

THE COCKPIT EFFECT 2026

May 2026

cockpitstudios.org



40 YEARS

of craft excellence

THE COCKPIT EFFECT 2026

Celebrating 40 Years of Craft



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FOREWORD



It gives me great pleasure to introduce the 2026 edition of The Cockpit Effect – a milestone year, as Cockpit celebrates its 40th Anniversary.

Over 40 years Cockpit has become one of the UK's most influential spaces for craft and making, and our impact can be measured in the very large number of makers that have built successful careers and businesses over that time.

Cockpit equips makers to succeed creatively and commercially, and our signature business incubation package offers multi-stage support, with formal professional development workshops and one-to-one coaching. In addition, our team offers informal support with applications for residencies, scholarships, competitions, and funding – plus we have a community of makers ready to share their experience.

Recognising a challenging macroeconomic environment, we have facilitated a number of new commercial opportunities for our makers this year. These have encompassed the launch of The Cockpit Edit, our e-commerce platform; brokering major commissions (One Triton Square) and curating exhibitions in-house and with external partners (Paul Mellon Centre); and offering special training for those makers interested in leading workshops in schools and the local community.

Cockpit is integral to the wider craft ecosystem, and we share our expertise nationally. Beyond our studios, our professional development programmes are now open to individual makers as well as partner organisations. Cockpit convenes makers from across the country and acts as a catalyst for those participating to stay in touch subsequently. Our expanded suite of workshops addresses the needs of makers at every stage of their journey, including those exploring whether to turn their creativity into a career or solo business.

Our Awards and Bursaries remove socio-economic barriers to participation, and I am delighted that support for this area of our work has grown this year. We are incredibly grateful to all our funding partners and individual supporters, and trust that this report brings to life the impact and value of your support. Thank you.

As you would expect, as we look ahead to the next 40 years, we remain ambitious. We must respond to the demand for our services and ensure that Cockpit remains the leading provider in craft business incubation, agile and attuned to the needs of makers. We will continue to play a pivotal role in creating successful pathways into craft and engaging and educating the widest public.

There is much to do, and we look forward to working closely with you and sharing our plans.

Jonathan Burton
CEO, Cockpit

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Cockpit Effect offers insights into the craft businesses that Cockpit supports, the challenges they face, the support Cockpit offers, and the impact and value of that support.

It also gives context to the trading and economic environment these craft businesses have to navigate.

The report highlights the creativity of our makers: not only in their work, but also in the ways they respond to challenges, reach their audiences, and develop sustainable models for their businesses.

Cockpit is rightly celebrated as a diverse community across age, cultural background, craft discipline, business model, practice type, and years of experience. Encompassing 25 different craft disciplines, our 173 makers represent all career stages and all types of business models.

Demand for the space and support that Cockpit offers has never been stronger. Our buildings are fuller than ever, with more than seven applicants for every available place. Through our work with external organisations, Cockpit is reaching even more makers throughout the UK and overseas, and this year we significantly grew our work with individual makers based outside of Cockpit's two London studio sites.

Overall, the financial performance of our community has been strong, and our survey findings are encouraging. Average turnover reported for the year 2024/25 was £43,181, with makers reporting an increase of 21% on the previous year. Extrapolating this data for the whole community, this indicates a turnover in excess of £7.4 million.

The average profit reported was £14,563, with makers reporting an increase of 38% on the previous year. For the community as a whole, this gives a combined profit of £2.5 million.

When the value of employment, whether PAYE or freelancers, is added, the Gross Value Added for the community in total is estimated to be £3.9 million. In concrete terms, this means that every £1 invested in Cockpit generates a return of £3.90.



total annual Gross Value Added

£3.9
MILLION



£1 invested in Cockpit generates a return of

£3.90

Key themes from this year's report:

A Challenging Environment

While the financial data provided by our makers is strong, it is important to note that the financial data that supports this report is taken from the last two complete tax years (2023/24 and 2024/25). There is a natural time lag between the hard data captured for this report and our current interactions with makers.

As business coaches, we hear first-hand how things are in real time, and the economic and political climate has become even more concerning since the survey was conducted in February 2026.

We also see stark differences in makers' experiences, depending on where their work is positioned and their target audience.

The makers' thoughts on current and future conditions range from general concern to specific worries about factors such as the rising cost of materials. This is explored more in the Market for Craft section of this report.

The Importance of Support

Our makers show a belief in themselves and an appreciation for the support they gain from Cockpit.

A major element of this support is coaching and workshops from the Business Incubation team, but just as important is the support that comes from the community itself – from other makers sharing expertise, advice, and experience.

Cockpit continues to look for ways to link our makers to opportunities. In the past twelve months we have developed The Cockpit Edit exhibition and e-commerce platform to create a new route to market for makers, and worked with partner organisations seeking public commissions and curated craft content. We have engaged influential trade buyers and offered community-based opportunities like public workshops.



Collectively, our makers tell us that they believe there will be opportunities for growth in the future and that they feel positioned to take advantage of these opportunities, with Cockpit's support.

Expanding Opportunities

This year has seen us invest further resources to engage makers outside Cockpit. Previously, support for external makers has been limited to those accessing Cockpit's expertise through partner organisations. With the expansion of the Business Incubation team in 2025, we are now able to offer online workshops to individual makers outside of Cockpit. Many places on these workshops are subsidised by funders and partners, ensuring that our ethos of bridging the gap between talent and opportunity extends to makers across the country.

Our priority in the next period is to reach more makers nationally and internationally, whether as individuals or through partner organisations.

David Crump, Head of Business Incubation, Cockpit



THE COCKPIT EFFECT 2026

COMMUNITY



173
MAKERS

29%
global
majority



25
DISCIPLINES



27%
jewellery



14%
textiles



14%
ceramics

ROUTES TO MARKET



27%
makers
sell through
retailers



36%
makers
sell through
galleries



online
sales
18%
of
turnover

▶ **£796K**
for Cockpit
as a whole



31%
gained major
commissions



33%
makers
are
exporting

FINANCIALS



total
annual sales
£7.5
MILLION



average
turnover
UP 21%
year-on-year



average
profits
UP 38%
year-on-year



total annual Gross
Value Added
£3.9
MILLION



£1 invested in
Cockpit generates
a return of
£3.90

BUSINESS SUPPORT



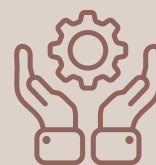
86 workshops



614 coaching
sessions



238 makers
supported



1838 hours of
business
support



40 YEARS OF SUPPORTING MAKERS

ABOUT COCKPIT

Cockpit is London's centre for excellence in craft and an award-winning social enterprise. For 40 years, Cockpit has been at the heart of the craft community, nurturing and supporting craftspeople at every stage of their careers.

Cockpit is home to 173 independent creative businesses across two London sites. Thanks to funded studio space, our signature professional development programme, and in-house business coaching, Cockpit makers thrive, with many going on to become international leaders in their fields.

Cockpit gives makers tools to build their businesses so they can focus on what they do best: making. As the UK's only incubator for craft, we help makers to succeed on their own terms, creatively and commercially.

Bridging the gap between talent and opportunity, Cockpit's education and careers programmes open pathways into creative employment for people from all backgrounds. Each year we support 40 new makers into practice, joining our community on funded places. Offering space, equipment, and advice that would otherwise be out of reach, these Awards and Bursaries give new makers the strongest possible footing to go on to future success.

From studio space to business advice, Cockpit is where careers in craft are made.





Our Story

Cockpit's name comes from our first studio site at Cockpit Yard, Bloomsbury. Originally a seventeenth-century cockfighting arena, the yard was taken over by a cabinet maker in 1745. It has been a site for craft and making ever since.

Cockpit as we know it today began in 1986, when Camden Recycling created five starter units in Cockpit Yard for young, unemployed makers. In the early 2000s, we opened our second location in Deptford and launched our pioneering business support programme. From there, Cockpit's reputation grew to become *the* destination for makers starting up in practice. Highly sought after, a place at Cockpit is a mark of quality.

In 2023 we completed a major development of our Deptford building. Alongside shared hubs for woodworking, leatherworking, and weaving, new studios, and a Learning Centre, our café and Craft Garden now allow us to welcome our neighbours into our community.

Beyond the makers based in our two buildings, Cockpit has always been keen to support the wider craft and creative community. As we detail in this report, 2025 saw a significant expansion of that support locally and throughout the UK.



‘Before starting at Cockpit, I knew barely anything about running a business, and throughout [my time here] my knowledge has really grown. With the mentoring support, I have managed to achieve goals I had only vaguely thought about before, such as designing and starting my own online shop.’

Eva Dennis,
recipient of the 2020 Make It Award

MAKER PROFILE

SHANNON LEE

Shannon joined Cockpit in April 2025 with the support of a Haberdashers' Award. Following completion of the Award, Shannon successfully applied to stay on in Deptford.

I'm Shannon Lee, and I'm a knitwear designer, maker, and pattern writer.

I create pieces on my hand powered knitting machine, as well as using hand knit and crochet techniques. I work exclusively with deadstock, surplus, and secondhand materials to make my collections, whilst using as many zero-waste practices as possible to reduce the amount of waste I produce.

I draw inspiration from a number of places – colours and textures are taken from my love of the coastline, looking at where the land meets the sea. I take inspiration from preppy uniforms such as scouts and sailors, and often reference my Northumbrian heritage.

The challenges that I've faced during my career have been balancing the need to work part-time alongside my practice to be able to sustain myself financially. Not being able to give my full attention to my practice definitely felt as if there was a limit to how far I could push myself.

My achievements this year have been taking part in makers' markets across London in iconic venues such as Battersea Power Station, Coal Drops Yard, and Kew Gardens, as well as having success with a number of my knitting patterns, seeing them sell in countries across the globe.

My career highpoint is receiving the Haberdashers' Award and being able to move my practice into Cockpit Studios, which has enabled me to grow my business into something I can work on as my full-time career.

Being in the Cockpit community is incredibly inspiring, as the building is filled with craftspeople who all have a shared passion for making. Being in a shared studio has allowed me to build some wonderful friendships, as well as be surrounded by other makers to share ideas and hurdles with.

Having already secured a spot to trade at a music festival and the opportunity to write a knitting pattern for a publication, my ambitions for the year are to reach bigger audiences and hopefully explore new and exciting opportunities.



WHO WE ARE

Cockpit is committed to equity and inclusion and celebrates being a diverse community across age, cultural background, craft discipline, business model, craft practice, and years of experience.

Recognising that creativity and innovation are fuelled by diversity, we foster an inclusive culture where all aspects of diversity are embraced and seen as key to our success. Existing Cockpit makers play an important part, acting as role models for the next generation.

Craft Disciplines

Our 173 makers at Bloomsbury and Deptford work in 25 different disciplines. The top three disciplines continue to be jewellery (27%), ceramics (14%), and textiles (14%).

The distribution and concentration of disciplines is driven by several factors. The proximity of our Bloomsbury studios to London's Hatton Garden jewellery quarter is an obvious draw for jewellers.

Many of our Awards and Bursaries are discipline-specific, reflecting the focus of Livery Companies and the interests of other funders. The three Hubs in Deptford (leather, wood, and weave) attract many of our awardees, as well as offering additional facilities for more established makers.

We actively seek new funders for Awards and Bursaries, which allows us to further diversify our portfolio of disciplines.



MAKERS BY DISCIPLINE

26.8% Jewellery	1.7% Mosaic
14.3% Ceramics	1.1% Metalwork
13.7% Textiles	0.5% Stone Carving
7.4% Leather	0.5% Sculpting
5.7% Embroidery	0.5% Wood Carving
5.1% Wood	0.5% Bookbinding
5.1% Knitwear	0.5% Furniture Making
2.8% Print	0.5% Knife Making
2.2% Glass	0.5% Restoration/Conservation
2.2% Basketry	0.5% Luthier
1.7% Tailoring	0.5% Stage & Costume Design
1.7% Shoemaking	0.5% Gilding
1.7% Millinery	

‘Being in the Cockpit community is amazing, so supportive and inspiring, I absolutely love working side by side with makers of such beautiful work. It has definitely pushed my practice.’

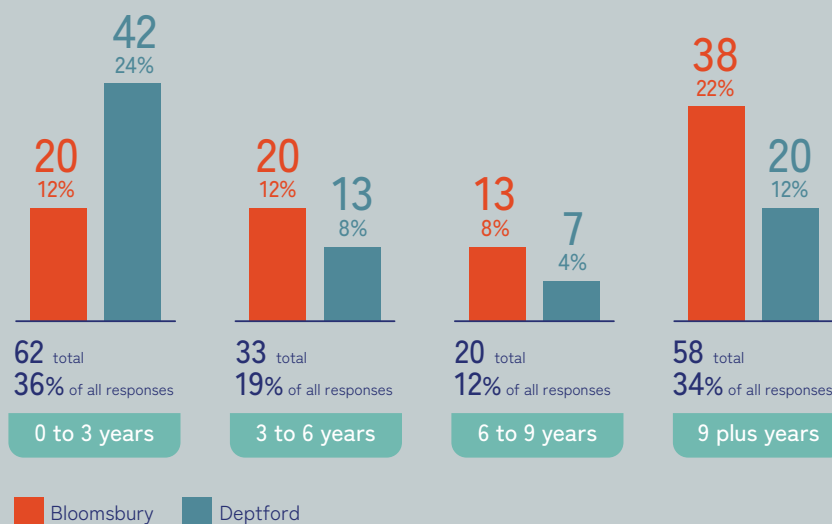
Jacky Oliver,
recipient of the
2022 Tin and Wire Bursary

Demographics

We celebrate being a diverse community – 29% of our makers are from a Global Majority background (an increase from 20% in 2020). Recognising that we have more to do if we want to reflect our local neighbourhoods and London as a whole, we have an Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Action Plan in place.

Career Stages

As the chart below shows, the majority of makers at Cockpit are either early career and have been with us for three years or less, or they are relatively mature businesses and have been at Cockpit for nine years or more.



Currently, 28 makers are on Awards or Bursaries, representing 16% of the whole Cockpit community. 25 of these awardees are based in Deptford – accounting for 30% of the community there and 60% of Deptford makers who have been in business for 3 years or less.

The redevelopment of Deptford in 2023 allowed us to create more studio capacity, and we now have 82 makers onsite in Deptford, the highest it has ever been.

Across both sites, the majority of our makers are sole traders (75%), with 17% being Limited Companies. A small number, mostly awardees who are at the early stages of their careers, are not yet registered. While many of our makers, particularly those at an early stage in their career, have other jobs to supplement their income, they are all pursuing their practice professionally and with dedication.

On average, the makers completing our financial survey had been in business for 12 years, and they had been at Cockpit for 8 of those years.

Global Majority



Cockpit Awards and Bursaries

Our Awards and Bursaries give early-career makers the time and space to develop and test a roadmap for future success. They also help address the financial reality facing young maker – that it will take a number of years before their practice reaches a sustainable level.

Our Awards recognise the awardees' skill and creative vision, giving them confidence to develop their passion and aspirations into a professional practice, while recognising the need for support at a crucial stage of their development.

The need for this support is recognised by our generous funders, many of whom now give two or three year Awards. In addition, some provide a match-funding bursary to encourage professional development and investment in the right tools and equipment for the early stages of the maker's business.

Over the past twelve months, 59% of the 17 makers who came to the end of an Award opted to stay on at Cockpit as standard studio holders.

MAKER PROFILE

JACKY OLIVER

Jacky joined Cockpit in 2022 on a Bursary supported by the Worshipful Company of Tin Plate Workers alias Wire Workers.

I'm Jacky Oliver, and I'm a metalsmith.

I work on a range of scales and with different processes. Most of my work is created from linear steel structures that are silver soldered. I also incorporate etching and enamelling in my work, and more recently, micro arc welding.

I draw inspiration from the briefs for different commissions, exhibitions, and residencies, but also from reading books and further developing projects I've worked on previously but didn't have the chance to fully explore the first time.

The challenges and blocks that I've faced during my career have included spending more time applying for opportunities than actually creating work, though this happens a lot less now.

This year I am working on the largest scale commission I have ever worked on. For this project I am working with someone else to fabricate the final piece. It has been years since I have worked at this kind of scale, so trying to develop ideas and working out costs for labour, materials, and my time managing the project has been tricky.

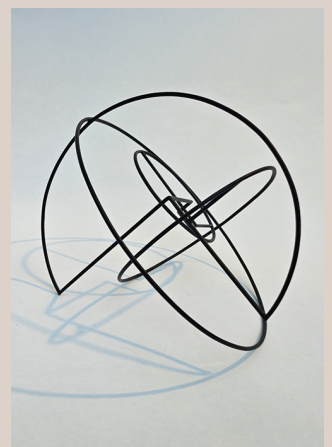
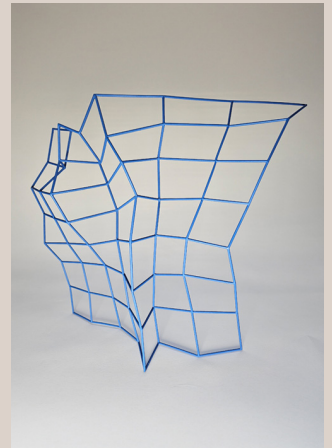
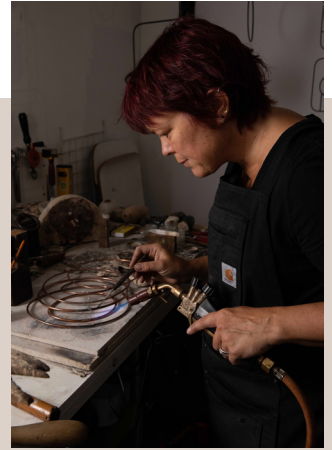
Balancing my teaching and my own practice has also been difficult. I love teaching and find it so rewarding, making it difficult to say no to any opportunities. This year so far I have taught in primary schools, after school clubs, on Foundation courses, as well as mentoring and teaching one-to-one sessions.

My career highpoints so far include my Bunhill Residency, Collect Open, joining Cockpit, and finding out that one of my Foundation students, who didn't have a clue about the world of craft before, is now teaching at Central St Martins and exhibiting at Collect and internationally. I was also pretty blown away when one of the kids in my workshops said it was the best thing she had ever done!

The Business Incubation team has helped me develop the confidence to make my application for the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QUEST). I have started to approach some of the places I would like to exhibit my work.

My ambitions for the year ahead include creating a fabulous piece for an enamelling exhibition, exhibiting with QUEST, and completing my large-scale commission.

What's next is lots more work – bigger, better, and more ambitious – lots of teaching, and plenty of tea and biscuits with visitors to my workshop.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Creating opportunities for the wider community to engage with craft is a high priority for Cockpit.

Our workshop programmes extend to all generations, from young people to those living with dementia, and their families and carers. These programmes also create new opportunities for makers, allowing them to complement making and selling with teaching and facilitating.

Deptford continues to grow as a space for all, from community members dropping in to use the café to local families taking part in the many workshops and community events on offer.

In 2025/26, we reached 731 children, young people, and community members, hosting careers days, school and university visits, and participatory workshops in partnership with Arts for Dementia and other community groups in Lewisham and Camden.

Case Studies

National Saturday Club

Cockpit's Saturday Club for Craft & Making, delivered as part of the National Saturday Club, grew in the 2024/25 academic year, with seventeen members attending our regular Saturday morning sessions across the academic year. Sessions included workshops led by Cockpit makers Alice Burhope, Charlotte Grierson, Woo Jin Joo, Jihyun Kim, Ashley Jess Knight, Lucy McGrath, Nick McMillen, Chloé Rochefort, and Esna Su, as well as alumni Kimberly Cookey-Gam and Kethi Copeland.

Across the year, club members worked with Cockpit makers to develop their hands-on making skills and grow their confidence as young creatives. In their final term, club members took the lead on designing a piece for the National Saturday Club's Summer Exhibition. The group worked with our Youth & Community Producer, Chris Webb, to develop the concept for a fantasy-inspired hanging installation, bringing their vision together through a wire and metalwork session led by Jacky Oliver. Club members attended their graduation and celebrated their work, which was showcased alongside work from 122 other clubs at Somerset House.

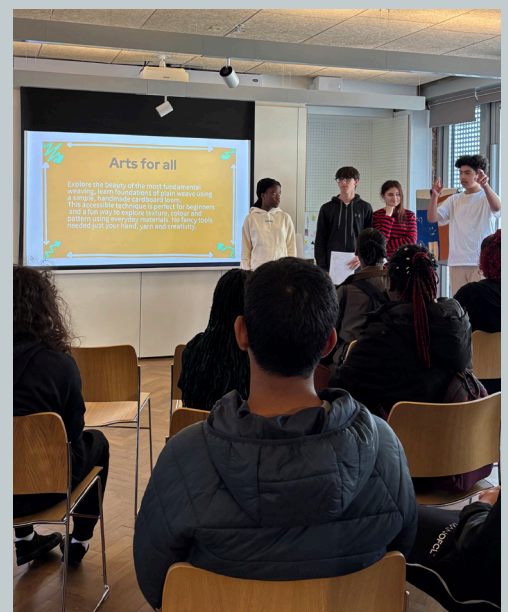


Lewisham Education Arts Network (LEAN)

As part of Cockpit’s annual programme of on-site and digital school visits, we partnered with LEAN to deliver a pilot experience for Year 10 pupils from local secondary schools. A group of sixteen students from Deptford Green School and Addey & Stanhope School took part in a week-long project, which invited them to curate and stage a temporary exhibition of Cockpit makers’ work in our Learning Centre. The week was led by the LEAN team, with support from Cockpit maker Kemi Ajose and our Youth & Community Producer, Chris Webb.

The students worked with Cockpit makers and staff, dividing into groups focused on curation and interpretation, marketing and communications, workshops, and visitor experience. At the end of the week, students opened their exhibition to fellow students, visitors from their schools, and members of the public.

The young people found it enjoyable, if hard work and challenging at times. Nearly all of the participants reported a significant increase in their confidence and communication skills, with one participant stating, ‘I really had a great week. I normally don’t really talk to people, but after this week I feel able to.’



Private tours
11

Private tour participants
119



University tours
6

University participants
157



Arts for Dementia workshops
16

Arts for Dementia participants
232



Creative Dimension Trust workshops
21

Creative Dimension Trust participants
166



National Saturday Club sessions
23

National Saturday Club total participants
17



LEAN sessions
10

LEAN participants
40

MAKER PROFILES

WOO JIN WOO

Woo Jin joined Cockpit in 2023 after receiving a three-year Award from the Bagri Foundation.

I am Woo Jin Joo, and I'm a mixed-media artist.

I predominantly work with textiles and embroidery, creating sculptural forms and tapestry-style work out of embroidery and found objects.

I draw my inspirations from East Asian myths, folklore, and rituals, finding resonance of these traditions in contemporary context.

My vision and ambition is to continue to expand my field of practice; to create immersive installations, performance, and artworks that bring enchantment and wonder to the audience.

My career highpoint so far is having my work acquired by the V&A, and winning the Ingram Collection Founder's Prize and the inaugural Cockpit Bagri Award!

A key turning point in my practice was when I realised that my practice isn't bound by my training or background, and I can grow and adapt in any medium or way of expression that resonates with me.

What being in the Cockpit community means to me is a sense of belonging and the creative energy that often leads to motivation and collaborations.

The Business Incubation team has helped me to stay focused and committed to my vision, breaking down my goals to achievable steps.



HUIMIN ZHANG

Huimin joined Cockpit in 2024 after successfully applying for a standard studio place.

My name is Zhang Huimin, and I am a gold artist.

I handcraft ultra-fine gold wire jewellery and decorative pieces.

My work focuses on the various emotional issues faced by middle-aged women. My technique is influenced by traditional filigree craftsmanship and European gold and silver thread embroidery. Much of my exploration is based on research into traditional crafts from different countries.

Achievements this year have included two Gold Awards in The Goldsmiths' Craft & Design Council Awards and an invitation to participate in a panel discussion at the V&A.

My career highpoint so far is having three of my works acquired by museums and institutions and being awarded a QEST Scholarship.

A key turning point in my practice was when I came to London to study a postgraduate course in Jewellery and Design, joining the Cockpit community after graduating. Cockpit has helped me overcome challenges by guiding me through the QEST application process and helping me develop a career plan.

WHY COCKPIT?

Financial Support

While all standard studio places are subsidised at Cockpit, the majority of makers join Cockpit on an Award or Bursary reducing the cost of their space even further. This additional financial support is critical to makers at an early stage in their career. It allows them time to develop their creative practice and test their business model. Our funders fully recognise the value of this support, and are increasingly moving to two- and three-year Awards to give makers more time to develop their creative practice and business.

Space

Some makers who join Cockpit are making the leap from 'making do' at home or in a shared space to having their first dedicated workspace. Others want to trade their existing, unsupported studio space for one that provides a greater sense of community, access to the Business Incubation team, and new marketing opportunities.

Equipment

Some of our Awards include provision of equipment that would otherwise be out of reach for the makers that apply due to cost, space, or both. Our Deptford development has enhanced this support with the addition of a Wood Hub alongside the existing Leather and Weave Hubs, offering shared use of specialist equipment for the entire maker community.

Audience

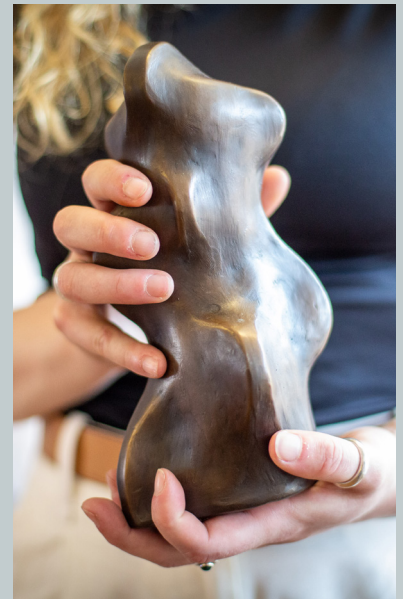
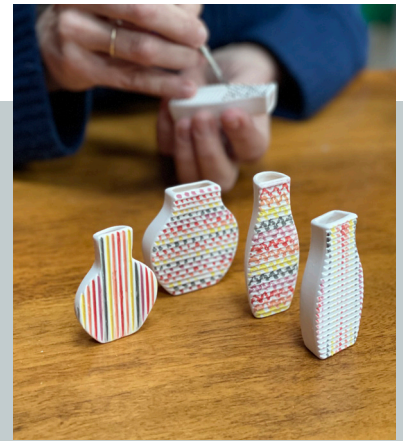
Cockpit's Open Studios events give makers unparalleled access to an audience of specialist buyers, curators, collectors, and commissioners. Open Studios are also an opportunity to test products with new audiences and gain valuable sales.

Community

Overcoming isolation and being among peers is an important motivator for joining Cockpit. Many makers who apply already have connections with existing studio holders, and some will have worked for makers based at one of our two sites. Others have experienced the benefits of being part of Cockpit's maker community through participation in one of our external programmes. The sense of community is evident in both Bloomsbury and Deptford, with makers at every stage of their career all having something to share.

Business Support

Throughout the application process, makers find it fairly straightforward to describe their practical needs but more difficult to pinpoint what they need in terms of business support. Applicants will often point to an existing or past studio holder as an example of what they would like their business to look like or what they aspire to achieve, without being able to unpick what support they might need to get there. What they do know is that they associate being at Cockpit with success, and they are ambitious to achieve this with our help.



'I have so much more clarity on what isn't working as what is worth pursuing. It had a direct impact on planning and selling at the Goldsmiths' Fair, as well as market research during and after the event. I feel less woolly around finances, planning, and marketing having done this Programme.'

Alex O'Connor,
participant on the
QUEST Professional
Development Programme

Applying to Cockpit

Makers at Cockpit are selected for excellence in craft skill, originality of creative voice, and ambition to succeed professionally. We also look for makers who wish to contribute to the wider craft community. Our places are advertised widely through the craft, design, and art media, with some Awards focused exclusively on addressing lack of representation or on particular craft disciplines.

Applications are reviewed by an in-house panel, and a shortlist of makers is then invited to interview. Selection panels comprise a Cockpit Business Coach, along with two or three in-house or external craft experts. Award and Bursary sponsors are invited to join the panel and be involved in the selection process.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme





As part of our commitment to increasing diversity across all Cockpit opportunities, we offer a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) for candidates who meet the relevant criteria. By focusing on historically marginalised groups, the scheme aims to remove systemic barriers in the recruitment process and foster a more inclusive community at Cockpit, across the maker community and staff team.

The GIS offers significant advantages for eligible applicants and the broader creative community, including:

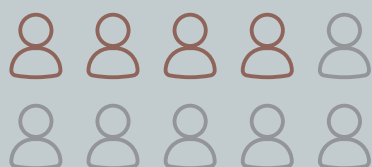
- **Ensuring fair opportunities:** By guaranteeing an interview for candidates who meet the essential criteria, the scheme reduces unconscious bias and levels the playing field in recruitment.
- **Increasing diversity within the community:** A more diverse environment fosters creativity, innovation, and a broader range of perspectives, benefiting Cockpit and its makers, staff, and audiences.
- **Highlighting craft skills and creativity:** Many individuals from marginalised communities face systemic obstacles in securing interviews. The GIS addresses this challenge by recognising not only formal qualifications but also the candidate's unique talents, craftsmanship, and creative thinking. This approach allows applicants to showcase their artistic abilities, which are essential in Cockpit's creative and craft-driven environment.



In 2025/26 we received a total of 178 applications for a place at Cockpit. Of these, 15% were successful. Seeing the application process as an opportunity for professional development, we offer micro-coaching feedback sessions of up to 30 minutes to all makers who are not offered a place. We encourage interviewees to consider reapplying when the timing is right. Those who do, and who have absorbed and implemented feedback, are often successful on a subsequent application.

	Awards	Standard	Total
 Applications	133 75	45 25	178
 Rounds of interviews	21	6	27
 Number of makers interviewed	59 (44%)	12 (27%)	71 (40%)
 Offers made	21 (16%)	5 (11%)	26 (15%)

Of the 133 Award applications during the year, 43 (32%) were from makers who selected the Guaranteed Interview Scheme. Of the 21 Award offers made, ten (48%) were GIS candidates.



4 IN 10 MAKERS
applying for a studio
were interviewed



1 IN 7 MAKERS
applying for a studio,
whether Award or standard
place, were successful

While applications for Awards and Bursaries are predominantly from those starting their careers, standard places usually attract more established makers who recognise that they need the wraparound support that Cockpit offers. For these places, we have year-round demand.

56% of the 173 makers currently at Cockpit are past or present recipients of an Award, Bursary, or Prize.

External Funding

For many makers, external funding has been a key element of sustaining their practice.

The general climate for arts funding has been challenging, particularly in London, and the responses from our makers highlight this further.

In 2021/22, 35% of our makers reported having received funding from bodies (such as Arts Council England), with an average grant of £7,573 per recipient. The following year, 2022/23, saw a reduction in the total number of grants, with only 12% receiving support.

For 2023/2024, 14% of makers said that they had received funding support, at an average of £8,940 each.

For 2024/25, whilst a higher proportion of makers reported that they had received funding support (20%), the average amount received had fallen to £4,615. No makers reported receiving funds from Arts Council England in this period.

Mid-career makers often comment that they find the funding environment particularly challenging. Many funding opportunities are aimed at early career makers, and those available to mid-career makers often demand a time commitment that is not possible if makers are to continue developing their business. This is something that Cockpit aims to address with our Prize offering.

MAKER PROFILE

ESNA SU

Esna joined Cockpit in 2020 with the support of an Award from the Worshipful Company of Basketmakers. She was also a recipient of the Cockpit Textile Prize in 2022.

I'm Esna Su, and I'm a multidisciplinary artist. I explore questions of identity in the context of political instability and displacement.

My practice is rooted in heritage, drawing on traditional techniques such as weaving, crochet, and knitting – processes often associated with continuity, care, and cultural memory. These familiar forms, however, are transformed into sculptural works that reflect rupture and change. Through this shift, I examine how identity mutates under pressure, shaped by forces beyond personal control.

My process centres on traditional techniques like knitting and weaving, but I use them to create something distinctly contemporary. Craft is the foundation, but it's never about nostalgia. In 'Burden', I cut deadstock leather into cords, knitting and shaping them into bold forms. In 'The Refugee', I weave paper rush and deadstock fabrics, cutting them into strips and building structure. The result is painstaking, but it's an adventure – one that stays firmly in the present.

My work is driven by a deep sense of frustration and from witnessing lives torn apart by war, the ongoing movement of refugees in search of safety, and the painful reality of leaving behind home, belongings, and history. The destruction of my hometown, Antioch, following the earthquake further informs my practice, embedding personal loss within a broader narrative of collapse and survival.

Through these works, I aim to hold space for both fragility and resilience – tracing what is lost, what remains, and what is continuously being remade.

My goals over the next twelve months are intimately tied to a project I began on the Cockpit Textile Prize. I dreamed of collaborating with local women in my hometown, reviving the traditional carpet weaving technique *hasır*, a practice woven into the fabric of our heritage. Alongside this, I will be preparing for Cockpit Open Studios, continuing to shape my practice through new commissions, and taking part in a number of exciting exhibitions.

Being part of the Cockpit community feels like a very warm home – a place where I feel supported, understood, and encouraged to grow.

The Business Incubation team has helped me by simplifying my plans for the year ahead and supporting me in navigating challenges. Their guidance has given me greater clarity and confidence in structuring my practice, allowing me to focus more intentionally on developing my work and moving forward with a stronger sense of direction.



SUPPORTING MAKERS TO SUCCEED

A key aspect of Cockpit's mission is the business support we provide to our studio holders, through one-to-one coaching sessions and workshops.

Core to this support is helping makers gain the confidence to test their potential practice or business model, in the same way that they expect to test and experiment as they develop their craft skills.

We do this by encouraging makers to dare to dream – what do they want their future to look like? From there, it's a question of working backwards to plot potential pathways to achieve their vision.

Even after identifying this, success is not easy. Pathways to success in craft are varied, and options are multiple and ever-changing. Makers, most of whom are sole traders, are spinning many plates at the same time.

The role of the Business Incubation team is to provide the framework for our makers to establish a vision for their practice and examine ways of achieving it. This is balanced against our ambition to reach more makers outside Cockpit.

One-to-one Coaching Sessions

One-to-one coaching sessions are available to all makers at Cockpit, with the frequency agreed between each maker and their coach. Makers have the choice of meeting in-person or online.



One-to-ones
with Cockpit makers

365



Feedback one-to-ones
from interviews

49

Business Incubation Workshops

Core Cockpit workshop programmes – Make it Count and Step it Up – are delivered by David Crump and Madeleine Furness, who lead the Business Incubation team. These sessions are augmented with sector specialists brought in to speak on specific themes.



‘Having a place at Cockpit has enabled me to focus on developing both my craft and my products. Being part of a creative community across a broad range of experience and disciplines provides both practical and moral support. Open Studios are a fabulous opportunity to engage with a wide range of craft-literate visitors and gain feedback on work and ideas. If I can afford to I would like to stay on at the end of the award period.’

Deb King,
recipient of the 2023
Clothworkers' Award

Make It Count

Makers joining through an Award or Bursary take part in a dedicated programme, Make It Count, that gives them a solid foundation on which to build their business or practice. The programme, offered twice a year in the lead-up to each Open Studios event, consists of nine sessions that aim to give makers a solid footing for their first year at Cockpit. We also offer this programme to makers who are awarded standard studio places if they are at a relatively early stage in the career or if they have not previously taken part in this type of professional development.

Step It Up

Step It Up is a programme developed for mid-career makers who are ready to sharpen their practice or transform their business. Each module consists of recorded content, coupled with in-person sessions that offer the maker the opportunity to apply ideas to their unique practice. Each participant is supported by the peers in their cohort and a Business Incubation coach.

Monthly Workshops

To complement the programmes above, we run monthly workshops on a range of topics relevant to craft makers. These offer makers the opportunity to meet sector specialists covering specific topics. In designing the workshop schedule, we respond to makers' needs and plan workshops accordingly. Topics covered are wide ranging and encompass subjects like exporting, AI, and digital marketing. Key sessions from the last year have included branding and storytelling, navigating a crowded marketplace, how to convey your core values, and fundraising.

‘With previously very little business know-how, the Make It Count programme gave me the tools to be able to treat my practice like a fully functioning business, whilst still allowing the space for creating and making.’

Shannon Lee,
recipient of the 2025
Haberdashers' Award



Workshop sessions delivered by Bus Inc to makers at Cockpit

18

Number of attendees

190



Workshops delivered by sector specialists to makers at Cockpit

11

Number of attendees

131

Beyond Cockpit

The Cockpit team has an established track record of working with makers outside our studios, most recently in direct collaboration with partner organisations such as the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QEST), Craft Scotland, and Craft Northern Ireland.

Our offer for external makers has been a balance of off-the-shelf programmes with bespoke sessions tailored to a particular audience, all based on our experience of what has worked best for our studio holders.

Over the past year we have further developed our external programmes, enabling us to support individual makers as well as partner organisations. For makers outside Cockpit, most of whom are working in relative isolation, participating in a programme with a wider group of makers provides value through shared learning and relationship building, a key element of Cockpit's offer for its studio holders. This is evidenced by the number of makers who are still in touch with their cohort after several years. This was one of the motivating factors for extending our offer to individual makers.

We now have three clearly defined programmes:

Craft Your Future

Craft Your Future gives makers who are just starting out a solid foundation from which to launch a craft business. This is a brand-new workshop programme especially for ambitious early makers who are exploring whether to turn their creativity into a career or solo business. Through eight sessions based on expert guidance and real-world case studies, participants gain clarity, confidence, and the tools needed to take the next step on their journey as a maker – whether that's launching their own business or refining their creative direction.

You can learn more about our external programmes at cockpitstudios.org/professional-development, or reach out to our Head of Business Incubation, David Crump, at david@cockpitstudios.org.

Make It Count

Make It Count supports early career makers who are ready to shape a professional practice that feels both authentic and viable. Based on our tried and tested programme for new makers joining our studios, this programme includes eight sessions that help participants shape their business vision and values, identify their market and customers, and optimise opportunities and events.

Forge Ahead

Forge Ahead helps more experienced makers realise their full potential and develop lasting impact. Through ten sessions based on expert guidance, workshop content, peer-to-peer learning, and real-world testing, participants gain the tools needed to evolve and elevate their business creatively and commercially.

All three programmes are open to individual makers, with some subsidised places available. Organisations can also opt to support makers to join the programmes, from booking one seat to a full cohort. In addition, each programme offers the opportunity for one-to-one coaching sessions with a Cockpit business coach.

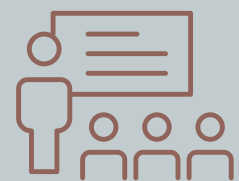
The programmes are now scheduled throughout 2026 and 2027 and are bookable at any time.

Alongside these programmes we continue to offer bespoke support to partner organisations, tailored to budget needs.



One-to-ones offered outside of Cockpit

200



Workshops delivered outside Cockpit

57

Workshops attendees outside Cockpit

456



MAKER PROFILES

MAJEDA CLARKE

Majeda joined Cockpit in 2016 with the support of an Award from the Clothworkers' Foundation. She started off in the Weave Hub in Deptford before moving to her own space in Bloomsbury.

I am Majeda Clarke, a woven textile artist. I make blankets, scarves, and textile art.

I weave and hand dye textiles on a hand loom using ancient weave techniques. For my blankets I sample on my loom then work with traditional family run mills in Lancashire and Wales. I also work with UNESCO heritage weavers in Dhaka to create handwoven fine Jamdani muslin scarves.

My background as someone who emigrated to the UK from Bangladesh as a young child informs much of my practice, celebrating how seemingly disparate cultures can find common ground in colour, storytelling, and design.

Achievements this year have been exhibiting my largest work to date at Collect, co-curating the Dhaka muslin collection at the V&A, and successfully securing a role as a visiting Research Fellow at Merton College Oxford for next academic year.

To me, being in the Cockpit community means a craft community at my door. I love the group emails, popping my head into a studio to see what people are making, learning and sharing ideas, and supporting new makers through the Awards scheme.



JANE ADAM

Jane was a studio holder at Bloomsbury from 1994 to 2015. After leaving Bloomsbury, Jane spent a period on Cockpit's Board of Trustees. Since then she has remained a passionate supporter of Cockpit and a regular at our events, becoming one of our first Alumni Members in spring 2026.

I am Jane Adam, and I make jewellery.

I use dyed anodised aluminium and precious metals, particularly silver and gold bimetals and fine silver, using my own techniques of colouring, texturing, and forming.

I draw inspiration from so many things, such as ancient and natural forms, and just being alive and alert to my environment and culture.

My vision and ambition is to create pieces which harmonise with their wearers, making them feel more like themselves.

It is so valuable to be part of Cockpit, which supports its members to grow as individuals and as part of a vibrant, talented, and committed community. We need to keep crafts and makers present, visible, and active in the city and the world.

THE MARKET FOR CRAFT A VIEW FROM COCKPIT

Gathering feedback from makers each year gives long-term insight into the craft market. The information in this report is based on data shared with us by 103 makers based at Cockpit, as well as insights gained from our work with other makers nationally over the past year.

Data in this year's Cockpit Effect covers the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 – a period that continued to be testing from a trading perspective, with tariffs and the cost of living crisis as ever-present pressures in the background for makers, as well as many of their customers.

It is important to note that these survey findings were collected just as the recent events in the Middle East were unfolding.

Financial Results

The survey findings are encouraging. Average turnover reported for the year 2024/25 was £43,181, an increase of 21% on the previous year. Extrapolated for the whole community, this indicates a turnover in excess of £7.4 million.

The average profit reported was £14,563, an increase of 38% on the previous year. Using these statistics for the entire Cockpit community, this gives a combined profit of over £2.5 million.

The increase in profitability is all the more impressive given current challenging trading conditions. To help build profit margins, our pricing workshops focus on the importance of intangible as well as tangible value. This highlights the need for storytelling to convey the emotional value of our makers' work, over and above the functional.

Most makers that join Cockpit at an early stage have other employment as well as their own business. Balancing the need for income against carving out enough time to develop their practice is a challenge for many makers, and reinforces the value of our Awards and Bursaries programme in supporting makers in the early years of their practice.

For makers in their first three years of business, the average turnover was £16,883 with a profit of £6,882. At the other end of the spectrum, makers who have been in business for over nine years reported an average turnover of £55,339 with a profit of £17,996. Makers who are limited companies have predominantly been in business for over 9 years, meaning that the profit they report is after they have paid themselves.

Employment

When asked about employment, 23% of makers reported that they either employed staff (PAYE) or regularly used freelancers for four or more hours per week, an increase from last year (19%). Extended to the whole community this suggests that fifty or more people are being employed by our makers, with an investment of over £690,000 per year.

These numbers are broadly consistent with those reported in previous years. When added back to the profit figure mentioned earlier, they give a Gross Value Added for the whole community of £3.9 million. This means that every £1 invested in Cockpit generates a return of £3.90.

Looking ahead, makers seem more confident than last year, when nearly 41% said they were unlikely to maintain current employment levels over the next twelve months. This year the majority of makers expect to continue employing staff, with the anticipated number of employees remaining the same.

'We are all suffering from the cost of living crisis, especially creatives. Setting up a business in this economy is tough, and every day that I get to spend in the studio working towards growing my business I am grateful that I have the support of the Award from the Leathersellers and Cockpit. The advice, workshops, and access to business mentors is incredibly helpful.'

Sim Orme,
recipient of the 2023 Leathersellers' Award

Routes to Market

Open Studios

Our flagship Open Studios events are important for Cockpit and for our makers.

For Cockpit, they offer an opportunity to cultivate key industry groups including funders, collectors, influencers, and buyers. This is a natural extension of the efforts we make throughout the year to connect collectors and industry professionals with our makers and create new opportunities for sales and commissions.

For some makers Open Studios is a regular opportunity to test product or market services, while for others the event is a key source of income that has become more critical at a time when conventional routes to market are being challenged. For 2024/25, makers reported that the combined sales from the Winter and Summer Open Studios contributed 10% to their turnover, an increase from the previous year (8%).

Our two Open Studio events collectively generate sales in excess of £700,000 for Cockpit makers.

Online Sales

Across the community as a whole, 46% of our makers report online sales. This is lower than last year (53%) and significantly lower than the post-pandemic level reported in 2022 (71%).

For makers that completed the financial survey, online sales averaged £7,430 or 18% of turnover. This represents a marginal decline from last year (19%). Extrapolated for the whole community, online sales equate to just over £796,000.

Of the makers that sell online, almost all (98%) sell through their own website, while over half (59%) sell via third-party platforms, including Cockpit's new e-commerce platform, The Cockpit Edit.

The online sales and marketing environment is a competitive one. The fall-off of online sales for our makers could be a product of changing consumer behaviour, as in-person purchasing regains popularity. It could equally be symptom of the limited resources (time and finance) that the makers have to successfully reach their online audience.

Other Routes to Market

In the past 12 months, 42% of our makers took part in direct-to-consumer selling events, a marked reduction from the previous year (65%). However, the sales from these events are significant, representing an average 19% of turnover.

When asked to look forward to the next 12 months, 55% indicated that they intended to take part in selling events.

By comparison, only 6% of makers took part in trade shows, although 18% said that they were considering doing so in the next 12 months.

A significant number of makers (26%) reach their audience by taking part in museum and public gallery exhibitions, though many found it difficult to ascribe a tangible financial benefit to these events.

This year we asked for the first time about major commissions. A high proportion of makers (31%) reported that they had received a major commission in the past year, with the average resulting income being 15% of their overall turnover.

Securing new commission opportunities for makers has been a major focus for the Cockpit team, and these numbers suggest it should continue to be a priority.

TYPES OF COMMISSION:



Private
55%



Commercial
29%

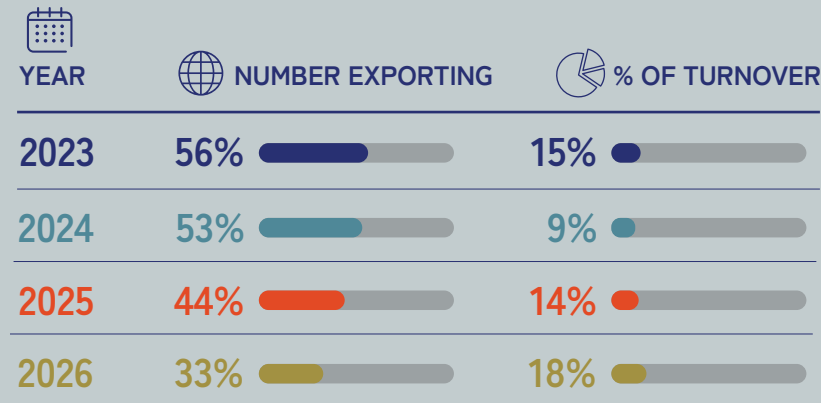


Public
16%

Exports

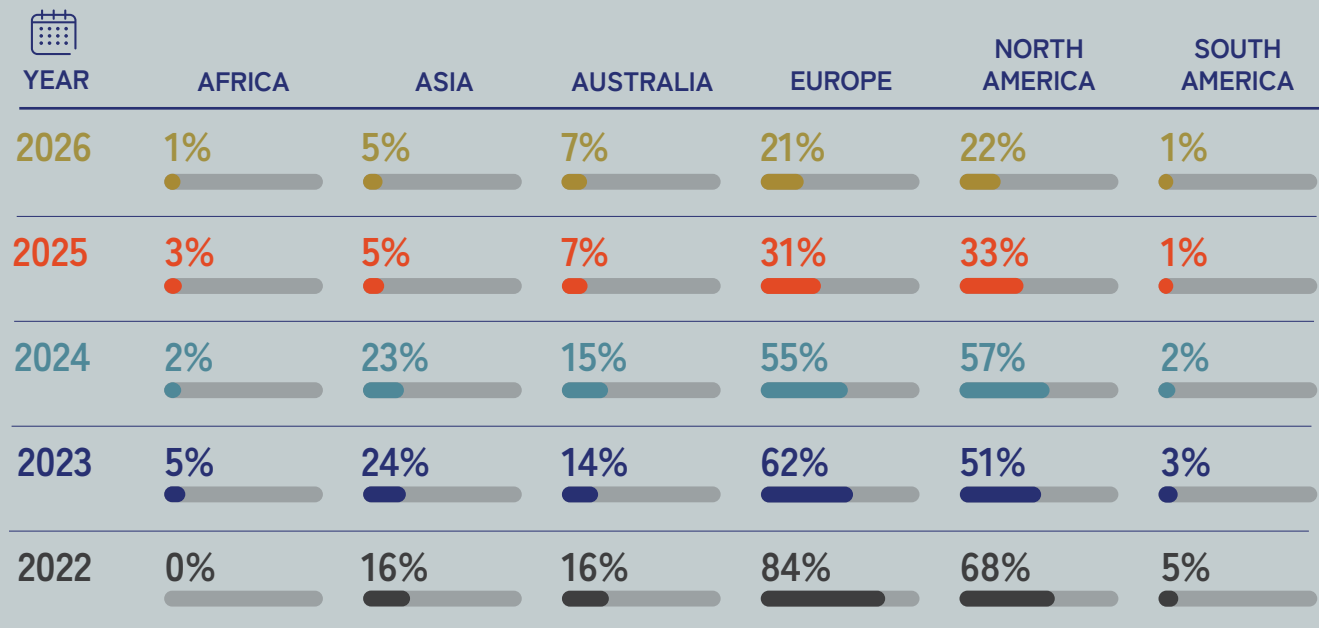
The number of makers exporting this year was 33%, a continued decline from previous years.

However, on average the value of these exports was over £4,628 or 18% of their turnover.



As the table below shows, the sharp decline in exports to Europe has continued, reflecting the challenges that continue post-Brexit. But beyond Europe, all the major markets have softened over the period. It is important to note that tariffs for North America were introduced in February 2025, perhaps contributing in part to the decline in that market.

Despite this negative trend, 38% of makers said they planned to export in the next year.



Workshops and Teaching

Workshops continue to be a growing part of many makers' practices.

Of those completing our survey, 29% offered their own workshops, whether to people looking for an experience or to those seeking to develop a craft skill. For those offering workshops, the average income generated was 23% of their turnover. Teaching continues to be important, with 36% of our makers teaching in formal education settings. Income from teaching, where the maker is on the organisation's payroll, is not included in the financial results detailed in this report.

Beyond the Numbers

We asked our makers how positive they feel about the climate for craft in general over the next twelve months.

The overall score they gave was 6.5/10 (10 being the most positive). This was an improvement on last year's score of 5.7/10.

Concerns expressed in the responses included:

- Cost of living crisis
- Squeezed middle market
- Struggling galleries
- Global political uncertainties
- Rising cost of materials (especially precious metals)

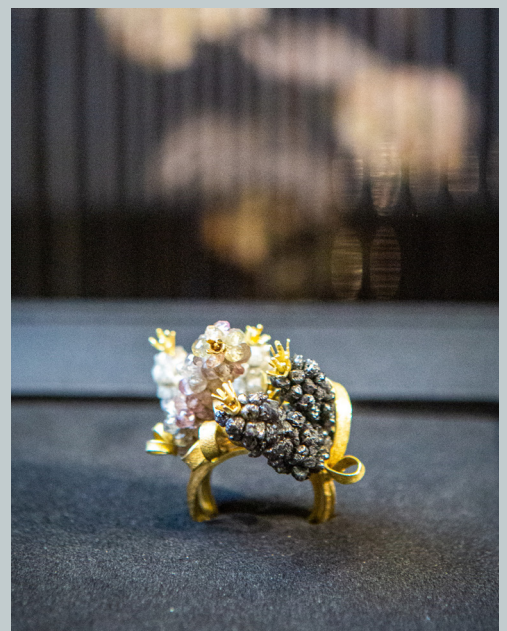
Positive comments centred around:

- A growing interest in craft
- A growing demand to learn new skills
- An appreciation of craft in an increasingly digital world

What Our Makers Say

'Cockpit has recently helped me with sales opportunities – my jewellery being in The Cockpit Edit. Also my work was exhibited at Open Studios, which was good promotion. Further promotion by Cockpit really helps.'

'Keep doing what Cockpit does best – bringing the right people through the door – because the people who come through are really interesting and my future clientele.'



We then asked how optimistic they felt about future opportunities for their own business/practice.

The overall score was 6.9/10, an improvement from last year's score of 6.3/10.

Concerns expressed included:

- Difficulties in exporting, particularly to the US
- Financial constraints
- Lack of equipment
- Political uncertainty
- Health and/or work-life balance

Positive comments included:

- Ambition and confidence to reach new markets
- Building on progress made in the past year
- Exploiting newly identified opportunities
- The increase in commissions

Finally, we asked how confident makers felt about making the most of these opportunities and what Cockpit could do to help.

The overall score was 6.9/10, the same as last year.

‘Continued support through visibility, promotion, and access to new audiences would be hugely valuable.’

‘[Cockpit is] doing a good job and creating great opportunities/pping the Open Studios. It's a rough sea out there, and Cockpit are improving so much.’

‘I am confident that Cockpit does enough to help us make the most of the opportunities we are given.’

‘Ongoing support and guidance from [my] business coach is much appreciated.’

‘Cockpit already goes above and beyond.’



MAKER PROFILES

KEMI AJOSE

Kemi joined Cockpit in 2022 with the support of an Award from the Haberdashers' Company.

I'm Kemi Ajose, and I am a knitwear designer, textile artist, and workshop facilitator.

My process is hands on and materials led. Using a domestic knitting machine, I fully fashion each piece by hand, allowing time, care, and intention to shape the outcome. I experiment with deadstock yarns and found materials, developing ideas through sampling and swatching. My process responds intuitively to the materials, guided by a zero-waste approach.

I create knitted garments, accessories, and textile art installations, using the body and space as canvases for self-expression. My work explores the relationship between material, culture, and craft, rooted in storytelling, craftsmanship, and sustainability.

I draw inspiration from my West African ancestry and contemporary British upbringing. My designs embody a fusion of tradition and modernity, offering a fresh perspective on cultural connection, shaped by lived experience and heritage.

My vision is to create work that communicates cultural narratives in meaningful and accessible ways, connecting with audiences within and beyond the West African diaspora.

A key turning point in my career was becoming an Associate Lecturer at Central Saint Martins not long after graduating. This was an invaluable opportunity to give back and inspire the next generation of designers.

This year, I have facilitated machine knitting workshops and presented a solo exhibition at The Hub in Sleaford. Most recently, I became a Craft Livery Apprentice to the Lady Mayor of London. These milestones mark a significant step in my trajectory, positioning my work within a wider craft and fashion context.

Being part of the Cockpit community has helped me share ideas, develop my work, and build confidence. The Business Incubation team has helped me gain the skills to build a sustainable practice across multiple creative roles, enabling me to grow and reach new milestones.

Over the next twelve months, I plan to continue producing commercially viable products and sculptural artworks, showcasing them in boutiques, galleries, and pop-up events, while expanding my professional network to pursue new opportunities and collaborations.



OPEN STUDIOS

The first Cockpit Open Studios was held in 1988, and the biannual event, which invites visitors behind-the-scenes into our makers' studios, has since become a must-attend event.

Open Studios gives makers unparalleled access to an audience of specialist buyers, curators, collectors, and art and craft enthusiasts. They are an opportunity to test products with new audiences and gain valuable sales.

Open Studios generates estimated sales in excess of £700,000 for our makers annually. In 2024/25 makers, reported that combined sales from Winter and Summer Open Studios contributed 10% to their turnover.



What Our Makers Say

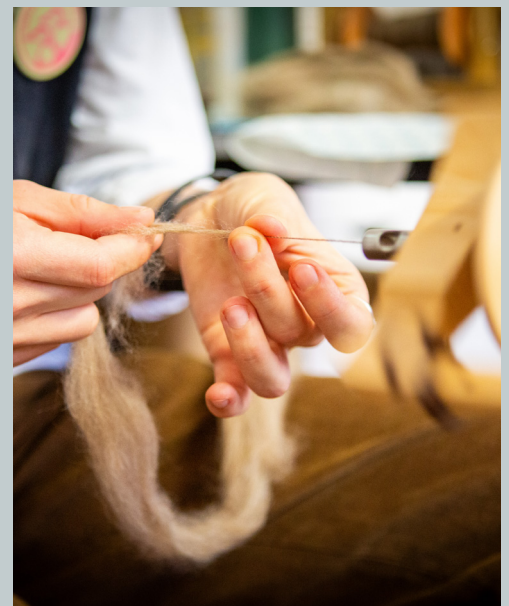
‘I think you guys nailed it! It was the best Open Studios crowd ever.’

‘Nice to have new people I haven’t met come through with genuine interest.’

‘Really good feedback & conversations on new work, all very encouraging.’

‘I always use Open Studios to show new work and the feedback is invaluable.’

‘This was the best Open Studios (by miles) that I have ever experienced at Cockpit.’



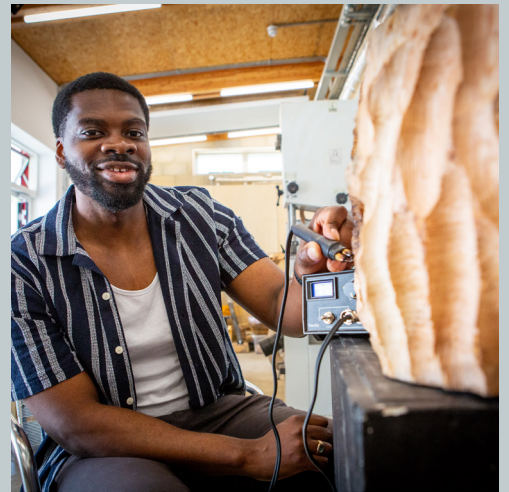
Our Winter Open Studios in 2025 attracted the most visitors since 2017.

Total annual visitors increased by 52% year on year in 2025. Attendance by local visitors from Camden and Lewisham increased from 200 in 2024 to 754 in 2025.

What Our Visitors Say

‘I enjoyed it so much! It was just amazing to see such a range of unique and talented people and their creations. I found it really inspiring, a real antidote to the current negativity in the world.’

‘A really inspiring and exciting place!’



Learn more about Open Studios and book tickets at cockpitstudios.org/open-studios



BECOME A SUPPORTER

The impact shown in The Cockpit Effect wouldn't be possible without our generous supporters. Every year we raise over £250,000 from donations, which supports every area of our work – subsidising studio space for our makers, providing access to craft for local community members, and delivering education and careers programmes for young people from all backgrounds.

Memberships and regular giving are uniquely important ways to support Cockpit. Knowing that we have regular support enables us to plan ahead with confidence and ensures we're able to invest in people and ideas, offering stability in a sector that is anything but predictable.

This reliable income underpins everything we do and helps us ensure we can flourish not only today but for the next 40 years.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

Friend

£5 per month or £60 per year

Friend +

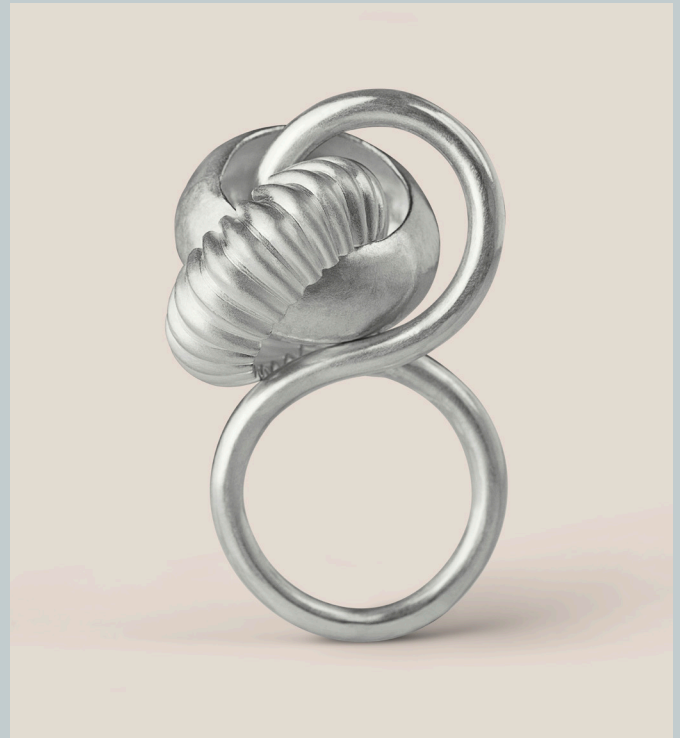
£10 per month or £120 per year

Champion

£50 per month or £600 per year

Patron

£100 per month or £1,200 per year



By committing to regular giving, craft lovers like you become active partners in fulfilling Cockpit's mission. Your generosity can help us continue reaching talented makers at a pivotal point in their careers, while sending a powerful message of confidence in our work and our makers.

Beyond a financial contribution, you'll be part of something bigger – a community that values craft and the makers behind it.

We regularly host private events for our supporter community, allowing you to meet like-minded craft lovers and see exciting collections and exhibitions. You can learn more about Member benefits on our website.

Join us now to make a difference for the most exciting new voices in craft.

You can join as a regular supporter at cockpitstudios.org/donate, or reach out to our Head of Development, Emily Lloyd, at emily@cockpitstudios.org.

THE ALMAW AWARD

Dedicated to the memory and talents of Alan White (1939-2022) and Maureen White (1939-2026)

In January 2026, the team at Cockpit were saddened to learn of the passing of Maureen White. A talented seamstress and lover of craft, Maureen, along with her daughter Veronica, launched the ALMAW Award in 2025 as a celebration of the life of Maureen's late husband Alan.

Alan was a skilled woodworker, using his carpentry skills to create a first home for him and Maureen after their marriage in 1958. In the early 1970s while recovering from illness, he made a stunning doll's house for his daughter, complete with beautifully crafted furniture, and many other family homes bear witness to the work of this kind and talented man.

Maureen started dressmaking as a youngster, making her wedding and bridesmaids' dresses aged 19. She went on to take her City & Guild exams in Pattern Cutting and Dressmaking. The dining-room table was often taken over for pattern making, and among other things, she made some beautiful evening dresses to wear at business dinners and family celebrations.

Alan and Maureen often visited Cockpit for Open Studios in the years before the pandemic and loved meeting the artists and makers. Their 60th wedding anniversary present to each other was a textile collage from Cockpit Alumni Onome Otite.

The ALMAW Award, the title of which is an amalgamation of Alan and Maureen's initials, honours their artistic spirit and aims to inspire and support emerging craftspeople in the field of woodworking or textiles.

We are grateful to Maureen and Veronica for their generosity in setting up this award as a tribute to Alan, which now also honours Maureen, and are delighted to be able to share Maureen and Alan's story with the Cockpit community.

Maureen met the first ALMAW Awardee, Morag Seaton, in December 2025, and we are pleased Cockpit can play a small role in continuing Maureen and Alan's legacy.



MAKER PROFILES

KAREN HENRIKSEN

Karen joined Cockpit Bloomsbury on a standard place in 2005.

I'm Karen Henriksen. I'm a milliner and artist-maker.

I describe my work as taking a line for a walk and seeing where it takes me.

Some key turning points in my practice include winning the UKTI international trade award at OriginCraft Fair in 2007 – this led to my first trip to Japan, which became an important market for my hats. The same year I made my debut at Premiere Classe during Paris Fashion Week. I continued to show there twice a year until 2020.

More recently, I had the opportunity to show at Decorex as part of Making Spaces – this was game-changing for my newer work, making sculptural lightshades, as it introduced my work to many high-profile interior designers.

It would be difficult to overstate how important being in the Cockpit community is, but it comes down to sharing. Sharing of knowledge, know-how, contacts, secrets, ideas, grumbles, gossip, stories, memories, invitations, opportunities, mistakes, successes, materials, equipment, furniture, drinks, picnics.

I've also been able to use the Cockpit community as unofficial models for my hats for informal photo shoots!



DEBORAH CARRÉ AND JAMES DUCKER

Deborah and James, who together form Carréducker, had a studio at Cockpit from 2001 to 2019.

We are Carréducker, and we're bespoke shoemakers and teachers. We practice the heritage craft of handsewn shoemaking, constructing shoes using hand tools, starting with a pair of lasts, uppers, and a pack of oak bark leather.

We draw inspiration from the generations of shoemakers who have gone before us and achieved greatness.

The challenges and blocks that we've faced have included a lack of investment/cash flow, low earnings, losing specialist suppliers, and physical wear and tear.

A key turning point in our practice was when we were asked to be part of the permanent collection at the Design Museum in Kensington.

Being at Cockpit, we felt the power and inspiration of being surrounded by a storm of creativity – a dynamic environment of camaraderie, friendship, and guidance. The business support was also crucial. Cockpit helped us overcome challenges by providing a supportive community, a sounding board, and introductions to craft champions and stability.

What's next... a PhD and retirement.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings from this year's survey are positive. The year-on-year financial results for the Cockpit community are stronger than we have seen in the past few years, in terms of turnover, profit, and Gross Value Added.

These results are all the more impressive when considered against the political and economic background and in the context of the wider impact these have had on the craft sector.

Key trends identified in this report:

- Demand for work at the higher end of the market is proving stronger than for low or mid-range
- Appreciation for quality of design and craft is strong
- There has been an upturn in demand for commissions, whether private, public, or corporate
- 'Craft' as a term continues to proliferate into the mainstream, creating significant noise in our sector
- Routes to market continue to evolve, with some established intermediaries suffering from audience erosion and new actors emerging
- The export market remains particularly challenging

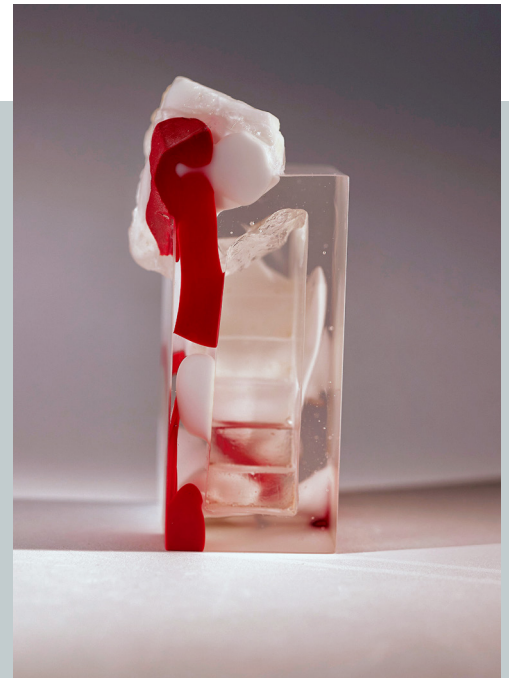
For our makers the impact of these trends on their practice is significant, often requiring them to rethink their model significantly. This might involve:

- Developing new work, for instance working at a different scale or with alternative materials
- Establishing relationships with new partners, such as galleries and retailers
- Improving the way they communicate their craft and gain visibility

The wraparound support Cockpit provides is significant, as is the impact generated.

Critically, the marketing team works to bring awareness of Cockpit to the widest possible audience, and in addition, promote our individual makers, their crafts and disciplines.

We provide a pipeline of opportunities, from events like Open Studios or The Cockpit Edit, through to invitations to tender for public or corporate commissions.



With our tours, talks, and community workshops, makers are given an additional opportunity to develop their practice as well as generating income and contacts.

Meanwhile, in the studios, the Business Incubation team continually works with makers to help them better understand and capitalise on these opportunities. From specialist workshops and one-to-one coaching to targeted professional development programmes, we continue to provide makers with the tools to shape their own practice and equip themselves for long-term success.

Cockpit continues to raise the bar, setting the training standards for modern craft businesses. We remain focussed on attracting makers with exceptional skill and creative vision, aligning inclusivity and excellence.

Every maker is on a journey – our ambition is to help them at every stage, whether starting their journey on one of our programmes or moving into a studio at Cockpit.



MAKER PROFILE

YEN DUONG

Yen joined Cockpit in 1997 and has had a studio in Bloomsbury ever since.

I'm Yen Duong, and I am an independent jeweller translating rhythm, flow, and movement into contemporary pieces that balance form, feeling, and wearability.

I draw inspiration from the body in motion, molecular structures, and the emotional connection people have with jewellery.

My vision and ambition is to create jewellery that feels alive, deeply personal, and becomes part of the wearer's everyday life. Also to grow my practice while supporting early-career makers with studio space and structured mentorship.

The challenges that I've faced during my career include balancing creative integrity with the business of an independent jewellery practice. This year's challenge has been to maintain growth and visibility while protecting time for the creative process.

A key turning point in my practice was developing my molecule-inspired jewellery structures, which defined my signature design language.

My goals over the next twelve months are to continue to evolve my design language and craftsmanship, strengthening my collections, and continuing to build meaningful client relationships.

In addition, I will be planning a mentorship programme for emerging makers and supporting technically skilled early career makers navigating the fragile transition from training to independent practice.

Being in Cockpit means being part of a supportive creative network that balances craft and business, offering friendship and community at key moments in my career, and providing guidance and advice.



APPENDIX 1: TEAM & TRUSTEES

Staff Team

Jonathan Burton, CEO
Fabienne O'Neill, COO
Lateefat Babalola, Programme Coordinator
David Crump, Head of Business Incubation
Madeleine Furness, Business Incubation Programme Manager
Ashley Gerling, Head of Marketing & Digital
Hugo Godfrey, Financial Controller
Beckie Kingman, Studio Manager, Deptford
Kathy Lacour, Business Coach
Adrian Lee, Studio Manager, Bloomsbury
Emily Lloyd, Head of Development
Kanny Morgan, Awards & Admissions Coordinator
Sarah Odong, Events & Venue Coordinator
Dominika Zalewska, Marketing & Development Assistant

Freelance Team

Melanie Dresti, Studio Manager Cover
Mia Krstic, Studio Manager Cover
Shital Pattani, Open Studios Manager
Chris Webb, Youth & Community Producer

Trustees

Davina Mallinckrodt, Chair
Mehul Nathwani, Deputy Chair
Bill Amberg
Min Bhogaita
Nishita Dewan
Preston Fitzgerald (Appointed June 2025)
Cristina Garrigues (Appointed November 2025)
Darla-Jane Gilroy
James Grand (Appointed June 2025)
David Moore
Catherine Pütz (Appointed November 2025)
Ian Smart
Gavin Watters

Committee Members and Advisors

Jill Humphrey
Amanda Kay
Lorna Killin
Isabel Miao



APPENDIX 2: FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS

Trusts, Foundations, and Livery Companies

The Arts Society GLA
Bagri Foundation
The Broderers' Charity Trust
The Clothworkers' Company
The Company of Arts Scholars Charitable Trust
The Cordwainers Educational and Training Charitable Trust Company
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
The Dyers' Company Charitable Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation
The Haberdashers' Company
John Lyon's Charity
The Leathersellers' Foundation
Marsh Charitable Trust
The Mila Charitable Organisation
Newby Trust
The Schroder Foundation
The Worshipful Company of Basketmakers' Charitable Trust
The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London
The Worshipful Company of Saddlers
The Worshipful Company of Turners of London
The Worshipful Company of Weavers

Award and Prize Funders

Sarah Burgess and Jill Humphries (Springboard Prize)
Prue MacLeod (Make It Awards)
Dr Veronica White and Maureen White (ALMAW Award)

Partners

Albion Wine Shippers
Decorex
Wednesday's Domaine

Patrons

John & Marianne Adey
Preston Fitzgerald & Cedric Smith
James Grand
Davina Mallinckrodt
David Robinson



Champions

Susan Charles
Jake Emmett & Rob Caunt
Sybille Giacomotto
Erin Walls
Dr Veronica White

Friend+ supporters

Catherine Dyson
Sian Evans
Lynn Foster
Sam Fry
Robert Hugill
Tim Johnson
Tina Mabey
Wendy Morris
Emma Nightingale
Frances Ray
Valerie Seager
Charlotte Simm
Annie Warbuton

And those who wish to remain anonymous

APPENDIX 3: ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Cockpit Effect report gives an insight into the craft businesses that we work with, the challenges they face, how we work with them, and the impact that our support makes.

This is the 15th edition of The Cockpit Effect.

This year's report looks at makers' financial data from 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Specific sources of data for this report are:

- 103 financial surveys completed by Cockpit makers
- 178 applications for studio places (standard or Awards/Bursaries)
- Maker surveys conducted during the year
- Awardee progress reports
- Workshop programme feedback
- Exit interviews with makers leaving Cockpit
- One-to-one coaching sessions





Author: David Crump

Editors: Jonathan Burton, Ashley Gerling, Emily Lloyd

Designer: Craig Yamey

For interviews and questions about this report, or to learn more about the various programmes offered by the Business Incubation team, contact David Crump david@cockpitstudios.org.

Image Credits

Front Cover: Jacky Oliver, 'Flow', detail.

Page 4: Ute Decker, studio detail. Photo by Alun Callender.

Page 6: Jonathan Burton. Photo by Alun Callender.

Page 7: David Crump. Photo by Cheri Crump.

Page 8: Mark Nuell, Aquamarine shard necklace. Photo by Alun Callender.

Page 10: Botanical Weaves, naturally dyed handwoven scarf. Photo by Kathryn Tomasetti.

Page 11: Eleanor Lakelin, 'Floe'. Photo by Evan Mason.

Giuseppe Savoca in his studio at Cockpit Bloomsbury. Photo by Carlos de Château-Morand.

Kamilah Ahmed, 'The Life Above', installation view at Collect Art Fair 2026.**Page**

12: Joanne Lamb, studio detail. Photo by Onur Pinar.

Eva the Weaver, 'Wedding Memory', detail. Photo by Eva Dennis.

Page 13: Shannon Lee in her studio at Cockpit Deptford. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Shan Fran, 'Coble' bag. Photo by Shannon Lee.

Shannon Lee in her studio at Cockpit Deptford. Photo by Oli Stockwell.

Page 14: Yen Jewellery, 'Sunray' brooch and pendant. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Jennie Adamson. Photo by Alun Callender.

Page 16: Jacky Oliver in her studio at Cockpit Bloomsbury. Photo by Stefan Stefanou.

Jacky Oliver, 'Eastings and Northings'.

Jacky Oliver, 'Flow'.

Jacky Oliver, 'Circles VIII'.

Page 17: Workshop participants, Arts for Dementia x Cockpit workshop, facilitated by Ted Tinkler. Photo by Harry Plowden.

Jacky Oliver leading a Saturday Club workshop. Photo by Chris Webb.

Participants in Cockpit's Saturday Club for Craft & Making.

Page 18: Lewisham Education Arts Network (LEAN) workshop at Cockpit Deptford. Photos by Chris Webb.

Page 19: Woo Jin Joo in her studio at Cockpit Deptford.

Woo Jin Studio, 'Tireless'.

Huimin Zhang in her studio at Cockpit Bloomsbury. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Huimin Zhang, brooch, detail.

Page 20: Helen Johannessen, miniature pots. Photo by Anthony Grima.

Jasmine Bradbury, 'Curve me'. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Page 21: Ho Lai, 'Stones/Lava'. Photo by René van der Hulst.

Emily Kidson, Blue and gold oblong earrings.

Tessa Eastman, 'Moonlight Sunshine Ladder to Cloud'. Photo by Juliet Sheath.

Page 23: Esna Su in her studio at Cockpit Bloomsbury. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Esna Su, 'The Memory Shell', detail.

Esna Su, 'The Refugee'.

Esna Su, 'Ties That Bind', detail. Photo courtesy Alveston Fine Art.

Page 24: Candice Lau. Photo by Alun Callender.

Page 25: Luna Lighting, jugs. Photo by Tom Jacobs.

Darren Appiagyei, studio detail. Photo by Alun Callender.

Page 27: Majeda Clarke in her studio at Cockpit Bloomsbury. Photo by Onur Pinar.

Majeda Clarke, 'The Explorer Palette' blanket. Photo by Yeshen Venema.

Jane Adam in her studio. Photo by Alun Callender.

Jane Adam, spiral bangles.

Page 30: Joost Pasman and Harry Owen. Photo by Alun Callender.

Page 31: Workshop participants, Arts for Dementia x Cockpit workshop, facilitated by Kim Sutherland. Photo by Harry Plowden.

Ella Merriman, 'Zig Zag'. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Donna Brennan, 'Gifted' cocktail ring. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Page 32: Stepan Terteryan, 'Argent Missif' bracelet. Photo by Alun Callender.

Sine Fiennes. Photo by Alun Callender.

Hannah Refaat, embroidery detail. Photo by Alun Callender.

Page 33: Kemi Ajose in her studio at Cockpit Deptford. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Morenikeji Textiles, beaded top. Photo by Sam Hylton.

Morenikeji Textiles, recycled zip bag. Photo by Sam Hylton.

Morenikeji Textiles, braided sequin top. Photo by Sam Hylton

Page 34: Visitor in Sara Dodd's studio during Open Studios. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Ted Tinkler in their studio at Cockpit Deptford. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Elise Gustilo in her studio at Cockpit Bloomsbury. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Page 35: Chloé Rochefort in their studio at Cockpit Deptford. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Darren Appiagyei in the Wood Hub during Open Studios. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Visitors with Kemi Ajose during Open Studios. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Page 36: Clara Breen, 'Entwined Play' ring.

Page 37: Morag Seaton, 'Denim Faces'. Photo by Daniel Uwaga.

Morag Seaton, 'Cotton Faces'.

Page 38: Karen Henriksen in her studio at Cockpit Bloomsbury. Photo by James Champion.

Carréducker in their studio. Photo by Jonathan Stewart.

Page 39: Miyuki Guo, 'The Flow of One'.

Page 40: Grace Willsmer, 'Hold'.

Giulia Manzoni, studio detail. Photo by Jamie Trounce.

Page 41: Yen Duong in her studio at Cockpit Bloomsbury. Photo by Ope Odueyungbo.

Yen Jewellery, rings. Photo by Alice Balfe.

Page 42: Neve Beill, 'Garden Isle'.

Claire Macfarlane, coloured rings.

Page 43: Ruby Taglight LDN, 'Albedo'. Photo by Alun Callender.

Page 44: Meron Wolde, studio detail. Photo by Flavia Catena.

Page 45: Michèle Oberdieck, 'Double Japanese Blossom'. Photo by Simon Bruntnell.


Back Cover: Angelita Alves, 'Emaranhamento Chair'. Photo by Alun Callender.



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