10. Appendix 2: Interviews

Overview

Interviews were undertaken to better understand digital platforms and the craft sector, in particular, to gather information about the application of digital platforms for craft. These interviews also informed the design of the survey deployed in the project. The interview questions are listed at the end of this appendix.

In total, 9 people took part in interviews in the UK and 2 makers participated the interviews in China. A total of about 30000 words of interview responses were collected.

UK Interviews

Table 10.1 details the background of UK interviewees. Following this are representative answers to the interview questions.

Table 10.1 The list of UK Interviewees and their charactersitcs

No.	Role	Key characteristics
P1	PhD student	Researching craft process in digital musical instrument design
P2	Lecturer	Maker and designer, specialising in E-textile Academic
P3	Innovation manager	Manages the Crafts organization's programme that supports professional makers who use digital tools in their work.
P4	Communications and marketing staff	Responsible for Communications and Marketing in Artspace
P5	Director of craft agency	Craft agency
P6	Marketing manager of craft agency	Responsible for Marketing and digital platforms for the craft agency
P7	PhD student	Maker Investigating the socio-technological structures of communities of maker practices
P8	Professor, artist, writer and curator	Maker, Academic
P9	Ceramist	A well-known artist and use traditional way of making, although she has a personal website, which is outsourcing.

Representative quotes from UK interviewees

1.What is your understanding about craft? What's the value of craft?

Word "craft" tends to be feminine while "making" is masculine "gender does play a very large role where it's usually something, it's material based but largely the word craft tends to be feminine while making is masculine. So, if I'm making in making spaces, they don't get called crafting spaces. If something's called a craft space, it usually means it's for women who are not as serious. If something's called a making space it usually means for men who of course are serious." P2

"So I like to see craft as a mind-set, as a way of working, and obviously comes with - you practice it and you've mastered certain tools and certain materials, but I want to believe these are skills that you can apply in other things, it's a way of thinking. There is experimentation involved, and there is prototyping and these are all things that can be used to develop more products and ideas, right? So it doesn't always have to be 'craft' maybe in the way that we know it, and that's why I think it's very interesting when it intersects with these newer technologies and materials. " P3

2. How to call craft people?

"People would like to call themselves "Maker" instead of "craft maker", to make themselves different from the traditional craft." From P1

3. What challenges do you think that craft makers have when using these digital technologies? Why?

There are no opportunities for makers to have access to these technologies. "You need to be able to experiment with all these different materials and explore how is this new thing behaving, how can I make something out of mycelium, what are the properties of it, what will it look like. So this requires a lot of time and when someone is a professional maker, obviously they cannot sacrifice loads of their time and days of their time that they could be making stuff they can sell and make money off just experimenting." "People don't get access to facilities and technologies, and they don't get support and motivation, especially financial motivation, to be doing this kind of work." From P3

"The other thing that's interesting in terms of the digital technologies is we also see some, there is some kind of movement towards digital production of craft, so I think that that's an interesting space as well." From P3

"Digital is really important, and the digital participation chapter is very important, and we do throughout our projects and major exhibitions we usually do activities to off-scale maybe the makers or other people getting involved in it. So for instance, we have preparation days where we discuss marketing and PR. We do things like Instagram takeovers so that's where a maker accesses our Instagram and they do a takeover of Instagram stories, which sounds like a little bit but actually what we're doing there is we're giving them instruction sheets…" From P6

4. What is your opinion of using online channel/social media?

"I would say makers use Instagram more than Twitter but theoreticians of craft use Twitter more than Instagram. more academic conversations happen on Twitter. Instagram is great

for that you can do it through the stories and you bring people behind the scenes, people are fascinated by how things are made. So, people are filming themselves make things and you get to see how a pot is thrown, or how someone works on the loom." From P3

"we are starting to develop more and more virtual realities, what's the role of a craftsperson, what's the role of someone who deals with materiality so much in these virtual environments. So is there some sort of connection there between the virtual and the physical and how we create materials in the virtual world." From P3

"We use it to tell people about our craft activities rather than using it within the craft, but we use, we find Instagram has broadened our audience significantly. We use Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. We find it's a great way of connecting with other makers and audiences and get people along to our exhibitions and events, and helping our, helping us get the names of our artists out to the wider public, letting people know what we do. We have quite a good following on Instagram and we spend lots of time updating it. " From P4

5.What are the opportunities that online channel/social media bring to the craft sector?

"Lots of opportunities, especially for early career makers, they can get a big following without spending any money on printing or newspapers or adverts. So it's a massive opportunity that we didn't used to have and it puts power in the hands of the maker rather than in the journalists so they can decide what they want to put out there and just do it immediately, it doesn't cost anything. You can reach lots of people. " From P4

6.What is your opinion of using digital) software, e.g., photoshop in your craft activities?

"I think a lot of people are using it with art, there has been, there is a project which is very interesting where they've used VR to develop some new 3D modelling software, and they're premise, they're theory which I think has some elements of truth is that a 3D modelling software is using numerical and words to communicate, right? So even when you're using a software like a Rhino [Note: Rhino is a 3D modelling software] or whatever to do 3D modelling, you still have to go through commands that are either words or numbers. They argued that designers, craftspeople, even doctors, for example, they have more spacial awareness, their intelligence is more about space and how we use a space. So they believe there is a better opportunity in using the VR and these kind of technologies so that it's more intuitive for people with spatial awareness to create in the virtual 3D space… to improve the way people with spatial awareness like makers interact with software maybe this is one of the challenges they find the way software works is not as intuitive, is not as straightforward and easy for them to use compared to something that's in the space." From P3

7.What do you find are the challenges of using software?

"There is a maker in the [United] states which uses a lot of 3D modelling and he's 3D printing all his moulds to make ceramics and then when he goes to craft fairs to sell, people have - and he's doing he's drawing the porcelain all himself so it's very handmade he's a very skilled maker, he just created a different process that involves 3D printing, so when he goes to sell because the aesthetic of the object is quite machine-made, it's more like it has straight angles and it's very smooth and all that, people are saying to him 'well I don't want to buy, that's quite expensive and it doesn't look like you made it, it looks like a machine made it'.

So I think that, for some people, that also - but I think that it's a shame because there is so much potential in fusing digital processes and hand processes." From P3

8.What do you find are the challenges of using online marketplaces?

"time issues, customer service issues, how much money can you put into it, in terms of how much you can put into your photography or getting copyrighting, how much money can you put into advertising, whether that's online or offline. " From P6

"a challenge for a commission rate, so different platforms, different online selling platforms will charge different rates of commission, there's also an issue with free shipping because a lot of people we've worked with in the past maybe offer free shipping but haven't actually factored that into the cost of the product, so where's that money coming out from it feeds into their margins. " From P6

"I don't know like those, when it comes to commercially using platforms there's always the tradeoff of, you know you have to pay for using the platform so of course it minimises or it lowers your income through using this platform and then also it puts you in the position that you need to professionalize your craft" From P7

9.What are the opportunities that online marketplaces bring to the craft sector?

"It helps to be in a central place where people can find you on a search very quickly, for people who are looking for you. It can, you know they're looking for something handmade so that's a bonus so it can really help especially in the beginning stages. You don't have to monitor your own website with it, you can just put things on there so it can be a lot technologically easier for makers. And it just creates a, you know, online shop where people can see each others products and support each other making as well. " From P4

Good examples of applying digital platforms for craft mentioned by interviewees

i) Jono Smart https://jonosmart.co.uk

"We are Jono Smart and Emily Stephen, a Scottish based couple who live and work together. Jono is trained as a garden designer and works as a potter. Emily is trained as an architect and works as a woodturner and in the pottery studio. We also combine efforts to make sculptural works and installations. Our studio is a showcase of the things we make and design, our home, our neighbourhood and the landscape we live in.

The studio was set up in a tiny basement in rural Devon at the end of 2014. After meeting Emily in early 2015, Jono moved the studio north to join her in Glasgow. In 2018 we expanded into the adjacent space, setting up the woodturning studio.

We're very much makers of our time. Our work is supported by the Instagram community that follow our progress and process." (Source: https://jonosmart.co.uk)

ii) Lynne MacLachlan https://lynnemaclachlan.co.uk

"Lynne's designs play with light, space and colour, intending to create visual delight for wearer and viewer. She takes an experimental approach with digital tools, exploring and

pushing the capabilities of these, using bespoke software tools and 3D printing to materialise complex forms. Combining these tools with meticulous hand finishing techniques, such as dying, polishing and construction, elevates the pieces further.

After a degree in aerospace engineering Lynne returned to education to study jewellery and metalwork design, and completed an MA at the Royal College of Art. She also recently completed a PhD with the Open University, researching how designer-makers find creative opportunities through tools and applying these strategies to multi-material 3D printing."

(Source: https://lynnemaclachlan.co.uk)

iii) Alison Grubb

"she combines traditional glazing techniques with 3D printing technology to create iridescent vessels. "Gray's School of Art in the 3D design class, I think. And her work, she's interested in this sort of metallic lustre glaze, ochre-y kind of glaze. But what she did was she designed the mould for her ceramics using 3D printing, because it gives it a really geometric shape, and then she applied the glaze by hand "

(Source: https://www.craftscotland.org/craft-directory/makers/alison-grubb/bio)

iv) Small machine https://www.smallmachines.co.uk

Small Machines is a construction kit toy builder based in Sheffield, UK. The founder of small machines is Giles Grover, who makes digital things, i.e., Contemporary Laser Cut Wooden Toys and Gifts.

"All Small Machines' toys are designed and manufactured in Sheffield, UK. And we're incredibly proud to boast the Made in Sheffield mark. " said by Giles Grover | Founder, Designer, Laserist (Source: https://www.smallmachines.co.uk)

Chinese interviews

Two makers were interviewed in China who demgraphics are detailed in Table 10.2. Repesentative answers to interview questions follow.

Table 10.2 The list of China's Interviewees and their use of digital platforms

No.	Role	Uses of Digital Platforms
P1	Bamboo artist	Uses social media: WeChat, TikTok
		Film short video on WeChat and TikTok
		Mobile phone plays an important role in his craft such as recording videos
		He has started creating a website
		He opened a public account on WeChat, through which other people canq follow it and learn the latest news of the studio
P2	Blue dye artist	Uses social media: WeChat, TikTok
		Film short video on WeChat and TikTok
		Mobile phone plays an important role in her craft such as recording videos
		Without internet marketing and online stores, her art relies on oral communication among friends and WeChat

Representative quotes from Chinese interviewees

1. 请问对于手工艺人来说如今最大的挑战是什么?

"部分设计师不懂工艺、结构，设计的东西大多无法实际生产。"

1. What do you think are the main challenges for makers nowadays?

"Some designers do not understand the process, structure, most of the things they designed can not be actually produced."

2. 哪些手工艺产品更受欢迎？

"经过博览会、交易会的检验，小东西很收欢迎，例如灯具、手机架、毛笔架、戒尺等，有几个品种现在已经进行了小批量的生产，如皮影灯、小提灯。"

2. What kind of craft products are popular?

"After the investigation of Expos and trade fairs, small things are prevalent, i.e., lamps and lanterns, mobile phone holders, brush holders, rulers, etc. Some types of craft products have been small-batch produced, for example, shadow lamp and lantern."

3. 请问运用社交媒体给手工艺的发展带来哪些机会和挑战？

"有一个徒弟负责帮我把网上的网站、抖音做起来。现在抖音对非遗传承人进行扶持，流量支持，和文化部签了协议，长期的、没有任何附加条件、不收任何钱的。"

"现在的粉丝对普通的手工艺视频不是很感兴趣。发小孩子的视频更能够吸引流量（600+赞，增了 100+粉丝），可以帮助自己多增加点粉丝量。现在简单的、好玩的东西最受欢迎。"

3.What are the opportunities or challenges that using online channel/social media in craft?

"One of my apprentices is responsible for operating the TikTok and website. Now, TikTok supports the inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, network traffic support, and signed an agreement with the Ministry of culture, which is long-term, no additional conditions and cost."

"Today's fans are not very interested in ordinary craft videos. Sending children's videos can attract more attention (600 + likes, 100 + fans increased), which can help you increase your fans. Now simple, funny things are the most popular."

4.请问您是如何理解手工艺-染布的？它的价值是什么？

"蓝染是真正的植物染，没有一点化学东西，我亲眼看到人家做，每一次看到染出来的作品就很喜欢，心里很震撼。蓝染是我一生中最喜欢的事情，我一直默默地一个人做。"

"我跟老师学到了回归粗布，尼龙布是不腐烂的，粗布是可以腐烂的，取之于自然，回归大自然。很多人还是意识到棉布好，价值还有性价比很高，所以做出来这些东西很受欢迎。"

"到这里学习扎染的孩子小的有 4 岁，大的有 20 多岁的。男女比例差不多，男孩子也愿意动手做。"

4. What is your understanding about craft-blue dye? What's the value of it?

"Blue dye belongs to plant dye, which has no chemical thing. I have seen other people made blue dye, and whenever I see dyed work, my heart is very touched as I like it very much. Blue dye is my favorite thing in my life, and I always do it by myself."

"I learned from my teacher the return of coarse cloth. Nylon cloth cannot be rotten, but coarse cloth can be rotten. It can be taken from nature and returned to nature. Many people realize that cotton cloth is good, valuable, and cost-effective, so cotton clothes are very popular. "

"The children who come here to learn blue dyeing range from 4 to 20 years old. The ratio of boys and girls is about the same, and boys are also willing to do it."

Interview questions

What is your main role in your organisation?

Probe: Would you please introduce your organisation? What do you offer to craft makers? How do you support them?

What is your understanding about craft? What's the value of craft?

Probe: What is the motivation for people to do craft?

What do you think are the main challenges for makers nowadays?

What is your understanding about digital platforms/technologies?

Probe: Have you ever used any digital technologies for your craft activities?

What are the purposes of using digital technologies for your craft activities?

What is your opinion on using digital technologies?

Probe: Have you met any difficulties in using digital technologies?

What challenges do you think that craft makers have when using these digital technologies? Why?

Would you please introduce the use of digital platforms/technologies in your organisation?

What is the biggest challenge do you think for promoting digital platforms?

Probe: What do you think that craft makers are most interesting know about digital platforms?

What is your opinion of using online channel/social media?

Probe: Have you ever used any digital technologies for your craft activities?

What is your favourite online channel/social media to promote your craft activities?

What are the challenges that using online channel/social media in craft?

Probe: Have you met any difficulties in using online channel/social media?

What are the opportunities that online channel/social media bring to the craft sector?

Probe: What value is generated through the use of online channel/social media?

What is your opinion of using online marketplaces?

Probe: What online marketplaces do you use/ know for craft activities?

What do you find are the challenges of using online marketplaces?

What are the opportunities that online marketplaces bring to the craft sector?

Probe: What value is generated through the use of online marketplaces?

What is your opinion of using digital) software, e.g., photoshop in your craft activities?

Probe: Have you used any (digital) software, e.g., photoshop in your craft activities?

What they are? How you use them?

What do you find are the challenges of using software?

What are the opportunities that software brings to the craft sector?

Probe: What value is generated through the use of software?

Have you known or used any digital platforms in craft that we have not discussed yet?

Do you know any good examples of applying digital platforms for craft？