASK work to the Kenya Desk at the US State Department, and to the Special Assistant to the President on Africa, Grant Harris, at the White House in 2013. We gifted the President paintings by MASK students and received a thank-you letter from Michelle and Barack Obama that said, 'We are looking forward to working together.'</p> <p><i>Michelle and Barack Obama letter to MASK</i></p> <div data-bbox="935 1666 1378 2065">  </div>

<p>Graduate School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University (GWU)</p>	<p>The collaboration facilitated MASK's talk 'MASK: engaging creativity for human development' in 2013. "When creativity is placed at the centre of personal, organisational and societal development, growth and effectiveness follow. Neglecting creativity leads to a stunting of human development. MASK's model of creativity education can be a model for education reform that can meet today's socio-economic challenges." Alla Tkachuk.</p>  <p><i>MASK's talk at the GWU</i></p> <p>"Dear Alla, a special thank you for the very lovely presentation at George Washington Graduate School of Education and Human Development. The role and use of creativity in education settings for children and youth is a most interesting and important policy and practice topic. We are very grateful to have had the opportunity to learn more about the role of MASK in Kenya as demonstrated by the incredible stories you shared about the developing and ongoing work." Maxine B. Freund, Associate Dean for Research and External Relations.</p>
<p>The Smithsonian Folklife Festival</p>	 <p>In 2014, Alla Tkachuk and the Curator at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife, Preston Scott, presented a workshop discussing the nature of creativity. At the workshop, Mongolian and Kenyan musicians improvised together connecting their compositions into new musical ideas.</p>
<p>The Nobility Project</p>	<p>The Nobility Project is a non-profit organisation based in Austin, Texas, USA, which was founded by Turk and Christy Pipkin in 2006, while producing their film Nobility. Turk and Christy were building infrastructure in schools in Kenya when they came across MASK and contacted us. They subsequently met our Director and offered their support. Since 2014 they have been funding the MASK Awards School Prize, opening our award ceremonies and encouraging our YP and educators. The partnership has improved the lives of our beneficiaries across Kenya and beyond.</p>  <p><i>Turk Pipkin presents prizes to MASK Awards 2019 winners at Michael Joseph Center in 2019</i></p>
<p>Global Education Elite, San Diego</p>	<p>Through this collaboration, our youths developed their voices and leadership participating in the online seminars: 'UN Sustainable Development Goals: Quality Education' and 'UN Sustainable Development Goals: Gender Equity' in 2021.</p>



South Korea	
UNESCO, Korean National Commission (KNC)	<p>The MASK Director presented MASK's report 'MASK: creativity education is a driving force of sustainable development' at the 2014 UNESCO (KNC) 'International Forum on Development Cooperation in the Field of Culture' in Seoul in October 2014.</p> <p>"I have been involved in many development projects throughout the world. What you have done in Kenya is very important for development to stimulate people's creativity." Professor of International Economics, Won-Gyu Hwang, Gangneung-Wonju National University.</p>  <p><i>The speakers at the conference</i></p>
France	
UNESCO IIEP	UNESCO IIEP (International Institute of Educational Planning) Summer School in Paris hosted MASK's peace-building exhibition in 2009.
UNESCO	<p>The MASK Director and MASK student Joe Gathua presented MASK's report 'MASK: engaging young people for development through creativity education' at the IIEP Policy Forum 'Engaging Youth in Planning Education for Social Transformation' at UNESCO HQ, Paris, in October 2012, and organised a MASK exhibition at the Forum.</p>   <p><i>The Permanent Secretary, the Minister of the Kenyan Ministry of Youth Affairs, and MASK Director at UNESCO Policy Forum; MASK exhibition at UNESCO HQ main conference hall</i></p>
The Embassy of the Republic of Kenya in Paris, France	<p>MASK and the Embassy exhibited MASK students' work at the Embassy in 2010. It was opened by the Ambassador, the Hon. Elkanah Odembo.</p>   <p><i>MASK students exhibit their works at the Githirwa School in Kenya</i></p> <p><i>Exhibition of MASK students' work at the Embassy</i></p>





*No Complaints, Muchira Muraguri, 23, Nairobi, digital drawing*

## Contact

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