

CAREER TIPS

Creative Generation

For this interview, ENCATC spoke with Jeff Poulin to learn about Creative Generation which works to inspire, connect, and amplify the work of young creatives who catalyze social change and those who are committed to cultivating their creativity.



CREATIVE GENERATION

ENCATC: What is your project Creative Generation? What is the story behind it and how did you get the idea?

Jeff Poulin: Creative Generation began as a research project I embarked on in early 2019. From the research, we learned about many amazing projects around the world and asserted several paradigm shifts in the field that exists at the intersection of arts, culture, education, and social change. Ever since, we have been working with partners around the world to achieve these goals, better understand the impact of creative youth, and support the changing landscape of the sector. Today, Creative Generation is an international NGO that works to inspire, connect, and amplify the social change work of young creatives and to support those who are committed to cultivating their creativity.

ENCATC: How have you been rethinking taking the project forward due to the impact of COVID-19?

Jeff Poulin: Creative Generation has always been a multi-national remote organization, so our day-to-day practice has not changed (except no travel since

February 2019!). We have, however, responded to the global health pandemic, growing movement about racial justice, and impending economic recession to continue to support young creatives and our partners around the world as they have quickly adapted to the changing circumstances of their work. We first led the #KeepMakingArt campaign to connect practitioners during their COVID response, continued with extensive research about the innovations that have resulted from this crisis, and continued to connect practitioners around the world.

ENCATC: Can you give us some background into your education and professional experience that has led you to where you are today with this project?

Jeff Poulin: I grew up with in very arts-rich community, achieving some early success as a teenager touring the U.S. as a tap dancer. I entered my university studies and earned degrees in arts management and cultural policy and began working professionally. I have had great experiences working on arts policy and educational initiatives in the

Republic of Ireland, and across the United States. In early 2019, I left my post to pursue teaching at two universities and pursuing the concept (and now organization) of Creative Generation.

ENCATC: What skills or other personal attributes do you think you have that have helped you develop and grow Creative Generation?

Jeff Poulin: I think tenacity, collaboration, and humility have allowed me to succeed in my work with Creative Generation. We remove ego from our work and simply act in service to the field. This has allowed us to partner more effectively, respond with agility, and foster large-scale collaborations which increase our impact.

ENCATC: What you do wish you had known before starting this project?

Jeff Poulin: I wish I had known about the ability of of the arts and culture field to adapt to rapid change. I had my doubts about the field moving to work online, shifting professional development to virtual spaces, etc. We did it very quickly around the globe – I was very impressed!

ENCATC: What have been the most difficult challenges you encountered? How have you overcome them?

Jeff Poulin: The COVID-19 pandemic – and the resulting inability to plan for the future – provided a substantial challenge in the early months of 2020. We were able to adapt eventually, but there was a learning curve to change our models, systems, and projects to remove face-to-face experiences, and connect synchronously across time zones.

ENCATC: How did you go about getting start-up funds and how did you use them to get the project up and running?

Jeff Poulin: We began by investing our time to build a solid foundation of research. The rest was earned. We continue to partner effectively through cost-sharing, scaling of projects, and earning revenues.

ENCATC: What advice would you give to students or early-career professionals looking to start their own creative projects?

Jeff Poulin: Get started – that's the hardest part. If you have an idea, write it up. Share it with mentors. Seek guidance. Then get going!

ENCATC: What keeps you motivated and going?

Jeff Poulin: I have had the distinct privilege of witnessing the change from our work and impact on people and communities. This keeps me motivated and eager to keep working as hard as I can!



About Creative Generation

MISSION: Creative Generation works to inspire, connect, and amplify the work of young creatives who catalyze social transformation and those committed to cultivating their creative capabilities.

VISION: A world where creatives are leaders of social transformation in thriving communities and towards more just societies.

GOALS

- Amplifying the voices of young creatives and promising practices of those committed to the cultivation of their creative capabilities.
- Connecting and activating projects and people leading efforts of creative social transformation.
- Documenting and disseminating promising practices to elevate the field.

Follow Creative Generation online:



<https://creative-generation.org/>



www.twitter.com/Campaign4GenC



www.instagram.com/campaign4genC/



www.facebook.com/Campaign4GenC/



www.linkedin.com/company/40661748/

Connect with Jeff Poulin online:



www.twitter.com/jeffmpoulin



www.instagram.com/jeffmpoulin/



www.facebook.com/JeffMPoulin



www.linkedin.com/in/jeff-m-poulin-b7406414/