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## The Street and the Lab: Enabling and Commercialising Talent Notes from Session

21 January 2003

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The session was opened by Chair, Michael Frye, who welcomed the Mayor of London and thanked him for establishing the Commission. The Mayor, Ken Livingstone, replied by thanking the Commission members for agreeing to take part and stressed the importance of creativity to the long-term prosperity and well being of London.

The Commission members were given a series of presentations by the following key informants: Kate Oakley, Demos Associate; Sir Michael Bichard, London Institute; John Connolly, NESTA; Manoj Ambasna, Haringey Arts Council; Suran Goonatilake, Centre for Scientific Enterprise; Linda Peters, Centre for Fashion Enterprise. All presented projects, research and models of intervention for enabling and commercialising talent in London's creative industries. The following were identified as points for possible LDA action:

- There is no shortage of creative talent in London, but the feeling persists that talent and ideas often fail to be fully commercially exploited, and that many Londoners are not accessing all of the opportunities that the creative industries provide.
- A more strategic overview is needed for the plethora of support and creative industries projects to provide efficient, effective and targeted support to all Londoners wanting to participate in, and enjoy, its creative economy.
- Research shows that creative people feel that the principal systems and institutions are not meeting their needs, and that there is a mismatch in terms of the support supplied and what is actually required.
- Models pioneered by the Centre for Scientific Enterprise and the London Technology Network warrant further examination in their application to the Creative Industries.
- London's HE Institutes are critically important. Traditionally, these have supplied London with creative talent, but they can and should do more to stimulate and support start-ups, and equip graduates with entrepreneurial and business skills.
- When and how should talent be exposed to commercial pressures and investment? Individuals need the freedom to be creative, but able to access business skills once they can appreciate its relevance and value to their professional lives.
- An approach rooted in communities, working closely with local individuals and groups, can result in significant creative activity, and provide access to commercial opportunities. Top-down attempts to replicate these may be less successful.
- Creative professionals need to have a better understanding of the value of their Intellectual Property, and how it can be commercially defended and exploited.

For more information about the Commission's activities, please get in touch with Paul Owens, [paul@creativelondon.org.uk](mailto:paul@creativelondon.org.uk) or 020 7468 2224