NETWORK of NETWORKS

A research project to unearth Cornwall's creative networks

WHAT? WHY? HOW?

In 2020, we investigated the many formal and informal networks for creatives, artists and cultural organisations across Cornwall, noticing what "network" means to different people in different sectors.

How can we tailor a dedicated approach to networking that:

- Creatives actually want to be a part of
- Works rurally
- Is lasting
- Is inclusive

To demystify networks and networking in our rural economy, and create useful, publicly accessible resources that provide a bird's eye view of the various creative "intersections" across Cornwall.

- Do people feel well connected and networked?
- What barriers do creatives face to making new connections?
- How can networking best enable meaningful connections?

Mapping

Existing networks across Cornwall

Surveys - Quantitative

Exploring how respondents felt about networks and networking.

Interviews - Qualitative

Well established and emerging individuals across a range of sectors.

We are conscious that our work, now published, can support a number of other national and local initiatives, particularly in response to Cornwall Council's 2021–25 Creative Manifesto, Falmouth Universities 2021 "Hubs" report, and the PECs November 2020 "Creative Microclusters" research.

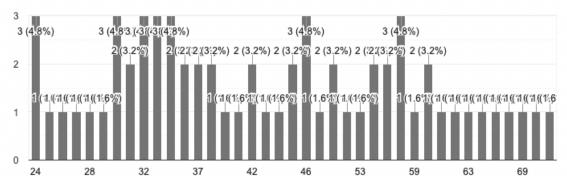
WE ARE

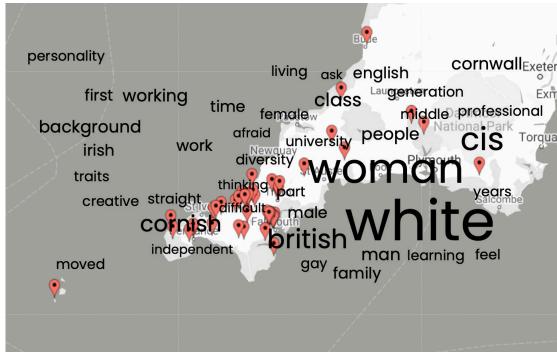




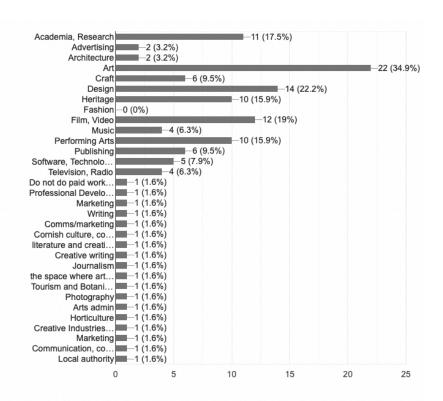
HANNAH IRWIN

....SCOPE& LIMITS

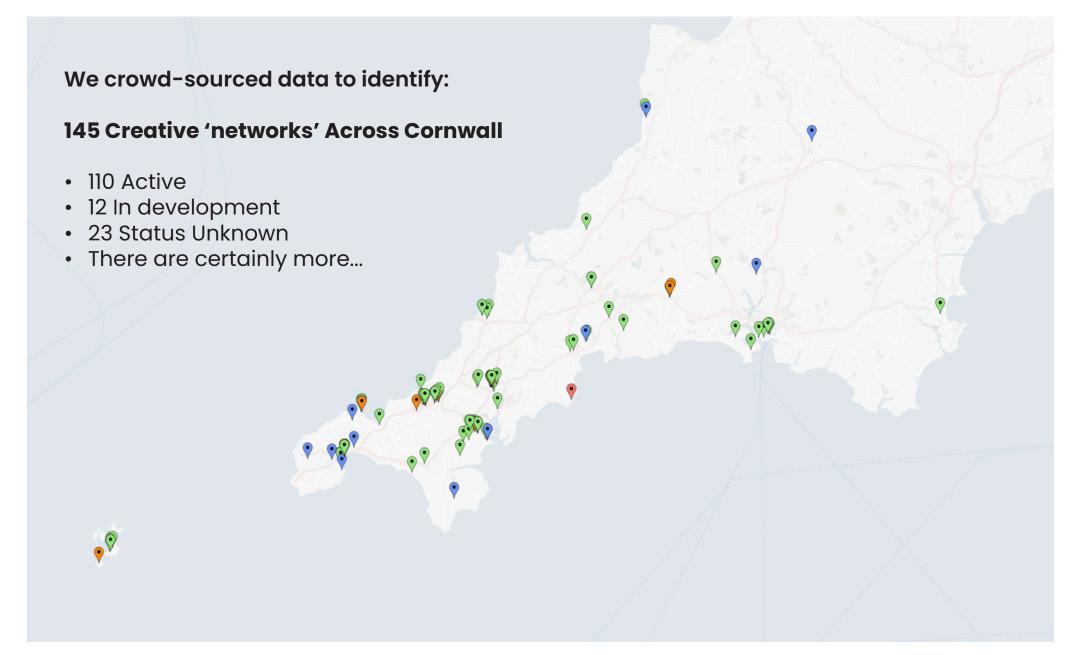




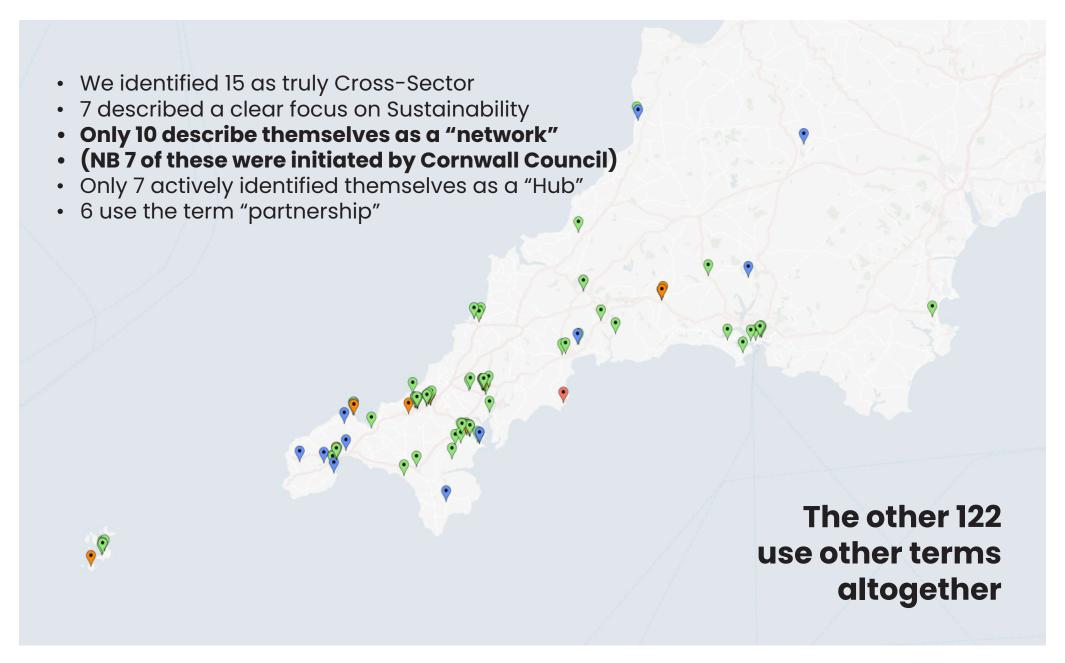
- 63 respondents
- 24 62 Y.O
- Broad spread across Cornwall
- Top 5 sectors: Art, Design, Academia, Film, Performing Arts
- Top 5 ways of networking: At an event, as a member of an organisation, Via Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn
- Lack of diversity in our own networks speaks to a wider issue in Cornwall



MAP



MAP



·············CONCLUSION

A PROBLEM OF SEMANTICS

The language around networks is confusing and ambiguous

..... COLLECTIVES

Most of the 'networks' named, weren't networks at all but:

- Places where networks overlap
- Events when networks come together
- Groups working towards a mutual goal

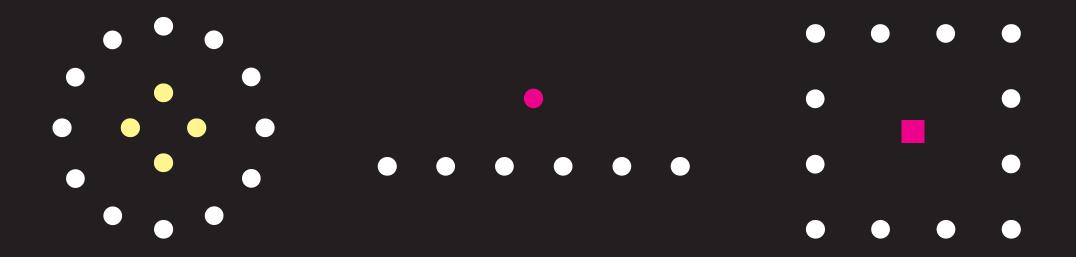
These **collectives** can be a gateway into, or a **catalyst** for networks and are easily mistaken for the networks themselves.

Many people also referenced:

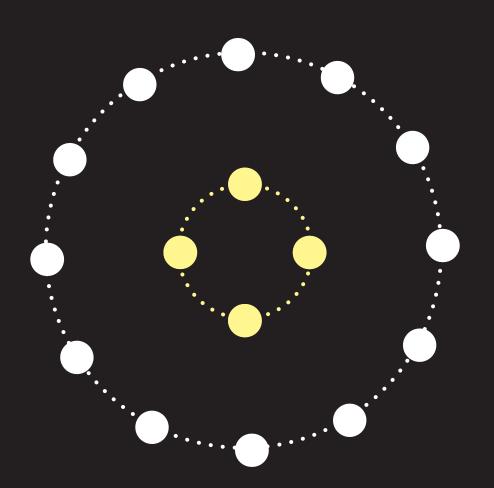
- Individuals who are well networked
- Organisations that work within communities e.g. ArtsWell (usually charities or CICs)
- Businesses with a broad client base e.g.: Screen Cornwall
- Platforms that promote network members e.g.: Cornwall365

SOLUTION

A TYPOLOGY OF COMMON COLLECTIVES



COMMUNITY



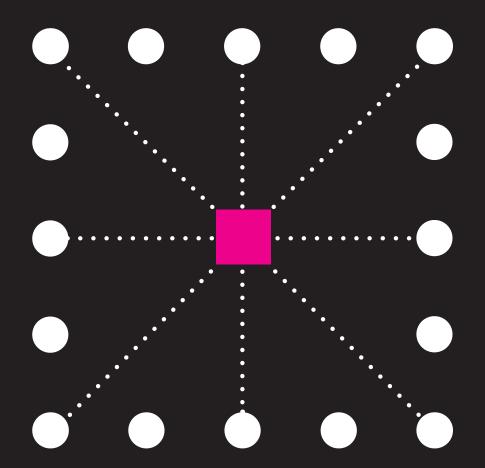
Characterised by:

COMMON GROUND

- Mutual investment in a place or purpose.
- Membership or involvement is flexible and usually voluntary.
- Not usually hierarchical.
- Round table approach.
- May have an inner circle of more active members e.g.: Voluntary committee.

e.g. Plymouth Design Forum
Climate Designers (Worldwide)

HUB



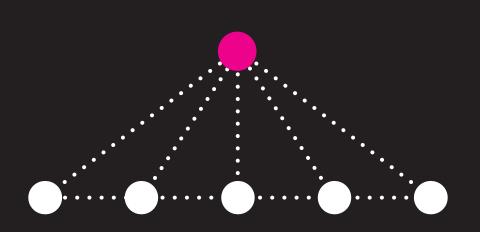
Characterised by:

CENTRAL NUCLEUS

- Managed or curated centrally.
- Tethered:
- To a physical space,
- To an organisation.
- More structured in nature.
- Usually bound by compliance GDPR.
- Members of a hub collective do not directly connect with other members
 - there is either no culture or means to support this.
- Therefore, connections are made via the central nucleus.
- Members **co-exist** but don't often collaborate.

e.g. Co-working spaces or studio complexes

COHORT



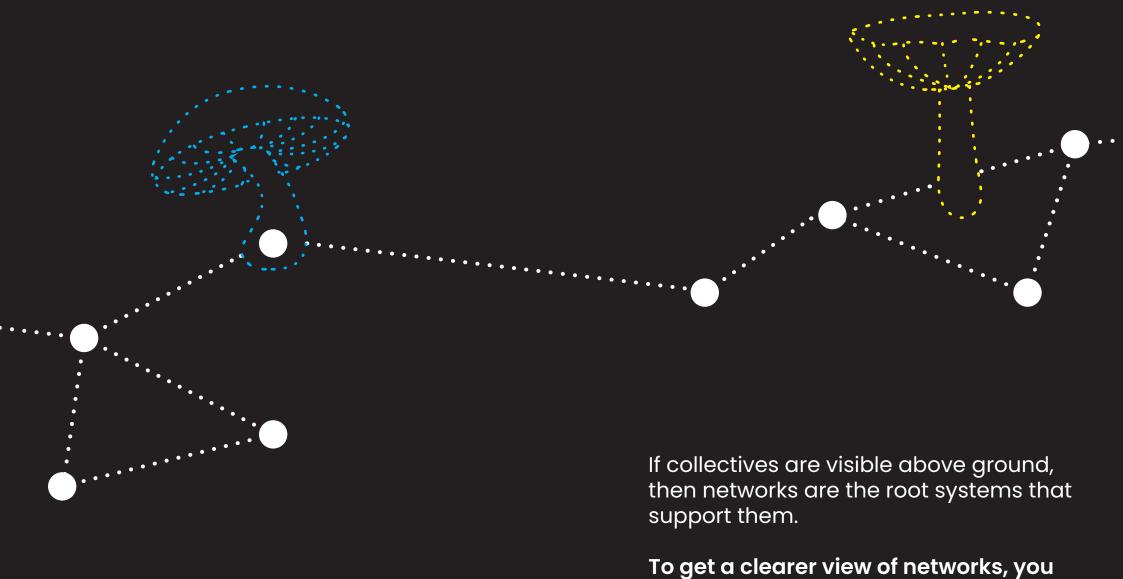
Characterised by:

A SHARED JOURNEY

- Usually involves group learning.
- Goal oriented.
- Defined duration.
- May also be collaborative.
- Cohort members move in parallel.
- Defined hierarchical structure.
- Leader(s), teacher(s) or facilitator(s).
- May represent an organisation.

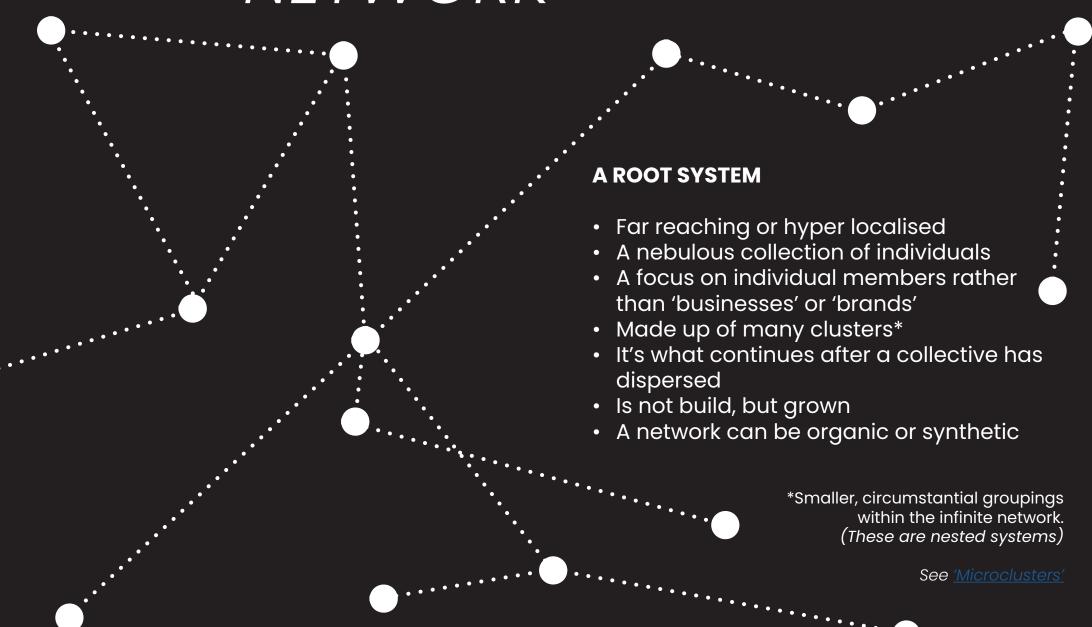
e.g. B Corp Network
BBC Writers Room
CCLDP

····ABOVE & BELOW

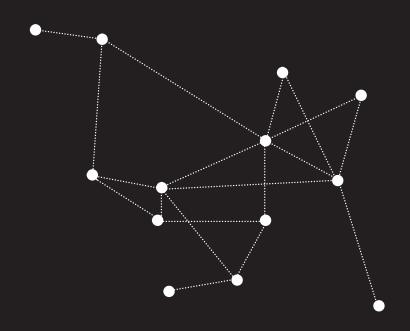


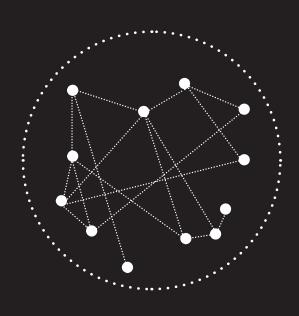
have to dig a little deeper.

NETWORK



NETWORK





ORGANIC

Circumstantial | Uncurated | Social

Smaller networks based on clusters of individuals and not around organisations.

More nebulous and harder to define.

E.g. a group of habitual dog walkers in an area

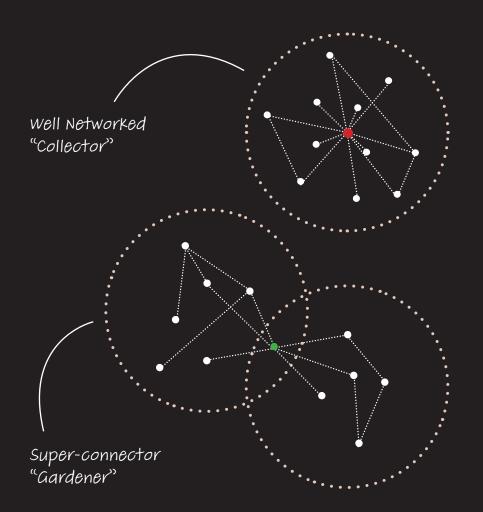
SYNTHETIC

Curated | Analysed | Professional

Defined. Goals, outcomes and objectives are usually predetermined. Often orbits an organisation, with a focus on professional rather than social benefits. Requires resource; often funded or facilitated.

E.g. Creative Industries Federation

SUPER-CONNECTOR



A STATE NOT A TRAIT

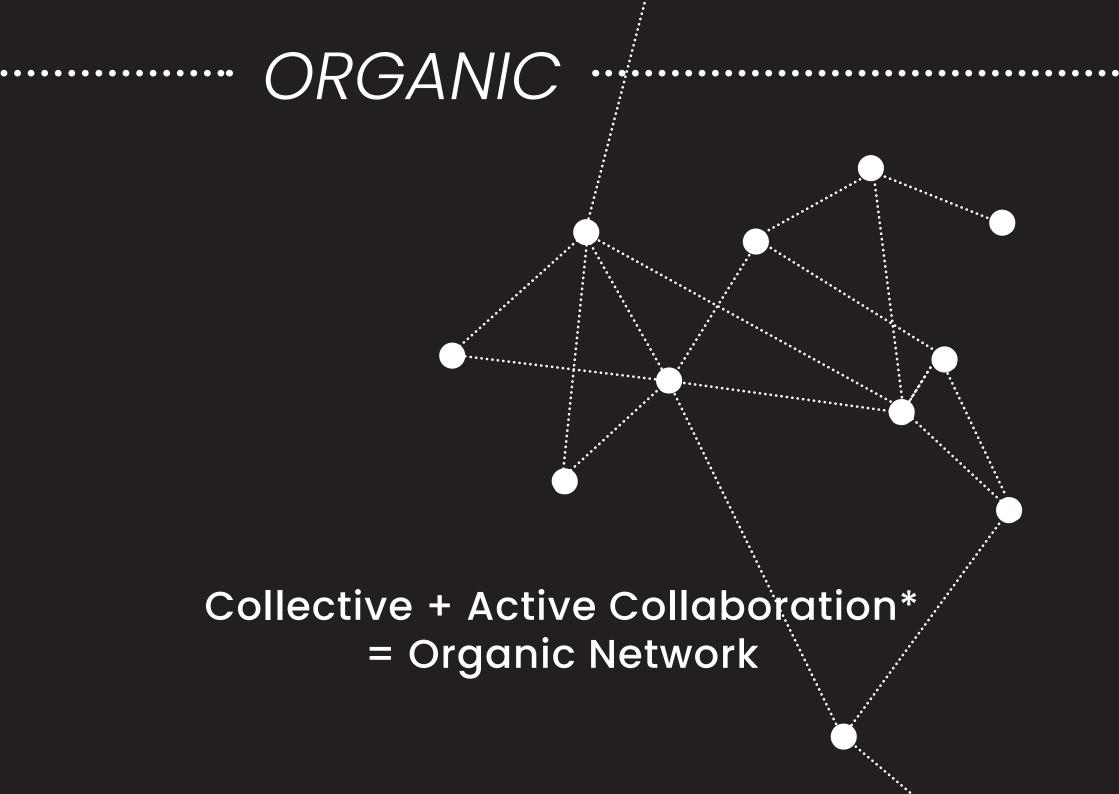
- A role that people play
- No one can be a super connector all of the time - it's a mindset
- Taking themselves out of the equation
- Connecting on behalf of others
- Signposting not gate-keeping
- Facilitating channels of movement between network "clusters"

HOW TO SPOT A SUPER-CONNECTOR

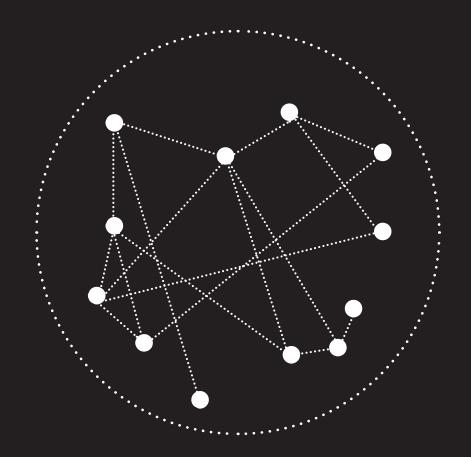
- Generosity
- Mobility
- Not fixed at the centre of one cluster
- Micro & macro perspectives
- Wider understanding of networks
- · Sense of personal responsibility

There is an important distinction between someone who is well networked and a super-connector

HOW TO GROW A SUCCESSFUL **NETWORK** FROM SCRATCH



SYNTHETIC



Purpose + Resource + Super-connector(s) = Synthetic Network

RECOMMENDATIONS

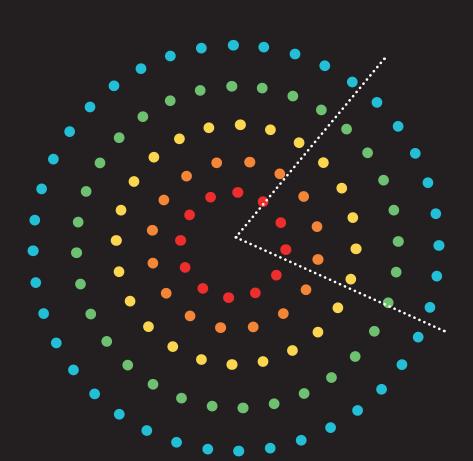
NETWORKING IS ALWAYS AN OUTCOME, NOT A PURPOSE

Collective + Networking = Purpose

Collective + Purpose = Networking

2

WORK OUTWARDS



For example:

Central: Founders, CEOs, MDs Senior Positions Mid-Weight Part time or junior

Peripheral: consultants, freelancers

3

NOT JUST NOUNS

I am a

......

I share stories, build positive relationships and make powerful connections. I'm always looking for creative collaborations.

I am a

I collaborate with teenagers and children to co-design new services, products, and creative communications campaigns that make the world a little bit better for everyone.

3

NOT JUST NOUNS

I am a Project Manager

......

I share stories, build positive relationships and make powerful connections. I'm always looking for creative collaborations.

I am a Creative Director

I collaborate with teenagers and children to co-design new services, products, and creative communications campaigns that make the world a little bit better for everyone.

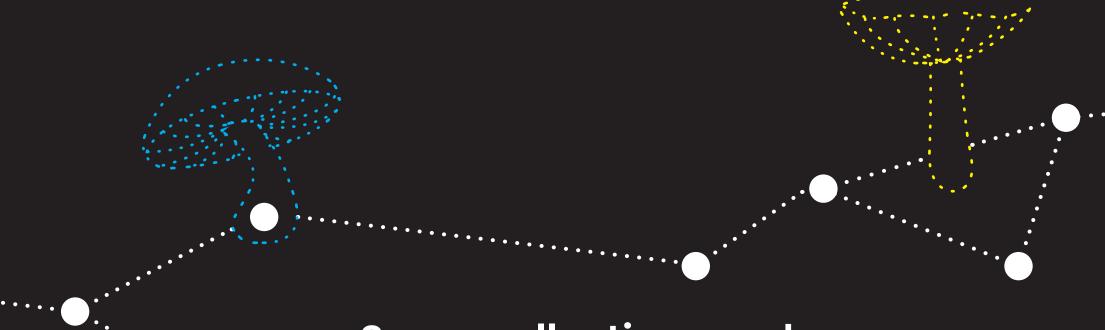
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DO THE MATHS

Purpose + Resource + Superconnector(s) = Synthetic Network

Collective + Active Collaboration* = Organic Network

LIVE FAST DIE YOUNG



Some collectives and synthetic networks are short-lived (and that's OK)

DON'T CALLIT NETWORKING!

"" APPLICATIONS & USES

For the Sector

- Provides a common language to articulate the role and value of creative networks.
- Amplifies sector voice.
- Takes into acount the freelance perspective.

For Individuals

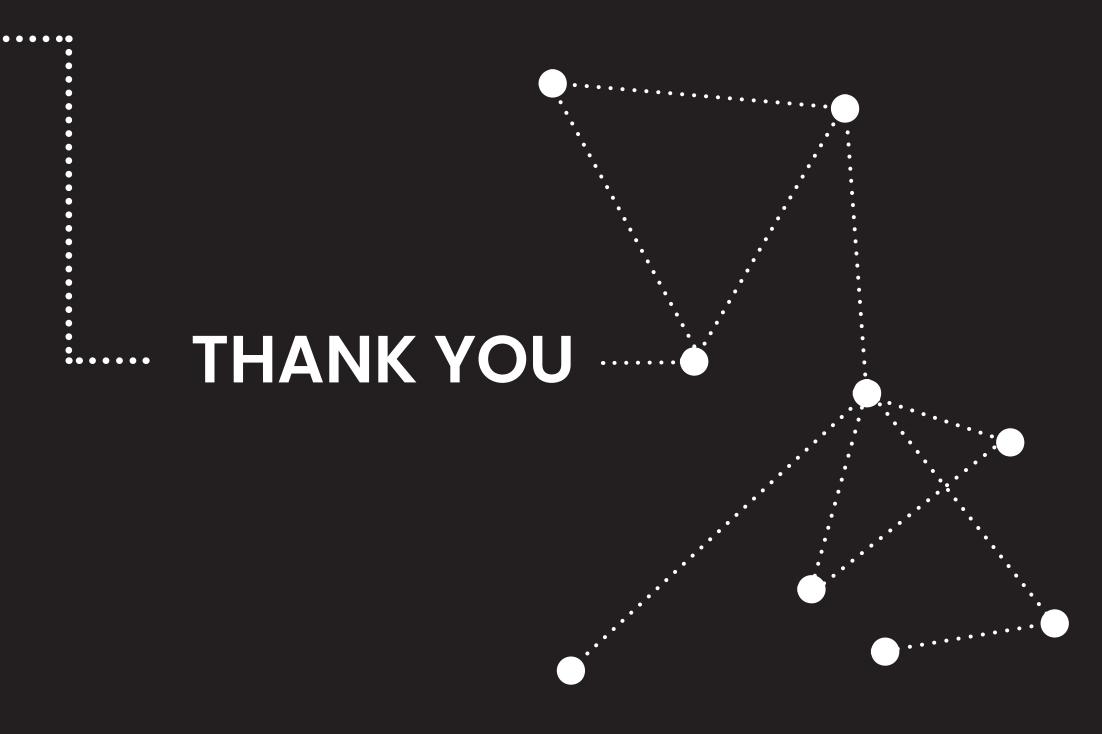
- Demystify networks and networking.
- Understand and identify the different types of collectives and resulting networks.
- Give a bird's eye view of existing networks in Cornwall.

For Organisations

 Useful for anyone interested in starting a collective or synthetic network and/or creating fertile ground for organic networks to grow.

For Funders

- Suggest alternative, clearer terminology when talking about networks and collectives.
- Vital for funders to understand the lasting impact and potential of collectives, even those that are short-lived.
- Help to inform useful objectives for funded synthetic networks.



This research was originally presented in 2020 within the Creative and Cultural Leadership Development Programme in Cornwall. It is now published with support from Screen Cornwall.

Bethany Lyne - Cornwall 365
Hannah Irwin - University of Plymouth
Emily Sorrell - Doorstep Creatives