**Example Case Study for QUAL (qual.org.uk)**

**Creative Edinburgh (https://www.creative-edinburgh.com)**

**Research brief**

As the largest network of creatives in Edinburgh, Creative Edinburgh is committed to advancing the value and impact of creativity. Creative Edinburgh wanted to explore the creative and 'organisational' practices of its membership. In particular, they sought to explore the business needs of its membership, and whether these needs were being met by the business support that is currently available in Edinburgh.

**What are you trying to find out?**

- To explore and understand the business support needs of Creative Edinburgh members, and how these are currently being met within Edinburgh;
- To explore the perceptions of Creative Edinburgh and its membership provision and events amongst Creative Edinburgh members.

**Who should you talk to?**

- Creative Edinburgh members responded to a Creative Edinburgh recruitment email, explaining the nature of the research. Members were given a choice of group time slots and they self-selected the most convenient time to them.
- In total four mini groups were conducted at Codebase, where Creative Edinburgh is based.

**Choosing your approach**

- Mini groups (3 or 4 people): mini groups were chosen because of budget constraints – mini groups keep down costs of both recruiting and incentivizing participants
- Time: lunchtimes and evenings (to fit into the working day, lunch and snacks provided)
- Duration: 45 mins - 1 hour
- Incentive: £30 per person (although you can incentivise with a free ticket to one of your events or workshops)

**Methods**

**Example fieldwork schedule**

|   | Duration and time | Target | Research Aims |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Wed 8th Aug 2017 12-1pm | Creative Edinburgh members | *To explore and understand the business support needs of Creative Edinburgh members, and how these are currently being met within Edinburgh.* |
| 2 | Wed 8th Aug 2017 1-2pm | Creative Edinburgh members | |
| 3 | Wed 8th Aug 2017 6.30-7.30pm | Creative Edinburgh members | *To explore the perceptions of Creative Edinburgh, and its membership provision and events, amongst Creative Edinburgh members* |
| 4 | Wed 8th 2017 7.30-8.30pm | Creative Edinburgh members | |

**Topic guide**

**Introduction: important to establishing a rapport**

- Assurances of confidentiality and introduce the recording device to the group (if there are objections to recording, cannot proceed with recording, take notes only)
- Introduction of self and then go around the group and ask them to introduce themselves, their occupation, how long they have been working in the creative industries, where they are based etc.

- Experiences in 'trying to get in' to the creative practicing community / and progression – influencers / how / why? Explore fully – specifically in relation to Edinburgh / Scotland.

**Warm up questions: important for context**

- Explore perceptions of the current creative community – particularly in relation to Edinburgh. Key issues that are affecting them as creatives / their work – how/why?

- Explore different aspect of their work – how are these managed and organized? Which are priorities? How?  why?

- Explore on resources that they have found in problematic / supportive/ useful Why? How?

**Key questions to meeting your research aim**

- Explore perceptions of Creative Edinburgh – membership (how long / awareness of activities and events / awareness of different levels of membership? How useful / supportive is the Creative Edinburgh network – How? Why?
- Explore ideas in relation to how Creative Edinburgh could be improved / be more supportive as a network – probe on events, workshops, members' jams etc.

**Sum up**
- Key thoughts on how business support / support for creative organisations can be improved.
- Key thoughts on how Creative Edinburgh, as a resource and network for creative organisations in Edinburgh can be improved.

**Thank & close**

**Key findings**

*NB these represent headline findings only and are presented here to give a flavor of the insights that can be elicited from qualitative research. We also present illustrative quotations from the transcripts to support the findings.*

- ❖ **Creative Edinburgh is very much valued within Edinburgh's creative community**,

  *"I think that there is a nice mindset amongst everyone I have met in Creative Edinburgh. It's absolutely invaluable, just to be able to go into a room of people who get how bloody hard it is to run your own business …so it really is an incredibly supportive network and Edinburgh would be the poorer without it."*

- ❖ **Creative Edinburgh needs to create more awareness for its activities**,

  *"Even just a member pack, because there is a lot of stuff and most of what I understand about Creative Edinburgh I learnt through [fellow Creative Edinburgh member and close friend]."*

- ❖ **There is a lack of business support and guidance specific to creative start-ups and freelancers in Edinburgh**,

  *"You are a bit scary and you're not a safe bet."*

- ❖ **Creative Edinburgh has a role in delivering business start-up advice,**

  *"As a [Creative Edinburgh] mentor, I come away from … you come away kind of having mentored yourself for those two hours because you're like, "I should do that." …Or just, "Have I considered doing this? So, the whole process of seeing someone else's wood for the trees helps you sometimes see your own wood for the trees."*

❖ **There was also a need for advice and support on mental well-being,**

*I think it's quite mentally challenging being a freelancer. That can be the hardest part, so that's been really good for me, just speaking to people…being connected with other freelancers…"*