

12. Appendix 4: Workshops and focus groups

Workshops, focus groups and interviews were undertaken in the UK and China to further identify uses, challenges, and opportunities for digital platforms for craft. Workshops took place in urban locations whilst focus groups and interviews took place in rural area.

Workshops

A workshop schedule was developed and piloted within the whole research team including three professors, three lecturers, 3 researcher assistants, and 2 postgraduates to ensure questions were neutral and useful in answering the research questions, and the workshop time was sufficient. The workshop schedule was divided into five sessions in both the UK and China (details can be found at the end of this appendix):

- i) *Welcome and introduction* to introduce the project and encourage participants to self-introduction;
- ii) *Group discussion about craft* to better understand contemporary understandings of 'craft' and craft practice;
- iii) *Case studies* to share professional researchers' projects about applying digital platforms to craft, which aims to inspire participants;
- iv) *Group discussion about digital platforms for craft* to identify uses, challenges, and opportunities;
- v) *Sharing and summary* to share discussion results, and express gratitude as well as check whether participants had any questions.

Representative photographs from the workshop are given in Figures 12.1 and 12.2.



Figure 12.1: Workshop group discussion in London (UK, left) and Changsha (China)

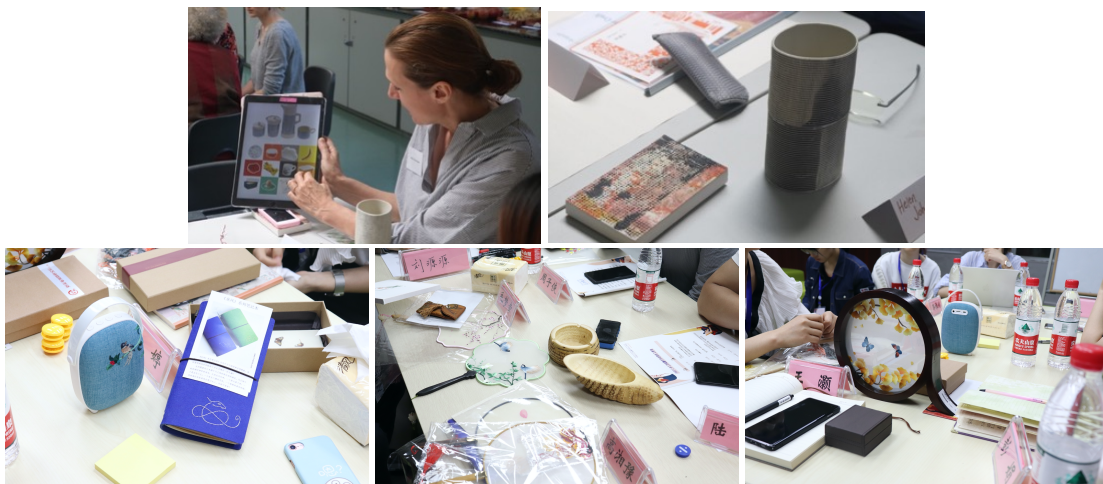


Figure 12.2: Craft makers' practice introduction in the UK (above) and China (below)

Interviews and Focus Groups

It was not possible to recruit a sufficient number of participants in the rural area of both countries for and so we undertook several focus groups and interviews in rural towns and remote areas as an alternative. The structure of the focus groups and interviews is given at the end of this appendix and includes questions and prompts about: the nature of craft and its meaning; the use of digital platforms in and for craft; and the challenges and opportunities of using digital platforms for craft. Representative examples of focus groups and interviews in rural China are given below.

Focus Groups: Tongguan Kiln Ceramics

Two focus groups were undertaken. One had three makers, the other had four makers. Each group had one facilitator and one assistant to take notes and make audio recordings as illustrated in figure 12.3.



Figure 12.3: Focus groups at Tongguan Kiln Ceramics

Interview: Yiyang Xiaoyu Bamboo art

An interview was undertaken with a senior craft artist in bamboo and national intangible heritage inheritor, Lumian Wei, in Yiyang, China, as illustrated in figure 12.4.

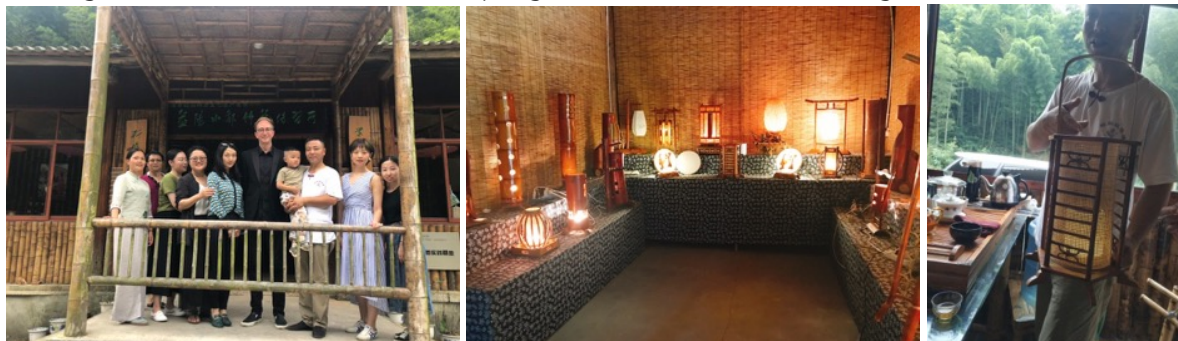


Figure 12.4: Interview at Yiyang Xiaoyu Bamboo art

Interviews: Xiang embroidery

Interviews were undertaken with a China arts and crafts master, Yan Li, her daughter (Ni Chang), and son in law in Embroidery City (湘绣城) as illustrated in figure 12.5.



Figure 12.5: Interviews at Xiang embroidery

Sampling strategy

Workshop participants were recruited from three channels: i) online surveys; ii) online search the open resources for makers' contact information; iii) network of the research team. In the UK, about 10 participants, including makers, professors, and researchers, attended the workshop in London. All the participants were volunteering to participate in the UK. To increase participation of craftsmen from nationwide, the Chinese team paid participants in China 1000RMB as an incentive to participate. About 20 participants including makers, manager, designer, researchers and stakeholders, attended the workshop in Changsha, a city in China.

We interviewed three participants including a lecturer, makers and gallery manager in Farnham in the UK. Similarly, we organised focus groups and interviews in different remote areas of China, including Tongguan Kiln Ceramics, Hunan Arts and Crafts Vocational College, Yiyang Xiaoyu Bamboo art, and Xiang Embroidery.

Results

We combined the results of the workshops, interviews and focus groups and categorised the in three ways: i) uses; ii) challenges; and iii) opportunities of using digital platforms for craft in the UK and China. Table 12.1 summarises the use of digital platforms in the UK and China. Digital technologies such as 3D printing and laser cutting, and digital software such as 3D modelling software and *Photoshop* have been used in the making or production process. Some makers have tried to use open source software-*WordPress* to make their website and engage customers. To make the best impact of social media, makers use *filters of Instagram* to make their posts look appealing and attract audience. Makers are also can learn and share making and designing skills on *YouTube* channel. We found that digital platform usage in rural and urban areas is similar, although there are some differences in terms of their popularity.

Table 12.1 Use of digital platforms for craft

UK		China	
City	Rural	City	Rural
1. 3D printing and laser cutting used in making process	1. Digital technology: digital engraving, laser cutting, and 3D printing in making	1. Digital technology: laser engraving, laser cutting in making	1. Digital technology: laser engraving in making
2. Digital software such as 3D modelling used in assist making	2. Digital software: design software-Photoshop,	2. Digital software: design software-Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator used in making and advertising; CAD, SketchUp, 3D modelling software used in making	2. Digital software: design software-Photoshop used in making and advertising
3. Watching YouTube	3. Adobe Illustrator, InDesign, used in making and advertising;		
4. videos of design	4. open source software--WordPress to make website and engage customers	3. Digital equipment: CNC machine tool in making	
5. skills		4. Social media such as WeChat used for communication with customised clients	
6. Use filters of Instagram	5. Social media such as Instagram and Facebook used for communication with customised clients.		

Table 12.2 lists the challenges of using digital platforms for craft. There are some shared challenges identify from participants of the workshop in the city and participants of interviews in “rural” area of the UK: i) the process of learning technology; ii) expensive and challenging to meet the rules of specific platforms; iii) difficult to find target users online, and iv) time consuming to update. Participants from the workshop in London mentioned four topics which were not reported in interviews in “rural” areas: i) teach craft making through online platforms; ii) inherent traditional craft in the digital age; iii) copyright/ IP issue; and v) difficult to make choices. Although the results here may not be able to adequately represent the different challenges between city and rural of the UK, it can still reflect the difference between city and town/suburb. For example, the makers attending the London workshop are more likely to have an awareness of IP protection. Similarly, the makers in urban China were more aware of IP protection compared with makers from rural areas of China. Besides the challenges mentioned above, participants from urban China said some types of craft might not be suitable for teaching online due to the size, techniques and materials. Also, there is a lack of platforms to connect with appropriate manufacturers in China which is needed as craft is more linked with industry and the required design and mass production in China than in the UK.

Table 12.2. Challenges of digital platforms for design practice in craft

UK		China	
City	Rural	City	Rural
1. Difficult to teach craft making through an online platform	1. The process of learning technology	1. Lack of platform to connect with manufacturers (In the process of product production and development)	1. Cannot use digital technology due to unfamiliar with it
2. Expensive	2. Expensive	2. Some handicrafts with large volumes, sophisticated technology and difficult to obtain raw materials are not convenient for teaching online, such as bamboo weaving and ceramics	2. Attract fans and customers
3. Difficult to meet the stipulations and rules of certain platforms	3. Find the right customers		
4. Find target audience	4. Time-consuming to use and update as too many platforms	3. It is easy to cope and hard to protect IP for online market	
5. Time consuming/Social media are distracting from making		4. Time consuming	
6. How to inherent traditional craft		5. Expensive	
7. Copyright/ IP			
8. Difficult to make choice			

Both UK and Chinese participants reported that digital platforms are useful to show and easily share information regarding making, connecting with a wider network and accessing more audiences. In addition, participants in London of the UK discussed the following opportunities for digital platforms:

- i) universities promote e-learning of making skills-e.g., universities could develop applications that help kids learning craft skills

- ii) co-design/make with customers- customers can more easily discuss and be involved in the design process e.g. through social media
- iii) save time: e.g., -it is quick to use 3D printing to make mould compared traditional hand-made moulds for ceramics.
- iv) improve quality- e.g., machine-made embroidery work can increase speed and quality of production.
- v) modify easily- e.g., it is very convenient to use 3D modelling and 3D printing the prototype to facilitate the making process.
- vi) cheap/free- e.g., there is no charge to use most of the digital platforms.
- vii) diverse/abundant- e.g., digital technologies make more possibilities to craftwork such as 3D printing ceramics and laser-cutting jewellery.
- viii) evolution of the available technology -e.g., an increasing number of digital technologies such as home-based 3D printers are available to makers nowadays.
- ix) novelty -e.g., new ways of making appear and support more novel and unique craftwork.

Meanwhile, participants from urban China shared five different possibilities of using digital platforms to facilitate craft:

- i) Online activities to promote craft making, e.g., live-streaming craft making competitions
- ii) Develop applications for Craft making education and entertainment
- iii) Provide sharing service of digital equipment - to reduce cost and improve utilisation rate
- iv) Provide a crowdfunding platform - for the public to evaluate creative designs, and determine whether to produce or not based on consumers' feedback or pre-production sales
- v) Build an online graphic pattern library - to reduce the time needed for graphic design work

Table 12.3. Opportunities of digital platforms for craft

UK		China	
City	Rural	City	Rural
1. Access to resource/information/opportunities in terms of ideas/inspiration/ Sharing information/ knowledge	1. Showing and sharing information in terms of making 2. Easier sharing 3. Online marketplaces translate to a wider network 4. Access more audiences	1. Provide more products/ design for customers 2. Help craftsmen connect with manufacturers (networking) 3. Access audiences 4. Online activities to promote craft making, e.g., live-streaming craft making competitions 5. Develop applications for Craft making education and entertainment	1. Access more information regarding making 2. Networking 3. Access more audiences 4. Using digital platforms 5. to teach online
2. Outsourcing digital can save recourse of making			
3. Networking			
4. Generating audiences			
5. Universities promote e-learning of making			
6. Co-design/make with customers			

<p>7. Saving time</p> <p>8. Quality guarantee</p> <p>9. Easy to modify</p> <p>10. Cheap/Free</p> <p>11. Diverse/ Abundant</p> <p>12. Evolution of the available technology</p> <p>13. Novelty</p>		<p>6. Provide sharing service of digital equipment, reduce cost and improve utilisation rate</p> <p>7. Provide a crowdfunding platform for the public to evaluate the creative design, and determine whether to produce or not based on consumers' feedback or pre-sale</p> <p>8. Build an online graphic pattern library and rapid prototyping tools to reduce the period of graphic design</p>	
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Workshop schedule

- **Registration and lunch**

Sign the participant's information sheet and consent form

- **Session 1: Welcome and introduction**

Good afternoon. It is our pleasure to invite you to participate in this workshop. The aim of this workshop is to identify the uses and opportunities for digital platforms for craft and the wider Creative Economy.

Facilitators (Note: *Assistant records the workshop by mobile phone.*)

3 Groups

Group number	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Facilitator			
Assistant			
Photographer			
Participants' name			

- Participants self-introduction
(Name, main role in craft sector, craft form)

- **Session 2: Group Discussion-Craft (12:45-13:45/ 60mins)**

- Craft makers bring one example/piece of their work (or pictures) and share their craft work to other group members, and how they describe themselves (e.g. maker, craft person, etc.) (15mins)
 - o Note: Assistant takes photos when makers introduce their work
- Introduce the concept of the craft and ask participants their views about craft(10mins)

Q: What is (your understanding about) craft?

- o Note: Our definition of craft: the key thing is that they are skilled activities which produce physical objects and also inherit the cultural heritage

Q: What is the value and features of (your) craft?

Q: What is the biggest challenge for (your) craft activities?

Q: What do you see as the difference between art, craft, and design?

Q: What is the motivation of your craft activities?

- Making process

Q: How do you work? *Probe:* work alone/ collaborate with others?

Q: *For Makers: What kinds of tools and materials do you use for making your craft?*

Q: *For Makers: what is the history of your craft?*

- Promotion

Q: Where are your main customers come from?

Q: How are you promoting your craft?

Q: What are the most important things for you promote in advertising your craft?

Q: Why do you think people buy your craft? What kinds of things are your customers interested to know about your craft?

Q: What challenges do you meet when promoting your craft?

- If time: making a “day in the life” descriptions of craft activities, plotting out the making process from ideation – creation – production – distribution – consumption and mapping the points of the digital footprint on that (Might be suitable for the interviews?)

13:45-14:00 Tea break

▪ **Session 3: Case studies** (14:00-14:30/30mins)

- Game for craft education in China by Duoduo Zhang (10-15mins)
- Inspiring examples about applying digital platforms for craft (5 mins)
Introduce the concept of digital platforms. There are various forms of digital platforms, like social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, online marketplaces such as eBay and Amazon, also digital productions like the popular 3D printers.
- Examples of hybrid crafts (5mins) [Lauren]
- Questions and answers (5mins)

▪ **Session 4: Group discussion- Digital platforms for craft** (14:30-15:50/80mins)

- Discuss the understanding and current use of digital platforms for craft

Q: What is your understanding of the term “digital platforms”?

- o Note: Our definition of digital platforms: we are interested in all kinds of use of digital technologies in craft, from social media (such as Facebook and Twitter) and online marketplaces (such as eBay and Amazon) through to digital production tools (the popular 3D printers) and materials.

Q: What digital platforms are used in the UK? / Do you know any digital platforms are used for craft?

Q: Whether the digital age changes your craft activities?

Probe: Can you share changes that digital platforms bring to your craft activities?

Q: What is the most significant change that digital platforms bring to (your) craft activities?

Q: Would you be interested in knowing more about digital platforms for your craft activities?

Probe: What are you looking for regarding applying digital platforms in your craft activities?

- **Identify the challenges and opportunities of using digital platforms**

Digital production tools: e.g. 3D printers, laser cutter.

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

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

Q: What is your opinion on using digital technologies?

Q: Have you met any difficulties in using digital technologies? What are the challenges for craft makers to use these digital technologies?

- Note: Ask participants write down the challenges on the post-it-notes and put on the whiteboard.

Q: What are the opportunities that digital technologies bring to the craft sector?

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

Online channel/social media:

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

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

Q: Have you met any difficulties in using online channel/social media? What are the challenges that using online channel/social media in craft?

- Note: Ask participants write down the challenges on the post-it-notes and put on the whiteboard.

Q: 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?

Online marketplaces:

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

Q: What is your opinion of using online marketplaces?

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

- Note: Ask participants write down the challenges on the post-it-notes and put on the whiteboard.

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

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

Digital software:

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

Probe: What they are? How you use them?

Q: What is your opinion of using software?

Q: What do you find are the challenges of using software?

- Note: Ask participants write down the challenges on the post-it-notes and put on the whiteboard.

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

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

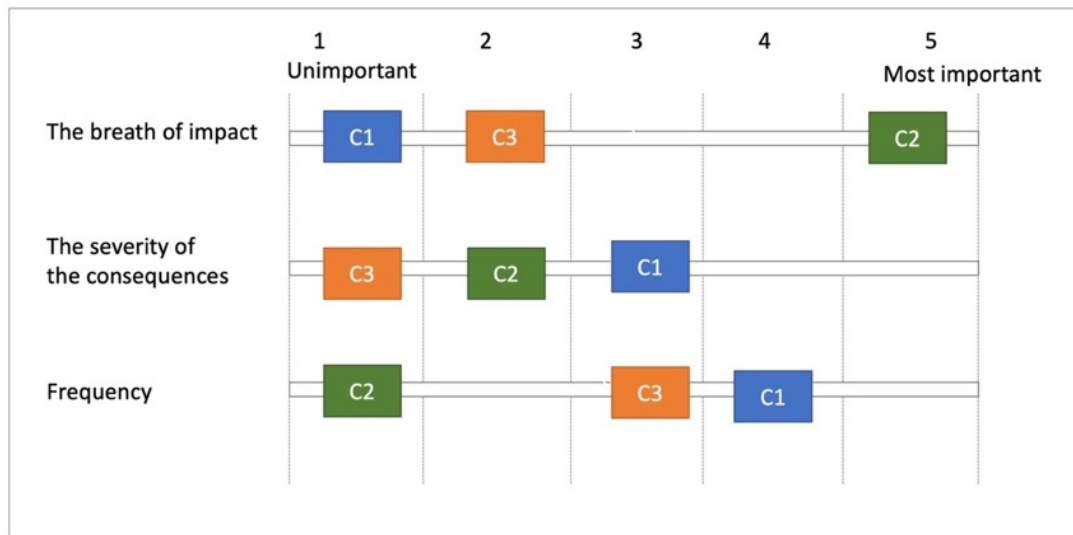
Q: Have you known or used any other digital platforms in craft that we have not discussed yet?

Q: Have you known any good example of applying digital platforms in craft?

Probe: Can you share a good example? Have you known any good example of applying digital platforms in other sectors?

Q: Are there any IP issues related to your craft activities?

- **Categorise the challenges of digital platforms for craft**
- o Rank the priority of the challenges (Tradeoff Slider)
C1= Challenge1 Example impact: Time, Budget and Quality



Three factors: Time & Budget & Quality C1 = Challenge 1

- **Brainstorming the potential recommendations(15mins)**
Focusing on the top 3 challenges and can discuss other challenges if have got more time
- **Prepare for cross-group discussion**
- **Session 5: Sharing and summary**
- **Each group shares discussion results (5mins each group*3=15mins)**
- **Summarise the workshop and send invitation of researcher immersion (5-10mins)**

Interview and Focus Group topics

OPENING (about 2-3mins)

- Introduction

Read participants information sheet and sign the consent form

- What is our project about?

Digital Platforms for Craft in the UK and China

Research Question:

How are digital platforms used and what value do they generate for the craft sector in the Creative Economies of China and the UK given the differing cultural heritages and divergent contemporary digital culture, regulation, and infrastructure.

we are interested in all kinds of use of digital technologies in craft, from social media and online marketplaces through to digital production tools and materials. Also we are interested in all sorts of crafts from jewellery to pottery (or whatever the range is), and also digital crafts – the key thing is that they are skilled activities which produce physical objects and also inherit cultural heritage.

BODY (about 30mins or more)

1. What is your main role with regards to craft?

What craft activities you involved in?

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

How do you support them?

2. 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?

3. What is your understanding about digital 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?

4. 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?

5. Would you please introduce the use of digital technologies in your organisation?

6. 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?

7. 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?

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

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

9. 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?

10. What is your opinion of using online marketplaces?

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

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

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

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

13. 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?

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

15. 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?

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

Do you have any questions about our project?

Thanks and close