



Equal Arts Play Book

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Call: 2024 Round 1 KA2 KA210,VET

Small scale partnerships in vocational education and training (KA210 VET)

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DOCUMENT TYPE

PRO	Technical/economic progress report (internal work package reports indicating work status)	
DEL	Technical reports identified as deliverables	x
MoM	Minutes of Meeting	
MAN	Procedures and user manuals	
WOR	Working document, issued as preparatory documents to a technical report	
INF	Information and Notes	

PU	Public	x
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the Consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CON	Confidential, only for members of the consortium	

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date	Author (s)	Partner organisation	Description
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DOCUMENT APPROVAL

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V1.1	30/07/2026	Harriet Macauley	InDance International
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DISCLAIMER – EQUAL ARTS

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ABOUT THIS PLAY BOOK

CORE COMPONENTS OF A MICRO, LEARNING COURSE PLAYBOOK	
1. COURSE OVERVIEW & PURPOSE	
• Learning objectives • Target audience • Why this topic, why now?	
2. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN FRAMEWORK	
• Course structure, modules, lesson length, sequencing logic • Learning model used (e.g., bite, sized video + reflection + quiz) • Pedagogical approach (storytelling, scenario based, self-paced, cohort based)	
3. CONTENT STANDARDS & TEMPLATES	
• Module template (intro, content, activity, reflection, quiz, consistent format) • Tone/voice guidelines • Branding guidelines (visual style, fonts, colors) • Accessibility standards (captions, alt text, readability level)	
4. PRODUCTION WORKFLOW	
• Roles & responsibilities (who writes scripts, records video, designs slides, builds in the platform) • Step-by-step production process (script → review → record/design → build → QA → launch) • Tools/platforms used (e.g., Articulate Rise, Canva, LMS platform) • Timeline/production schedule template	
5. DELIVERY & DISTRIBUTION PLAN	
• Platform/LMS where course lives • Enrollment process • Communication/marketing plan to promote the course • Scheduling (self-paced vs. cohort based, drip content vs. all at once)	
6. ENGAGEMENT & ASSESSMENT STRATEGY	
• Types of interactions (quizzes, reflections, discussion prompts) • How completion/mastery is measured • Certificates or badges (if applicable)	
7. EVALUATION & FEEDBACK LOOP	
• Success metrics (completion rate, engagement rate, satisfaction score, knowledge retention)	

- Post course survey template
- Process for iterating/improving based on feedback

8. REUSABILITY & SCALABILITY NOTES

- How to adapt this playbook for future topics/modules
- Templates that can be reused (scripts, slide decks, quiz banks)
- Lessons learned/best practices log

UNIT 2.1 PLAYBOOK

Success and Opportunity: Financial Fluency and Structure in the Performing Arts, Meet Lara

UNIT SUMMARY

This unit follows Lara Albergo, Development Manager at Bruiser Theatre Company, as she reflects on what it actually takes to build and sustain a career and a company in the performing arts. As you work through the unit, observe these three connected ideas: The first is fluency: Lara describes discovering that financial literacy, not just creative skill, is what actually decides what gets made, and calls her own leadership approach "informed management", learning the mechanics of roles beyond her own so she can lead as a peer. The second is structure: she names a persistent pattern in the sector, where women remain significantly underrepresented in technical and production roles, and argues this reflects a lack of skills and opportunity rather than confidence or capability. The third is protection: Lara's practical advice, learn something technical even if nobody asks and always get terms in writing, reflects her wider case that a career is sustained by structure, not passion alone.

FURTHER PERSPECTIVES

Let's look at how Lara's experience is related to topics of financial fluency, structural barriers and sustainability in the creative sector. Finally, you will find a section of further reading for anyone who is interested in these themes.

THE BORING PART ISN'T BORING

Lara's account of discovering that financial fluency, not just creativity, was what lets her make a real impact on the arts reflects a pattern rarely discussed openly in the sector: decision making authority tends to sit wherever budgets are understood, not necessarily wherever the creative vision originates. For many people entering arts management from a creative background, the instinct is to treat finance as someone else's job, a technical afterthought rather than a leadership skill. Lara's experience suggests the opposite: mastering the numbers is often what makes a seat at the table possible in the first place. Section 1 of this unit is about how professional authority is often built through unglamorous, learnable fluency, in budgets, in contracts, in the mechanics of the work, rather than through creative talent alone.

WHO GETS TO LEAD? BARRIERS IN TECHNICAL AND PRODUCTION ROLES

Lara's observation that women remain significantly underrepresented in technical and production roles, stage management, lighting and sound among them, is supported by research across the sector. A cross Europe study by the [European Theatre Convention](#), conducted with researchers at [UCLouvain](#), found that men dominate the most visible technical and decision making positions in theatre programming across the continent, while women remain concentrated in costume and front of house roles. Separate research tracking gender representation in resident theatres corroborates this pattern at a more granular level, finding that women hold only around a fifth of lighting positions and just over a tenth of sound design roles, despite far higher representation in costume design. This connects directly to what Lara identifies as the real barrier: not a lack of confidence or capability, but a lack of skills building and opportunity, shaped by assumptions about which roles are "technical" and who those roles are imagined to suit.

STRUCTURE OVER PASSION: SUSTAINING THE COMPANY

Lara's candor about working in one of the most underfunded arts environments in Ireland and to the United Kingdom, and her insistence that passion alone cannot sustain a career or a company, reflects a wider structural reality. Ireland receives less public arts funding per capita than any other United Kingdom nation; a disparity [Arts Council Ireland](#) itself has repeatedly raised as a serious and worsening problem. Freelance and self-employed workers, who make up the majority of the theatre workforce, report growing financial precarity and unclear terms of engagement, the exact conditions Lara's own advice to "get it in writing" is built to protect against. Her observation that Ireland has lost the apprenticeship style pathways that once existed for production and technical roles also matches wider research showing Northern Ireland has the lowest rate of apprenticeship participation and the least investment in workforce training of any UK nation. Sustaining a career and a company in this context, Lara argues, depends on building structure, diversified income, contingency planning, clear agreements, that can be taught and learned, rather than relying on passion to carry the work indefinitely.

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Informed management	Lara's own term for leading by deeply understanding the technical and financial mechanics of the work itself, rather than relying on authority or consensus building alone.
Financial fluency	Understanding budgets, cost structures and funding cycles well enough that they function as a source of decision-making authority, not just an administrative task.
Diversified income	Combining multiple income sources, project grants, multiannual trust or foundation funding, box office, education and earned income, to reduce reliance on any single funder.

Contingency planning	Lara's Plan B/Plan C mindset for touring, casting or funding scenarios where the original plan may fail.
Structure	The systems, planning and written agreements Lara argues actually sustain a career and a company, in contrast to relying on passion alone.
Verbal agreement risk	Lara's observation that informal, spoken deals tend to advantage whoever is already comfortable in the room, which early in a career is rarely you.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

Financial fluency functions as a form of authority in the sector, not a background administrative skill.

Women remain significantly underrepresented in technical and production roles, a pattern rooted in access and opportunity, not capability.

Learning technical skills outside your formal role can change how you are seen and respected as a leader.

Structure, diversified income, contingency planning, written agreements, is what sustains a career and a company, not passion alone.

Verbal agreements tend to advantage whoever is already comfortable in the room, which early in a career is rarely you.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Use the space below to reflect on your own response to Lara's experience. There are no right or wrong answers.

Where in your own career have you treated a 'non-creative' skill, finance, technical knowledge, admin, as someone else's job rather than your own?

Where have you noticed the pattern Lara describes, women pushed toward 'people' or programme roles rather than technical or financial ones, in your own context?

Is there an agreement in your own working life, verbal or informal, that you should actually get in writing?

APPLICATION

Thinking about your current role or project, what is one small way you could begin building more structure, financial, technical or contractual, into your own work?

NEXT STEPS

- Choose one 'non-creative' skill (financial, technical, contractual) you have been avoiding, and identify one way to start learning it this month.
- Before your next freelance or partnership arrangement, write down the terms, even informally, rather than relying on a verbal agreement.
- Notice one moment this week where you treat structure (a plan, a written agreement, a budget) as a leadership tool rather than a chore.
- Carry these reflections forward into Unit 2.2, where the next artist's experience is explored next.

REFERENCES	
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5.	CIPD. Devolution and evolution in UK skills policy: Finding common ground across the four nations. Cipd.org
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