TITLE   **Making it Together: communities of care in Scotland's craft ecology – Maker-led organisations and the prospects for good work and social impact in the creative and cultural industries**

AUTHOR   Rosemary James-Beith, MA (Hons), LLB, MSc

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Media and Cultural Policy in the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, Cultural Industries, School of Culture and Creative Arts, College of Arts and Humanities, University of Glasgow.

Declaration   I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Printed Name: Rosemary James-Beith

Signature:

Date: September 2025

For Anne

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the role and impact of maker-led organisations within Scotland's craft ecology through qualitative multi-sited case studies of three national craft organisations. Drawing on Hesmondhalgh and Baker's concept of 'good work,' (2011) the research examines how these organisations enhance individual maker experiences of craft work and generate broader social impacts within the creative and cultural industries. Through analysis of participant interviews, field observations, and organisational documents, the study reveals these organisations serve as crucial intermediaries of care, reducing maker isolation and developing collective responses to systemic challenges, while simultaneously advocating for craft's broader social value.

The findings, drawing on the work of Tronto (1998), demonstrate maker-led organisations act as communities of care-practice. They generate caring other-oriented behaviours, enhance skills and competencies that improve both the quality of craft work and the capacity to maintain common infrastructures, creating surplus social value in the process. However, the research also identifies significant challenges, including inequitable access to support structures, and sustainability concerns stemming from reduced cultural funding, aging memberships, and reducing volunteer labour that largely underpins their operation. This research argues that these organisations exemplify an alternative to growth-focused industrial production models, demonstrating how practice-led peer communities can address needs unmet by current policy frameworks. It draws attention to the deficiencies of the creative industries policy context that views creative individuals as the primary producers of social and economic value, and often disregards non-financial exchange, and collective endeavours.

This research proposes maker-led organisations could, if provided with enhanced status and resources, better develop and maintain both craft and non-craft infrastructures for the common good. This thesis illuminates the extra/ordinary characteristics of care ethics in practice-led communities. It points to the generative role of care as a theoretical framework to explore non-financial value exchange and hidden organisational practices within the creative and cultural industries more broadly.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The nature of work is changing, affecting how society organises itself and shares resources. Studying collaborative behaviours in Scotland's craft sector – an under researched area of the creative and cultural industries – can provide insight into how those working independently find common purpose with others to mitigate and challenge precarity and create working lives that align with their beliefs and values. This project illuminates maker-led organisations' practices, and the values, beliefs and behaviours underpinning makers' involvement in, and contribution to, their running. The research design has been developed drawing on a Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) methodological approach, informed by the work of Charmaz (2000, 2017), and utilises a variety of research methods. This includes documentary analysis, online survey, qualitative interviews with participating makers, craft sector leaders, and policymakers, and participant observation within three case study organisations.

This study considers how cultural policy relating to craft and craft work in Scotland both informs and intersects with how the values, beliefs, and behaviours underpinning makers' self-organisation manifest. It proposes the role these organisations play within the Scottish craft ecology: as communities of care practice they provide care for their maker-members, and contribute to the skills, capacities, and infrastructures required to provide care to each other, and human and non-human others. This thesis explores the potential these practices, as models of craft organisation, might hold for improving the quality, access to, and experiences of work in the creative and cultural industries more broadly. It also considers what social impacts they contribute to in wider society.

This chapter provides an overview of the background to my research and introduces the overall purpose and research questions that have informed the methodology and methods used. I outline here the significance of the study, its limitations, and delimitations, and introduce key definitions – terms that have framed the research design and its subsequent findings. Finally, I summarise the structure and set out what to expect in the chapters that follow.

1.1   Background to the Study

The impetus for this work was an analysis of factors influencing the emergence of the *MAKE Manifesto,* which in 2019 and 2020 formed the basis of my (unpublished) master's dissertation. This shared manifesto of priorities representing 'Scotland's multi-sided craft community' (Panel, 2018) encouraged craft workers, primarily recruited through call outs to craft membership organisations, to participate in wider social policy discussions and interventions relating to education, community development, rural development, environmental sustainability, economic development, and tourism (Panel, 2019). This evidenced a complex and multifaceted relationship between policy makers and individual craft practitioners in Scotland. This underscored the increasing instrumentalization of craft – as has been seen elsewhere in the sphere of public funding of culture (Hadley & Gray, 2017). Further, it drew attention to the current problematisation (Bacchi, 2012; Stevenson, 2013) by policy makers and development bodies of the marginalisation of the voices of those that practice craft. Craft workers, I found, were regularly absent, and moreover often excluded, by the systems and processes emanating from government that construct an understanding of problems and needs of craft workers, develop policy visions, and action responses. This raised concerns of a misalignment between policy interventions and the values of those affected by them.

Craft and craft work have been prominent in debates surrounding creative and cultural work; seen as a means to improve the quality of work in society, and foster more ethical and humane work practices, in a period of rising concerns for the negative effects of individualisation on freelance creatives (Banks, 2010; Jakob & Thomas, 2015; Kroezen et al., 2021; Luckman, 2013a; Mignosa & Kotipalli, 2019). There have been, however, longstanding concerns about the romantic and pastoral associations of craft diminishing criticality; leading to calls for increased cross-disciplinary attention to contemporary craft practices (Adamson, 2008; Jakob, 2013). Those best placed to bring a more nuanced and less idealistic view of craft work, and craft's possible applications in society – craft workers themselves – have often been missing, ignored, or misrepresented. The *MAKE Manifesto* publications demonstrated that membership organisations played a significant, if under theorised, role in Scotland's craft ecology and were used as a means through which to generate and communicate the manifesto's priorities with the disaggregated and dispersed maker communities of Scotland. It therefore followed that attention to craft membership organisations' contemporary practices in Scotland could provide

a means to explore the needs, aspirations and social roles of craft makers, and their relationship to government policy.

The value of craft workers' relationships to each other through 'collectives, membership of associations and mailing lists' is recognised and considered a development priority nationally. *The Market for Craft Report* – published in the period directly following the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions – highlights this. 'Master Craftspeople' – defined as those with over 5 years' making experience who show work in galleries and museums – are most likely to be members according to the report. This posits a correlation between membership and quality of work produced, market success, and resilience in the sector. The authors add: '[i]t will be even more vital to maintain and develop these networks in a post-pandemic, post Brexit world.' (2020, p. 70). Despite this, the authors do not detail the reasons underpinning this, or indeed what maintenance and development might look like. In 2021 Craft Scotland, the national development agency for craft in Scotland, published a blog post titled '17 Scottish Craft Organisations to Know' again reiterating the valuable and important role these membership organisations have in supporting the working practices of professional craft workers: '[e]xploring the questions of the day and supporting makers to achieve their ambitions wherever that may lead them' (Lapeyre, 2021). Unexplored are how these organisations operate, how and to what extent they contribute to makers' creative and professional development and sustainability, and which makers benefit most (and indeed least) from their activities. Also scarce at the beginning of this research process was interrogation of what factors influence their structures, purposes, and behaviours, and whether these were arising within the organisations' membership communities, or as external stimuli.

There has been increased interest in the collective actions of creative and cultural workers, demonstrating emergent labour politics through practices of mutual aid and grassroots policy intervention (de Peuter & Cohen, 2015). In Scotland, there has been a predominant focus on this work within the visual arts sector, specifically artist-run initiatives (ARIs) (Biddlecombe, 2022; Brown et al., 2018), with limited consideration of the specificities of this activity in the craft sector. This study, therefore sought to foreground the contemporary collective working practices of craft makers – their interdependencies with cultural policy and potential social role – through attention to the practices undertaken by makers within grassroots, maker-led craft organisations.

1.1.1 Developing and Using Sensitizing Concepts

Prior to, and throughout, my postgraduate research career, I have been active within Scotland's cultural sector. I have held roles within cultural venues, managing creative participation programmes, festivals, cultural projects, and major cultural sector research projects and evaluations. Over the last six years I have developed an ongoing relationship with Scotland's craft sector, conducting research, project evaluations, and case studies on a freelance consultancy basis. As someone with pre-existing relationship to the field of study, who also sought to acknowledge my heretofore limited academic range, Charmaz' Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) approach to the research, particularly the use of iterative literature review processes, had a significant influence on the way I developed and structured this research design and subsequent findings.

The original proponents of grounded theory methods, Glaser and Strauss, diverged following their original publication, particularly in their expectations for what the initial stages of research should consist of. Corbin and Strauss' approach to grounded theory anticipates extensive initial literature reviews, and use of literature to test and refine emerging theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Glaser's consequent writing on the method however, called for restraint in terms of what the researcher brings into the research process with them, including limiting engagement with literature, and avoiding defining research problems and research questions that narrow the focus of the broad substantive area of the research study from beyond the data itself (Glaser, 1978, 1992). This limits the constructivist ontological position associated with interpretivism, towards a post positivist epistemology – imagining the researcher can 'discover' theory separate to their existing knowledge and experience (Cullen & Brennan, 2021). Dey critiques Glaser's suggestion the researcher can enter the field as *tabula rasa*, free from prior influences (1999), while Charmaz notes that Glaser and Strauss' work has informed other researchers to embody what could more aptly be termed 'theoretical agnosticism' (Charmaz, 2014a). Atkinson levels a direct critique to this approach, stating '[i]n the absence of ideas, research is pointless' (2017, p. 1).

Beginning this research design, I aimed to be generative and open to the data, working within a grounded theory methodological approach. I found Glaser's approach problematic, however, in terms of the claims to impartiality of the researcher. I acknowledged the subject discipline

perspectives, professional knowledge, and skills I brought into the field have directly influenced my relationship to that field: I entered the field equipped with 'sensitizing concepts' drawn from prior research and experiences. These 'sensitizing concepts' according to CGT offer 'ways of seeing, organizing, and understanding experience' and they are relativist: 'embedded in our disciplinary emphases and perspectival proclivities' (Charmaz, 2000, p. 515).

Following engagement with the work of Charmaz, I sought to acknowledge my own prior knowledge of the field and experience as a freelancer in the sector as an organising and motivating force. My research design though proactively created space for departures from pre-existing assumptions, and I was intentional in the development of new perspectives and reference points through wide engagement with diverse literatures and generation of new empirical research data. As Charmaz writes:

> Grounded theorists' background assumptions and disciplinary perspectives can alert them to certain possibilities and processes in their data. These assumptions and perspectives often differ among disciplines but nonetheless may shape research topics and conceptual emphases. Researchers need to be aware of how and to what extent they draw on such assumptions and perspectives and to be willing to revise or relinquish them, should their interpretations of the data so indicate. (Charmaz, 2014a, p. 30)

Throughout the process the analysis and coding of the research data, and cyclical engagements with literatures, alerted me to limitations and inadequacies in my background assumptions and disciplinary perspectives. My chosen methodology enabled repeated and iterative engagements with literature to gather and develop new conceptual lenses and terminology that supported analysis and theory development.

As acknowledged later in this chapter, this particularly related to the emergence of themes of care and compassion within the research data. While these had yet to receive critical academic attention relative to craft organisation, they were gaining traction within other debates relating to creative and cultural work within the period of the research, not least due to the pandemic context, which had raised awareness of unmet needs and mutual aid practices within the creative and cultural industries. This was consolidated relatively late in the research process. Repeated attempts to structure the coding and align dominant codes with distinct findings

chapters alerted me to the necessity to revise my theoretical framework. Following engagement with theories of care ethics (Tronto, 1998) – and after exploring and disregarding a great number of other theoretical possibilities in relation to the research data – I successfully re-coded the data and generated a sufficiently robust theoretical proposition that withstood testing. The work presented here is a testament to the combination of preceding knowledge and sector relationships, occupational inquisitiveness, and academic rigour, afforded by undertaking the postgraduate research process as a mature student with prior professional experience and relationships.

1.2   Research Purpose and Approach

The first purpose of this study is to discover the role played by maker-led organisations in Scotland's craft ecology – for those that join and participate in their activities, and for the wider craft ecology – and what this can tell us about the values, needs, and aspirations of Scottish craft makers. Secondly, this study is interested in the prospects maker-led organisations (might or do currently) offer for enhancing 'good work' (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011) in, and driving positive social impact through, the creative and cultural industries.

I chose a qualitative research design that supported data collection and analysis from a range of sources, including documentary and archival analysis, surveys, semi-structured interviews, and ethnographic participant observation. The constructivist grounded theory methodology applied (Charmaz, 2014b, 2017) facilitated overlapping data collection and analysis from multifaceted sources. This supported iterative thematic analysis, which enabled richly detailed insights and theories to develop through analysis and coding of the data, tested and refined through repeated comparisons and triangulation with both literature and empirical data. This was important because of the lack of pre-existing theory relating to the area of inquiry.

The research questions guiding the research design, and methods utilised, narrowed iteratively to encompass four key inquiry areas:

[1]   What are the practices of national (Scottish) maker-led organisations – specifically those of the chosen case studies?

[2]   What do makers express are the drivers underpinning their membership and participation in them – and what can this tell us about the needs and aspirations of craft makers in Scotland?

[3]   How are national maker-led organisations structured and resourced, and how does this shape the experience of the work and labour involved in their running?

[4]   What factors enable or disable membership and participation in these organisations?

As a qualitative study, designed to produce granular, detailed research findings, it was necessary to delimit the field of study through the selection of a small number of case studies, and a distinct time-period. Three national maker-led craft organisations were chosen: Applied Arts Scotland (AAS), Scottish Furniture Makers Association (SFMA), and Scottish Glass Society (SGS), all operating within Scotland, with members spread across the country. Maker-led, in this context, meant that those within leadership and governance roles were primarily practising craft makers themselves, and membership afforded some influence over the objectives, priorities, and practices of the organisations. The geographical focus of Scotland was important, as it provided the opportunity to evaluate the effects of a distinct policy context, whilst acknowledging it as contingent on broader UK Government activity.

These organisations' practices were tracked, and their activities observed, over a period of one year from January 2023 to December 2023, during which time a sample of participating maker-members – around 10% of the total membership of each organisation – also took part in semi-structured interviews. A multi-sited case study approach was chosen to provide, as Falzon recommends (2009), insights into the wider landscape all three were operating within, not just those pertinent to an individual case. This increased the generalizability of the research findings, and supported their applicability to other contexts. A broad survey of makers and interviews with craft sector leaders and policy makers were also employed as methods to further contextualise the chosen case study organisations, and their maker-members' experiences, within the Scottish craft ecology and the policy landscape that they operate within. Documentary and archival data were sought and analysed to contextualise the case study organisations' contemporary practices and memberships, within a broader time-

continuum. This enabled insight into factors, internal and external to the organisations themselves, that had shaped their operations and focused their priorities prior to the fieldwork.

Given the small number of case studies utilised, there are several notable limitations to my otherwise in-depth research. Firstly, the field work specifically relating to the case study organisations was carried out over a period of one year (January to December 2023) with intermittent opportunities for participant observation during that timescale. My participation, and the experiences I recorded in this field work over twelve events, must be recognised as a sample of the case studies' activity delivered during this period. This was a period notable for rapid shifts in delivery and format of activity, which required flexible and responsive engagement in the field. The case study organisations were all returning to prioritising in-person meetings and events, after the effects of COVID-19 had compelled them to 'pivot' to digital engagement in the previous three years. This resulted in a mix of participant observation in digital and physical spaces. Interviews were conducted with 36 research participants, including case study member participants as well as craft sector leaders and those involved in policy advocacy. These provided a rich sample of the case study organisations' membership – primarily craft makers – and the concerns of those leading craft sector organisations. But I cannot claim to provide numerically or statistically representative data on the craft sector as a whole. Triangulating the interviews with the survey data, documentary and archival materials, and recent sector mapping, provided confidence that the thematic findings are pertinent to the Scottish craft ecology more broadly.

1.3   Significance of the Study

Rising public appeal and critical interest in craft, in a period dubbed craft's 'third-wave' (Jakob, 2013), have been fuelled by evangelical practitioner accounts of craft work's pleasures, sustainability credentials, and contributions to social and technological innovation (Anderson, 2012; Crawford, 2010; Levine & Heimerl, 2008; Marchand, 2022). This has stimulated new critical attention to craft work and its organisation, seeking to account for its potential social role as an alternative to globalised production, industrialisation, and scientific management in late-stage capitalism (Bell et al., 2019; Kroezen et al., 2021; Mignosa & Kotipalli, 2019). Craft makers, research finds, often reject growth-focused inducements to labour and become entrepreneurial subjects, operating with moral considerations (Bennett, 2020; England, 2023; Luckman, 2018; Naudin & Patel, 2020). This commonly sets them at

odds with the growth-focused economic instrumentalism endemic within creative economy policy and related discourse. However, craft's contemporary position is also thanks to its contribution to consumption, hyperindividualism, and economic growth derived from the exploitation of labour and natural resources in products marketized as artisanal and handmade (Black & Burisch, 2021; Gandini & Gerosa, 2023; Gaugele, 2021; Kowolik, 2021). There have been, in this context, increasing attentions to the formal and informal organisational practices of makers, both those organised from above, and generated within practice-led craft communities, from below (Comunian & England, 2022; Gu, 2018; Shultz, 2013; Stevens, 2011; Thomas & Jakob, 2019; Thomas & Luckman, 2024). To date, this activity has received notably less academic attention than the organisation of other areas of the creative and cultural industries, due to its informality, small-scale, and supposed economic insignificance.

Maker-led organisations are a longstanding feature of the Scottish craft ecology, but one that has yet to receive significant critical attention. No organisation or institution has taken responsibility for mapping or cataloguing maker-led organisations in Scotland or indeed, researching makers' participation in them. Unpublished desk-research has been carried out through the work of *MAKE Manifesto,* a maker-led craft advocacy campaign led by Panel and supported by Craft Scotland and Creative Scotland. Since 2018 the *MAKE* project has focused on developing national strategy for craft, stimulating new initiatives within craft education, and improving craft's public perception. The report (Baker, 2022) identifies 60 Scottish craft organisations, around one-third of which are maker-led, suggesting an increasing awareness of, appreciation, and interest in their role by sector bodies and those that fund them. Craft in this respect is playing catch up with other 'artforms' in Scotland, which have undergone large-scale sector reviews commissioned by Creative Scotland and other public bodies that capture the ecological complexity and identify the infrastructural components supporting talent development, creative practice, production, audience development, and participation. There has been limited assessment of maker-led craft organisations' working practices, value to makers, sustainability, or equity of access to the resources and opportunities they produce. No formal tracking of how their roles and practices have changed over time has been undertaken. Attention to maker-led organisations, I propose, therefore has the potential to enable positive policy interventions, in line with equivalent initiatives in other cultural sectors.

There are currently heightened concerns for the quality of – and equitability of access to – craft work in Scotland (Craft Scotland, 2023b). These concerns have been mounting following the COVID-19 pandemic which exposed the individuated vulnerabilities and precarity of self-employed craft work. Utilising survey methods, factors affecting makers' livelihoods and the sustainability of their practices were identified by Craft Scotland, the national development body for craft in Scotland. These included low pay, enhanced requirements for portfolio-working, and lack of access to welfare, alongside restricted physical access to workshops, studios, and production facilities that are owned, managed and controlled by others (Craft Scotland, 2020). This is concomitant with wider concerns for the self-employed within the creative and cultural industries following pandemic restrictions, as raised by the cultural sector policy advocacy body for Scotland, Culture Counts. Craft makers' particular precariousness and lack of welfare and financial safety nets were illuminated by the pandemic context (Brabin, 2020; Comunian & England, 2020; Jones, 2022), but largely appreciated to be continuations and amplifications of longstanding sector issues. This is considered a result of low incomes, sole trader status, and market sensitivity.

Policy focus on driving Fair Work, work that offers 'all individuals an effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment, and respect', in Scotland's creative and cultural sectors has subsequently emerged from Scotland's public body responsible for developing the cultural sectors, Creative Scotland (Culture Radar, 2022). This is aligned with broader Scottish Government focus on developing Fair Work practices in Scotland, as a major policy priority seeking to drive a more equitable income distribution and improve the Scottish economy (Scottish Government, 2022). Critical questions about the applicability and relevance of these Fair Work statements and initiatives for creative and cultural workers are being raised by those that represent and support freelance creatives (i.e., STUC, 2025). As a majority freelance and self-employed sector – less than one-fifth of sector respondents employed other people according to the latest sector review (Craft Scotland, 2023b) – this is particularly pertinent to craft. Craft's continued marginalised status in government policy in Scotland (Panel, 2018, 2019), is seen to exacerbate the inequity of security, opportunity and progression for craft makers, as well as heighten the risks posed for intangible cultural heritage, and contemporary cultural expression, from the loss of craft skills that follow (Heritage Crafts Association, 2021).

The collective organisational practices of creative and cultural workers, including generating mutual aid and developing policy advocacy 'from below', are pointed to more expansively as a nascent disruption to creative industries' individualisation and de-politicization of creative labour (de Peuter & Cohen, 2015). This aligns with interest in the political potential of individualised creative workers, and the forms of social organisation they enact, freed from proscribed structures as a result of their creative and occupational autonomy (Hardt & Negri, 2011; Lazzarato, 2006; Morgan & Nelligan, 2017). Conversely, there are also those who provide critical assessments of the drive to work as 'passionate' freelance creatives as a symptom of neoliberal governmentality seeking to encourage labouring subjects to pursue self-employment as a means to lower welfare costs, and reduce social responsibilities of the State (McRobbie, 2016). This research is interested in the policy drivers, and the social effects, of makers' self-organisation within this context.

There has been limited policy attention to the role makers' organisations do, or could, play in improving the conditions of craft work, for self-employed craft makers, or the impact of their practices on the access to and equitability of craft work. This research study provides a significant intervention. Firstly, I have developed new empirical data on the working practices of maker-led organisations in Scotland. Secondly, I have generated novel theoretical conceptualisations on the drivers informing maker-led organisations emergence and practices, both from within the maker communities that engage, and the external stimuli created by environmental factors, including cultural policy. Thirdly, I have evaluated the role and effects of these organisations on member-makers, and Scotland's craft ecology more broadly. This contributes to assessments about how to improve the conditions of, and access to 'good work' in the creative and cultural industries, by considering how the positively impactful practices of Scotland's maker-led organisations, could be leveraged in other contexts. Further, this study considers how these maker-led organisations' practices might contribute to society, through contributing to social goods and infrastructures, during a period when there are urgent calls to 'reclaim' culture's – and by association cultural workers' – role in generating common goods as part of the foundational economy (O'Connor, 2024). My research advances sector knowledge and makes policy recommendations, to better inform grassroots advocacy and practices and government actions relating to craft and craft work in Scotland. It points to practices and values that could be socially generative more broadly in the creative and cultural industries.

1.4   Defining Key Terms

Multiple key terms scaffold this research, none of which are without their nuances, confusions, and elusiveness, not least because of their interdependencies. To support engagement with the body of work that follows, I put forward here a series of short, preliminary definitions relating to the key terms employed, namely: craft, good work, care, and compassion. I also introduce some of the key debates relating to these terms, which are explored in-depth within the literature review (Chapter 2) that follows.

1.4.1 Craft, craft work and craft makers

Craft is a complex and multifaceted term that routinely troubles those seeking to define it. It has over the last two and a half centuries, as Greenhalgh contends, become a 'naturalised and institutionalised signifier of a certain range of practices and attitudes' (1997, p. 46). These delimit and position craft in relation to other forms of cultural and material production. As a disparate collection of material disciplines or class of objects, commonly referred to as 'the crafts', it is commonly denied the status of art – being understood as manual skill rather than mental processes, producing utility over conceptual content. Craft work is recognised as producing physical, lasting and material products, rather than intangible, event-based outputs. However, craft work is also understood as unifying 'head and hands' (Sennett, 2008), making it ubiquitous within artistic production (Buszek, 2011) and a major input to art's value (Banks, 2010). Moreover, it is often presented within the same institutional settings as art. Craft is associated with autonomous small-scale, manual production, and freedom to control the work process from conception to completion (Braverman, 1974), enhancing its pleasures and reducing exploitation by capital. This focus on quality over quantity, has led to craft's characterisation as 'industry's opposite number' (Adamson, 2013). Despite its institutionalisation, questions abound regarding the defining limitations based on scale and form, inputs and attitudes, leading to craft's 'blurred boundaries' (Shiner, 2012) with other practices and disciplines, including art, design, technology, and manufacturing.

Craft work has, since the rise of the industrial revolution, been associated with good, meaningful, pleasurable, and ethically oriented work with utopian overtones. This is most overt within the Arts and Crafts Movement in the late 19th Century (Luckman, 2013a). While

associated with quality and skilled labour in some contexts (Sennett, 2008), craft is also commonly viewed as a leisure pursuit. Often carried out within the home, it is frequently considered unprofessional, producing amateur, low-quality, 'crafted' objects with a low economic status (Knott, 2015). Historically this has led to devalued vernacular crafts and 'feminine' textile-based arts (Luckman, 2015a), and the perception of craft as backward-looking, pastoral, and conservative (Greenhalgh, 2002). However, as Stebbins (1992) identifies, craft is often 'serious leisure' – craft makers, even when producing craft without deriving a living from it, are occupationally devoted. They can dedicate significant time and resource, at their own expense, in pursuit of personal fulfilment and community – often producing work of high quality and exacting standards that match or sometimes exceed those working 'professionally'.

Craft is simultaneously viewed as more humane and environmentally sustainable than industrialised production (Jakob, 2013; Prados-Peña et al., 2022), and yet increasingly implicated in wasteful material proliferation, neoliberal self-branding, and exploitative work practices due to its co-option by commercial interests (Black & Burisch, 2021). It is, as Julia Bryan-Wilson contends, ripe with contradictory propositions (2015). It names specific material processes, and cultural products, as well as being uniquely encompassed in debates surrounding the politics of work, as a form of pleasurable, autonomous, unalienated labour.

Within this thesis the use of the term 'craft' (and the associated terms of craft work and craft makers) draws from across the above debates, and yet has a narrower definition informed by the context of Scotland, and the need to delimit the field of study. This thesis focuses on those involved in small-scale craft production, often operating as sole-traders or microenterprises, working across a range of disciplines and material processes. Specifically, in the cases selected: applied artists commonly working in disciplines such as textiles, jewellery, and clay; glass artists and makers involved in both production and restoration work; and furniture designer-makers producing items such as wooden cabinetry and chairs, who directly manage the process of craft production from conception to completion. It does not attend to those working in consumable materials, such as food, drinks, candles, and cosmetics, those who might consider themselves 'craft workers' in highly skilled trades and manufacturing sectors, or those contributing craft skills and labour to the work of others operating in non-craft-

specific creative and cultural sectors, such as costume designers and prop makers working in broadcasting and film.

This is broadly aligned with the delimitations put forth by the national development agency for craft in Scotland, Craft Scotland, whose remit developed within the specific policy context of Scotland, whereby craft has historically been supported as both small craft businesses and artform – a context explored in depth within Chapter 5. While this thesis delimits craft, craft work, and craft makers in these ways, the research also sought to be open to a range of perspectives and forms of practice. I enabled research participants to self-identify as 'makers' regardless of formal work status, level of experience, turnover or income levels. In doing so this research partly aligns with the status of craft in Scottish policy, supported primarily as a creative industry sub-sector, 'hav[ing] their origin in individual creativity, imagination, and curiosity and… where creative motivation provides the basis for living, working or studying' (Scottish Government, 2019, p. 2). However, it also challenges the economic value focus of this policy context, whereby revenue generation, and professional status is expected, and the contemporary and heritage crafts have largely segregated support structures (Craft Scotland, 2023a; Local Voices CIC, 2021). As will be encountered later in this thesis, the majority of research participants practice their craft seriously and systematically as occupational devotees (Stebbins, 1992), around a portfolio of other commitments, with variable income generation motivations or necessities.

1.4.2 Good Work and Craft

Improving the quality of work is of growing concern in policy relating to the creative and cultural industries, alongside longstanding interest in the overall quantity of work (Carey et al., 2023). This follows rising concerns for the 'bad' characteristics of work in these sectors, including precarity, lack of security, low and no pay, exploitation, lack of equity of opportunity, and injustice in its distribution (Banks, 2007a; Brook et al., 2020a; Gill & Pratt, 2008; McRobbie, 2016; Serafini & Banks, 2020). These bad characteristics have been heightened by the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions, accessing places of work and cultural production, and the effects on employment and self-employment (Brabin, 2020; Comunian & England, 2020; Walmsley et al., 2022). The timing of this research – which was initiated in the period where pandemic-related restrictions were lifting, and makers were processing and adapting to the impacts on their lives and livelihoods from

the preceding two years – meant these concerns were omnipresent within the field of study. This frequently showed up within the research process, with many participants emotionally expressive, and at times tearful about their current experience of sustaining their craft work.

In the work of Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011, p. 36), who make a major contribution in this area, 'good work' is defined as: 'work involving autonomy, interest and involvement, sociality, self-esteem, self-realisation, work-life balance and security', while conversely 'bad work' involves 'control by or dependence on others; boredom; isolation; low self-esteem or shame; frustrated self-realisation, overwork and risk.' In these definitions, the 'internal rewards' of work as 'practice' are foregrounded (MacIntyre, 2007), rather than the external rewards relating to pay, benefits, recognition and progression, or their distribution. In the context of Scotland, Fair Work has been the terminology underpinning a major policy initiative *Fair Work First* (Scottish Government, 2022, 2023a). This has been increasingly central within cultural policy; those seeking public funding for cultural projects and initiatives are required to have relevant Fair Work policies in place, and the ability to demonstrate they can uphold the key principles of Fair Work: 'promoting fair pay, conditions, and employment opportunities across the creative sector' (*What Is Fair Work? | Creative Scotland*, n.d.). This has a primary focus on external rewards; reducing unpaid work, aligning pay scales with recognised industry standards such as those proposed by the Scottish Artists Union (SAU), enhancing equity of opportunity, and increasing workplace protections and representation.

While there are many debates surrounding what constitutes 'good', 'fair', or 'decent' work, the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) recently sought to consolidate these varying terms into a singular definition:

> 'Good' work in the Creative Industries is characterised as offering: fair reward commensurate to skill and contribution, that counterbalances security and flexibility; provides autonomy and personal fulfilment; where workers have agency, voice and representation and the opportunity to utilise their skills, develop and progress; in a healthy, respectful and inclusive environment. This experience of work must be fair and equal for all Creative workers, irrespective of their gender, age, ethnicity, disability or socio-economic background. (Carey et al., 2023, p. 12)

This combines the internal and external rewards of work, and the review notes that both must be considered in any assessment of the overall 'quality' of work.

The internal rewards of craft, including personal fulfilment and autonomy, are understood as significant contributors to craft work's status as 'good work' (Bozkurt & Lara Cohen, 2019; Crawford, 2010; Inkson, 1987; Stebbins, 1992). However, craft work in Scotland is acknowledged as frequently low-paid and insecure. Operating as sole traders and microenterprises, craft makers are – alongside many working within the creative and cultural sectors as freelancers – acknowledged to have limited recourse to improve access to opportunities, representation, and security of work (Culture Radar, 2022). To mitigate the lack of security, and manage its risks – including personal responsibility for the development of craft skills, and professional profile – craft is often carried out alongside a portfolio of non-craft-related employment and self-employment (Champion, 2020; Craft Scotland, 2023b). This results in lack of equity of opportunity for those less able to weather the peaks and troughs of income and opportunity. There are also increasing concerns about the narrow craft canon, based on Eurocentric tastes and sensibilities, resulting in inequitable progression and lack of diverse representation in institutional forums, where external pay, recognition and other external rewards are often higher (Patel, 2020b; Patel & Dudrah, 2022).

The external rewards of craft and ability to produce quality over quantity, thereby achieving the internal rewards of craft practice, are reliant on ready market demand (Pye, 1968) or a robust social value proposition as to its public utility vis-à-vis other public policy priorities (Belfiore, 2015; Gray, 2007; Hadley & Gray, 2017). Makers are frequently depicted as ambivalent towards, or actively rejecting of, economic growth for growth's sake, with both personal fulfilment and moral imperatives motivating their craft work (Bennett, 2020; Luckman, 2018). It follows, therefore that understanding maker-led organisations' role in relation to good work, supporting its internal rewards, distribution of opportunity, and development of demand through highlighting its social utility, can lead to learning relevant not just to craft work, but to improving work, particularly for freelancers and sole traders, in the creative and cultural industries more widely.

1.4.3 Care, compassion, and craft

Care became increasingly significant within the theoretical framework, structuring this thesis and its findings, through repeated appearances of other-oriented sentiments, and concern for the unmet needs of makers, within the research data. This was informed and reinforced by the

COVID-19 context of the research, which created a heightened appreciation of mutual dependencies, within a period characterised by isolation and uncertainty. This has led to a burgeoning attention to care, and its effects, within creative and cultural work and practices over the post-pandemic period. Maker-led organisations are collective structures, set up to consider, and respond to, the needs of makers. It follows, therefore, that attending to compassion as a driver of maker-led organisation, as well as care as a series of nested practices emanating from it, provides a novel, and generative framework to explore their role and effects.

Care within this thesis is a multifaceted framework that encompasses both values, what is thought and believed, and practices, what is done and achieved (Held, 2005). As such it dovetails well with the combination of enquiry methods used in the research, drawing from interview testimonies, as well as participant observations, to consider the relationships between thinking and doing, values and actions. As a value, care is understood as an ethical orientation to meet the needs and enhance the wellbeing of others motivated by feelings of altruism and compassion. Compassion, argues Nussbaum, acts as a 'central bridge between the individual and the community' (1996, p. 28). As such, it is prudent to consider in assessments of social organisation and community building. Care can also be defined, as practice, as:

> a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web (Fisher & Tronto, 1990, p. 40)

Care here is not only other-oriented values, but the actions or practices that follow from those values, having impacts and consequences in the world. Fisher and Tronto's conception of care has been used to challenge the supposed predominance of neoliberal individualism, and question the hegemony of extractive growth-focused economic policies, through foregrounding the ecological interdependencies of life, and non-financial exchange of value.

Care is increasingly advocated for as both value and practice to respond to 'organised neglect' and 'carelessness' in wider society (Chatzidakis et al., 2020). Care, hypothesises Lynch, can provide a form of capital, which – alongside economic, social, and cultural capital – can contribute to the resources required to live well, enhancing the ability to contribute to social life (2007). However, to care is not politically neutral; people can care about all sorts of issues

and subjects that have negative consequences, it can be incomplete, incompetently practiced, and inequitably distributed. As Puig de la Bellacasa also reminds us, care can be freely given, it can also be experienced as a heavy burden of responsibility (2017).

Culture, the arts and humanities, Nussbaum furthers, have an important social and community building role; cultivating compassion, through generating opportunities to imagine the experiences of others vividly. That can, in turn, enhance the propensity to act and care for others, and consider 'just distribution' of goods beyond self-interest (1996, p. 57). There is increasing interest in the role of compassion as a moral driver within creative and cultural work, producing caring practices through socially-engaged, community-focused or issue-based practices (Alačovska, 2020; Alačovska & Bissonnette, 2021; Banks, 2006; Campbell, 2022). There is simultaneously interest in responding to an acknowledged lack of care for the creative and cultural workers themselves. By generating new understandings of who currently cares for these workers, and on what basis, there is ambition to uncover mechanisms through which to improve the quality, experience, and equitability of this work (Dent et al., 2023).

Craft objects hold within them, and communicate, makers' compassions. Consideration of the needs of human and non-human others are expressed in the sensitivity towards materials, tools and forms used, and their histories and properties. The needs of the end user are materialised in the shape, feel, and form of a cup handle, or height and proportions of a chair seat. Craft in this way emerges from compassion, as a desire to meet the needs of self and others. The craft maker enacts care through making things care-fully, embodying them with use value, as well as emotional and cultural significance (Bratich, 2010; Niedderer & Townsend, 2015). Craft and making, argues Gauntlett, can be a way of connecting people, values and ideas across time and geography, contributing to social capital and happiness (2018). Craft knowledge and skills are accepted as a means through which people learn to care for, and thereby sustain and repair, the material world around them (Carr & Gibson, 2015). I argue, therefore, that craft – as well as being motivated by the pursuit of self-satisfaction and external reward – involves other-oriented values and practices. Attending to compassion and care within maker-led craft organisations can illuminate the drivers underpinning, as well as the labour involved in self-organisation.

1.5 Outline and Structure of the Thesis

The thesis begins, in Chapter 2, with a critical exploration of the academic literature relating to craft, craft work, and craft organisation. Despite the heightened attention to craft in this 'third-wave' moment (Jakob, 2013), contemporary craft organisation and the collective behaviours of self-employed craft makers have only recently begun to receive critical attention. This literature review points to the need for new empirical and theoretical research into contemporary craft organisation, the roles they play for craft makers, and their current or potential social contributions. In Chapter 3 the research design, and methods and sources utilised are detailed, informed by the chosen CGT methodology. In this chapter the decisions relating to site selection, participant selection, data sampling and analysis are presented, foregrounding the in-depth, qualitative, multi-sited case study approach (Falzon, 2009; Marcus, 1995). The ethical considerations of this approach, and risk assessment processes undertaken, are also detailed.

The background to the study is introduced in Chapter 4. This chapter utilises the survey data from 123 respondents, all self-identifying makers based in Scotland, to contextualise the chosen case study organisations within the Scottish craft ecology and the forms and practices of organisation and association that makers currently undertake. It acknowledges the significant impact this survey data made in the subsequent research findings that follow; introducing the key concerns, ambitions, practices, and socio-demographic characteristics of makers within the wider ecology, that were examined within the case-specific inquiries through observations and interviews. Overall, the survey data points to national maker-led organisations as the most substantial and widespread form of organisational behaviour undertaken by Scotland's makers, adding to the significance of the findings that follow.

Chapter 5 presents an account of the three chosen case study organisations: Applied Arts Scotland (AAS), Scottish Furniture Makers Association (SFMA), and Scottish Glass Society (SGS). Operating as national, maker-led organisations, it sets their formation and development within, and interrelated with, the shifting policy landscape pertaining to craft and craft work in Scotland over the last seventy-five years. The drivers underpinning makers' self-organisation are interrogated in Chapter 6, drawing on interview testimonies and participant observations. This research explores the ways that these drivers illuminate gaps in provision and needs unmet by other forms of support, as well as the effects of membership and participation. The

values and practices of the makers leading the case study organisations, and contributing significantly to their operations through voluntary labour, are explored in Chapter 7. In this chapter compassion is centred as the driver of maker-leaders' voluntary contributions, with care ethics structuring the organisational practices that result. In the final findings chapter, Chapter 8, the enabling and disabling factors affecting membership of, and participation in, maker-led organisations are explored. The practices of the organisations to define, delimit, and develop their membership communities are considered. These findings elucidate the organisations' quandary: responsive to a pre-existing narrow demography affected by wider social inequalities, as well as the necessity to sustain the organisations through membership income and prestige, affect who is pursued and invited in.

Finally, to conclude, Chapter 9 revisits the findings, and looking across the preceding chapters consolidates the role of compassion and care ethics in driving and structuring the practices and effects of maker-led organisations in Scotland's craft ecology. Within this conclusion, I propose that maker-led organisations demonstrate extra/ordinary care. This is once ubiquitous and widespread, and yet illuminates craft's 'humane' organisation (Kroezen et al., 2021) setting it apart from other forms of economic activity and production. The labour involved in mitigating a lack of care elsewhere in the landscape draws attention to the effects of the policy context pertaining to craft in Scotland. Following the conclusions, the implications for policy and practice are outlined, and some recommendations are proposed. I conclude with reflections on opportunities for future research that this reveals.

CHAPTER 2: THE ROLE OF CRAFT, CRAFT WORK AND CRAFT MAKERS IN SOCIETY

The interplay of craft work and its organisation (Bell et al., 2019; Luckman, 2015a) presents a rich and complex landscape within which to situate research into Scotland's contemporary maker-led organisations. Craft as concept is foundational to established fields of social enquiry, such as Marxism and Taylorism, and is drawn upon in concepts relating to work and social organisation. For Marx, in a craft-based economy, individuals engage fully in the production process, which allows them to express their creativity and see the direct results of their work. However, in a capitalist system, this connection is severed; workers become mere cogs in a machine, performing repetitive tasks without personal fulfilment, leading to their alienation and exploitation by capital (Marx, 2024 [1867]). In Taylor's work (1911), efficiency and productivity is developed through scientific management, involving standardised tasks and time management, to maximise economic output. However, Taylorism is criticised as fragmenting labour into specialised tasks, leading to deskilling, and loss of agency, both unfavourable to the sustainability of the craft tradition (Braverman, 1974).

In the recent moment of critical attention, craft is invoked in rising aspirations for 'good' work, and the concomitant concerns about 'bad' work, in the cultural and creative industries (Carey et al., 2023; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; McRobbie, 2016; Ross, 2004). The current moment is marked by concerns for the loss of craft skills in society as a result of technological changes and digital work practices (Crawford, 2010; Heritage Crafts Association, 2021; Sennett, 2008), while craft is simultaneously seen as a driver of technological innovation (Anderson, 2012; Ingold, 2013), and an essential input to the value of the creative industries (Banks, 2010). Government policy seeking to drive social change through the support and subvention of craft and craft workers has re-emerged in this context (Jakob, 2013; Jakob & Thomas, 2015). There is rising interest in the potential craft work's organisation holds in a period of accelerated social and technological upheaval, as an alternative or counterpoint to dominant economic rationales (Hofverberg et al., 2017; Kroezen et al., 2021; Mignosa & Kotipalli, 2019).

2.1   Craft's contemporary significance

Craft – its organisation, economics, and social and political values – have been of increasing prevalence within the public imaginary within a period characterised as the 'third wave' of craft, which began in the late 20th Century (Hofverberg et al., 2017; Jakob, 2013). This third wave shares many characteristics found in earlier waves. First, the Arts and Crafts Movement taking place within the latter part of the 1800s and early 1900s asserted the social role of craft, driven by the writings of John Ruskin, William Morris, and their contemporaries. More recently, the 'Back to the Earth' hippie craft revival of the 1960's and 1970's, which sought to promote self-sufficiency, presented craft as political – counter cultural to rising consumerism (Luckman, 2015a). Shared characteristics across these 'waves' include the search for 'solace in the tacit' during a period of social upheaval and turbulence (Crawford, 2009; Sennett, 2008; Stevens, 2011); a desire for humane labour and creative and occupational autonomy to resist the alienating effects of technology (Lucie-Smith, 1981; Luckman, 2013a; Marchand, 2022); a riposte to the deskilling and degradation of labour associated with scientific management (Braverman, 1974; Previtali & Fagiani, 2015); and concerns for environmental sustainability and need for material sensitivity and skills, in the face of rising consumerism and decadent material proliferation and its subsequent ecological crises (Carr & Gibson, 2017; Hofverberg et al., 2017; Luckman, 2018; Miller, 2015; Prados-Peña et al., 2022). As Greenhalgh writes:

> [W]henever the industrial society appears to tip into the especially consumerist phase, real or imagined, and particularly when respected thinkers identify the age as decadent and greedy, craft and design are wont to reveal themselves as the forces of anti-mammon. (2002, p. 9)

Craft is therefore, as Wagner expresses, never 'simply about making but about making a political statement since the days of Ruskin, Morris, etc.' (2008, p. 1).

Craft has, in this context, increasingly been called forth in UK and Scottish Government policy and by craft sector advocates and practitioners – as instrumental in responding to a range of contemporary policy 'problems' (Bacchi, 2012; Stevenson, 2013). These range from advancing economic development (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2020), and regional development, particularly in rural areas; sustaining heritage and reinforcing national cultural identity aligned with calls to ratify the UNESCO Convention on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (Local Voices CIC, 2021; Lovett, 2024); contributing to education, employability and skills development (Jakob & Thomas, 2015; James-Beith, 2021); advancing

social inclusion and mental well-being (APPG Arts, Health and Wellbeing, 2017; Corkhill et al., 2015; Riley et al., 2013); promoting environmental sustainability and carbon reduction to meet Net Zero targets set by the Scottish Government (Creative Carbon Scotland, 2018); and contributing to innovation and digital capabilities (Anderson, 2012; MakerEd, 2020; Tech Nation, 2021). Craft makers both support and challenge this instrumentalism of craft. Scotland's *MAKE Manifesto* demonstrates Makers' desire to be viewed as net contributors to society; motivating policy alignments and promoting value assessments and social impact propositions related to craft. Conversely, their strongly-held counter cultural perspectives – often challenging dominant growth-focused values aligned with industrialisation, mass-manufacture, and rampant consumerism – can result in critiques or rejection of this requirement to demonstrate extrinsic impacts, fearful of loss of control and subsumption into antithetical policy projects (McHattie et al., 2019; Munro, 2020). Within this period of heightened attention, craft makers in Scotland are acknowledged to have persistently low-income levels, and there are mounting concerns over the loss of craft skills, educational infrastructures, and sustainability of craft practices (Craft Scotland, 2023b; Heritage Crafts Association, 2021). This makes for a dynamic context within which Scotland's maker-led organisations are operating.

Considering the contradictions at work in this moment, this chapter first explores the different angles from which craft and craft work have been variously valued and assessed. It considers the ongoing paradoxes that mark its contemporary valuation as producing different social, cultural and economic goods (Bryan-Wilson, 2015). Thereafter those defining craft – including both those attending to craft as a form of moral and progressive labour, and as an economically-framed and valued subsector defined by creative industries policies – are explored, paying particular attention to the various definitions and framings within Scotland, as a distinct, if contingent, policy region within the UK. Through these definitions, the broad policy context surrounding craft and craft makers is evaluated. This consider on what basis and in what form craft makers and their organisations receive public support and resources, alert to the frequent 'policy dissonance' that emerges in this context between the professed values of craft makers, and top-down priorities (McHattie et al., 2019). In the third, and final, section the literature review narrows to focus on the historical and contemporary understandings of craft makers' social and occupational organisational practices, their roles, and effects. This section explores their framings variously, as 'communities of practice'

(Stevens, 2011; Thomas & Jakob, 2019), 'social networks' (Gu, 2018), and 'craft intermediaries' (Comunian & England, 2022). The effects and implications of these framings are considered. This chapter concludes with a summary that acknowledges the theoretical and empirical gaps that frame my subsequent research, re-stating the central framework of care.

2.2 Ongoing Contradictions of Craft

This third wave moment is ripe with contradictions. There is increasing recognition of and attention to craft labour's integral, if low status, role in workshop-based artistic production of commoditised cultural goods within the creative industries, and therefore its economic import (Banks, 2010). Conversely, this centrality has also made its traditional forms more vulnerable to being undermined by enhanced management, and technological standardisation. As Banks cautions, despite its rising significance, 'this ostensibly 'good work' is increasingly subject to the advanced demands of capital for controlled, standardised production, divested of traditional craft values and practices' (2010, p. 317). The craft worker's ability to refuse 'the efficiencies of modern manufacture for aesthetic, ethical, social or political reasons' (Adamson, 2008, p. 6), and by association their ability to position themselves in opposition to mass production and industrialisation, is increasingly in question.

The economic contribution of craft to the UK economy is captured and promoted by development bodies, such as the UK Craft Council (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2020), and used as an advocacy tool to garner enhanced policy attention and public subvention aligned with creative economy policy orthodoxy (Schlesinger, 2017). However, these figures have been dismissed as inflated. Research conducted by Jakob (2013) found the economic growth attributed to craft in this third wave moment was largely a result of growth in the number and scale of craft supply businesses, producing materials, tools, marketing, and training for enthusiastic hobbyists, rather than the sale of handmade goods themselves. Craft's public value is being promoted on the basis of its ability to generate economic growth and increased tax receipts and lower welfare costs through encouraging growth in entrepreneurial self-employment (McRobbie, 2016), with politicians articulating craft as 'an engine for economic recovery' following a period of austerity and financial stagnation and retraction (Jakob, 2013, p. 128). This is despite growing scholarship that finds standard entrepreneurial strategies and goals geared towards growth for growth's sake fail to align with the practices of craft makers (Bennett, 2020; England, 2023; Luckman, 2018; Naudin & Patel, 2020). Persistent low

income levels derived from craft, and the required portfolio of non-craft economic activity undertaken by craft practitioners to sustain themselves (Craft Scotland, 2023b; Greenlees, 2020; World Crafts Council Europe, 2023), further trouble the rhetoric surrounding craft's economic contributions, despite its notable public appeal. This has led to questions about the 'modest' ambitions of craft makers (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2020), inferring makers' attitudes towards economic growth are largely to blame for their own marginalised economic status and low earnings. This draws attention to the 'dissonance' between the largely unscalable practices of craft makers, and the creative economy priorities of supporting 'high-growth-oriented models associated with technology and digital content-creating industries' (McHattie et al., 2019, p. 5).

Craft has a growing and disparate invocation in organisational and management studies as the basis for alternative models for organising work. However, there is acknowledgement that a shared common theoretical basis for that proposition, is lacking. Kroezen *et al.* argue: 'we seem to lack a dedicated theory that helps us understand what distinguishes craft approaches to work' (2021, p. 503). This has led to its vulnerability, and co-option by commercial interests who marketize mass-manufactured goods as artisanal, hand-made and crafted for economic gain (Black & Burisch, 2021; Gandini & Gerosa, 2023). Proposing a theoretical framework, that defines craft by its 'humanist approach to work' Kroezen *et al.* suggest that we can:

> [U]nderstand why and how advanced societies may be characterized by the revaluation and reinvention of craft approaches to work in a period where workers are increasingly subordinated to 'intelligent machines'. (*Ibid.*)

Ultimately this framework suggests that this third-wave interest is morally aligned with an increasing concern for the quality of work, and by association workers' quality of life. This follows an ongoing assumption that the separation of mental and manual tasks under conditions of scientific management and industrialisation, driven by technological advancements, results in a degradation of labour, and quality of life for workers (Bell et al., 2019). This sentiment infuses the writings of Sennett (2008) who invokes the fulfilment and autonomy provided by craft work as diametrically opposed to the alienation and disconnection of work under neoliberal capitalism. Crawford, likewise (2010), argues that craft provides meaningful and tangible work that stands in contrast to the unsatisfying nature of modern work, and aligns with Graeber's assessment that the latter can cause psychological harm (2018). Gauntlett, in turn, explores how craft and making can foster social connections and

personal fulfilment, providing opportunities for 'wonder, agency and possibilities in the world' (2018, p. 1) – an antidote to the isolating effects of neoliberalism and consumer culture.

There is burgeoning attention to the role of craft in contemporary societies globally, and craft is increasingly a subject of inquiry within cross-disciplinary research. Craft as an idea and set of values is positioned in debates surrounding strategies for 'sustainable prosperity', defined as 'a good life for all, decoupled from slavish adherence to accumulation and the growth imperative' (Oakley & Banks, 2020, p. 9; Cf. Oakley & Ward, 2018). And craft has been increasingly identified as a means through which to renegotiate our relationship to non-human material, and reduce environmental impacts associated with wasteful consumerism through practices and material knowledges that promote care, attention to, and re-valuation of disregarded materials (Carr & Gibson, 2017; Hofverberg et al., 2017; Prados-Peña et al., 2022). After a period of 'wilful neglect and dismissal', cultural economist Arjo Klamer asserts this signifies a fundamental shift in values:

> The re-appraisal of the crafts may signal, or be an expression of, a paradigmatic change in contemporary economies. After an instrumentalist period with the emphasis on increasing quantities of all kinds—such as the quantities of income, production, GDP, profit, jobs—interest turns to qualities of all kinds—such as the quality of work, of goods, of communities, of family life. The crafts are about qualities above all. (Arjo Klamer, preface, in Mignosa & Kotipalli, 2019, p. v)

This aligns with recent calls to re-appraise culture and cultural work, and the investment in the 'soft infrastructures' that support it, in a period of rapid societal upheaval. The aim is to acknowledge culture's capacity to produce 'foundational' common goods that can enhance quality of life and social relations, not just generate private wealth and profit (O'Connor, 2024).

At the turn of the Twenty-First Century, a new portmanteau was coined – 'craftivism'. A combination of craft and activism, this word sought to represent a growing use of handmade and crafted materials within anti-globalisation and anti-war demonstrations (Greer, 2011, 2020), positioning craft as antagonistic to the status quo. There are, however, burgeoning concerns about its appropriation. The rising invocation of craft, and associated terms such as artisanal, hand-made, and crafted – in this period of heightened attention – have been used to 'craft-wash' over unethical or environmentally damaging practices and re-signify consumption

as a moral good (Black & Burisch, 2021; Gaugele, 2021). Luckman notes the erosion of boundaries between work and leisure in micro-enterprise craft practices, thereby adding to increasing encroachment of capitalism in all aspects of life (2015b). Craft and its artistic and social critiques, it seems, have been captured within what Boltanski and Chiapello propose is the 'new spirit of capitalism' (2005, 2018).

Rises in occupational autonomy, sought out by craft maker aspirants, are correlated with declines in workplace and job security. Craft entrepreneurship and its associated risks are increasingly promoted and celebrated in an era of 'institutionalised individualisation' (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002a), and craft's feel good consumption leaves existing power systems intact. Craft workers are subsequently increasingly acknowledged as subject to, and complicit in, reproducing individualised neoliberal work regimes (Black & Burisch, 2020). This includes the demand to be always on, opportunistic, and hypercompetitive; exploiting themselves through unpaid work, and relentless self-promotion, in the 'hope' of future commercial success (Alačovska, 2019; Duffy, 2016; Luckman & Thomas, 2018; McRobbie, 2016). This contributes to widespread conditions of 'overwork, exploitation and poverty' (Morgan & Nelligan, 2017, p. 131) in craft as in much of the creative industries. Far from being politically progressive, Kowolik argues that 'many of the assumptions that fuel neoliberal capitalism are also lively and at work within craft.' (2021, p. 99)

Countering these more fatalistic accounts of craft makers' complicity in their own exploitation and insecurity, the 'solidaristic' rather than 'bureaucratic' attachments within practice-based communities are foregrounded (Ranson, 1989). As a result of their horizontal organisation within peer-communities craft makers are viewed as retaining potential for creative and occupational autonomy, whilst laying the foundations of political organising and resistance (Morgan & Nelligan, 2017). Craft makers' non-hierarchical, distributed, forms of collaboration are an increasing subject of study as an alternative model for organising work (Felcey et al., 2013; Kroezen et al., 2021; von Busch, 2013), of interest to sociologists of cultural work and organisations (Bell et al., 2019; Thomas & Luckman, 2024), and scholars of labour organisation (Anderson, 2021).

In her writing about craft's third wave Jakob identified a gap in the critical assessment of craft within the social sciences, noting the preponderance of self-published practitioner accounts

and evangelical personal blogs that dominated the field, alongside research undertaken within practice-based arts and design disciplines. As a result, the experiences of craft producers – their organisation and associated policy interdependencies, and the practices they undertook to sustain their crafts – were largely glossed over, in accounts of their occupational freedom, psychological comforts, and 'alternative' political values. She cautioned 'the study of contemporary crafting lacks… systematic and methodologically robust social-scientific analysis' (2013, p. 130). This, she argues, has led to overblown claims for its counter-cultural possibilities and environmental sustainability credentials, as well as lack of attention to its contributions to, and associations with, dominant economic activity. This sentiment was echoed by Adamson (2008), who formed *The Journal of Modern Craft*, partly to encourage new cross-disciplinary research into craft to counter overly-romantic, pastoral, nostalgic and utopian accounts of its social role.

This gap has increasingly been filled with mounting scholarly attention to the contemporary organisation of craft work (Bell et al., 2019), craft's evolution and role within contemporary economies (Luckman & Thomas, 2018), and the social practices encompassed by craft and the communities that sustain it (Thomas & Luckman, 2024). The expanding economic importance of 'neo-craft' artisanal industries has also been the subject of mounting academic attention, as low-status manual work is resignified as 'craft-laden' and by association attractive, 'cool' and aspirational (Gandini & Gerosa, 2023). While exploitation and poor working conditions persist, there is interest in the new forms of craft worker organisation and solidarity that are emerging as a result of this migration towards craft work (Anderson, 2021).

In keeping with wider cultural industries research (cf. Banks, 2017; Brook et al., 2020a; Eikhof & Warhurst, 2013), there has also been rising attention to the problems of access, representation and equalities within the craft economy, not least because of the persistent bias towards practitioner accounts from the Global North (Luckman, 2022; Patel, 2020a; Patel & Dudrah, 2022). Especially pertinent to this research, Banks' assessment of craft labour's growing significance within the creative industries policy domain, has motivated increased attention to both historical and emergent contemporary forms of craft labour organisation (Gu, 2018; Luckman, 2013a; Stevens, 2011; Thomas & Jakob, 2019). This is taking place against a backdrop of enhanced interest in emerging forms of creative labour organisation (de Peuter &

Cohen, 2015), and the political potential offered by individualised forms of work (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002a; Hardt & Negri, 2011; Lazzarato, 2006).

The revival of interest in craft and craft work has emerged not just as a nostalgic return to traditional practices but as a critical response to the challenges posed by industrialisation, globalisation, rapid technological developments, the digital economy, and environmental crisis. Craft is throughout characterised by its contradictions. Craft, note Black and Burisch, 'is frequently described as both *a fix and foil* for the ills of capitalism and alienating conditions of industrialization' (2020, p. 13 emphasis added). Craft makers (and those that support them) are acknowledged as actively complicit in reproducing neoliberal work regimes and value systems (Jakob, 2013; Luckman, 2015a, 2018), whilst also understood to hold heightened potential – through both longstanding and new forms of worker organisation and occupational solidarity – to mitigate the harms, and subvert the practices of dominant industrialised modes of production and labour management. Contributing to these contradictions are the shifting definitions and classifications of 'craft' and associated terms within a variety of registers, from everyday speech to government policy. It is these definitions to which this literature review now attends.

2.3   The Problematics of Defining Craft and Craft Work

Definitions of craft as both a cultural practice and form of work have been significant in shaping this study, consistently troubling as they have been, to the major thinkers working within its boundaries. Lucie-Smith describes the word craft as 'brief, pungent and ambiguous' (1981, p. 11), while Greenhalgh notes 'a plurality of meanings' resulting in negative associations, 'confusion' and marginalisation in intellectual debate (1997, p. ix). This is before considering the broad and varied contradictory associations of craft (Bryan-Wilson, 2015), variously seen as a counterpoint to art, with different behaviours, values, and motivations (Metcalf, 1997, p. 81) or (within the same edited collection) part of an overlapping and interdependent 'porous' continuum between art-craft-design-commerce, that those working within 'exploit', self-identifying to fit their own needs and interests (Rees, 1997, p. 135).

Craft labour is frequently romanticised as an intrinsically satisfying, internally motivated, form of skilled work, as described by Wright Mills in *White Collar*:

There is no ulterior motive other than the product being made and the process of creation. The details of daily work are meaningful because they are not detached in the worker's mind from the product of the work. The worker is free to control his own working action. The craftsman is thus able to learn from his work; and to use and develop his skills and capacities in its prosecution. There is no split of work and play, or work and culture. The craftsman's way of livelihood determines and infuses his whole being. (1951, p. 220)

In this description, Mills acknowledges the essential combination physical skills and mental attitudes, or holistic alignment between 'head and hands' (Sennett, 2008), as well as the control, or autonomy over the work, that contrasts craft from working practices managed and controlled by others within industrialisation. In that context individual skill is devalued in favour of deskilled, fragmented and controlled labour inputs from interchangeable, alienated, and disengaged workers (Braverman, 1974). Craft work is often undertaken as a form of 'serious leisure', eliciting devotion, and commitment to self-development; undertaken in pursuit of personal fulfilment first, social rewards second, and economic return a distant third (Elkington & Stebbins, 2014; Stebbins, 1992).

The centrality of the physicality of craft and the 'handmade' quality continues to resonate in discussions: art, craft and design are viewed as part of a continuum of human-centred and hand-based creative practices and occupational behaviours, often exploiting the same capacities and skills. The physicality (and human-proximity) of material engagement is central to the arguments of Niederrer and Townsend (2010, 2015) and Carr and Gibson (2015, 2017) who view craft as a means to engage producers and consumers in ethically-construed relationships with human and non-human others. While Leach's assessment that Craft not as absolute rejection of machine but as 'degrees of separation': '[t]he words 'hand', 'tool' and 'machine' imply degrees of intimacy between conception and execution…' (Leach 'The Artist and Machine Production' qu. in Greenhalgh, 1993, p. 95). Pye also argues that craft is intimately connected with technology, and technological innovation (1968). This is echoed in contemporary explorations of digital tools in craft production. The emerging maker movement of the late 20th Century combines low technology and high technology in 'playful experimentation' (MakerEd, 2020). Explorations of virtual and augmented reality are growing in craft practice and presentation, and digital making practices are gaining attention within Web 2.0 as an emerging form of skilled craft work (Gauntlett, 2018). Further, craft

professionals use of social media and online selling tools and applications have gained significant attention in recent years as an increasingly essential component of self-employed craft work (Luckman, 2015a; Luckman & Thomas, 2018; Naudin & Patel, 2020). Despite the frequent characterisation of craft as counterpoint, craft is not static or separate from the wider social, economic, and technological developments in society, but very much intertwined with them.

Craftsmanship stands in for 'skill, commitment and judgement' and is associated with quality over quantity: the 'enduring human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake' (Sennett, 2007: 9). And yet, when used in reference to amateur activity craft often calls to mind 'middle-class idleness' (Knott, 2015, p. xi), and low-quality, self-interested, wasteful use of mass-produced materials. The meaning of craft within this context is 'constantly evolving' (Nenadic, 2022, pp. 4–5). This continues to make craft 'elusive' as both 'a discipline and concept' (Niedderer & Townsend, 2010, pp. 3–4), troubling its economic valuation (Tuck et al., 2014) and, as can be seen from the preceding section, its social role and values.

Craft, so Adamson contends, was 'invented' through the characterisation as industry's 'other' (2013) in the period where craft stopped being the default basis for economic production. Craft has ever since been associated with a nostalgic romanticism for a lost past. Nenadic reminds us though that the historical representation of craftworkers in the nineteenth century as a dying breed, rapidly deskilled and swept away by technological change and capitalist factory organisation, is incomplete and biased. It has been constructed through literature charting the rise of industrial working practices. This largely neglects the continuing presence of small-scale craft production and artisanal craft practices, including subsistence piecework which has been a persistent factor of Scottish economic activity, particularly for women in rural areas. Nenadic, in her monograph on craftworkers in Scotland, surmises that the literature of the last century is full of:

> Ideas of a past 'golden age' [that] fuelled discontent and political activism and shaped contemporary and later interpretations of the losses that attended industrial change that is elegiac in character. (2022, p. 6)

Counter to the 'myth of decline' of 'the craftworker, his [sic] community and his product' Nenadic finds that craft employment grew in both rural and urban contexts in Scotland in the 19th Century. This echoes Banks' assessment of the continuing, and possible growing role of

craft labour practices in contemporary economies, due to their persistent value contributions (2010).

Craft at once refers to 'the crafts', a set of specific material practices and commoditised goods produced through those practices, and 'an input to the industrial labour process' that has a particular 'attitude or mindset', being understood as motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Banks, 2010, p. 306). While the latter can be applied across a whole range of disciplines, cultural policy in the UK has been particularly interested in the former. Greenhalgh notes the lack of 'intrinsic cohesion' to the various heterogeneous practices, products and processes associated with the word 'craft', from blacksmithing, to basketry, jewellery-making, pottery, weaving, woodwork, and furniture-making, (and beyond) that form 'the crafts'. He goes on to offer a proposition to crafts' collective identity:

> After decades of deliberation it has become obvious what the crafts are. In late modern culture the crafts are a consortium of genres in the visual arts, genres that make sense collectively because for artistic, economic, and institutional reasons, they have been deliberately placed together. (2002, p. 1)

This 'deliberate' placing raises the question of who gets to define craft and on what basis. Contemporary with Greenhalgh's statement, the *Creative Industries Mapping Documents* (DCMS, 1998, 2001) sought to define 'Crafts' as an economic subsector, and so distinguish craft as creative practice producing saleable goods, from the broader understanding of craft attitudes within labour.

Outlined as 'creation, production and exhibitions of crafts', specifically listing marketable commodities such as 'textiles, ceramics, jewellery/silver, metal, glass' (DCMS, 2001, p. 8) with a broad list of activities representative of different roles in the subsector from agents to craftspeople, producers and retailers. The effect is to acknowledge and delineate a type of economic activity to aid quantification and incorporation into economic impact assessments. This has resulted in a focus on small-scale cultural production of craft goods, often made by hand, by sole-traders and microenterprises, with larger operations and those using industrialised processes (such as textile manufacturers), and craft practices in other industries, explicitly excluded from these definitions. Consumable products: food, drinks, cosmetics, candles, and flowers, are also excluded from government support relating to craft. This has a longstanding basis in Scotland, where craft production has been a target for policy

interventions seeking to drive economic recovery, particularly in rural areas, with a focus on appealing to tourist markets and wealthy patrons, since the 1950's (Brown, 1980; Peach, 2013b).

The DCMS mapping relied heavily on data provided by the Crafts Council UK and a range of market research and economic impact assessments to produce its characterisation. Subsequent campaigns have drawn attention to the way the economic priorities of the UK Government have affected craft's representation within official statistics. In *Craft in an Age of Change,* a report commissioned by the Crafts Council and its regional partners, Burns *et. al.,* highlight this erasure:

> Craft has been counted as one of the 'creative industries' ever since the term was first adopted by the British government in 1998. However, the craft sector has always been difficult to measure. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) produces a range of economic estimates every year for the industries that fall into its remit, but is unable to supply figures for the craft sector for many of its indicators. This is due to the small size of most craft businesses and the difficulty of identifying makers through the standard industrial and occupational classifications – it is hard, for instance, to separate out 'studio' ceramics from more industrial processes. Makers also often choose to define themselves by a variety of terms, such as designer-maker or applied artist – indeed, they may use different terms depending on the client they are dealing with.'
> (2012, p. 11)

The implications are significant, craft practiced informally or under tax thresholds – including through non-financial exchange practices – is not accounted for, and therefore invisible in official representations of the sector (Tuck et al., 2014).

This underestimation has the corollary of not only continuing a longstanding exclusion of women's (often informal and part-time) economic participation through craft (Luckman, 2015a), but fails also to account properly for the precarious and often invisible nature of much of craft work. As Luckman highlights this work is taking place:

> …in the cracks between the neat statistical classifications: through self-employment, second (or third, or fourth) jobs, cash-in-hand or volunteer work, and work that can move variously between being understood as amateur or professional. (2022, p. 943)

Despite this contested and partial representation, the DCMS' characterisation remains the most prominent definition of craft for the purposes of UK government policy. The Scottish Government, in turn, has drawn from this definition in its creative industries policy, identifying craft as one of 16 target creative industries subsectors, again with an economic growth and quantitative accounting basis. The numbers of tax-paying businesses, employees, and their contributions to Scottish GVA are foregrounded. These figures bear little relationship to the work of self-employed and microenterprise craft producers, who are frequently recognised to be missing in official statistics (Craft Scotland, 2023b). The result is a poorly considered and vulnerable sector. Notwithstanding the 'firing up of craft capital' within job-creation, skills development, and education policy contexts in the UK, as documented by Jakob and Thomas (2015), publicly funded routes into education, training and apprenticeships continue to decline. Subsequently, Heritage Crafts is warning of the impending extinction of many traditional craft practices (2021).

Craft as an economic and cultural sub-sector is characterised consistently in sector reviews by a preponderance of sole-traders and microenterprises, with low income-levels (Baird & Watban, 2007; Bletcher, 2017; Burns et al., 2012). This characterisation largely obscures the non-financial and informal exchanges and practices taking place within the craft economy, including those relating to networks, societies, organisations, and voluntary associations. The supposed shared ideological goals of individual craftspeople are often at odds with the 'institutional infrastructure of the craft movements' (Denker, 2013; Adamson, 2017, p. 7), and the policy actors and their actions that invoke it (Banks, 2010; Jakob & Thomas, 2015; McRobbie, 2016). Defined as an economic subsector, this has resulted in a focus on policies principally seeking to drive economic and business growth of craft activity through investment in marketing, business skills, exports, and related training (Baker, 2021). These initiatives focus on developing individual entrepreneurial aptitudes, rather than systemic change, collectivities or practices of mutual aid, despite craft's longstanding association with it (Kropotkin, 2006 [1902]). Current policy sees no value in social organisation; creative growth and development potential is seen as housed within the enterprising individual, not the social surpluses created by co-operative or communal practices. This compounds the persistent 'policy dissonance' (McHattie et al., 2019), with rising concerns about craft makers lack of representation in decisions that affect them, a point that is explored in detail in chapter 5. Within this context the formal and informal organisational practices of craft makers have

lacked policy attention, and there are limited means to account for their drivers and effects. In the next section, the literature pertaining to forms of craft organisation, and their theoretical and empirical framings are explored.

2.4   Theoretical and Empirical Characterisations of Craft Organisation

Historical craft workshops and guilds loom large in the public imaginary as sites of worker organisation and resistance to capitalist labour exploitation. Craft is widely understood as prototypical good-work based on 'simple co-operation' set in opposition to 'co-ordinated and capitalist-owned manufacture' (Banks, 2010, p. 307). This continues to have a particular influence on the political left in the UK (and internationally) thanks to the widely circulated works of Ruskin and Morris in the late 1800's and early 1900's (Luckman, 2013a). This work came to be known as the Arts and Craft Movement and has had an undeniable effect on the contemporary perception of craft, craft workers and their organisational practices. Sennett summarises Ruskin's effect as casting the craftsman as 'a blazon of resistance – resistance to capitalism coupled with resistance to machines' (2008, p. 84), while Kowolik characterises Morris as 'the original conflater of craft and protest politics' (2021, p. 112). The Arts and Craft Movement and its associations keep craft, and the plight of the craft worker, centre stage within debates surrounding labour reform, workers' rights, and technological change. However, the preoccupation with the Arts and Craft Movement has distorted both historical and contemporary accounts of craft and craftworkers' organisation, because of a pervasive sense of loss of a previous golden age (Nenadic, 2022).

Although co-operation, both informally and formally, is characteristic of craft labour practices (Sennett, 2008) and a longstanding feature of its progressive political identity (Luckman, 2013a), Banks has cautioned that craft workers' collective representation appeared to be in 'steep decline' (2010, p. 315), contributing to their increasing exploitation and precarity. Research conducted by Benjamin Anderson in Canada highlights that the 'mythologies' of artisanal work – as autonomous, creatively fulfilling, and community-oriented – have effectively insulated the booming consumable craft sectors from critique. Despite evidence of poor working conditions and unequal divisions of labour, this has constrained efforts to organise (Anderson, 2021). The associations with labour reform and political action notwithstanding, little critical attention has been given to the factors influencing contemporary

organisation of craft workers, their drivers, values, and beliefs; or indeed who is able to participate in the practices this entails.

The creative industries economisation of craft within government policy has had the effect of obscuring non-financial exchanges 'below the water line' (Gibson-Graham, 2014), and constraining accounts of alternative economic organising happening within and in parallel to the formal economy (Luckman, 2012). These aspects of craft's practice are of interest to, and increasingly prominent within the research of, cultural geographers, art historians, cultural economists, and sociologists. This highlights the ongoing need for cross-disciplinary qualitative engagement with craft as a subject of inquiry, as well as quantitative studies. Several framings are prominent in contemporary characterisations of craft makers' organisational activities. Defined variously as Communities of Practice (COPs), social networks, and craft intermediaries, these theoretical underpinnings each illuminate and obscure different aspects of their subjects' activities, roles, and effects. Assessing these differential empirical and theoretical approaches exposes both lines of inquiry and gaps which my research actively responds to.

Focusing on exploring the sustainability of, and makers' relationships to, two of England's longstanding rural craft guilds, Thomas and Jakob (2019) characterise these maker-led organisations as Communities of Practice (COPs). This draws directly on the work of Lave and Wenger, who define COPs thus:

> A community of practice is a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice. A community of practice is an intrinsic condition for the existence of knowledge, not least because it provides the interpretive support necessary for making sense of its heritage. Thus, participation in the cultural practice in which any knowledge exists is an epistemological principle of learning. (1991, p. 98)

This framing draws attention to the embodied and socially embedded nature of craft's practices, and the ways in which craft skills and knowledge are acquired and transformed through co-productive collective participation in self-organising structures.

Thomas and Jakob's study highlight the evolving portfolio of skills and competencies required to make a livelihood as a craft practitioner and the role of these maker-led guilds in developing

and making visible professional standards, providing peer-recognition, and facilitating mutual support. Thomas and Jakob acknowledge their potential for sustaining and improving 'the livelihoods of dispersed creative workers' through connecting craft makers with their peers, and reducing isolation (2019, p. 184). Seeking to avoid overly romanticising these structures and their longevity, they also caution that the increasing professionalisation and rise of paid staff roles within these organisations – while raising standards and embedding skills that enable members to focus on their own studio practices – has had the effect of disrupting community relations and connection with the ongoing practices they undertake. This highlights both the continuing importance of collectivity for individualised creative workers and, as forewarned by Banks (2010), the risks to collectivities associated with enhanced management practices. Lightly touched upon within Thomas and Jakob's argument is the longstanding public subvention of guilds, through both rural economic development initiatives, and cultural funders such as Arts Council England. Greater attention to the interplay with government policy in the guilds' emergence, development and effects on members' attitudes, behaviours, and practices, could raise importance questions over the supposed self-organisation of these structures, and the foundations of their standards.

Similarly theorised as COPs, Stevens explores Do-It-Yourself (DIY) digital craft social networks, and the role they play in validating craft makers' identities and lifestyles. Echoing Thomas and Jakob craft COPs are formed, writes Stevens,

> when social units are united by common areas of concerns or interests, interact regularly, share a common vocabulary, and, even without acknowledging it, learn with and from one another in the process. (2011, p. 46)

In traditional craft practices this has the impact of disaggregating craft from a larger craft 'domain' into distinct 'fields' aligned with specific materials and processes, around which practitioners congregate. This produces systems for distinguishing themselves from other craft communities through use of practice-specific language and vocabularies, that have historically fragmented materially specific craft practices, and their practitioners, compared to contemporary art practices. The emergent digital DIY craft COPs populated by younger craft practitioners, however, believes Stevens, are oriented around shared political ideals and values, that transcend material disciplines and predetermined questions of quality and skill.

Such approaches actively oppose the hegemony of 'hierarchical' modernism found within traditional craft disciplines, as well rejecting the need for institutional legitimation; instead remixing practices with 'culturally fluent use of irony, satire, and parody' (Stevens, 2011, pp. 54–55). Stevens views these groups as organising to bring about political change, rejecting both the 'neo-romantic' and 'social-traditional' logics of earlier craft movements, to question who gets to define craft and on what basis. As Joanna Mann writes, as part of craft's post-capitalist identity crisis 'the emphasis on participation rather than proficiency has seemingly become paramount within the third wave of craft' (2024). Whilst apparently improving the democracy of access to craft, this community work becomes increasingly about micro acts of self-improvement, rather than bolstering socially progressive attitudes and actions more broadly. This is one of the key critiques of the 'craftivist' movement, and the way it has been co-opted by commercial interests to 'craftwash' over environmentally damaging and ethically dubious practices (Black & Burisch, 2021; Kowolik, 2021).

The argument proposed by Stevens fails to account for the ways in which this DIY 'creative' energy, and the commodities it produces, are motivated and captured by the new spirit of capitalism. The artistic critique produced, and the identities and lifestyles validated, are frequently consistent with late stage capitalism and individualism (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2018; Kowolik, 2021; McRobbie, 2016). As interest in craft and its practice has grown and digital craft communities become mainstreamed these COPs have increasingly been targeted and co-opted by commercial interests such as online retailers, craft marketing initiatives, and industrialised producers of craft tools and materials. Heralded as laden with 'alternative' and anti-capitalist sentiment, these communities are powered largely by new consumer tastes, the 'conspicuous consumption' (Veblen, 2017) of craft products, and search for 'positional goods' that distinguish the owner (Hirsch, 1977). The anything goes freedom these digital communities promote, raises concerns around the loss of craft skills, professional standards and societal care and valuation of skilled labour and material goods. Stevens also refrains from questioning the ways in which interactions within online social networks have themselves become more ephemeral and commodified, devoid of the markers of community, and increasingly promoted as a means to generate individual capitals in the era of 'network sociality' (Wittel, 2001).

Drawing on Wittel's work, Gu explores both physical and virtual craft communities' role in promoting 'doing more with less' (Mozorov, 2014), where, she writes, ''networking' becomes parasitical on other, longer term, forms of social bonding' (Gu, 2018, p. 17). In the context of creative industries policies, and the increasing emphasis on individual creativity and entrepreneurialism this predicates, self-reliance becomes paramount with the withdrawal of social safety nets and institutional support for education (Banks, 2007b; McRobbie, 2016). Networking is seen as key to 'surviving' difficult and fast-changing market conditions (Gu, 2014). Networking is of increasing prominence in accounts of cultural work and practices as a promoted entrepreneurial aptitude; influencing career development, the distribution of cultural goods, and its (often inequitably distributed) rewards (Banks, 2017; Caves, 2002; Gill & Pratt, 2008; McRobbie, 2002). Recent research from British Council found that craft makers were significantly over-represented within creative networks, here termed 'cultural hubs', compared to other types of creative practitioners (Dunbar, 2020).

Crafts workers, Gu writes, epitomise the quandary of small-scale cultural producers. Operating within narrow financial margins – with limited, if any union or labour representation or protection – they are particularly vulnerable. As such craft workers are eager to engage in social networks to provide a sense of community and facilitate joint working practices. This in turn has quickened the individualisation process, as craft makers are decoupled from affective and embedded social relations within local markets and peer communities, heightening the depoliticization of labour organisation (McRobbie, 2002). To illustrate, Gu notes digital networks such as Etsy facilitate superficial and transactional social exchanges on a global scale without providing protections to those within their network (2018).

Gu is here critical of the naivety of proponents of the consumer-oriented maker culture's supposed ability to drive social change, aligning with similar scepticism expressed by Luckman (2013b). However, through a case study of Renew Newcastle, Gu demonstrates the potential for disrupting dominant economic rationales for supporting craft. The physical co-location of maker communities within formerly vacant retail spaces within the Australian city of Newcastle increasingly made visible the labour involved in craft's production, reduced vacancy rates, and supported city-wide regeneration. This validated the contribution of small-scale cultural craft production to local communities, beyond the purely economic growth imperative, and revived the 'affective community' between craft practitioners in the locale

through shared sense of esteem and purpose. The 'aesthetic and ethical bonds' between participating craft makers – and between makers and the local community – were forged within 'spatial co-presence' (Gu, 2018, p. 24), deepening a sense of interdependence. Mouat and Adams, exploring craft as a force for regeneration and repair of social relations, echo this:

> [C]raft can reanimate our interdependence with our world and each other: craft can trouble the atomized neoliberal individual subject (as a voter or statistic, for example), by actively reminding us of our relation to place, planet and society. (2024, p. 96)

Craft here is invoked as regenerative and relational, with possibilities for maintenance, repair, and mutual care.

The comparison made between Etsy's commodified and commercialised virtual network sociality and the affective physical community of Gu's case study is awkwardly binary. There is limited appreciation for the spectrum they work within, or indeed the interdependencies between these seemingly opposite manifestations of maker community activity. While Gu touches on the possibility of makers' exploitation and instrumentalization by city officials within the regeneration initiatives, she claims this wasn't significant because of the central positioning of makers' voices within the project. This largely glosses over how, for many craftspeople, without policy actions and public funding, physical co-location is financially inaccessible, and digital community is sought out as an affordable alternative. Unequal access to property underpins this, with globalised commercial real estate bolstered, rather than subverted, by (often short-term) cultural regeneration initiatives. There is a need to better account for the co-construction of craft organisations and makers' communities by makers and policy makers, and the effects this has on the working lives of the makers in question.

In the final conceptualisation proposed, makers' organisational activities are described as 'craft intermediaries'. Craft intermediaries have been of increasing interest in the turn of the Twenty-First Century, as new digital platforms facilitated access to global markets, and disrupted longstanding barriers between makers and consumers (Shultz, 2013). Interest in craft intermediaries has expanded to account for an increasing range of activity taking place within the craft ecology. Drawing on Bourdieu's concept of cultural intermediaries (2010 [1984]) and more recent work on creative intermediaries (Maguire, 2014; Maguire & Matthews, 2012), craft intermediaries are those organisations, agents and activities seen to be undertaking 'curatorial/taste-making and gatekeeper functions', mediating between cultural producers and

audiences, as well as those involved in actively supporting the development of makers' livelihoods and community relations (Comunian & England, 2022, p. 1600). Comunian and England's study of craft intermediaries in Cape Town, South Africa seeks to account for the oft-overlooked, but important, middle of the craft ecology between the micro scales of independent producers and macro scales of policy initiatives. They focus particularly on the business models they adopt and the role this plays in the equity and diversity of the South African craft ecosystem. Cultural or creative intermediaries are identified as:

> [A]rts and cultural councils, policy networks, economic development agencies, foundations and unions to artist collectives, cultural centres, creative industries incubators, festivals and tradeshows (Jakob & Van Heur, 2015, p. 357)

Comunian *et al.* (2021) further articulate the range of scales and modes of interventions that craft intermediaries are working across – categorising them as a sub-group of creative intermediaries in five groups aligned with: provision of space and equipment; finance; business advice and guidance; training and skills; and networking and partnership.

In their work on craft intermediaries Comunian and England (2022) note the ongoing dialogue between a variety of policy frameworks (especially social, cultural, educational, and economic) at national, regional and local levels, and the craft intermediaries. As such, the intermediaries play a significant role in translating and extending policy influences onto individual craft makers, shaping their practices and experiences, problematising and addressing sector challenges and inequalities in the process. They are also acknowledged to have a critical role in the revaluing of craft and craft skills by policy makers, through practices of policy advocacy. This work has the effect of increasingly aligning the practices of craft makers with policy priorities.

Comunian and England's case study intermediaries focus heavily on providing makers with support geared towards market growth, internationalisation, and responding to perceived barriers to professionalisation and development. While acknowledged as a significant component of the infrastructure for craft, the work of the 'complex ecology' of intermediaries was often found to be disjointed, fragmented and small scale, with varying levels of public recognition or policy buy-in (*Ibid.,* p. 1613). This resulted in ongoing challenges to improve equity of opportunity and development for craft makers from non-white backgrounds who were subject to significant structural inequalities, particularly in relation to routes in through

education, challenges with longstanding marginalisation in the craft canon, and misrecognition of social privilege as talent. Echoing Patel's recent work (Patel, 2017, 2020a; Patel & Dudrah, 2022), craft intermediaries within consumable craft sectors, were often found to exacerbate issues of inequality, by centring white masculinity within their legitimation and taste-making practices (Ocejo, 2017; Withers, 2019). Missing from Comunian and England's work, and indeed other characterisations of craft intermediaries (Jakob, 2013; Shultz, 2013), are accounts of the effects they have on makers' experience of craft work. Analyses of the work of leading and managing these craft intermediaries, and the drivers and values that underpin this labour, are also absent.

Each characterisation, drawing from a distinct theoretical perspective, reveals and obscures particular aspects of makers' organisational practices and their effects. Studies of craft intermediaries – tracking lineage from Bourdieusian cultural economics – focus on the logistical and economic aspects of connecting craftspeople with markets, and their role in the distribution of various capitals. There is minimal attention here to the social relations developed within and across these infrastructures, or the impact this has on organisational functions. Research into craft COPs emphasise the shared learning and development of skills and mental attributes within social contexts relating to craft. These point to the evolving nature of standards of practice within COPs as co-produced by the communities, while obscuring the impact of external forces such as policy initiatives and economic shifts. Studies focusing on craft-related organisational practices as social networks attend to the intensity and scale of social relations within them. These point to the role of authenticity, quality and depth of social interactions, collaborations, and interdependencies within these structures as providing the basis for alternative economic and political organising. Superficial social ties are seen as vulnerable to commodification and, following the work of Wittel, symptomatic of wider desocialisation. None of these characterisations attend to the quality and experience of the labour, or resources, involved in craft organisation. My research draws from across these varying theoretical frameworks, and combines the approaches to better account for the external and internal stimuli informing maker-led organisations' practices, and the effects and impacts these have on the members' experience of craft work.

2.5 Chapter Summary and Conclusions

Craft's contradictory value propositions, overly romanticised social and political roles, and shifting definitions that reject precise delimitation have all contributed to the limited attention heretofore given to craft makers' collective endeavours. Craft makers' contemporary organisational practices occur in response to gaps in provision and unmet needs, as well as public policy priorities, and private commercial interests. Their emergence, development and continuation cannot be treated separately from the socio-economic and political contexts that surround them. The increasing requirement to organise, or indeed self-organise, can be viewed as institutionalised individualism, and part of a rising Foucauldian governmentality in society where individuals are required to self-manage, and accept increasing risk in exchange for 'creative' autonomy (McRobbie, 2016). Alternatively, this can be seen as creating opportunities for political innovations: '(re)generative and synergistic spontaneity in response to a lack of government action' (Mouat & Adams, 2024, p. 96), more closely aligned with ideas of individualised creative subjectivities' disruptive potential (Banks, 2007b; Hardt & Negri, 2011; Lazzarato, 2006; Morgan & Nelligan, 2017). I argue here that the current empirical assessments and theoretical framings of craft makers' organisational behaviours have heretofore limited accounts of their roles and effects. I propose that new research approaches are required to capture their contemporary significance, including their impacts on the experiences of craft work, and socio-political potential. This requires research that addresses makers' organisational practices from a novel theoretical perspective, drawing from multiple disciplines simultaneously.

Through engagement with the data, compassion (Nussbaum, 1996) as a driving force for makers' self-organisation, and care ethics (Tronto, 1998) as a framework that correlated with the structures and practices of the case study organisations, provided an emergent theoretical framework. This research found common ground between makers' experiences within maker-led organisations, and those attending to the role of compassion and care ethics within other forms of creative and cultural labour (Alačovska, 2020; Alačovska & Bissonnette, 2021; Campbell, 2022). It also dovetails with increased consideration for the role of creative and cultural intermediaries as providers of care for self-employed and sole-trader creative workers, following the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed and heightened the vulnerabilities and precarities of this work (Dent et al., 2023). It is within this context that the proceeding research findings have been developed and presented.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY, METHODS, AND SOURCES

This study gathers and utilises existing, and generates new, qualitative and quantitative data about Scotland's maker-led organisations and their maker-members within an iterative and inductive Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) research design (Charmaz, 2000, 2014a, 2017). First, the research design and rationale for its use is introduced. Following this the research questions, site selection and participant selection strategies employed to delimit the research field are detailed, noting the multi-sited case study approach. I then account for the data collection and generation methods I employed, and my approaches to data processing and analysis are presented. This includes detailing the iterative engagements with various literatures, and the testing and refinement of emerging theory. A discussion of the ethical implications of the research then follows. Finally, the research challenges and limitations are discussed.

3.1   Introduction to the Research Design

A broad interest in forms of craft organisations in Scotland – developed through my professional engagement in the craft sector as a research and development consultant – first guided me towards the PhD study, uncovering a widespread, if under-researched and underacknowledged component of Scotland's craft ecology. The interest in the craft sector was twofold; firstly, I had recently been working with craft sector organisations operating within Scotland and had personal and professional connections that would aid my investigations. Secondly, from this work, I knew those working within the craft sector were grappling with how to support each other and advocate for themselves within wider cultural policy priorities, as an increasingly individuated workforce facing precarious conditions. Investigating the craft sector's experience of low-paid, self-reliant, individuated work, and the reactions to experiences of isolation, precarity and inequality of access within that, appeared to have the potential to draw broader conclusions about creative and cultural work in other sectors. This was particularly relevant in the context of the Scottish Government's Fair Work policies, and questions over their relevance and applicability to cultural work. Fair Work priorities were a feature of the *Culture Strategy for Scotland* (Scottish Government, 2020),

with emerging concerns of its inadequacy for freelance creatives and cultural workers subsequently emanating from Creative Scotland (Culture Radar, 2022).

From this initial interest, there are three ways in which this study has been designed and delimited. Firstly, the research questions have focused lines of inquiry and guided the development of methods and sources. Secondly, site and case selection narrowed the focus further to attend to three maker-led craft organisations, operating nationally in Scotland. Thirdly, this research has sampled the memberships and practices of the case study organisations, through the selection of interview participants and field work events. These strategies have been underpinned by the CGT-informed research design.

3.1.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory

The research design was embedded within a Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) methodology. Grounded theory, first described by Glaser and Strauss (2006 [1967]), was chosen as the starting point for this research design because of its recognition as an approach that 'facilitates recording and interpreting individuals' subjective experiences' (Cullen & Brennan, 2021, p. 1), as well as generating substantive and formal theory from empirical data. It was employed for its ability to generate insights from in-depth qualitative research, where limited pre-existing theory existed. An ethnographic, multi-sited case study research design was employed to enable data drawn from field work with three specific organisations and interviews with individual maker participants to speak to the broader landscape they were operating within (Falzon, 2009; Marcus, 1995). The case study approach was augmented with documentary and archival methods, a survey, and 'elite' interviews with policy makers and craft sector leaders, to situate the case studies and their maker-members' contemporary practices within a wider geographic and temporal context. This generated insights pertinent to the Scottish craft ecology, as well as the creative and cultural industries more broadly.

There have been many different approaches to grounded theory developed since Glaser and Strauss' original conception of the methodology. My research design follows the work of Charmaz whose adapted approach to grounded theory was first described in a chapter within Denzin and Lincoln's *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods* (Charmaz, 2000). Constructivist grounded theory (CGT) is 'systematic' yet 'flexible' (Charmaz, 2017), and it answers postmodernist and poststructuralist critiques of early iterations of grounded theory in

that it: facilities reflexivity, anticipates both the researcher's and participants' multiple perspectives, and situates the research within the conditions of its production (Charmaz, 2017, p. 299). This approach, which draws heavily on the original (1967) foundation of the methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 2006), is appropriate here in that it:

> (1) supports collection and analysis of large volumes of diverse empirical data,
>
> (2) facilitates comparisons between data,
>
> (3) is iterative in design enabling the development of the overall research design as new data and insights become available,
>
> (4) is inductive in nature treating social reality as constructed and contingent, and
>
> (5) enables development of both substantive and formal theory that can be applied in other contexts.

More practically, it integrates well with, and complements, other qualitative (including ethnographic) methods. This makes it appropriate for the study of makers' contemporary values, beliefs and aspirations, and their individual and collective actions, within maker-led organisations: an area of inquiry with limited pre-existing research.

3.1.2 Research Questions

The research questions developed over the course of the project. There were four questions that guided initial data collection processes and framed the documentary analysis and survey development. These were:

> [1] What are the organisational practices of craft makers in Scotland?
>
> [2] What are the socio-demographic characteristics of makers who participate in organisations related to their craft work?
>
> [2] What motivates makers to join or participate in organisations related to their craft work?
>
> [3] What policies (government actions or inactions) intersect with the practices and behaviours of craft organisations in Scotland?

From this initial line of questioning, and the data produced through documentary analysis and the online survey, I identified a narrower focus to the research, developing a series of questions related to the most prevalent type of organisational practice: national maker-led craft organisations. This then guided the development of participant selection strategies, interview questions and field work plans. The research questions for this second phase included:

[1] What are the practices of national (Scottish) maker-led organisations – specifically those of the chosen case studies?

[2] What do makers express are the drivers underpinning their membership and participation in them – and what can this tell us about the needs and aspirations of craft makers in Scotland?

[3] How are national maker-led organisations structured and resourced, and how does this shape the experience of the work and labour involved in their running?

[4] What factors enable or disable membership and participation in these organisations?

In keeping with the research design this process was iterative and reflexive and narrowed over the course of the project.

3.1.3 Site and Case Selection

I employed a purposive theoretical sampling approach (Glaser & Strauss, 2006 [1967]) to iteratively narrow the focus of the research. This differs from other purposive approaches to qualitative site selection, that are 'informed *a priori* by an existing body of social theory' (Curtis et al., 2000, p. 1002), and indeed from quantitative site selection concerned with representative sampling and statistical probability. It is concerned with providing detailed analysis of specific examples to create new insights in particular cases that speak to broader theoretical propositions. My preexisting interest in Scotland's craft sector, including the ways in which legally independent (often micro-enterprise and sole trader) producers of craft collaborate and support each other, and the effects of cultural policy on these collaborations and support structures, guided the purposive site selection for this research.

Geographically, Scotland's creative and cultural industries was the focus for reasons of personal and professional interest; I am both based here as a resident and citizen and have a long-term experience working with Scottish cultural sector organisations. I am familiar with the key aspects of Scotland's cultural policy and how it has developed over the last twenty years through that professional experience. Despite overlap and interrelation with national (Westminster) government departments, Scotland's cultural policy can be disaggregated from other parts of the United Kingdom because of its devolved government and independent legal system, making it a distinct (if contingent) policy environment, that had heretofore had limited

critical attention in academic work relating to craft policy in the UK (Cf. Jakob & Thomas, 2015).

A wide range of collaboration points were initially evaluated as potential case study sites, ranging from online selling platforms, shared workshop spaces, local networks, and national craft associations. National maker-led craft associations were determined as the most appropriate focus for this research study due to makers' widespread participation, explicit provision of support for freelance and sole-trader members, and long-term stability – they would be active for the duration of the PhD and their development could be traced over several decades. Initial assessments also indicated they engaged with issues surrounding craft's cultural value, craft as cultural work, and craft's social impact.

From a broad assessment of national craft associations in Scotland (some of which consider themselves 'societies', 'networks' or 'support organisations'), and conversations with those involved, 3 case study sites were selected: Applied Arts Scotland (AAS), Scottish Furniture Makers Association (SFMA) and Scottish Glass Society (SGS). This multi-sited ethnographic approach was informed by the work of Marcus (1995) who recognises the potential for multiple sites within a wider 'landscape' (in this case Scotland's craft sector) to support theoretical development pertinent to the landscape, not just the case. All three cases selected evidence self-organisation: craftspeople are actively involved in the governance and running of these associations, they have active memberships numbering between 70 and 150 individuals, and programmes are developed and maintained by members acting in a voluntary capacity around not-for-profit legal structure. All three operate on a national basis with members based across Scotland's 32 local authorities. Critically, the organisational Chairs and board members agreed to participate, and had capacity to support participant recruitment and fieldwork.

3.1.4 Participant selection

The approach to participant selection uses purposive theoretical sampling, which 'abandons concerns about representativeness' (Glaser & Strauss, 2006 [1967]) and instead continually samples the field to close conceptual gaps in the emergent theory. Documentary evidence and the craft maker survey provided foundational context for elite participant and case study participant selection. The 'elite' participants include those involved in policy making and

policy interpretation roles in public bodies who have an explicit remit to support craft and craft makers as part of Scotland's creative industries. They also include those in strategic and leadership roles in organisations that provide support and development for craft makers. These were selected partly due to practical convenience of proximity and accessibility, with many having previously participated in research activity I have undertaken independently.

Individual craft maker participants were recruited through a mixture of theoretical and snowball sampling. Access to the case study organisations was negotiated through gatekeepers, namely the chairs and voluntary boards of each organisation, using a mixture of email, telephone communication and in-person conversations at events they were hosting or attending during Summer 2022. A long-list of potential participants for each case study site was developed, using criteria such as 'longstanding member', 'new member', 'passive member' and 'active member' to ensure a diversity of perspectives, and initial communications were started by email. Once initial interviews started with participants in early 2023, the theoretical sampling approach allowed for those participants to recommend or connect me to further members who complemented the existing participants, using snowball sampling. Participant selection was guided by the principles of ethnography, in that depth of engagement, rather than quantity of participants was prioritised. A total of 36 participants took part actively (contributing to interviews) and many more were observed or contributed informally through exchanges during field work. Further detail on the make-up and profile of research participants is detailed in sections 3.2.3-4 on interviews and field work.

3.1.5 Role of the researcher

My participation has included creative, generative, and active engagement with the field. I am therefore aware that I actively influenced the behaviours, beliefs, and values of the research sites during the period of my participation. This continues my ongoing engagement with the field in a professional capacity. I have sought to make visible and explore my 'entanglements' as a qualitative researcher engaging in my field of study (Thomas & Bellingham, 2020, p. 2). This research, in part, sought to disrupt and respond to an acknowledged quantitative bias in craft sector mapping and surveys (Luckman, 2022). I chose a qualitative research design partly for its potential to be corrective to the dehumanising effects of the 'datafication' (Miller, 2018, p. 15) of culture in quantitative research, which obscures the labour and experiences of cultural workers, and their non-financial behaviours and exchanges. There are therefore ethical

responsibilities and purposive intentions built within this research design which seeks to illuminate the diversity of values and exchanges beyond the formal economy, and how they become customary behaviours and beliefs, within Scotland's craft sector. This moral-underpinning, informed by the work of scholar-activists Derickson and Routledge (2015), aims to make productive interventions into policy and practice, generating useful knowledges and making recommendations, whilst avoiding contributing to any particular institutional project.

Ethnographic methods means that the research captures 'the perspectives of both the researcher and the researched' (Savage, 2000, p. 1401), particularly through the use of reflective field notes and the research diary as primary data. However, I acknowledge there is a hierarchy within this process: the participants' perspectives are constantly filtered through my own as researcher. I therefore have an ethical imperative as researcher to be reflexive; proactive in articulating these perspectives and their potential impacts on the interpretations of data. Miller calls for empathetic engagement of the researcher with research participants with the aim of increasing understanding 'of the world from their perspective' (2018, p. 4).

I acknowledge that, as researcher, I am 'caught up and examined, as much as the person she is submitting to investigation' (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 21). Bourdieu (2003) cautions against a narcissistic tendency in reflexive writing. Rather he calls for a *reflex reflexivity* during field work and interviews based on what he calls 'a sociological 'feel' or 'eye'', which:

> [E]nables one to perceive and monitor *on the spot,* as the interview is actually being carried out, the effects of the social structure within which it is taking place. (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 18 emphasis in original)

As such, my explicit role in the field, as researcher and participant has been documented and accounted for within the research findings. Throughout I critically engage with my role as researcher in 'the patterning of possible worlds' (Haraway, 2016, p. 31) – generating new data on social reality as well as collecting it. I tested emerging theory in dialogue with research participants, proposing key terms and language in exit interviews and observing and recording reactions to it. I was reflexive in data analysis and presentation, acknowledging the shared construction of meaning between myself and my participants.

The research was carried out overtly throughout the process. Within long-term data collection associated with ethnographic methods such as participant observation Charmaz notes the need to 'adapt [one's] self-presentation to fit the scene and [the researcher's] research goals' and to 'aim to see this world as our participants do – from the inside' (2014a, p. 23). This is indicative of the balancing act I had to perform: inhabiting the world of participants, and in some sense performing the role of researcher in a way that met their expectations, whilst also constantly navigating the need to have an outsider's critical eye on proceedings. This included, at times, acknowledging and challenging the misalignment between the research participants' expectations of what my role as researcher was in the research setting, by revisiting and restating the parameters of the research.

3.2   Data Collection, Generation and Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative data collection, generation and analysis methods are employed within this study. As with site and participant selection, this is informed by grounded theory principles of theoretical sampling, in that it is 'controlled by the emerging theory' (Glaser & Strauss, 2006[1967], p. 45). This takes place within an overall ethnographic approach, that aims to inhabit the social worlds of the research participants, and the data that they themselves are engaging with. The priority within this research project was to generate rich data that can add to a 'granular' (Atkinson, 2017) assessment of the social world of the participants being studied.

3.2.1 Documentary Review and Archival Materials

Data collection has included repeated engagements with academic and gray literatures, documentary, and archival materials; both those held in formal and informal settings. An overview of the records, documents and archives consulted can be found in Appendix F. This aimed to illuminate the internal and external factors that have influenced the development of maker-led craft associations over time. Documentary analysis provided foundation and context for the research study. It illuminated gaps in understanding and existing methodological issues and biases. While ethnography prioritises talk and participant observation, Atkinson is a proponent of incorporating diverse materials and multisensory data:

> Our ethnographies… need to be populated with social actors *and* material objects, and
> our own fieldwork strategies need to incorporate the full range of material and sensory
> codes. (2017, p. 127)

Documentary search and collection included the documents and informal archives of the case study sites themselves, including past newsletters, posters, board minutes, reports, member letters and other memorabilia and material artefacts kept by members. This documentary trail supported the development of questions within interviews and participation opportunities. This aimed to investigate what holds importance for the members, by understanding the reasons behind certain documents' collection and storage – both physically and digitally – drawing from Atkinson's assessment that '[w]hat is memorable and what is memorialised are always culturally influenced' (2017, p. 164). Documentary review and archival material engagement was revisited cyclically, alongside repeated engagement with literature to complement and develop the emerging theories.

The informality of the case study organisations' archival and documentation processes was itself a significant finding. While access to materials was pledged, accessing them required navigation of informal social networks to discover who (if anyone) had retained materials. Invariably the research process uncovered archival and document storage was not being routinely undertaken but relied on a small number of individuals storing boxes of print publications, posters, or other marketing materials on an ad hoc basis at home, where they were vulnerable to loss, destruction, or being forgotten about. The small number of materials stored in publicly accessible archives related to these organisations also illuminated the lack of access makers themselves have to uncover the historical working practices of the organisations they were associated with. The digital trail of organisational business, with websites and online publications accessible through the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine, provided a significant source of data relating to the case study organisations. This research acknowledges that this too is incomplete, focused on the last 20 years when digital materials were routinely available. This material was sampled by focusing attention on available sources relating to key dates of policy shifts pertaining to craft, as detailed in Chapter 5, as well as key events highlighted within interviews. Using the Wayback Machine over 100 website 'snapshots' – each including many individual webpages – were searched and analysed across the three case studies, and 15 print publications, including books, newsletters and exhibition catalogues were analysed.

3.2.2 Survey Questionnaire

The incorporation of a questionnaire, delivered through an online survey tool to a broad population of self-determined 'makers' in Scotland at the outset of this project, sought to overcome some of the challenges I experienced in developing an understanding of the background, setting and context of the field. This has been guided by the overall purpose of the research and its grounded theory approach, in which the broader context and setting that the cases are operating within is increasingly pertinent. It supported the development of theoretical insights surrounding the influence of cultural policy on the formation of contemporary self-organisation in Scotland's craft sector, and the consequences of this on makers' working lives.

Using primarily open-text questions the survey generated qualitative data on the views, values and beliefs of craft makers and their existing relationships to networks, associations and societies, as well as quantitative data on participation levels, resource contributions, and socio-demographic characteristics. Delivered through online survey tool Qualtrics, the questionnaire opened on 12th November 2022 and was closed on 1st February 2023 with 123 valid responses. It was distributed through direct emails to craft makers and craft sector organisations. It was also circulated by 18 third parties related to Scotland's craft sector through email distribution lists and social media accounts, with a specific focus on generating responses from specific local authority areas in Scotland who were underrepresented after distribution through my own central Scotland-focused contacts.

This survey broadened the field compared to existing institutional mapping criteria[1] that regularly exclude particular styles of craft, and those practising below official economic thresholds such as VAT registration – as in the case in DCMS economic estimates. This was achieved by using inclusive self-selection criteria allowing self-identification of respondents as craft sector participants. The survey approach has several noted limits: the overall sample size is small compared to the research population; digital distribution excludes those not using digital technologies; and it relies on self-selection. However, it had several benefits too,

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[1] Found for example in the work of Craft Scotland (*What Is Contemporary Craft? - Craft Scotland*, 2022)

including its low cost and time-efficiency, with a lack of geographical restrictions to completion (Bryman, 2008; Hewson, 2020); important for this nationally-focused research.

Overall, the survey data complements and extends the rich detail of the ethnographic observations, participation and interview methods used, as well as enabling testing and refinement of emerging theories through comparative analysis. The survey data provided rich detail in the background and setting for the thesis findings, contributed to the refinement of research questions, and supported triangulation and testing of emerging theory.

3.2.3 Interviews

Two types of interviews are included in this research design: semi-formal elite interviews, and in-depth, open-ended participant interviews. Semi-formal elite interviews were used to augment and triangulate the understanding of the policy context gained from documentary sources and the initial literature review. Two cohorts are included in this method as participants. Firstly, policy makers; this included those operating within Scottish Government-funded agencies with dedicated responsibility for culture and the creative industries. Secondly, senior leadership roles in craft organisations; specifically, those who are known to be recipients of public support, or directly involved in lobbying and advocacy on behalf of the sector. A total of seven elite interviews with nine participants were conducted lasting between 53 and 90 minutes, half of which were online over Zoom and half in-person. These were completed in early 2023.

These semi-formal interviews provided me three things that could not be gained with the other methods and sources employed. Firstly, broad insight into the current craft policy landscape, and the research participants understanding of its influences on craft makers, particularly freelancers and sole traders. Secondly, an understanding of the relationships across and between policy formation and policy delivery. Thirdly, it allowed me to identify and interrogate these research participants' policy 'problems' (Bacchi, 2012; Stevenson, 2013) indicating emerging priorities and actions in the field. The critical lens through which to determine the biases, blinkers and subjectivities of elite participants was developed through preparatory work and active inquiry during the interviews. This sought to disrupt the 'naïve image of the expert as source of objective information' (Bogner et al., 2009, p. 5) that is often employed in qualitative research. Although there was some overlap in approach, interview

questions were largely bespoke to each interview. An example interview script is included in Appendix E.

Participant interviews took place over a six-month period in the first half of 2023. In total 26 were completed, with 12 participants associated with AAS, seven with SFMA, and 10 with SGS, equating to roughly 10% of each organisations' membership. A small number of participants were members of two organisations. This group included both maker-members, as well as three non-maker individuals who contributed to the organisations as paid contractors on specific projects.

These in-depth, open-ended interviews, developed in an ethnographic frame: 14 were conducted online using Zoom, 12 took place in person in a range of locations including artist studios, home workshops, art school buildings, museum coffee shops, and University of Glasgow buildings. The shortest interview lasted 32minutes, while the longest was 145minutes. Those taking place in person lasted, on average, twice as long as digitally mediated interviews, as I was invited to engage physically with the material worlds the makers were inhabiting. This included handling materials (fleeces, plastics, glass stringers, yarns), tools (files, clamps, needles, shuttles, glass cutters) and crafted objects, taking in their textures, smells, and weights. I was invited to sit on chairs and consider their proportions in relation to my own body, share hot drinks and snacks, and walks between different workspaces. This all extended the time necessary to undertake the research exchanges. The interviews were recorded, and the audio transcribed to support review and detailed coding. Physical notetaking by hand during the in-person interviews to capture my own observations about the multi-sensory and material experience of the interviews were an important aspect of the research process, that the audio recordings alone could not record. An overview of the pseudonymised research participants and their associations are presented in Appendix C, and this includes notes on the ethnographic observations carried out during and around the interviews themselves.

Informed by the literature, documentary and survey data, these interviews were open-ended but guided. Participants were invited to share details of their working practices as makers, their participation in the case study organisations to date, contributions to the running and management of the organisations, reasons for membership and participation, and expectations

for what might be happening in the year ahead and why. They were invited to share memorable moments, highlights, and successes, as well as contemplate the more difficult aspects of membership, such as when they found their values did not align with others, or they felt they might not renew membership. A series of questions and prompts were used to guide these interviews, and this was augmented by additional questions seeking clarification and additional information pertinent to the research. These interviews acted as opportunities to build rapport and trust between myself and the participants and develop the field work plans for observation and participation. These interviews were also an opportunity to ensure full consent was explicitly given for participation, discuss participants' expectations for the research project, and allow them to ask any questions they might have about it.

3.2.4 Fieldwork: participant observation

A detailed 'granular' (Atkinson, 2017) account of the specific structures, purposes and behaviour of the three case study maker-led craft organisations was generated utilising participant observation. This was informed by the work of Atkinson and Hammersley (Atkinson, 2013a, 2013b, 2017; Hammersley, 2001; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2010), as well as Charmaz (2014a), and Marchand (2022). Developed in an ethnographic frame, depth and intensity of data capture was prioritised over breadth.

Fieldwork is important because it allows researchers to 'pay sufficiently close attention to what [participants] actually do and how they do it' not just their 'reported activity (through interviews)' (Atkinson, 2017, p. 43). Fieldwork also enabled me to view participants as interconnected and interdependent; 'inhabiting matrices of relationship' (*Ibid.*, p. 61) rather than as individual subjects. Fieldwork in this research began from the outset of the PhD process, as I engaged widely in a range of craft related exhibitions and events, generating a broad understanding of the field of study, and this broad engagement continued throughout the PhD process. The case study-specific fieldwork took place over 12 months between January 2023 and December 2023, giving a full year in the life of the organisations being investigated. As a participant observer I officially joined each organisation as an 'Associate' member and participated in social events, project meetings, board meetings, workshops, Annual General Meetings, exhibition openings and related activity. Participation was fairly passive in most field work, with brief opportunities to engage in group discussions, share updates on my research process, engage with members' work, and ask questions within meetings.

The depth and intensity of fieldwork was balanced by practical constraints around time, financial resources, and the need for comparable weighting of attention between the three case study sites. A field work plan was originally developed with three phases: January to March 2023 observing and participating in regular online social meetings, board meetings and project meetings; May to July 2023 observing and participating in member events, project meetings and exhibition selection discussions; September to November 2023 observing and participating in public events, open exhibitions, and shared selling events. However, during the research period I had to be more responsive and adapted my plans as the case study organisations' schedules changed dramatically around availability of members, funding priorities and related deadlines, and shifting programmes. This included the cancellation of many regular online meetings that had originally been the focus for ongoing observations, due to the preference for return to in-person activity, following the pandemic period where this was either restricted or impractical.

Participant observation consisted of both online and offline activity, in keeping with the mix of social engagement encountered by members. The social media activity of members around the case study organisations was also monitored, and I joined and participated in closed Facebook groups to observe and communicate with members. This study, however, was not designed to be a netnography (Kozinets, 2015) and the social media exchanges were found to be of limited scale. Alongside a broader engagement with the Scottish craft ecology throughout the PhD process, and observations during and surrounding interviews, a total of 12 fieldwork events were completed relating to activity delivered directly by the case study organisations in the year 2023. This included five related to AAS, two to SFMA, and five to SGS. Seven were online meetings, and five were in-person events – totalling 23 hours observation. A full breakdown of fieldwork events observed is included in Appendix B.

Fieldnotes were the primary means of collecting and generating data relating to these observations. While there are concerns over fieldnotes' personal, subjective and 'idiosyncratic' nature, alongside limitations of 'memory' and what is seen and heard (Walford, 2009), it is standard practice to rely upon these because they allow the ethnographer to:

record as much as possible of what is perceived to be relevant to the research project so

that there is a record that can be used later in the analysis and writing process

(Walford, 2009, p. 127).

As researcher I had discretion to record what I think is most important to the study, something noted as particular to ethnographic methods (Wolfinger, 2002). The fieldwork was recorded very broadly in the initial phases, with increasing focus on particular aspects of the participation and observation over time, in keeping with the grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2017; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2010). My notes consisted both of written text and drawings and diagrams to represent connections, processes, and changes over time. Quantitative accounting and categorising also appear, and data collection overlapped with data analysis and memo writing in these field notes. Photographic documentation of in-person participation and observation also took place and helped to augment the fieldnotes, and support recall. A fieldnote example is included in Appendix G.

3.2.5 Exiting the Field

Ongoing entanglements with the field mean that a formal withdrawal is impossible. To demarcate the end of the ethnographic observation and participation period, and ensure participants had a clear understanding of the project process, several strategies were put in place. Firstly, a small sample of case study participants were invited to take part in an exit interview, particularly those in leadership roles. This allowed them to share their reflections about their experiences with the case study organisations over the year and ask me, as researcher, any questions they might have about the next stage of the project. I also prepared some initial reflections and local findings at this point, in keeping with the guidance provided by Schlesinger *et al.* (2015). Secondly, initial findings specific to each case study site were compiled and circulated to each organisation through their Chair. Two organisations invited me to deliver a short summary of these in late 2023 to their boards in online meetings. While the data collection period formally ended at the end of 2023, I made myself available during a 'cooling off' period until early 2024 in case of participant questions after the exit interviews.

3.2.6 Overview of data collection methods

Table 1 (overleaf) represents the timescales of data collection methods undertaken, and the scale and volume of data gathered.

Table 1: Data Collection Timeline

Month / Year	Survey Responses	Participant Interviews	Elite Interviews	Exit Interviews	Participant Observation Events
Nov-22	80				
Dec-22	35				
Jan-23	8	1	2		
Feb-23		5	3		
Mar-23		1	2		
Apr-23		3			1
May-23		7			3
Jun-23		7	2		2
Jul-23					2
Aug-23					
Sep-23					1
Oct-23				2	3
Nov-23		1		1	
Dec-23					
Total	123	26	9	3	12

3.2.7 Data Processing and Analysis

In keeping with the overarching grounded theory research design, data have been repeatedly and iteratively analysed comparatively throughout the research process to allow for imaginative generation of theoretical propositions, that guide and inform attention, lines of questioning and further theoretical inquiry and formation. This included repeated engagements with literature, documentary, and archival materials; both those held in formal institutional and informal settings. Analysis in grounded theory is a process of thinking, as Atkinson suggests, 'from the specific to the general and back again' (2017, p. 169). Atkinson (2013b, p. 56) cautions against the technical and procedural treatment of data, suggesting it can overwhelm the analytical activity of the researcher. I employed a systematic two-stage coding process in this project, in keeping with the approaches described by Charmaz (2000, 2014a). This was partial rather than 'exhaustive' (Dey, 1999); it was beyond the scope of the study to code every single data point. Initial codes were developed from a line-by-line analysis of survey data and interviews. This built on themes emanating from preparatory literature reviews and

disciplinary foci, and helped to develop new 'sensitizing concepts' informing literature search and analysis processes relating to emerging themes, particularly care and compassion.

The data was captured in a range of formats, primarily in the form of transcriptions of interviews, fieldnotes, research diary entries, documents, and documentation of field work events. Each data type has its own 'analytic assumptions' as Atkinson says, for example, 'transcription is neither totally transparent not pure artefact' It is often the best available material' (2017, p. 62). Data was not treated as a proxy for truth or fact, but a representation of the negotiated meaning between myself as researcher and the field of study and its subjects. This is particularly true of the field notes and research diary, which are accepted as more subjective than the interview transcripts or survey responses (Walford, 2009; Wolfinger, 2002).

Each data set underwent initial coding, using Microsoft Excel as a practical tool to support the processing of large quantities of qualitative data and aid documentation and evaluation of the process (Gray, 2018). The resulting open codes were grouped by research question and related to the practices of self-organisation; the drivers underpinning self-organisation; the work and labours involved in developing and managing the organisations; and the enabling and disabling factors affecting membership and participation. Once produced these codes were tested, further sampling and revisiting the data and literatures, to refine them. This included triangulation with findings drawn from the survey data, as well as archival documents.

Open coding was followed by selective coding, which helped to distil large quantities of qualitative data into conceptual themes that reappear frequently. Frequency of codes is considered to offer reliability of findings from the data. Memo writing during this process provided opportunities to creatively explore emerging ideas, and guide further targeted and selective sampling of the data – revisiting literatures to test and develop emergent theories. During the research process there was increasing overlap between memo writing and field notes in terms of their ability to support critical reflection (Maharaj, 2016). This process of iterative refinement is creative, generative, and relies heavily on the sensitivity of the researcher to the data. The aim was to integrate theoretical ideas into the emergent theoretical framework. Due to the quantity and diversity of data, and the multifarious points of interest that emerged, this process took considerable time to distil the emergent codes into a focus,

structure and format that would be realistic to explore and present within the confines of a thesis.

Knowing when grounded theory analysis is complete is disputed. Glaser and Strauss focus on achieving 'saturation' (2006 [1967]). Charmaz criticises the term as imprecise. She prefers to use the term '*theoretical sufficiency'*, a term drawn from Dey (1999, p. 257) because it resists researcher conjecture of meeting an arbitrary standard, and is in keeping with the constructivist ontology highlighting the subjective nature of analysis. Analysis was completed by integrating substantive and formal theories into an overarching theoretical framework, which in this thesis was bult iteratively incorporating the prominent themes from the research data with literature on care and compassion.

3.3   Risk and Ethical Considerations

This research project involves human subjects; it has therefore undergone a rigorous risk assessment and research ethics process. Ethical approval for this research was granted on 5th August 2022 by the University of Glasgow's College of Arts Research Ethics Committee (Application Reference: 100210175). In considering the risks and ethics of this research I looked towards the ethical framework proposed by Murphy and Dingwall for ethnographic projects which has four categories of ethical considerations:

- *Non-maleficence* – researchers should avoid harming participants.
- *Beneficence* – research on human subjects should produce some positive and identifiable benefit rather than simply be carried out for its own sake.
- *Autonomy or self-determination* – research participants' values and decisions should be respected.
- *Justice* – all people should be treated equally.
  (2001, p. 339)

The first two, which are categorised as the consequentialist considerations, are often taken together to mean 'research is ethical if its benefits outweigh its potential for harm' (*Ibid.*). The second two relate to the rights of participants; protecting the autonomy of research participants to determine their participation, and ensuring those rights are conferred fairly (or equitably). These latter two are referred to as the deontological considerations (*Ibid.*).

There are three different cohorts of human research subjects within this research study each with a slightly different relationship to the project and ethical considerations: Survey participants, elite interview participants, and case study participants. Myself, as researcher, also factors into this, as do the material sources (documents and archival materials) I engaged with physically and digitally. The risks and mitigations for each, are informed largely by the work of Susan Tilley and Jan Savage (Savage, 2000; Tilley, 2016), and my ongoing professional relationship with the field of study.

To avoid harm all proposed research activity underwent a risk assessment, and risk assessment practices were built into fieldwork plans. Mitigations were put in place, including ensuring research questions did not cause offence, sensitive subject matters and data were not sought, and physical meeting spaces were safe. In keeping with the UK's General Data Protection Regulations, the potential to cause harm to participants from the collection, processing, storage, and use of data is minimised through data minimisation (only collecting and recording data necessary for the research), participant anonymity (unless otherwise requested), and password-protected safe storage of data. Meaningful anonymity is not possible within the raw data in all cases due to the small population size and interconnected nature of Scotland's craft sector. Care has been taken to anonymise data in storage and publication, including: creating participant pseudonyms, redacting identifying details, creating composite accounts, and selective use of direct quotations. Reducing the risk of data loss, corruption or misinterpretation was also factored into the engagement with non-digital physical documentary and archival materials.

The benefit (or *beneficence*) of this research has been factored into the design, ensuring that a lasting positive legacy of the field work is retained by each participating organisation, in the form of local observations and insights, and access to the thesis on publication. More broadly, the benefit to the wider craft ecology will be a new body of research on which they can develop, as well as recommendations for policy and practice. I anticipate sharing the research through a series of sector-facing events once the thesis is published. My role and aims as researcher were overt and communicated actively to research participants.

Interview subjects, survey participants and case study participants each went through a process to ensure their formal explicit consent was granted, using consent forms which were signed

physically or digitally before data collection commenced. For interview participants, the right to stop participating at any point, refuse to answer or pause participation was guaranteed and discussed at the outset of each interview. A small number of participants requested the transcripts from their interviews, and these were provided, with all participants happy to proceed without any redactions or amendments. *Autonomy* and *self-determination* were harder to provide for those incidental observations where general members and the public were present. As researcher I communicated my presence and role overtly at regular intervals, providing project updates in online meetings and introduced myself and the project during in-person events where this was possible.

All participants, whether formally consenting, or incidentally involved, had the same rights. As researcher I was responsible for upholding the legal, moral, and ethical consideration of *justice* that all people should be treated equitably. My own safety was also factored into all fieldwork plans, with a lone worker risk assessment detailing the precautions. These included communicating my travel plans to my partner, only meeting in safe spaces, and building in periods of rest into the year. Rest periods became highly necessary due to the emotional labour involved in processing the interviews, which frequently involved highly affecting exchanges with makers regarding their concerns for future sustainability of their craft practices.

3.4   Presentation of Findings

Data does not 'speak for itself' (Atkinson, 2017, p. 2) and the decisions surrounding presentation of findings are as important as the collection, generation, and analysis that precedes them. The resulting findings are presented thematically, aligned with distinct inquiry questions, prioritising readability and narrative flow (Ghodsee, 2016). Within the body of the findings the use of verbatim direct quotes have been carefully considered. Bissell writes of the 'sacred quality' of interview quotes in qualitative research writing, supposedly capable of transporting the reader to the moment of utterance (2022). They are the default approach to sharing insights from participant interviews. However, they come with a number of ethical and methodological concerns: presenting participant quotes can make it appear as if they are external 'truths', while constructivism views them as co-created between participant and researcher in the interview or observation (*Ibid.*). They also present data without the rich context, both conversationally and materially, within which they occurred, which can inhibit the readers' understanding of the intention and nuance of selected quotes.

The preservation of participant anonymity and the avoidance of harm to the case study organisations through prejudicing them to others within their sector, are priorities here, alongside an ethical imperative to set the data into the context from which it emerged and preserve the intended meaning of participants. Verbatim quotes are used where there is a strong case for developing the readability and argumentation of the text (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006). The use of alternative devices such as composite accounts; narrative retellings of the experience of conducting the interview or observation; and longer quotes which incorporate my own voice as researcher and situate the participant into the context of the research process, have all been utilised.

3.5   Research challenges and limitations

Overall, despite challenges relating to an ever shifting and highly unpredictable research field – requiring considerable administrative work and time to negotiate access to – the research design was largely achieved as planned. The multi-sited case study approach mitigated against the subjectivity and lack of generalizability of in-depth qualitative research; ensuring comparative analysis between the three chosen case studies could illuminate theoretical and empirical findings relevant to the wider landscape, not just individual cases. Triangulating the various rich data gathered within interviews, participant observations, and the initial survey, also provided confidence that the findings were empirically robust and generalizable. The iterative exchange between the various research data and literatures also enabled the identification and reflexive exploration of emergent theoretical ideas, and enhanced interdisciplinarity, to produce novel findings and theory. This approach mitigated against my subjective biases and narrow disciplinary perspectives and limited academic range at the outset of this research project. This methodological approach, despite its resource intensity, was highly appropriate and greatly enhanced my ability to develop as a researcher reflexively and critically.

3.6   Chapter Summary and Conclusions

CGT (Charmaz, 2000, 2012, 2014a, 2017) has shaped this research design, not just in the practicalities of methods, sources and analysis techniques employed, but epistemologically. An iterative and inductive orientation to the field of study has narrowed and focused attention

on the phenomenon of maker-led craft organisations in Scotland and their consequences. A foundation of data has been collected and generated through documentary, archival and survey research methods, on the broad field of study: the craft sector in Scotland. Further background and context have been generated through semi-formal elite interviews with policy makers and craft sector leaders, and a survey with 123 participating makers. From this, a multi-sited ethnographic approach – utilising in-depth open-ended interviews and participant observation – explored in-depth the behaviours, values, and beliefs of makers associated with three maker-led craft associations in Scotland: Applied Arts Scotland (AAS), Scottish Furniture Makers Association (SFMA), and Scottish Glass Society (SGS). Data analysis was concurrent with data collection and generation with cyclical revisitation of literature and theoretical sampling of the available data to generate theory.

The findings have been presented following the constructivist ontology, presenting the data collected and gathered in a way that explicitly situates it within the context of the research process it emanates from. This accounts for both epistemic relativism, and ontological realism. Drawing on the principles of 'judgemental rationality' (Bhaskar, 1989, 2009; Isaksen, 2024) this process has enabled evaluation of the findings to discern what is most pressing to publish and make recommendations on. What follows is a presentation of the results of that process. Initially Chapter 4 introduces the survey data and provides background and context to the study, articulating the broad practices of makers' contemporary organisational behaviours in Scotland. Following this, in Chapter 5, the case study organisations are investigated, including their formation, development and contemporary practices relative to shifts in government policy pertaining to craft in Scotland. Chapter 6 explores the drivers underpinning makers' membership of and participation in maker-led organisations. Chapter 7 turns its attention to the characteristics and experience of the work undertaken by those leading, managing and contributing to the running of the case study organisations. Chapter 8 attends to the factors influencing maker-led organisations' accessibility and equity of membership and participation. Finally, Chapter 9 provides a conclusion, proposing the overarching role maker-led organisations have in Scotland's craft ecology, finding both possibilities for generating the conditions for good work and social value, while also acknowledging the limitations within the current context.

CHAPTER 4:   MAKERS' ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOURS IN SCOTLAND'S CRAFT ECOLOGY

Preliminary research, carried out through survey analysis, highlights a diverse and widespread presence of both craft-specific and other types of cultural organisations in Scotland in makers' lives. Overall, this survey data provides significant insight into the organisational landscape of Scotland's craft ecology, and the different scales and geography of connection and collaboration that this encapsulates. It draws attention to the significant resources contributed by makers to the upkeep and running of their organisations, highlighting a lack of external investment, and mounting expectations of makers' self-reliance in the face of retracting welfare and public resource. The socio-demographic profile of survey respondents was narrow, drawing attention to inequity of representation within Scotland's craft ecology, being majority white, female and older. Simultaneously those with disabilities, life-limiting illnesses, and caring responsibilities were well-represented in the sample. With no comparable sector mapping on these characteristics, it provides an opportunity to interrogate why those with (often complex and intersecting) care needs, for themselves and others, may be drawn to join and participate in craft organisations.

This chapter foregrounds that equity of access to, and participation in, craft-related organisations, networks, associations, and societies is important. Makers acknowledge they provide access to benefits and resources, including development opportunities, opportunities for public exhibition and showcase, supportive social networks, peer-learning and mutual aid. The demographic and socio-economic factors affecting membership and participation, illuminated by the survey data, becomes a pressing concern in this context. This particularly relates to the rising age of maker-participants and effects of portfolio careers, unstable and low incomes, care responsibilities, disability, and life-limiting health issues on their capacity to sustain participation and contribute to the running of these organisations. This raises questions over these organisations' sustainability, despite their acknowledged value.

4.1 Craft Organisation in Scotland: forms, remits and maker-involvement

Makers engage and participate in organisational activity across a range of geographical scales, these include organisations whose remits are delimited and bounded by craft-specific material and disciplinary constraints, as well as those that are multi-disciplinary and open, particularly aligned with visual arts, design, and business support for small-scale enterprise. This demonstrates a complex and evolving craft ecology in Scotland. Despite its characterisation as a standalone economic 'sector' within Scottish creative industries policy, the craft ecology is porous and interdependent with other creative and economic activity and policy fields. Many self-identified makers move between various disciplines and use sector identifiers opportunistically and fluidly, exploiting the ambiguity of craft's definition to suit their own needs (Rees, 1997, p. 135). These makers also work across a complex spectrum between professional and amateur practice. There is rarely linear progression; individuals move across this spectrum variably through their lives, often moving across and between craft disciplines and material practices. Membership and participation in craft organisations is one way makers signify the 'seriousness' (Elkington & Stebbins, 2014) of their practice, in terms of commitment and contribution to it, but this is not directly correlated to the desire to derive a living from it, or claim a professional identity. This complicates the job of craft sector leaders and policy advocates to provide the hard data on income levels, outputs and impacts, from craft practices, or effectively map the 'professional' sector as distinct from casual, hobbyist or amateur activity. All of this diminishes the status of craft within Scotland's economic growth-focused policy landscape, and therefore craft makers' capacity to claim policy attention for themselves, or their collective endeavours.

Participation and membership are pervasive and growing. This aligns with assessments that individualisation within creative and cultural work, and the associated precariousness, is generating pressing need for occupational and practice-based attachments (Morgan & Nelligan, 2017). Three quarters (75%) of survey respondents, who self-identified as makers living and/or working in Scotland aged 18 or over (n=123), were a member or participant of one or more associations, organisations, networks, or societies related to their craft work. Of those respondents 74 went on to provide detail about their memberships and participation activity. Nearly one-third, 32%, had newly joined one or more in the 12 months between January and December 2022 – suggesting ongoing, and potentially increasing importance of this activity for makers in Scotland. Associating with multiple organisations simultaneously

was common: over one-third of respondents had 4 or more active at the time of the survey. The average number of organisations with which makers had an association with was just under three. My participation in three case study organisations during the field work year was in keeping with the activities of makers I was researching.

Within the survey 95 individual associations (see Figure 1 for breakdown), organisations, networks, and societies were identified. Thirty-three (33) of those referenced had remits that covered the whole of the United Kingdom, with registered offices in other parts of the UK. A small but prominent number were International (4), and more likely to be held with those practicing their craft for over ten years, indicating a potentially important role in sustaining craft practice echoing *The Market for Craft Report* (2020). The UK-based organisations identified included national UK membership bodies Contemporary Glass Society, Association for Contemporary Jewellery, Society of Designer Craftsmen, British Society of Scientific Glassblowers, Society of Bookbinders and The Textiles Society, and others. National bodies UK Crafts Council, Heritage Crafts Association, and the Federation of Small Businesses were also referenced. Also noted were subscription-based networks such as A-N The Artists Information Network, and private[2] social media groups exemplified by the likes of Ceramics UK's Facebook group. All had some influence within Scotland, either through knowledge sharing, offering opportunities or resources to Scotland-based makers, or delivering programmes and events within Scotland. Five regional or locally focused organisations based in England were referenced. These tended to be colleges, private training organisations or past collaborators, with which the responding makers had a continuing relationship.

The named organisations based in Scotland, which number 53, ranged in type, form, focus and priorities. A range of regional (especially Highland and Island-focused) and both rural and urban hyper-local associations were noted. This included collectives sharing studio spaces – presenting work together and meeting to discuss shared interests – and local tool libraries providing access to shared resources. Makers also referenced involvement in cross-disciplinary groups – often administered by Local Authorities or cultural organisations working explicitly within particular geographical locales. This included Dundee's AMPs

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[2] 'Private' in this context means members must request to join and be admitted by a group admin after answering questions to determine their eligibility to do so.

network, CABN (Creative Arts and Business Network, Scottish Borders), and GCAN (Glasgow Connected Arts Network)[3]. Open Studios networks also featured prominently, with North East Scotland, Fife, and Cowal area groups notably mentioned.
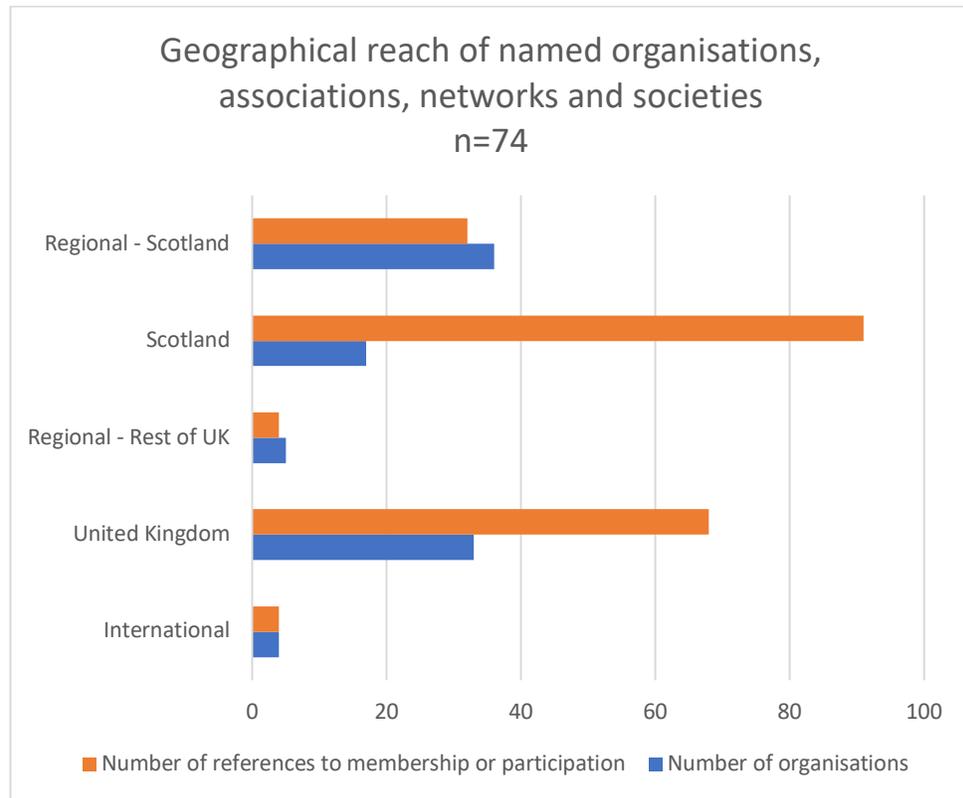
Figure 1: Geographical reach of named organisations, associations, networks, and societies referenced within survey of makers. N = 74

There was a significant crossover with notionally 'visual arts' focused national organisations, such as Visual Arts Scotland, Society of Scottish Artists, and Scottish Artists Union, while other disciplines were acknowledged in the inclusion of, for example, The Envelope Room, which provides membership for set designers and propmakers, and BECTU, the Broadcasting, Entertainment, Communications and Theatre Union. A high degree of alignment between making practices and visual arts practices can further be seen in the research conducted on Artist Run Initiatives in Scotland (Biddlecombe, 2022) where the notionally separate cohorts of 'visual artists' and 'makers', supported in separate policy tracks by the national development body for the arts, screen, and creative industries, Creative Scotland, share

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[3] In early 2025 GCAN CIC became Creative Glasgow, a limited company with charitable status, that the author has been contributing to on a freelance basis, managing membership and programme development.

institutional structures, resources, and intermediaries including provisions for making work in shared workshops and studios, platforms for exhibition and display, and spaces for education, training, research and development.

These shared needs are reflected in the regional partnerships delivering the VACMA (Visual Artists and Craft Makers Awards) centrally administered and supported by Creative Scotland, to provide individuals small bursaries for training, development, and research, and in the joint research outputs detailing selling platforms across visual art, craft and design (Creative Scotland, 2021). The latter also acknowledges the close alignment craft makers have with design. While this research focuses on specifically craft-related organisations, and those individuals who self-identify as craft 'makers', the intersection with other areas of cultural policy interest, and the associated identities of artist and designer are inevitably interconnected. Around two-thirds of survey respondents self-identify as 'makers', while nearly half also describe themselves as 'designer-makers', and a quarter also as 'designers'. A smaller proportion, 12%, self-identify as 'applied artists', while around one-third identify simply as 'artists'. Rather than being distinct identities, the survey showed respondents use multiple identities simultaneously, and modulate between them depending on the context, exploiting the ambiguous boundaries to suit their needs and personal preferences.

National Scottish-based craft-specific organisations (see Figure 2) had 57 references to membership and participation made to them, shared between 8 organisations, making it the most significant type of association for respondents by frequency of reference. Over half of respondents who responded positively to the question: 'Are you a member or participant of one or more associations, organisations, networks or societies related to your craft work?' referenced one or more of these organisations.
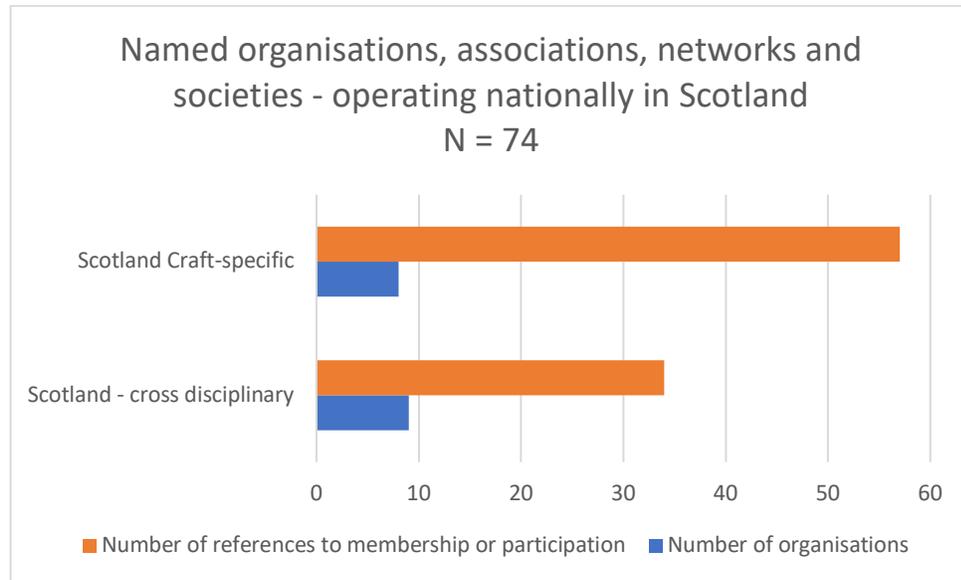
Figure 2: Named organisations, associations, networks, and societies operating nationally in Scotland, referenced by maker-respondents to the survey.

These ranged from materially specific groups, such as Scottish Glass Society and Fibreshed Scotland, to practice specific; Scottish Basketmakers Circle, and Scottish Potters Association (SPA). The latter was the most frequently mentioned; almost a quarter of respondents held active membership with SPA. This group also included national publicly-funded development body, Craft Scotland, which 22% of respondents referenced. Craft Scotland have a highly selective and competitive application process for entry to their 'Directory'. This is not considered membership by the organisation and does not confer rights to vote on organisational business or contribute to the running of the organisation. Due to participant anonymity, it was unclear from the survey the extent to which respondents were selected makers within Craft Scotland's online Directory, participants in projects and programmes, or simply recipients of regular communications.

Beyond Craft Scotland, the only national multi-disciplinary craft organisation identified was Applied Arts Scotland, which was also the third-most cited in terms of respondent's associations; over 20% of respondents were a member. Case study organisations AAS and SGS appeared prominently in the results. Despite the survey being circulated through their membership, the third case study organisation SFMA, which is majority male, did not appear. Male-identifying craft makers are consistently underrepresented in sector mapping, suggesting they may be less likely to complete surveys. This adds to the significance of including a majority male organisation case study in this research. This raises questions about the extent to

which other active organisations may be un-represented within the survey data. Indeed craft organisations named within other recent sector mapping research (Baker, 2022, pp. 78–79) are also absent; claims to have a full-picture of craft organisations in Scotland are not possible. Of the 18 most-cited organisations (see Figure 3) in the survey responses, six were Scottish craft-specific organisations with national reach, and of those four were constitutionally maker-led membership bodies, with practising makers holding governance and leadership roles, and able to vote on constitutional matters. This identifies participation and membership in maker-led national craft organisations as the most significant form of makers' organisational practice in Scotland.
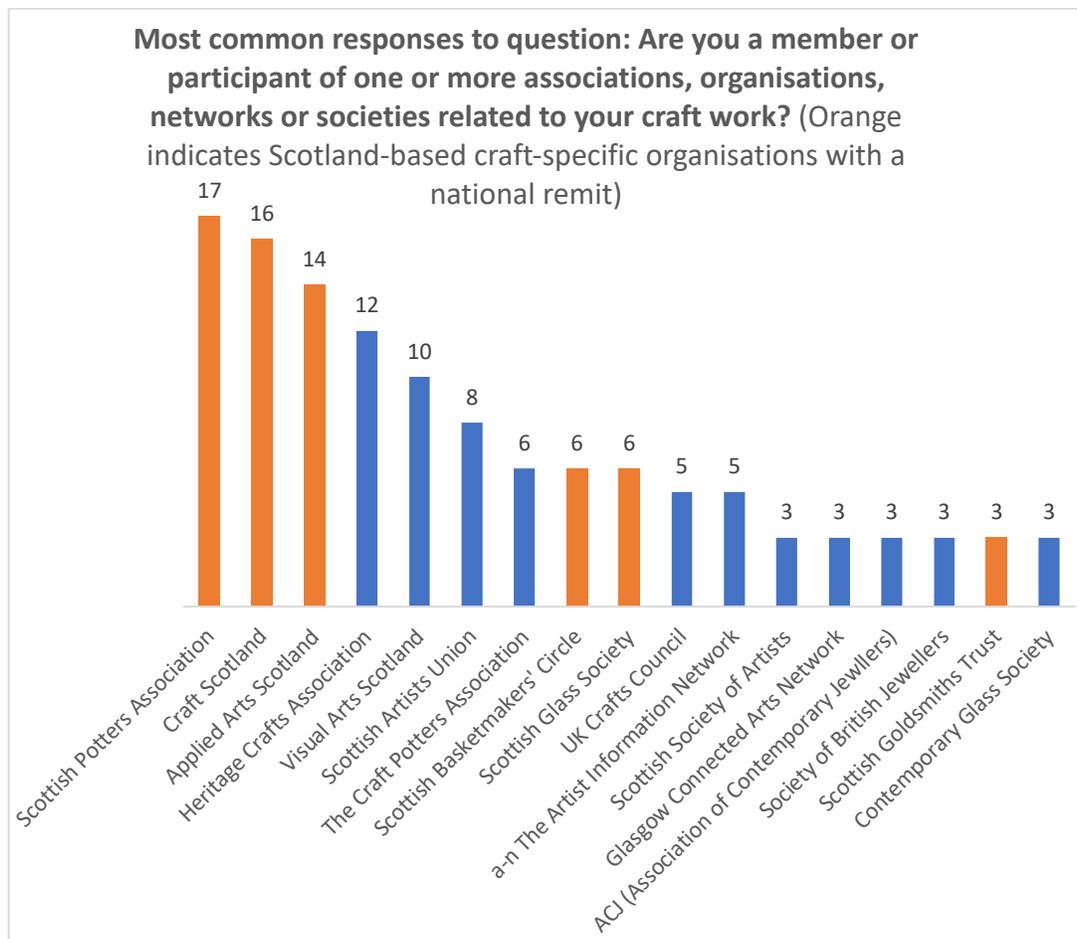
Figure 3: Eighteen most frequently cited organisations in the maker-survey.

Beyond identifying the names and types of organisations, the survey reveals that makers' association in these organisations is powered in large part by makers' own voluntary labour. When asked what membership and participation entailed, the most common responses related to participating in member activities such as events, exhibitions, online meetings, and

workshops, as well as attending organisational meetings and engaging with online and written content. Active contribution to the running of the organisations and their activities, however, were also common responses. This included: organising exhibitions, events, and workshops; updating websites, listings, and directories; attending Annual General Meetings; and developing written and online content. Makers also contributed through delivering learning and instruction to others on behalf of the organisations, and invigilating exhibitions and events.

Nearly one-third of respondents contributed an average of over 15 hours a month to the membership and participation activity in 2022, and 44% of respondents held a formal volunteer role with one or more associations, organisations, networks, or societies. This indicates the endemic nature of voluntary labour in craft makers' working lives, whilst also suggesting those who held voluntary roles with organisations were potentially more likely to complete the survey than passive or lay-members. Two responses to the survey registered the negative impact volunteering had on their ability to practice their craft, due to impinging on making and selling time – this was particularly felt by those who held formal volunteer roles involved in leadership and governance, which was understood to add to the 'enforced obligations' (Stebbins, 1992) of their participation, so diminishing their freedom and internal rewards. This sentiment was echoed in field work and interviews with board and committee members and is explored in detail in Chapter 7.

What this information tells us is that for makers membership and participation is highly varied in geographical reach, with multiple scales of associations held simultaneously. It also shows us that being a member of, or participating with, a craft-specific national organisation in Scotland, is a feature of the Scottish craft ecology. It ranges from informal and passive engagement with newsletters, social media accounts and informal networks, through to formal membership, and contribution to the running of organisations, sometimes involving significant resource commitments. Contributions from makers are fundamental to craft organisations' operation, and this includes voluntary labour, as well as monetary resource in the form of membership fees and associated costs.

4.2   The narrow demographic profile of craft-sector participants

Within this preliminary research responding craft-makers fell within a narrow demographic profile. This adds to growing concerns about inequity of opportunity and progression within Scotland's craft ecology, and lack of successful 'affirmative actions' (Banks, 2017) that provide support and resources to address this. The survey found, like Craft Scotland's recent sector review (Craft Scotland, 2023b), that the majority of respondents were female-identifying (81%), with 15% male-identifying, and 4% who declined to answer. While overall, three-quarters (75%) of respondents identified themselves as members or participants of one or more associations, organisations, networks, and societies related to their craft work, this fell to 50% for male-identifying respondents. Female-identifying makers in Scotland were found to be much more likely to be involved in membership activity than male-identifying makers, potentially accounting for the lower male representation in sector mapping and surveying. The majority of respondents (53%) were aged between 45 and 64, with a further 18% aged over 65, again showing parity with Craft Scotland's sector data that shows an age profile comparable to the Scottish population, where 20% are aged over 65 in the latest census (Scottish Government, 2023b). This demographic data raises questions around reasons for craft work's continuation beyond retirement age and state pension receipt (which currently stands at 66 years in the UK). For this reason, the oldest age category (ages 75 and over) was identified separately in survey data.

Nearly all respondents aged over 65 identified themselves as members or participants of one or more association, organisation, network, or society related to their craft work (88%), and this was also high in the 45-54 and 55-64 age ranges and shown to be increasing with age (at 75% and 86% respectively), while fewer than half of those aged 44 and under held memberships (46%). Those aged 25-34 had the lowest level of membership participation at 38%. Further detail can be seen in Figure 4, below – note the 18-24 age range was excluded from the chart due to only one response being elicited for this age range. While around one-third (34%) of survey respondents had newly joined an association, organisation, network, or society related to their craft work in the last 12 months. Those aged 45-54 were most likely to have done so, with 38% noting new membership or participation activity. Fewer than 20% of respondents under 45 had newly joined. This raises interesting potential for this membership and participation activity's intersection with questions around how to sustain making practices in later life, and questions around both the capacity and interest of younger makers to join and

participate in this activity. Research in other geographical contexts suggests younger makers may be more likely to engage in more generic online networking and selling, where social ties are looser, and relationships are more superficial (Gu, 2018; Stevens, 2011; Wittel, 2001).
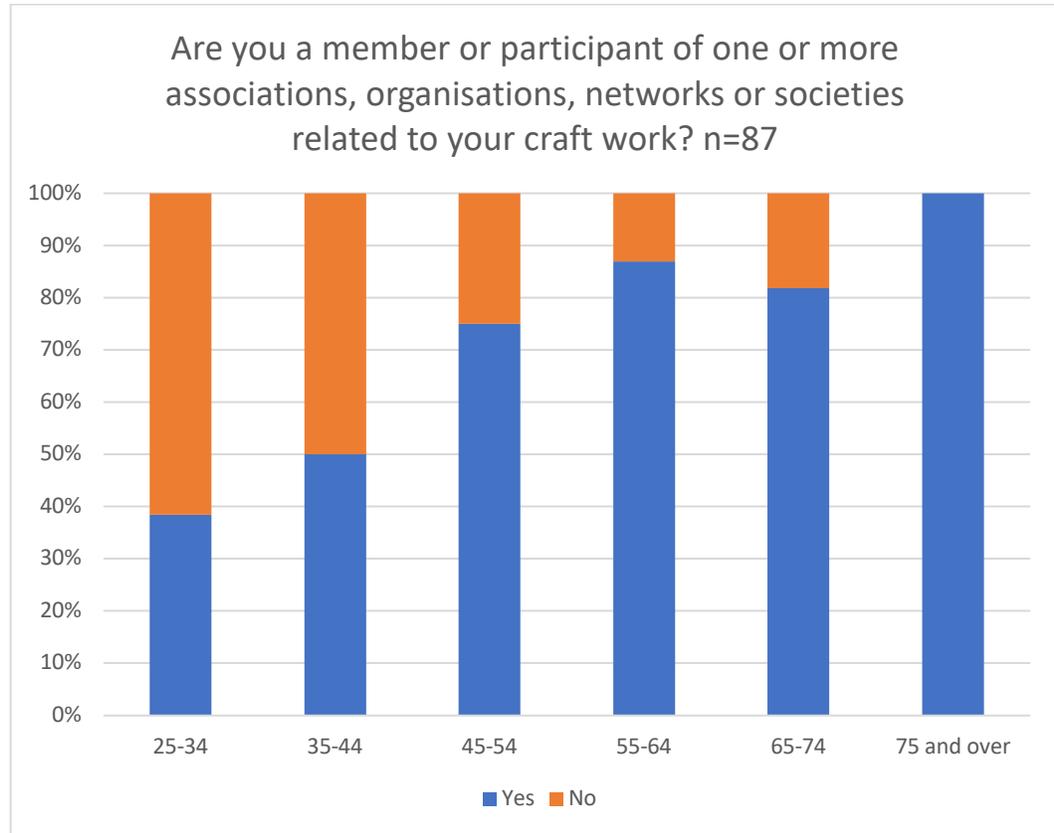
Figure 4: Craft makers in Scotland – membership and participation of associations, organisations, networks, and societies by age range of respondents.

The ethnic origin of survey respondents was largely found to mirror Craft Scotland's recent sector review, with the majority (91%) self-identifying as White Scottish, White British or White Other, and 2% declining to answer. Due to the small number of respondents who identify within the survey research as ethnic origin other than white – and in subsequent research with the case study research participants – this research does not focus significantly in this area, noting more targeted research is needed. It points to the importance of academic work ongoing in this area by the likes of Karen Patel (Patel, 2017, 2020a; Patel & Dudrah, 2022). However, the response of one Black British-identifying maker working in a traditional craft discipline, is significant, They were completing the survey seeking "information on who to approach and where organisations are" and further that, despite being interested in joining

or participating in an organisation related to their craft work, they were not yet a member or participant: the respondent "wasn't sure how to join" (Survey Respondent, 26/12/2022). This suggests that for this demographic, barriers to organisations might be related to accessing suitable information. To diversify more attention is needed to target and actively include culturally diverse makers in membership development and recruitment processes and leadership roles.

The preliminary research highlighted the narrow demographic profile of craft-sector participants in Scotland, and the way this intersected with membership and participation in organisations related to craft work. This informed interrogation of the case study organisations' attitudes towards, and practices and actions pertaining to, questions of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within the subsequent interviews and fieldwork observations, the detail of which is presented in Chapter 8.

4.3   Disability and long-term life-limiting illness prevalent in maker-community

Reporting on disability and long-term life-limiting illness is a notable gap in current sector reviews. There was a significant prevalence of those with disabilities and long-term life-limiting illnesses within the survey sample, and this group had higher levels of participation and membership in craft organisations, compared to non-disabled respondents. This raised interesting questions about the specific needs for community and peer-support for this group, and the potential that maker-led and small-scale craft organisations were able to provide suitable support for needs unmet elsewhere in the craft ecology, due to their size and responsiveness to peer-needs. This, coupled with equivalent findings within the case study interviewees, was a key finding that drew attention to the ethic of care within maker-led organisations.

Over a quarter (26%) of respondents consider themselves to have 'a disability or long-term life-limiting illness'. There is no comparable recent sector review data in Scotland, however the Craft in an Age of Change Report (CIAoC) found that around 4% of Scottish respondents were 'disabled' (Burns et al., 2012, p. 6), the more selective language used in this survey may account for the lower proportion. Open text responses provided more details related to participation and membership. Two makers specifically articulated their disabilities, namely chronic fatigue, and social anxiety, as the main barriers to becoming a member or participating

in an association, organisation, network, or society relating to their craft work. A further three respondents noted disability and health conditions as factors influencing their work patterns; rather than working consistently part time or full time, their craft practice fluctuated in duration and intensity to accommodate their needs, energy levels and capacities.

Around one-fifth (17%) of survey respondents work variably, rather than consistently full or part-time, noting the seasonal nature of their craft and other work, other work commitments, and economic pressures affecting their work patterns, alongside health-related fluctuations. Other makers again noted their disability status or illnesses as a key challenge within their craft practice, contributing to financial pressures, and socio-economic deprivation:

> "Physical restrictions due to ongoing recovery from a severe injury mean that I can't do any in person selling events at the moment, and these would normally provide a good income in the run up to Christmas." (Survey Respondent, 03/11/2022)

> "Covid means I am now on universal credit. Trying to pivot the brand but no cash to do so. Rent and bills killing me off." (Survey Respondent, 04/11/2022).

> "[As someone living with Fibromyalgia] I pretty much live in abject poverty. If I invest in my necessary materials, I have to do without in another area, usually food. It's hard." (Survey Respondent, 25/11/2022)

Survey respondents who do consider themselves to have a disability or long-term, life-limiting illness were slightly more likely to be a member or participate in one or more associations, organisations, networks, or societies related to their craft work (78%) than respondents in general (75%). It is unclear whether this is due to enhanced need for support structures from these individuals, or positive inclusive practices by the organisations and networks, or a combination of both. Other than Garvald, an organisation based in Edinburgh which supports those with complex disabilities and learning disabilities to undertake craft practices through the provision of workshops and tuition, and a platform through which to sell their work, there were no associations, organisations, networks, or societies specifically geared towards, or explicitly run by makers with disabilities identified in the survey research. This is notable considering the proportion of makers who identify themselves in this way.

4.4   Geographical barriers for remote, rural, and island-dwelling makers

Scotland's craft sector has a noted strength in rural and remote areas, with longstanding policy investment in rural craft, particularly in relation to economic development and tourism (Brown, 1980; Champion, 2020; McHattie et al., 2018; Young, 1995). However, many of the survey respondents noted barriers, both practical and perceived, related to geography. Moves

to rural and remote locations can often be motivated by makers' desire to escape 'burnout' and 'exhaustion' within urban locales, and improve work-life balance and environmental sustainability (Munro, 2020). However, the lack of infrastructure coupled with continuing growth-focused policy pressures found in rural areas can lead to enhanced requirements to internalise entrepreneurial commitments. Rurally based makers have heightened demands for self-reliance, particularly in relation to education and skills development, due to the lack of provision and additional resources required to access these opportunities (*Ibid.*).

Survey respondents were based across Scotland; 24 of Scotland's 32 local authority areas represented in the data. Glasgow City, Aberdeenshire, Highland, City of Edinburgh, Fife, and Scottish Borders together made-up over 60% of all the responses by location. Those areas that had a regionally based organisation supporting distribution of the survey (i.e., Fife Contemporary / Highlands and Islands Enterprise) had proportionally higher responses compared to population levels. Issues of geographical access to membership and participation were a perceived barrier by respondents: 17% of those who wished to join or participate in activity noted it wasn't available in their geographical area. This included those based in rural local authority areas, including Dumfries and Galloway, Perth and Kinross, Aberdeenshire, Na h-Eilean Siar (Western Isles), Scottish Borders and the Highlands.

Specific barriers for island-dwelling, rural, and remote makers were frequently raised, including the financial and time costs of travel. One maker who was seeking membership, didn't join "because of Shetland's remoteness. Costs a lot to get to mainland Scotland." (Survey Respondent, 02/11/2022) They proposed that their business was not at a scale where those costs could be absorbed. Another raised issue with financial penalties involved in accessing opportunities that were geographically distant:

> "I would like to see more financial help for those who live further away from central belt exhibitions and events to be able to afford to get to them, otherwise we are geographically penalised and those living closer are favoured simply by being able to easily access something." (Survey Respondent, 22/12/2022)

One respondent had recently retired from an organisational role because "[t]ravel to meetings average 12 hours round trip including 2 hr meeting getting old" (Survey Respondent, 17/11/2022). The time away from their craft work was deemed unsustainable, both physically and financially.

There was a perception from island-based, rural, and remotely located makers that many membership organisations were not representing or servicing them, due to a focus on using Central Belt and urban locations for programmed activities and meetings. This included issues of representation and understanding of the specific issues facing makers in these areas:

> "Many events and opportunities are central belt focused which feels un balanced. It would be good to have more regionally focused events and representation and support." (Survey Respondent, 22/12/2022)

> "Most organisations are based in the central belt and not focused on promoting craft and makers in the highlands." (Survey Respondent, 14/12/2022)

However, one maker based in Glasgow City also expressed similar concerns surrounding representation: "the area that I exist in seems to be not represented" (Survey respondent, 08/01/2023). One of the case study organisations, AAS, was particularly highlighted. As a national organisation, there was a perceived lack of specific knowledge and opportunities relating to island-based and rural makers, and this was off-putting for potential members:

> "AAS - they're very central belt and don't have much of a clue about island makers, or rural ones in general." (Survey Respondent, 22/11/2022)

While other makers raised issues of lost support in specific regions: "I really miss Emergents[4] in H&I." (Survey Respondent, 07/01/2023). There was an overall sense of concern about the increasing vulnerability and sustainability of existing support infrastructure, including organisations, associations, societies, and networks, that was heightened for those in island-based, rural, and remote locations.

Scotland's public policy support for craft businesses has had a rural enterprise and economic development focus since the late 1960's, connecting with tourism development and population growth ambitions, particularly in the Highlands and Islands region (Brown, 1980; Peach, 2017). However, Scotland's capital city Edinburgh has been a noted focus for exhibition and display of craft products, as a means to generate both cultural capital and economic returns for makers, by connecting with wealthy and elite patrons and buyers, concentrated in urban locales (Olding, 2007; Peach, 2013a). Through the survey research, this pattern can be shown to persist in the activities of craft associations, organisations, networks, and societies, resulting in barriers to participation for makers based outwith urban and particularly central-belt (the

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[4] Funded by Creative Scotland, HIE and ERDF, Emergents was a key part of HIE's support strategy for the creative industries in the Highlands and Islands. It provided collaboration opportunities between writers and craft makers until its closure in 2019.

urban and suburban population between Edinburgh and Glasgow Cities and surrounding local authorities) locations. While many opportunities for participation and membership may appear open and equitable for all makers living and working in Scotland, the survey data highlights additional structural and financial hurdles to overcome for those living in remote, rural and island locations. These not only connect with cultural policies, in relation to the provision of support, training, presentation infrastructure, and business development, but transport and housing policy.

4.5   Complex Intersecting Work and Care Responsibilities

Craft is often undertaken around a plethora of other work and care responsibilities, both paid and unpaid. It is often pursued for its flexibility around these other commitments, either as a pleasurable diversion, or out of economic necessity in the absence of other suitable employment opportunities, especially for women with caring responsibilities (Luckman, 2015a). This portfolio working, managed around other familial, social, and economic pressures, is acknowledged as a major contributor to the precariousness experienced by makers, including low-income levels, lack of access to welfare, and minimal workplace protections. The survey data enabled an assessment of the contemporary working patterns of makers in Scotland, and the responsibilities they have beyond their craft practice. This data shows that respondents' craft work takes place alongside a variety of other paid and unpaid responsibilities.

The majority, 92% of makers surveyed, had at least one other form of income other than their craft work. In all 83% of respondents had at least one other source of income from work unrelated to their craft work, with many indicating a variety of roles and incomes. Of this group 6% undertook paid work post-retirement age over and above their craft work. This suggests that participation and membership of craft associations, organisations, networks, and societies related to craft work takes place alongside – and must be navigated within – a range of income-generating responsibilities and schedules. A further 9% were retired, receiving pension income with no other paid work.

Half (50%) of respondents also undertook some form of unpaid work alongside their craft work. Just under a quarter (24%) volunteer, 8% care for a dependent adult or adults over the age of 18, and 24% care for a child or children under the age of 18. This includes parents and

guardians, as well as those who look after adults and children on an ad hoc or occasional basis, such as babysitting undertaken by grandparents, and relief care for older relatives. A small proportion (5%) are students. When asked to consider their financial situation, the majority (61%) had concerns about meeting their basic needs, which in the survey were articulated as 'costs relating to housing, transport, energy, and food'.
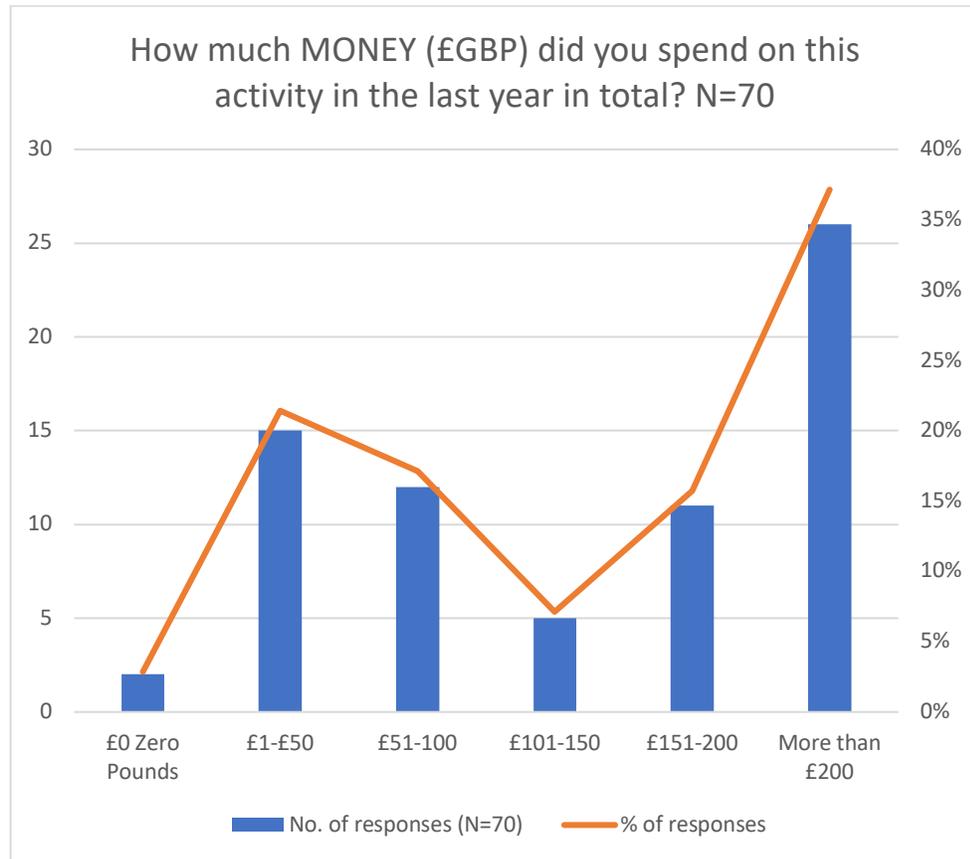
Figure 5: Money spent on membership and participation of associations, organisation, networks, and societies related to craft work in 2022

This concern is important when considered against the financial costs of participation and membership (see Figure 5, above). Over half of those who are members or participants of an association, organisation, network, or society related to their craft work (53%), spent £151 or more on that activity in 2022. One third (33%) estimate they spent more than £200. Over two-fifths (42%) of those who wanted to join or participate in an organisation, but hadn't, felt the costs were prohibitive, while the same proportion (42%) felt they didn't have the time or capacity to join or participate. These responses indicate that for those experiencing socio-economic deprivation or navigating multiple (often precarious) paid and unpaid

responsibilities, barriers to membership and participation are magnified. However, for those that are members and participants, there is also recognition that these costs provide returns, in the form of access to opportunities, training and knowledge development, recognition and profile raising, that can support their craft work, and in some cases generate financial return.

4.6   Drivers and benefits of organisational behaviours

Looking back to the various theoretical framings in Chapter 2 (Section 2.4), craft organisations are anticipated to provide opportunities to develop and support the co-production of skills and knowledge, and competencies necessary to make a livelihood as a craft practitioner (Thomas & Jakob, 2019). They are also seen as a means to validate craft makers' identities and lifestyles (Stevens, 2011), enhance survival through interdependence and the sharing of resources (Gu, 2018), and mediate between makers and markets, audiences, institutions and policy makers (Comunian & England, 2022). The survey data provided a means to explore the alignments with these preexisting propositions and evaluate craft organisations' value and roles for makers.

When asked to share what they considered to be the most valuable things offered by their associations, organisations, networks and societies, makers noted a variety of benefits. These were open-text responses, often expressing multiple benefits simultaneously. These were coded to illuminate themes. A quarter (25%) considered the social network support and encouragement they received from peers to be especially valuable. One-fifth (21%) of responses related to marketing and promotion to audiences and buyers, and a similar proportion (19%) related to knowledge and information sharing. The facilitation and encouragement of peer-learning was also rated highly (16%) alongside the provision of exhibitions (14%), technical expertise development opportunities (13%) and raising awareness of opportunities (13%). A smaller proportion (10%) felt the credibility and professional profile that their organisations provided them were valuable. These broadly align with the theories relating to craft organisations as Communities of Practice (COPs), social networks, and creative intermediaries.

When considering these benefits and impacts, patterns emerged related to specific organisations. Members of SPA have found solutions to technical problems from peers, improved their capacity to sell work due to organised events and exhibitions, and found the

social network and knowledge exchange that comes from membership impactful, especially the specialist technical knowledge specific to their practice as potters. Other practice-specific organisations and networks, such as Basketweavers Association and Scottish Basketweavers Circle, Stitch-Colour-Cloth, KE Millinery and Business Academy, and Weavers Bazaar are noted due to their capacity to inspire and inform members of techniques and approaches – supporting the development and improvement of their craft work practices. SGS is noted as impactful due to its facilitation of peer networking and peer learning that can improve technical and business knowledge and skills. The above organisations particularly align with assessments of craft organisations as important for supporting knowledge and skills co-development as COPs (Thomas & Jakob, 2019).

Cross-form regional organisations (Upland, Perthshire Open Studios, North East Open Studios, ArtMap, Cowal Open Studios, and Shetland Wool Week) are seen as impactful for their promotion and marketing to public buyers, raising awareness, and acting as a stamp of quality approval. Craft Scotland is cited as important and impactful because of the broad information sharing role, keeping people "in the know" about sector developments, as well as developing business skills to support overall professional development. For those explicitly within their Directory of Makers, they provide an important professional credibility and quality assurance role that can support growth in confidence and ambition and provide access to elite opportunities, echoing assessments of craft organisations as creative and cultural intermediaries (Comunian & England, 2022).

As one of the few transdisciplinary national networks AAS is noted as valuable due to its provision of paid and supported opportunities and utilising benchmarked rates of pay, alongside facilitation of peer-learning, social network development, and knowledge and skills development. Scottish Artists Union is valued for its provision of legal advice, support for contracting, and publication of pay scale frameworks that enable benchmarking with others. Both highlight the potential role of craft organisations in encouraging good and 'fair' work practices for freelance makers.

These assessments highlight the veracity of previous conceptions of craft organisations drawn from existing literature in other geographical contexts. However, the survey responses make limited intervention relative to how the specific policy context for craft in Scotland has

informed both the development and operation of maker-led craft organisations, and the intersection with how makers' needs and interests in them have developed. The survey data provides superficial accounts of the drivers underpinning membership and participation, the experience of membership and participation, and its effects on makers' experience of craft work. The proceeding findings, drawn from in-depth interviews and participant observation, interrogate the drivers and professed benefits within the specificity of the case study organisations, to better understand how these different needs emerge and are responded to by organisational practices.

4.7   Chapter Summary and Conclusion

Overall, the survey data provides significant insight into the organisational landscape of Scotland's craft ecology, and the different scales and geography that this encapsulates. The research identifies a diverse presence of craft and other cultural organisations in Scotland in the lives of craft makers. It emphasises the role of makers in sustaining these organisations due to limited external investment. This element of the research design was critical, supporting to identification of the most prevalent type of makers' organisational association – national maker-led craft organisations – adding to the significance of the case study selection and subsequent research focus on the drivers specific to this membership and participation activity. The resources contributed by makers, both in terms of labour and financial contributions, are significant when considered alongside sector review data on the persistently low paid and precarious nature of self-employed craft practice in Scotland: 77% of makers surveyed by the national development body earned under £19,999 from their craft-related work (Craft Scotland, 2023b). The survey research informed specific attention to the voluntary labour provided by those running and contributing to maker-led organisations – the motivations informing this labour, the practices it entails, and the experiences of providing it.

The survey revealed a narrow demographic profile, predominantly white and female, with over-representation of individuals with disabilities, life-limiting illnesses and/or caregiving responsibilities. This demographic skew raises important questions about equitable access and inclusion within craft organisational practices. Furthermore, geographical barriers significantly impact participation, particularly for makers in rural and remote areas. The financial and temporal costs of travel to central-belt events and meetings create significant inequities in access to resources and opportunities. It should be noted that the use of digital tools for

running meetings, hosting events, and exchanging learning are increasing, spurred on by the pandemic restrictions, which provided a mechanism to overcome geographical barriers. But as will be discussed in detail later in this research, there was a recent return to offline communications and opportunities, and these were largely favoured by participants. Finally, the survey exposed the precarious economic circumstances of many makers, juggling multiple paid and unpaid work responsibilities, which further constrain their capacity for organisational involvement. The enabling and disabling factors affecting membership and participation in national maker-led craft organisations is explored in Chapter 8.

This chapter emphasises the critical role of maker-led organisations in providing vital support networks and resources, while also highlighting the persistent challenges of limited funding, demographic imbalances, and geographical inequalities within Scotland's craft ecology. These findings necessitate further investigation into the organisational dynamics and policy interventions affecting this ecology that have fostered the emergence and continuation of maker-led organisations. The next chapter narrows to situate the inception, development and contemporary practices of the case study organisations, three national maker-led organisations, within the shifting policy context relating to craft in Scotland.

CHAPTER 5:   THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SCOTLAND'S MAKER-LED ORGANISATIONS

This chapter examines the formation and development of three pivotal maker-led organisations in Scotland: Applied Arts Scotland (AAS), Scottish Furniture Makers Association (SFMA), and Scottish Glass Society (SGS). These organisations arose in response to historical and ongoing shifts in cultural policy, which often favoured economic imperatives over the recognition of craft as a distinct artform. The chapter traces the evolution of these case study entities from the post-war origins through periods of craft revival and policy transformation, highlighting their roles in advocating for craft as a cultural and economic contributor through – and adapting to – a changing policy context. Initially marginalised in post-war cultural initiatives, craft began to gain prominence during the 1970s craft revival. Although Scotland's participation in this revival was limited, and focused on rural economic development and tourism (Brown, 1980; Peach, 2007), this period catalysed the establishment of maker-led organisations to address the support and advocacy gaps left by broader policy frameworks.

The chapter details how AAS, SFMA, and SGS have developed distinct operational structures and strategic activities to support the Scottish craft community, in response to these gaps. Through a combination of historical context and contemporary analysis, this chapter underscores the pivotal role of maker-led organisations, both shaped by, and reshaping the craft ecology in Scotland. By addressing both individual and systemic challenges, these organisations have sought to leverage collective action to enhance grassroots advocacy and support the sustainable development of the craft sector. AAS emphasises interdisciplinary projects, material experimentation, and digital innovation, SFMA focuses on public projects and environmental advocacy, while SGS is dedicated to preserving glass art and supporting its members through exhibitions and education. These organisations' contemporary operations reveal diverse governance structures and strategic activities aimed at supporting makers through opportunities for skill development, interdisciplinary collaboration, and public

exhibitions. My analysis finds they offer critical networks and resources, fostering community and mitigating the individual risks faced by independent makers.

Despite facing challenges such as inconsistent policy support and reduced public funding, these organisations play a crucial role in mitigating isolation and fostering community among independent makers. They have developed to advocate for the recognition of craft's broader cultural value, beyond dominant economic metrics, through mutual aid and policy engagement. My analysis underscores the significance of maker-led organisations in the Scottish craft ecology.

Drawing from documentary and archival materials and interviews with sector leaders, the formation and development of the three chosen case study organisations – Applied Arts Scotland (AAS), Scottish Furniture Makers Association (SFMA), And Scottish Glass Society (SGS) – are first set into the context of the wider shifts in cultural policy pertaining to craft and craft work in Scotland. Their contemporary operations and activities are then outlined – including legal status, governance structures, scale and profile of membership, and programmes. This facilitates the foregrounding of distinct thematic discussions in the findings chapters that follow.

5.1   Craft policy in Scotland's post-war period

Post-war Britain was a locus for significant shifts in cultural policy. The newly formed Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), financed directly by the UK Treasury, sought to make arts 'available to all' (Jacques, 1945, p. 283). However, craft was largely excluded from this support. Commercial and traditional forms of craft dominated public support programmes in the post-war period, with an explicitly economic development focus. An exhibition of 'modern' Scottish crafts, funded by the British Council in London, was toured to Canada and the United States between 1942 and 1945 (Peach, 2017). This sought to demonstrate the potential role of craft in the reconstruction of the post-war economy with a presentation of rural and pre-industrial handmade products. In 1946, drawing on 'invented traditions' derived from representations of Scottish identity within the writings of Sir Walter Scott and others, The Scottish Committee of the Council of Industrial Design, supported craft makers through a souvenir design competition (Peach, 2007). These were aimed largely at the tourist and aristocratic markets of Edinburgh (Peach, 2017). The

economic development focus was also overt in the Board of Trade grant that initiated the formation, in 1949, of the Scottish Crafts Centre in Edinburgh. The increasing devolution of power away from central government to regional Scottish economic development agencies identified craft as a target 'lighter industry' for promotion, particularly in rural areas marked by depopulation, and aligned craft with opportunities for income generation through tourism (Peach, 2017).

During this period there was a refocusing away, particularly in Scotland, from the access, education, and social issues, seen in the Arts and Crafts movement, and which had persisted during the austere 'make do and mend' periods of the two world wars (Lucie-Smith, 1981, p. 273), towards craft as input to 'better design for mass-production' (Leach, 1945). This approach was critiqued by craft curator Ian Finlay who expressed anxiety about the 'disintegration of craftsmanship' in Scotland, particularly the loss of craft education, skills-development, and public appreciation (1948). The Scottish Crafts Centre (SCC), founded in 1949 and based in Edinburgh, was a 'non-profitmaking members' organisation' (Peach, 2017, p. 185) that provided a partial response – supporting exhibitions and delivering professional education. Its legacy is clear, providing a model of operation and value proposition that has informed contemporary craft membership organisations. This includes a longstanding expectation that the needs of Scottish craftspeople would be inadequately served by organisations with primarily English membership. This is suggestive of differential support needs, and an 'ideological schism' between the two nations' treatment of craft (Peach, 2017, p. 84).

By the 1960s craft makers working within 'small industrial activity' and 'small batch manufacture' (Peach, 2017, p. 111) – as opposed to the higher scale manufacturing of established textile industry practices – could access dedicated business-oriented advice and government-funded support from the Highland and Islands Development Board (HIDB), and Small Industries Council for Rural Areas of Scotland (SICRAS). Carter, an editor of Scotland's Craftwork magazine, published through SCC, attributes this to crafts in Scotland 'coming into their own' (1990). By 1969 SICRAS had established an index of craft businesses in Scotland, reporting on scale, employment levels, and economic contribution, with some 700 small craft businesses providing 1,600 jobs between them (Brown, 1980, p. 25). Despite the growing business base, and celebrated economic contribution of craft within Scotland, the late

1960's again saw concerns raised by craft practitioners about a loss of quality and skill. The failure to refresh the membership of the SCC with younger entrants was seen as indicative of a loss of 'contemporary vigour and modernity' that would ensure its sustainability and relevance (Peach, 2013a, p. 527). The economic policies that had cemented crafts' position within rural economic development in Scotland were increasingly at odds with the cultural and socio-economic upheaval of the late 1960s that followed.

5.2   Craft revival and the emergence of maker-led organisations

The 1970's saw an increased interest in both making and buying craft as the handmade aesthetic indicated a rejection of middle-class consumerism for an emerging counter-cultural youth (Lucie-Smith, 1981). My assessment of the 'craft revival' as this period came to be known, and its importance in scaffolding the subsequent emergence of maker-led organisations, is indebted to the work of Peach. She provided significant resource through her analysis of the period within Scotland's craft sector and related policy, including a detailed case study of the SCC. This period, she notes, was precipitated by a unique combination of socio-economic factors:

> [T]he oil crisis of 1973, rising inflation, economic recession, growing public sector debt, rising unemployment, and industrial strikes, alongside student protests, rise of youth counter culture, beginnings of modern environmental movement and Second Wave feminism. (Peach, 2013b, p. 6)

This context resulted in increased individualised risk, reducing welfare and public spending, and in rapidly changing individual freedoms to pursue 'creative autonomy and self-expression' (*Ibid.*). Craft was 'subsumed within a wider government initiative to link the making of craft with the making of money', which Peach finds resulted in Scotland being 'curiously absent from the 1970's craft revival narrative' (2017, p. 9) that was prevalent in England and the US. These variances were manifest in the different language used by the emerging development organisations North and South of the border. Using the language of 'artist-craftsmen', the Crafts Advisory Committee (CAC)[5] in England, formed in 1971, supported craft as 'fine art', disbursing small grants to individuals, and supporting exhibition opportunities, research, and skills development (Marchand, 2022). In Scotland public funding was instead targeted at 'small craft enterprises' and 'craft businesses' (Brown, 1980), aligned

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[5] The CAC was founded in 1971 and later became the UK Crafts Council

with its position as a continuation of pre-industrial piecework and central to rural subsistence (Nenadic, 2022).

Founded in 1975 the Scottish Development Agency (SDA) took over the remit previously undertaken by SICRAS and became the sole funder of the SCC. It supported craft to further its overall mission that included:

(a) Furthering economic development;

(b) the provision, maintenance or safeguarding of employment;

(c) the promotion of industrial efficiency and international competitiveness; and

(d) furthering the improvement of environment. (Brown, 1980, p. 26)

The SCC, in the context of a reducing public sector, was now under increasing pressure from SDA to raise income and demonstrate commercial acuity, and increased exclusions for 'hobbyists' and those working in 'traditional' subjects and styles. Peach proposes this 'mitigated against the Centre's original aims of raising the quality and professional profile of craft in Scotland' (2017, p. 185). A second iteration of a Scottish Craft Biennale proposed to take place in 1976 was cancelled, and by the end of the decade previous reported rises in numbers of active craft businesses and economic turnover of craft had stalled.

The rapid emergence of maker-led organisations at this point, sought to disrupt this reducing public support, challenge the art/craft distinction, and redress the disciplinary boundaries and routes to public support that had been drawn in the process. Contradicting Brown's assessment that craft makers were not motivated to either form or join associations (1980, p. 184), one of Scotland's largest maker-led organisation, the Scottish Potters Association (SPA) formed in 1974. Following this, the oldest of the case study organisations, the Scottish Glass Society (SGS) was founded in late 1978 and formally constituted in 1979. Established by Brian Blench, a writer, historian and former Keeper of the Glasgow Museums and Art Galleries, SGS sought to 'promote the development of the art and craftsmanship of glass making in its many variations in Scotland' and 'advance the public appreciation of glass making as an art form' (Scottish Glass Society, 2002). The move to form SGS by its self-identified 'glass artist' members, was indicative of the widely deficient support for the cultural aspects of craft in Scotland during this period compared to that in England. As Olding reflected on this period,

State support has mostly been tempered by the approach to sustain a business first and worry about the contribution to cultural activity as a second best. The economic factor

has been inevitable because the funding has often derived from a governmental economic development arm, and even later state funding directly through the cultural arm of state has carried the money message. (Olding, 2007, p. 49)

Makers were largely excluded from 'arts' grants, and craft makers' expressed critical attitudes towards 'unacceptable' expectations regarding necessary 'commercialism' and 'artistic compromises' that publicly-funded bodies and institutions levied on them (Brown, 1980, p. 12). SGS sought, from its earliest iteration, to pursue ambitions to amplify the artistic credentials of its members through a programme of exhibitions, exhibition catalogues, journals, and conferences. SGS' programme was appetising to a new generation of glass artists and had been largely unsupported by the commercial development support of SDA grants, or competitive (and often elitist) opportunities to exhibit through the SCC.

5.3 1990s funding windfall for craft as 'artform'

The early 1990's was seen as a 'pivotal' moment for craft policy in Scotland. This created space for makers to challenge the longstanding economic development and business support approaches of government agencies engagement with craft. Following the demise of SCC and the withdrawal of public funding for craft, including the winding down in 1990 of the SDA's crafts office and Highland Craftpoint, craft makers again looked south to the culturally focused work of the CAC in England. During this period Northlands Glass was established in Lybster by SGS member and glass historian and curator Dan Klein, and noted Philanthropist Robert MacLennan, a former leader of the Liberal Democrats, with the 'aim of stimulating interest in glass as an art form' (Swann, 2007, p. 21). Craft makers, and those that worked with them, also campaigned for a dedicated Scottish Crafts Council, equivalent to that in England, reportedly expressing 'Horror, outrage and sheer disbelief' at the response of Ian Lang, then Minister of State at the Scottish Office, who was 'not persuaded of the need for a separate council to be set up' (Carter, 1990). Lang further made clear he wished for continuity with the economic development policies that had preceded, stating '[t]he health of the industry hinges on the provision of effective business support' (*Ibid.*).

The Scottish Craft Arts Furniture Makers Association, as SFMA was originally named, was founded in 1991. Founder Ross Samson, whose website describes him as 'probably the only communist carpenter in Glasgow with a doctorate' was inspired both aesthetically and politically by the Arts and Crafts Movement. He writes: '[t]he movement's ethos of

cooperative guilds and the honesty of labour… appeal to my socialist sentiments' (*Samson's Joinery*, n.d.). Emerging as an unincorporated association SFMA's beginnings are precipitated on a rejection of the overtly commercialising policies of the period. Initially SFMA sought to provide a social connection between independent furniture makers, who were often working in isolation in rural parts of Scotland, where requisite space for workshops was easier to come by. The association specifically sought out those who could demonstrate their craft through the quality of skills and a commitment to both design and make furniture themselves, often working with and adapting traditional processes and designs, and selling directly to the consumer, with limited aspirations towards business growth.

Policy in Scotland pertaining to craft was becoming increasingly generic and aligned with growth-focused economic instrumentalism pervasive in the wider policy context. In 1991 Scotland by Design Ltd (SBD), took over from SDA to 'provide trade-promotion and marketing consultancy' to craft enterprises, resulting in further loss of exhibition, curation and education relating to craft, including publications and collections. SBD was founded on an explicitly commercial basis 'required to be profitable within five years' (Carter, 1990). This raised concerns that only larger scale manufacturers would be able to afford to access these services, leaving artist-craft makers working independently largely without support. The organisation's name was 'deliberately' chosen to 'forgo the specific association with craft' and mark an end to the disruptive policy campaigning that had ensued (Olding, 2007, p. 50). However, during this period campaigns mounted, demonstrating continuing unrest. Proposals for a dedicated museum and collection space for crafts in Scotland were lobbied for (Carter, 1991), resulting in SDA's longstanding craft collection being gifted to National Museums of Scotland upon SDA's demise in 1991. However, as Olding writes, 'matters of strategic support for the education infrastructure and the development of creative practice were not seen as a priority for policy-making' – small craft enterprises continued to be seen by civil servants as primarily contributors to 'tourism and economic welfare' (2007, p. 52), rather than cultural goods.

Craft makers, in response, demonstrated their dissatisfaction and desire for greater consideration of craft as a public good beyond income generation. In 1992 Action for Applied Arts emerged following this tumultuous period in craft policy in Scotland. As an un-constituted membership-based forum, it aimed 'to lobby Government for support for the

crafts' (Craftscotland, 2006), while also demonstrating its members' creative ambitions through a series of public exhibitions. Its name was explicitly chosen to sidestep the discredited term 'craft' during this period and refresh the opportunities for policy advocacy through new alignments with arts and SALVO, a coalition formed to advocate for the interests and needs of the voluntary arts sector in Scotland, particularly in relation to arts funding. The Scottish Arts Council Draft Charter, published the same year, positively reflected this activity stating it 'recognises the need for traditional cultures and for craft – both somewhat neglected in the past – to be given their proper part' (Fowler, 1992). This resulted in an increased policy attention to the needs of makers as cultural, not just economic, contributors.

The policy advocacy activities of craft makers, timed within broader shifts in arts funding policy, was shown to have been productive. A 'policy settlement' in 1993 resulted in a dedicated £300,000 funding windfall for craft from the UK Government and support shifting into the cultural funding and development remit of the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) on its founding (Kerr, 1997; Mega, 1993; Olding, 2007, p. 52). AAS was subsequently formally constituted – originally as the Association for Applied Arts (AAA) – with an address in Edinburgh, and charitable status. This windfall also strengthened SGS, which became a recipient of SAC frequent funding that year. Writing in 1998, journalist Joyce McMillan notes a rising public interest in craft, as 'people with style and money have begun to find us' and noting the inclusion of craft within the cultural programme of the Edinburgh Festival resulted in a new 'glamourous' identity for the sector (1998, p. 12). McMillan aligned this with a turn of the century revisitation of Arts and Crafts sentiment relating to rejection of mass-production, and increasing environmental concerns. It also correlated with the emerging New Labour 'Creative Britain' ethos, which underpinned the establishment of the Creative Industries Task Force and the publication of the first *Creative Industries Mapping Documents*, which were circulated later that year (DCMS, 1998).

SAC's tenure as guardian of a dedicated funding settlement explicitly demarcated for craft between 1994 and 2002, was seen to be a highpoint of public support for craft, and the craft associations' activities flourished with increased access to public resources. This SGS website entry from 2002 attests to their extensive and growing programme of activity during the period:

We mount regular exhibitions and give annual prizes for student work, hold frequent meetings, organise lectures, demonstrations, produce publications and promote discussion.

Visits to studios, museums, private and public collections and lectures by experts are carried out throughout the year.

The society publishes a newsletter quarterly which provides information about meetings, studios, lectures, exhibitions, book reviews and publications. (Scottish Glass Society, 2002)

The social aspects of the society's work are also noted: 'Meeting like-minded people is also a source of enjoyment and inspiration.' (*Ibid.*) AAS's role, during this period, also developed as a trusted commissioning partner, collaborating with other agencies, with board members acting as project coordinators and curatorial leads for trade fairs, exhibitions, and events, as well as producing their own regular programme of members' exhibitions. Both AAS and SGS' activities are celebrated in the *Building Bridges* review of SAC's craft policy interventions during this period (Scottish Arts Council, 2003). SFMA, however, did not appear as a craft-related grant recipient during the period 1993-2003 *(Ibid.)*, or the *Glorious Obsession* report on Scotland's Indigenous Crafts (Butler, 2000)*.* This indicates they were operating independently of the cultural funding landscape; their members' focus on traditional craftsmanship was not a priority for the contemporary-focused arts-driven activity of SAC during this policy phase. This approach resulted in an increased bifurcation between contemporary and heritage crafts' support structures (Butler, 2000).

Towards the end of this period public sector funding reductions for culture and rising costs again forced several craft institutions to close, including in 2002 Edinburgh's Dovecot Studios, and the Decorative Arts Department of Glasgow Museums and Arts Galleries. Artisan – originally known as the Edinburgh Festival of Contemporary Crafts, and launched with SAC support in 1997 – also ceased trading that year (Olding, 2007). A resolutely 'artform' positioning of craft in Scotland's cultural policy, was no longer tenable in this context, and increasingly instrumental economic development arguments, aligned with New Labour's DCMS-led creative industries policies, were re-appearing.

5.4   Crafts Strategy led by Scottish Arts Council

Public interest in craft during the early Twenty-first Century, was notable, aligned with critiques of rampant consumerism and rising environmental concerns (Greenhalgh, 2002, p. 9). Despite this, in Scotland, crafts were noted to have a continuing 'image problem' in Scotland 'conjur[ing] up childhood images of bare-boarded church halls edged by rickety fold-away tables offering piles of over-sweet tablet' (Bain, 2001, p. 4). The crafts associations, most of them voluntary, were seen to be active in challenging this image, positively responding to the opportunities for increasing professional status and credibility provided by crafts' articulation as an 'industry' and 'sector' following the publication of the DCMS *Creative Industries Mapping Documents* (1998, 2001). SAC, the newly formed Scottish Enterprise economic development agency, and Scottish Enterprise Glasgow undertook a major survey of craft in Scotland, aiming to create 'a more coordinated approach to developing the sector' (Bain, 2001, p. 4). This re-articulated the crafts sector in Scotland in economic terms, generating between £95 and £130millon of turnover, with 3000 active businesses employing over 10,000 people, substantially greater than the 'core funded' arts sector at that time, at 4000 employees (Cultural Commission, 2005).

Craft businesses were subsequently acknowledged by the Scottish Government as 'healthy contributors… to Scotland's economy and creative industries' (2002). This resulted in a range of policy statements and 'sector' strategies, including SAC's *Crafts Strategy* which 'envisage[d] crafts as a dynamic cultural and economic contributor', and proposed a definition of craft as an 'artform', whilst interpellating much of the creative industries rhetoric of 'innovation' and economic growth (Scottish Arts Council, 2002, p. 5). During this period both SGS and AAS were referenced in SAC's *Crafts Strategy*, which noted 46 'makers' organisations' active in Scotland, which SAC committed to act in partnership with to realise the strategy's vision (2002).

SFMA members at this time expressed interest in collective promotion – confirming SAC's assessment that:

> makers' key concern at this time was promoting and selling their work. In particular, they sought more and higher quality opportunities to sell' (*Ibid.* p. 16).

An annual showcase of the members' talents, in the form of an exhibition aimed at potential buyers and commissioners, became a staple activity of the association. Often presented within,

or in conjunction with, commercially run fine art exhibitions in urban locations, including Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen. These exhibition locations were selected to guarantee high footfall and a ready market. The use of "premium" venues was a draw for membership in the early days of the association and, as one former chair recounted, set the association apart from other membership bodies (Interview, 16Feb23). Business advice between members was informally exchanged, and occasional workshops and training opportunities offered at members' expense.

The arts-focused policy of SAC was increasingly, in the period following the publication of the *Crafts Strategy*, attending to the twin priorities of excellence and access, with a programme of outreach seeking to enhance the equitable distribution of public resources, and encourage greater diversity in cultural contributions, both of which sought to align with demands to demonstrate commitment to the growth of Scotland's cultural sector. In 2003 the SAC roadshow to promote the *Crafts Strategy,* accompanied by 'Re:Sourcing for Making' events sharing their grant funding options, piqued the attention of SFMA's chair, who wrote:

> Many furniture makers have had bad experiences with the governmental bodies that in theory exist to support us. The SAC does have money to give, and furniture is within their remit, so we should be trying to get it. Perhaps the association can play a useful role in advising its members of what is available and what they actually stand a chance of getting, avoiding time wasted filling in forms only to be sent away with an insulting rejection. (SFMA, 2003)

This highlights previous exclusions from grant funding experienced by SFMA members, but also the shifts happening at SAC that opened the door to public support. This precipitated a change in operation; SFMA's newsletter later that year notes the Committee were formally changing the name to Scottish Furniture Makers Association, becoming a constituted organisation to 'allow us to apply for funds from certain bodies' (*Ibid.*). This followed through to a more formal and consistent presentation of the association's activities online, and a more thorough documentation of the association's work.

By the end of this period, as creative industries doctrine became prevalent in Scotland's cultural policies, there was a return to economic development and growth-focused priorities seen in the 1970s through to the 1990's. The need for a craft-focused organisation to support these initiatives nationally, which included developing the digital presence for craft, and

collating makers in accessible 'directories' for promotion and marketing for the craft sector, was proposed within SAC's *Crafts Strategy 2002-2007,* explicitly referencing the 'general trajectory of Creative Industries within DCMS policy' (2002, p. 4). In line with this, SFMA's website by 2006 hosted a gallery of members' furniture, makers' profiles, and a guide to commissioning from their members. News and events listings also showed an increasing connection with the wider wood-ecology around shared commitments to environmental sustainability; the work of SFMA increasingly supported by both charitable and local authority activities relating to woodland conservation, as creative industries policies fostered new acknowledgement and appreciation of creativity's role in driving innovation in other non-cultural sectors.

AAS was positively considered as a nascent umbrella organisation in the SAC *Craft Strategy* and had been active in lobbying for proposals relating to digital marketing and promotion, in keeping with its earlier policy advocacy role. Shortly after the SAC strategy was published craftscotland.org, a new 'e-organisation' was piloted. An online portal for promotion and marketing of Scottish craft – it was delivered through a partnership between regional enterprise development body Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIEnt) and Hi-Arts, a now-defunct cultural development organisation. The response of AAS was to shift their constitution from membership to becoming an open organisation, with the aim of being able to 'service the needs of all makers working in Scotland' (*Frequently Asked Questions*, 2006). This was premised on AAS' ambitions to become the commissioned partner to take the Craft Scotland pilot national, with board members working behind the scenes to advocate for their expertise and knowledge to do so. However, in 2007 Conkerhouse Ltd, a commercial marketing agency, won the bid to deliver the national roll out of Craft Scotland on behalf of SAC. This appointment confirmed the economic development aims of the initiative, focused on driving business growth and entrepreneurial skills, in line with an increasing focus on economic growth and makers' self-reliance, within a retracting public funding environment.

The same year (2007) SFMA became a co-director of Working Woods Limited, promoting the Scottish Working Woods (SWW) label, which highlighted low mileage, local and sustainably produced and sourced wooden products. Burgeoning connections between SFMA, art schools, and wider conservation efforts resulted in the first major public project for the Association, funded through SAC. The *Wych Elm Project* was initiated by Royal Botanic Gardens

Edinburgh (RBGE). It was the first in a trilogy of exhibitions using wood from felled trees from the botanic gardens to produce sculpture and furniture (*Wych Elm Project*, 2010); showcasing and promoting the members' craftsmanship skills and products, while drawing attention to ecological concerns impacting material availability.

SGS increasingly drew on a range of expert glass artists and curators to support their exhibition selection processes. This included strong links in their board with Edinburgh College of Art's Glass Department and North Lands Creative Glass' international networks, gaining critical credibility for the quality of exhibitions. Two of SGS' exhibitions featured in the *Cutting Edge,* a publication accompanying a major exhibition of Scotland's contemporary crafts (Baird & Watban, 2007). In the publication Scottish glass was noted to be in the ascendency and 'at a thrilling stage' (Swann, 2007, p. 21). Three of the thirty craft artists exhibited within *The Cutting Edge* had links to SGS; two, Stephen Richard and Alison Kinnaird, had chaired the organisation. This suggests SGS had an important role in fostering creative excellence and experimentation during this period. However the re-emergence of public sector cuts was also noted, with the risks of art college departmental closures affecting glass making and conservation of skills and knowledge in the future predicted (*Ibid.*).

The emergence of Craft Scotland as an independent organisation shifted the priorities and practices of maker-led organisations. In 2007 the AAS website noted they were undertaking a period of reflection as they restructured within the new context; indicating that Craft Scotland was expected to usurp many of AAS' functions, reducing both their capacity to advocate for public resources, and sustain sector engagement. This marked the beginning of a fallow period; AAS focused on maintaining an informal network, with intermittent content published through an online blog (*Applied Arts Scotland*, n.d.).

Support for craft-related activity as artform through SAC had stabilised and improved opportunities for the craft associations during the previous era, increasing access to public resources and recognition of the cultural value of their members' work. The incoming creative industries-focused policies had initially been welcomed and encouraged by the craft associations and their members. It was seen to provide a refreshed economic value-proposition for the support of craft, professional status *vis-à-vis* others sub-sectors, and a new range of business and digital development support. However, this had resulted in increasing

expectations of self-sufficiency and commercial success. Earned income and profit levels flatlined, just as public resources were also diminishing. Despite enthusiastic responses to Craftscotland's 'dynamic portal', and sector research-driven activity, including increased focus on audience and market development (Scotinform Ltd, 2007) the policy framework supporting craft was deemed to be a 'fragile balancing act' (Olding, 2007, p. 49). Concerns were re-emerging around a reducing public funding context and loss of support infrastructure, particularly for the non-commercial aspects of craft activity, including: education, training and skills development, the curation, mounting and touring of public exhibitions, and collecting and archiving (Scotinform Ltd, 2007).

5.5   Makers' organisation under Creative Scotland

SAC's responsibility for craft came to an end when the recommendations of a Cultural Commission sought to align cultural activity with a renewed sense of national identity and confidence associated with rising calls for Scottish political independence; increasing focus on 'cultural rights for Scottish citizens' (Cultural Commission, 2005; Gonzàlez, 2007). Creative Scotland were transferred the role of cultural funder and development body from SAC in 2010. In early 2012 a major piece of UK-wide craft sector advocacy was published by UK Crafts Council titled *Craft in an Age of Change* (CIAAOC). This report highlighted 'declining' craft-related incomes of craft makers (88% of whom were self-employed sole-traders), alongside the significant growth of online selling platforms that were expected to precipitate a need for strengthened skills in marketing and general business skills. This was in line with a focus on trade and export growth within Creative Scotland's new emphasis on the creative industries portfolio within which craft sat – now firmly represented as a sector that could access generic 'investment', rather than a funded artform (*Crafts | Creative Scotland*, 2011). Highlighted too were growing concerns for ethical production and consumption, and environmental sustainability, which were deemed to place craft in a uniquely advantageous position (Burns et al., 2012).

UK-wide state support for craft during this shift, focused largely on craft skills' potential benefit to industry – a point acknowledged in the UK Craft Council-published report *Measuring the Craft Economy*:

> Craft skills are key… to the success of other creative sectors, and makers are increasingly using their specialist materials knowledge to diversify into markets outside the creative sector. (Tuck et al., 2014, p. 1)

An enlarged assessment of craft's economic contribution followed, in keeping with creative economy policy, that sought to show 'the full craft footprint, which consists of craft industries… as well as craft workers in 'other' creative industries… and craft workers in non-creative industries (*Ibid.* p.5). This was driven by, as Peach writes, 'economic expedience, rather than any wider social or cultural benefits that craft might bring' (2013b, p. 8). Craft was at once 'desirable enterprise' experiencing a 'third wave', and increasingly acknowledged as low-paid, offering entrants a meagre financial return (Jakob, 2013, p. 127; Johnson, 2018). Craft self-employment was often resorted to in the lack of other viable employment options, or practiced alongside a portfolio of other jobs (Luckman, 2015a; McRobbie, 2016). While policies supporting training and apprenticeships that sought to provide highly skilled (and better paid) craft jobs were developing in England and Wales (Jakob & Thomas, 2015), this did not emerge in any coordinated way in Scotland during the same period. There were increasing concerns, following personnel changes at Creative Scotland, regarding the loss of specialist knowledge and support for craft, which had been delivered through longstanding relationships between the craft sector and knowledgeable art form leads, in favour of generic creative industries-wide approaches managed by portfolio managers.

In 2010 SGS celebrated 400 years of Scottish Glass with an exhibition, accompanied by a publication co-produced by the Society's founder (Airlie & Blench, 2009). Noting 200 members, over 50 of whom were glass artists, SGS had reached a high point in membership. As Craft Scotland developed its offer, it drew in the elite artist-members of SGS, gradually eroding the more established and critically successful membership. Creative Scotland's support for glass as an art form focused on core-funded organisation Northlands Creative. Public funding for craft exhibitions retracted and, unable to produce the same quality of presentations, the membership of SGS declined.

During this period there was a noted absence of craft-specific policy in Scotland, with a small number of regularly funded organisations in the Creative Scotland 'craft' portfolio 2015-2018, supporting 'craft infrastructure'. Generic business development advice was available through the enterprise agencies, and a programme of small grants (VACMA), managed by Creative

Scotland and delivered nationally through local authority and regional partnerships, 30% of which went to 'craft makers' (EKOS, 2018). There was also a marked focus on the economic language of investment, turnover and economic 'contribution' (*Regular Funding Craft Portfolio 2015-18 | Creative Scotland*, n.d.). Creative Scotland's *Creative Industries Strategy,* published in 2016, made no reference to craft, craftspeople, or makers, while in the strategy's appendices, only passing references were made, articulating the responsibility for its development and support stood with Craft Scotland (Creative Scotland, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c).

This weakened policy context for craft resulted in increased maker-led activity. Emboldened by a survey of makers within their network, which showed 83.7% of respondents 'would like to have face to face networking opportunities' (Paneels, 2012), AAS re-emerged in 2012. The organisation set out to refresh its status and role within the craft ecology under the banner 'by Makers for Makers', marking a new phase in its development, and raising questions about makers' lack of representation within policy decisions that affected them. This echoed concerns that the generic creative industries policy context for craft was not serving the interests of makers, and that makers themselves were increasingly isolated and responsible for resourcing their own development. In this period AAS partnered with a range of organisations, delivering touring roadshows with Hi-Arts, networking events with Cultural Enterprise Office (with which it was closely associated), and a talks programme with Scottish Artists Union. Craft Scotland, now an established landmark in the craft ecology, collaborated with AAS to host a series of digital skills, branding and marketing training events, and circulated learning and development opportunities for makers. In 2016, following a further leadership change, AAS became a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) to enable the organisation to pursue larger grants, and raise credit, while limiting the liabilities of individual maker-members.

In late 2016 SFMA's exhibition model was revisited with *After the Storm,* an exhibition of furniture from SFMA members, this time using storm-felled timber from trees damaged by 2012's Cyclone Andrea. This drew on the ideas of 'post-traumatic recovery' and 'resilience' inspired by the public's responses to the storm damage (*After the Storm – Botanics Stories*, n.d.). SFMA increasingly demonstrated an appetite for expanding strategic partnerships, both within the wood sector and cultural sectors. In 2018 SFMA undertook an organisational refresh, updating their design identity, logo, website and about information to put 'members at

the forefront' (*SFMA | Designers on the Run, Edinburgh UK*, n.d.). COVID-19 hit in 2020 however, and plans were upended. In late 2020, following a leadership change, the refreshed website and identity was finally launched. Working with an external producer the organisation celebrated its 20th Anniversary in 2021 with its first ever virtual members' exhibition *Adjust/Adapt;* still life compositions of members' furniture pieces, accompanied by a series of film shorts, and online skills development events and talks for aspiring furniture makers (*Adjust / Adapt | Exhibitions | SFMA*, 2021).

Within the context of generic creative industries support – focused on business growth and income-generation skills – practice-specific knowledge exchange and support was diminished. Makers had to increasingly resource and take responsibility for their own professional development. SGS' 40th Anniversary celebration programme in 2019 had secured a major grant from Creative Scotland. However, a members' survey noted increasing concerns for the sustainability of members' glass art practices, with educational closures, venue closures and reducing exhibition opportunities for glass art prevalent in the wider ecology. A review that year found SGS' membership had halved to around 100 (Gow, 2020). In the context of stalled membership growth and reducing access to public funds, the Society prioritised consistency and regularity of programme, and membership benefits retracted to an annual members' exhibitions, travel awards, and a printed journal. Following the pandemic restrictions in 2020, much of the Society's activities were on hiatus, impeding ambitions to refresh the organisation's governance, and further heightening concerns about sustaining membership.

Makers increasingly coalesced to advocate for craft-specific policy attention during this period. In 2016, responding to this perceived gap, a sector consultation event, titled *World Craft Café*, took place in Edinburgh, with the aim of supporting the development of 'a vision for craft in Scotland' (Dods, 2016). This lead, in 2018, to the publication of *MAKE Manifesto* an advocacy report, produced with 'Scotland's many-sided craft community' from the 'ground up', including members of each of the case study organisations. This both acknowledged the importance of craft's economic valuation but tempered that value proposition with calls for appreciation of craft's role in culture, heritage, and national identity. This included nine manifesto 'action points' that called for greater attention to craft infrastructure to support the capacity and self-esteem of the sector, including encouraging equitable access to craft, lifelong learning, and artistic, as well as commercial development (Panel, 2018).

During the last decade, despite variable and fragile policy commitments to craft and reducing public resources, described as 'a vacuum of out-of-date strategies' for crafts at Creative Scotland (Local Voices CIC, 2021, p. 112), and latterly the destabilising effects of COVID-19 lockdowns on makers' livelihoods and access to support (Craft Scotland, 2020), the maker-led organisations have sustained themselves. This has largely been achieved through the voluntary labour of their boards and organising committees, willing participation of maker-members, and continuing 'mainstream' interest in craft products and experiences (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2020, p. 3). This persistence points to the continuing relevance of peer-support networks for increasingly individuated, and isolated (Bletcher, 2017, p. 23), self-employed makers and those running microenterprises. It draws attention to the ongoing misalignment, or 'policy dissonance' between creative economy policy, that prioritises support for 'those businesses that fit this mould of entrepreneurial and high-growth-oriented models associated with technology and digital content-creating industries' (McHattie et al., 2019, p. 5) and the needs of makers whose work is rarely growth-focused or scalable.

5.6   The Case Studies' Contemporary Structures and Activities

The present craft policy moment is marked by continuing concerns regarding the low income levels and precarious conditions facing craft makers in Scotland (Craft Scotland, 2023b), developing craft curation and quality of exhibition opportunities (Craft Scotland, 2022), and concerns about loss of education infrastructure, motivating renewed focus on developing craft's position within the Scottish curriculum (James-Beith, 2021). Craft Scotland currently leads the policy advocacy role on behalf of craft makers in Scotland, carrying out mapping, surveying, and consultations. However, Craft Scotland has a necessarily narrow remit to target support towards professional, income-generating, contemporary craft makers, with a highly selective Directory, and curated programme that excludes many traditional disciplines, and forms of practice. Craft Scotland was, during the research period, renegotiating its funding with Creative Scotland as part of the Multi-Year Funding process.

National cultural policy has increased focus on Fair Work, sustainable development (both economically and environmentally), and tackling issues of underrepresentation and access to creative activity and cultural work for marginalised and excluded groups (Creative Scotland,

2022). Sector anxieties about the future of development body Creative Scotland have mounted, following delays to Multi Year Funding decisions, temporary closures of project funding, and the announcement of a major Scottish Government review of Creative Scotland's functions (*Review of Creative Scotland - Gov.Scot*, n.d.). For craft makers, this has precipitated concerns regarding the fragility of public support for craft as a common good, worthy of attention and public responsibility beyond its ability to generate jobs and growth and contribute to innovation in other sectors in the post-industrial economy. This echoes wider concerns for the diminished status of culture in public policy (O'Connor, 2024). In this chapter section, the contemporary structures, membership levels, operations, programmes, and practices of the three case study organisations are outlined. Some conclusions are drawn to the persistent gaps in current policy support that these expose.

5.6.1 Applied Arts Scotland (AAS)

AAS now operates as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), governed by nine voluntary board members, all practising makers, and an organisational chair, who took over the role in 2021. Membership processes, member communications, bookkeeping and general administration associated with funded projects, are further supported by a small number of paid freelance roles. Non-maker 'advisors' contribute specialist knowledge voluntarily and undertake time-limited paid roles on funded projects. The SCIO status enables the board members and chair to be remunerated for occasional project work related to the organisation's objectives, but not governance activities, negotiated through a weekly time-keeping process.

Membership, costing between £15 and £25 per annum, increased steadily from around 120 in early 2023 to 157 in October 2023. Primarily self-employed individuals, or those running microenterprises, members self-identify as designer-makers and applied or craft artists and must demonstrate their professional credentials as practising makers upon application to join. Website listings highlight their 'Main Discipline' – printmaking, jewellery, silversmithing, bookbinding, ceramics, textiles, sculpture, and woodworking all feature prominently. Introductory profile texts demonstrate many of the members' interdisciplinarity, and interests in digital tools and material sustainability. AAS' membership is majority female, with around one in ten members male-presenting. Three tiers of membership are offered (Associate,

Professional and International Member), with the overall aim of supporting makers to 'make sustainable livelihoods' (*How to Join & Benefits - AAS*, n.d.) through raising the visibility of their members' work, increasing their recognition as professional makers, and creating opportunities to contribute to live projects.

AAS has an extensive archive of projects amassed since its re-launch in 2012. Since 2017 a significant proportion have been funded directly through the British Council's *Crafting Futures* programme:

> [A] global programme which aims for a sustainable future through making and collaboration – supporting a future for craft by understanding its value in our history, culture and world today. (British Council, 2018)

AAS' 'Craft Toolkit' project, brought in a significant 3-year grant for the organisation, and was responsible for greatly expanding the scope of AAS through increasing resources for administration and overheads. However, with the closure of this grant AAS has sought to diversify its income, including introducing fees for membership in 2021. During the fieldwork year (2023) AAS was involved in delivering a range of project activity related to material innovation and sustainability with international partners. This included, among others, coordinating *Altar Matter*, a British Council-funded development programme that paired designer-makers and material designers in Scotland and Indonesia, with a four-week workshop and mentoring programme, culminating in a virtual presentation of speculative products responding to environmental concerns and future material scarcity.

During 2023 Closing the Loop Group (CTLG), a voluntary self-funding research-focused collective of maker-members operated autonomously within AAS. In 2023 this group were preparing for their next public presentation, drawing on both AAS' organisational resources, and status, to generate support in the form of venues, partners, and funding. *Hidden Floors,* an offshoot of an iterative project run through AAS titled *DISTANCE* (Digital Immersive Technologies and Craft Engagement), brought together a selection of AAS Members with digital designers, and technological support from digital agency Lateral North. This offered members an intensive, paid, research and development period, and a public presentation hosted by V&A Dundee. AAS demonstrates openness to, and facilitation of, digital experimentation, drawing on immaterial digital tools and spaces as resources for their members' creative experimentation. Across these projects AAS' members are both positioned

as experts, supporting skills and knowledge acquisition in others, and peer-learners, mutually exchanging their resources locally and internationally.

Regular monthly coffee mornings were a feature of AAS' member offer during the period characterised as 'lockdown' directly following on from the COVID-19 viral outbreak, as organisations pivoted to offering online-only solutions in the face of restrictions on physical meetings. However, these stalled in late 2022, as physical connection was reintroduced. Closing the Loop Group and another AAS online group Older Makers – for makers nearing or at retirement age – sustained online engagement even as physical meetings became possible and venues reopened, due to the purposive, targeted nature of their activity and commitments of voluntary facilitators. AAS frequently demonstrate their incubation role, creating supported virtual spaces for experimentation and risk-taking in the early stages of maker-led initiatives. Organisational resources held in-common were responsively deployed on a time-limited basis, to facilitate emerging member-initiated online sub-groups. This includes sharing zoom account logins, promotion through member bulletins, and contributions and facilitation from board members and advisors.

The major public moment for AAS in 2023, *|APPLIED| Makers' Offerings,* was an exhibition featuring 80 works by 55 members. This sought to offer AAS' maker members an equitable platform to bring their work to a public market, as well as illuminate the diversity of their members' practices. The exhibition publicly demonstrated AAS' response to several sector concerns. This included providing development opportunities for two emerging craft curators and improving access for audiences, partnering with Neuk Collective, a group that provided sensory kits (headphones, lanyards, fidget toys) to support disabled and neurodivergent visitors to the exhibition. The exhibition highlights AAS' role as – and explicit intention to be seen as – a positive contributor to the inclusivity and equitable development of the craft ecology in Scotland, responding to sector recommendations such as Dr Stacey Hunter's recent work highlighting the need for investment in craft curation (Craft Scotland, 2022).

Overall, AAS is imagined by members to be a "trusted hive mind", an "umbrella" or "vessel" that holds ideas, resources, skills, and knowledge together, and a "conduit" capable of collating, directing and delivering resources in a targeted and purposeful manner. AAS'

practices illuminate the continuing fragility of craft-sector infrastructures that enable non-financial exchanges of skills, knowledge, and material resources.

5.6.2 Scottish Furniture Makers Association (SFMA)

SFMA operates as a not-for profit unincorporated association and membership body. Governed voluntarily by a chairperson, secretary, treasurer and four other individuals who meet every two to three months online: all practising furniture makers. The organisation is further supported by a part-time administrator, also a furniture-maker, funded through membership income. A small number of freelance contributors are contracted on a time-limited part-time basis for funded project activity, working remotely. During the fieldwork this included a project producer, social media content producer, and public relations person, as well as agency photographer, designers, and filmmakers, all contributing to the realisation of the *Ash Rise* project, detailed below.

SFMA began 2023 with around 70 members, growing to 76 members by October 2023. Individual / Professional membership costs £100 per year and enables members to access range of benefits, including, as highlighted within their website 'Socially Connected Community', 'Trusted Brand Identity', 'Online Profile & Gallery' and 'Exhibition Opportunities'. Discounts for start-up businesses in their first year of trading are available. Student and unwaged membership costs £15 and excludes participation in special projects and most exhibitions. The £25 Associate and Supporter membership, enables access to news updates and community updates, but not contributions to exhibitions, projects, or member discounts. Applicants must demonstrate they are both designing and making their own furniture by hand in Scotland, and to a degree of quality in construction and finish to meet the expectations of the committee, who undertake regular reviews of applications.

Principally working as micro-enterprises, some members employ or contract freelance support for time-limited and specialist work, the majority work independently. There is a preponderance of wood as the primary material used. Metal and concrete also appear. Fewer than one in ten members are female-presenting in website listings, although the tendency to use business names and share only images of furniture projects hamper the demographic picture; within the fieldwork year, the organisation itself had not completed any recent equalities monitoring. A 'maker map' featured within their website directory demonstrates the

geographic spread of the membership with concentrations of members in Edinburgh and the Lothians, where most of the associations in-person activities take place. Glasgow and The Clyde Valley, rural parts of the Scottish Borders, Fife, Perth and Kinross, Aberdeenshire, and The Highlands are also notably populated with members.

Preparations underway for a major public project, *Ash Rise*, had restrained ongoing member activity during the fieldwork year to a small number of committee meetings and one public exhibition, alongside ongoing management of member promotions, online member showcases, digital resources, and 'takeover' posts on social media. The longstanding ASHS Partnership publication *The Full Circle* was on hiatus, and a previous online member meeting cycle, *Assemble,* had also been paused at the beginning of 2023, due to the committee's professed lack of capacity to coordinate and encourage members' participation. The *Ash Rise* project, funded by Scottish Forestry, Creative Scotland and supported by ASHS, was officially launched at an event in April 2023 in Edinburgh's Fruitmarket Gallery. It featured a temporary exhibition of work by members made from ash, short documentary screening, and presentations from the organisation's chair and project partners, including Scotland's Chief Forester.

The organisation's focus in 2023 was building anticipation and interest in the *Ash Rise* creative commissions and touring exhibition, due to take place in 2024 and 2025. A competitive opportunity, chosen by an 'expert panel', the project was created to enable participants – both SFMA member and 'makers, craftspeople, designers, artists, architects from across Scotland' (*Ash Rise Call Out*, n.d.) – to realise their speculative designs using ash wood from a single felled tree. Exhibiting these together they sought to highlight environmental concerns affecting the wood ecology in Scotland – in this case foregrounding Ash Dieback disease – and promote the material skills of members and other creative contributors. SFMA's activities highlight the ongoing work required to sustain the public appreciation for both the skills and labour involved in furniture making, as well as present their membership as contributors to social issues, with public, not just private value.

5.6.3 Scottish Glass Society (SGS)

SGS operate as a company limited by guarantee, with charitable aims, governed by a volunteer Chairperson, and supported by a voluntary board of five. Two further co-optees contribute

specialist knowledge relating to glass education. Alongside governance activity, the board, which includes glass artists, hobbyists, and glass enthusiasts, carry out activities relating to fundraising, programme planning, membership administration, social media communications and website development. In 2023 SGS had one paid contributor, who received a small stipend for editing the annual journal. SGS, unlike the other two case studies, has an open membership policy. Anyone paying the membership fees is eligible to join. Four membership levels are offered: Professional, costing £35; Student, £17; Corporate, £70; and Friend of SGS (for curators, collectors, and non-practising enthusiasts of glass art) £25. There is no assessment of 'professional' criterion, and applicants can self-declare.

The membership having stabilised over the last three years at around 100 members, increased to 108 over the course of 2023. A core, dedicated, membership, often described as 'elite' members, many who have been with the society since its founding, are used as the foundation from which to build credibility. Increasingly, the membership is populated with part-time, occasional and hobbyist members, who have come to glass later in life as professionalised routes into glass art contract and close. Members also include glass enthusiasts and collectors, which helps to boost sales of artist-members' work. The membership has an older age profile than the other two case study organisations; the average age of members is over 60. Age-related life limiting health issues, illnesses and disabilities, alongside caring responsibilities for relatives, are common within the membership, and a point of discussion within board meetings.

During the field work SGS' activity was regularly frustrated, many due to reasons beyond the control of the society. Funding was unsuccessfully sought for an exhibition and education project, to be delivered collaboratively with the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society (CRMS). A members' trip to Perth Museum's glass collection was postponed indefinitely due to delays in the re-opening of the museum. A joint masterclass and showcase event at Edinburgh College of Art, co-produced with the Contemporary Glass Society (CGS) was also cancelled when ECA's Glass Dept was closed suddenly following concerns around structurally unsafe concrete. The latter was subsequently moved online to become a series of free talks over Zoom; it had originally been scoped as a potentially income-generating day-long conference. During the fieldwork a travel award and training bursary were distributed, enabling two SGS members to participate in professional development activity. Two fully-booked weekend

masterclasses in screen printing on glass were delivered, and a waiting list demonstrated members' appetite for further opportunities. SGS' annual journal – featuring members' and guest contributors' writing – was also published in October 2023.

The major public activity for SGS in 2023 was the delivery of the annual open members' exhibition, *National Icons*. Drawing inspiration from Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society's 50th Anniversary year, this took place in Trades House in Glasgow in September. It featured 47 works by 23 'artist members' (Reid, 2023a), who produced among other things lamp-work glass thistles, stained glass 'banana boots' inspired by Scottish comedian Billy Connolly, and painted glass panels featuring Oor Wullie (an iconic Scottish comic-book character created by Dundee's DC Thomson). Scottish landscapes rendered in slumped and fused glass, stained-glass panels of flags, and Scottish historical figures also featured. A journal article reviewing the exhibition notes the volunteer team put it together in two days and 'it is the participation of volunteers that makes the exhibition possible' (*Ibid.*), this included the work to curate, install, promote, and invigilate the exhibition. The exhibition, it was noted, had not been able to go ahead in 2021, largely due to a lack of volunteers.

The exhibition received nearly 700 visitors across one week; footfall was boosted due to its tried and tested inclusion in the *Glasgow Doors Open Days*[6] programme. SGS' Chair, used the launch event to highlight the major concerns facing glass artists, including the recent closures of glass education courses, and development organisation Northlands, which went into administration in Summer 2023. The annual SGS Journal, distributed in October 2023, featured short articles covering areas of notable interest for the Society, including Steven Graham's piece 'Demand Education', and National Museum of Scotland's Curator of Modern and Contemporary Design, Sarah Rothwell, on the endangered craft of stained glass, both of which added fervent calls to reverse the loss of practical glass education resources and courses.

The website of SGS was, during the field work year, agreed by members and board members alike, to be deficient and in need of an overhaul, having been designed nearly a decade earlier.

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[6] Glasgow Doors Open Days Festival is an annual event celebrating the city's architecture, culture & heritage. Taking place in September, it commonly includes tours, exhibitions and events that open up otherwise inaccessible venues.

This was beyond the current capacity and resources of the Society, who are operating with a core annual budget of around £3.5k, derived almost exclusively from membership subscriptions. A large proportion, around one-third, of member profiles on the website are blank, suggesting disconnection from the organisation. No regular member meeting was facilitated during the fieldwork, and networking through SGS' social media accounts was insubstantial. Exchanges between members happened primarily through the in-person Masterclasses and Exhibition Opening in Glasgow. This resulted in members further afield, in Inverness particularly, feeling relatively underserved, a point that will be explored further in the findings chapter dealing with participation practices.

SGS overall is conceived as a "custodian" of knowledge and resources related to Scottish Glass, with the potential to be the "first point of contact" for those seeking information (Interview, 23Jan23). The organisational activity features a regular annual cycle of member exhibition and Journal publication, which act as a barometer of the interests, concerns, and overall health of the Scottish glass sector. The fragility of the organisation and lack of income during the field work year raised concerns over state of the wider Scottish glass ecology.

5.7   Chapter Summary and Conclusion

As this chapter demonstrates, these national maker-led organisations provide support, encouragement and facilitate social connections between craft makers, who tend to work independently, often geographically isolated from other makers. They collect resources from public bodies, funders, and national and international partners that are often inaccessible to makers working individually and distribute these to their memberships in the form of presentation opportunities, training, skills development, and technical resources. They show signs of growth in scale of membership and ambition, following the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic period, where cancelled plans and reducing opportunities for physical presentation and connection between makers were prevalent, and membership reduced. All three case study organisations' memberships grew in 2023 during the fieldwork, suggesting increased need for makers to support their own social connection, knowledge exchange, and development in the absence or inaccessibility of institutional infrastructures of support.

Setting the case study organisations' formation and development within the historical shifts in government actions and inactions relating to craft and craft work in Scotland illuminates the changing priorities of policy and their impacts on the practices and experiences of makers. These organisations arose out of necessity – in response to the decline of a historically established support structure. It shows craft and craft makers to be supported through a range of fragile and inconsistent policy measures between the local, regional, and national scales, where hard infrastructure (including education, presentation venues, and production space) is inadequately resourced and increasingly depleted, and power is concentrated into relatively few institutions and intermediaries around which makers can gather. Policy action relating to craft in this context is dispersed and insubstantial. The maker-led organisations have differential, and changeable, relationships to this policy landscape, some operating relatively independently of public bodies, at times actively antagonistic towards what they see as deficient or inappropriate support provision; others seek to enable makers to influence policy, through building issue-based coalitions with other sectors. Several aim to contribute to public bodies' and policy makers' strategic priorities, and are successful, for periods, at unlocking public resource to do so.

The practices of the case study organisations are shown to respond to the negative effects of the individualisation of risk, isolation and vulnerability faced by makers, who, over the second half of the Twentieth Century were working increasingly independently of others; with reduced opportunities for skills exchange and labour representation, and facing persistently low incomes from their craft work. The case study organisations demonstrate active attempts to both mitigate the negative effects of policy through forms of mutual aid and 'soft' infrastructure developments, as well as reclaim and renew craft's public value through opportunistically interpellating emerging policy discourse. They demonstrate an appetite for actions that influence policy 'from below', indicating they contribute to (albeit relatively small-scale and informal) emerging forms of labour organisation in the cultural industries (de Peuter & Cohen, 2015).

I argue here that the case study organisations, and their contemporary practices, must be considered as products of, and reactions to, the policy landscape they have developed within. This assessment draws attention to the longstanding effects of Scottish cultural policy on makers' practices and experiences of craft work, as well as the central role collective

organising plays in affecting and mitigating policy changes. It contributes to increased consideration of the significance of maker-led organisations, and adds to growing discussion of the political potential of individualised workers, particularly those involved in cultural work, and the resistance to forms of exploitation and precarity that their organisation points to (Beck, 1992; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002a; Hardt & Negri, 2011; Lazzarato, 2006).

Reducing resource at organisational level resulting from cuts in cultural funding appears cyclically in the Scottish context. At the time of writing this was frustrating ambitions and increased the (frequently unpaid) labour required to professionalise, fundraise for, and administrate these organisations. Increasing precarity of individual maker-members due to rising costs associated with craft practices, were at once reducing the capacity to participate and contribute voluntarily, while also increasing the need and demand for community, association, and camaraderie. Older, more financially secure makers, particularly those with other non-craft-related incomes, were more likely to be able to volunteer at the level required, in turn reflecting an aging profile in participating maker-members and increasing concerns for an underrepresented generation of younger makers. As a result, all three case study organisations were working through ways to structurally support the organisations' governances to continue, as well as renew the memberships in the face of declining educational pathways and progression routes, from which recruitment has historically been conducted through.

In the latter part of the Twentieth Century, the incoming creative industries policy, with its focus on individual skill, talent, and intellectual property creation driving job creation and economic development in post-industrial economies (Banks & O'Connor, 2009; Garnham, 2005) provided opportunities for a renewed and strengthened position for craft in public subvention decisions *vis-a-vis* 'the arts' (Banks, 2010; Jakob & Thomas, 2015). In the Scottish context, this can be seen as a return to longstanding economically driven policy approaches through which craft has frequently been supported (Brown, 1980; Olding, 2007; Peach, 2013b). These case study organisations are shown to respond proactively to the increased economisation of culture within Scottish cultural policy, resulting in proactive foregrounding of the novel, 'innovative' and design-led aspects of craft practice, and their contribution to other sectors. The contemporary moment has increased the focus on digital connectivity and tools compared to previous iterations. Simultaneously, the collective efforts and non-financial

exchanges within these organisations, increasingly critique and question the financialised basis on which craft (and culture), and by association the makers that produce it, are valued within the so-called creative economy. This has resulted in their marginalisation; due to the low tax returns compared to other creative sectors, and lack of contribution to the overriding economic growth agenda that has become 'global policy orthodoxy' (Schlesinger, 2017).

Within this context maker-led organisations continue to struggle to articulate their added value to the public beyond supporting individual craft enterprise, and by association tax receipts and lower welfare costs. This research seeks to acknowledge these organisations as a vital component of craft in Scotland's commonly-held 'soft infrastructure' (O'Connor, 2024); an indication of makers' ambition to contribute to the common good, and maker-led organisations' capacity to generate surplus social value.

CHAPTER 6:   DRIVERS OF MAKERS' SELF-ORGANISATION

In this chapter the drivers underpinning the formation and continuation of these structures – both those emanating from makers' individual needs and aspirations, and the external impetuses created through the policies and social and political contexts that inform them and their work – are investigated. These provide an opportunity to interrogate the systemic conditions that have necessitated grassroots organisation and bottom-up structures, and motivate the significant expenditure of time, money, and other resources, both makers' own, and those of other individuals and bodies, in their operation.

Many of my research participants view makers' organisations as a relatively informal arrangement; an indication of shared 'topic' interest, reflecting a base human need for community and conviviality around that which we spend our time. Indicative of this, when asked what was driving membership, one maker responded:

> "I don't think people know, to be honest, I think that's probably my answer to you is that I'm not sure what people want. People just join things because I think they like the idea of it." ("Liam", Interview, 14Jun23)

Wittel however, in his now foundational work on network sociality, reminds us that 'communities are always constructed, never automatic, given or natural' (2001, p. 62). This research seeks to problematise the community-seeking, collective behaviours of makers in these organisations, and illuminate the drivers behind them.

This research finds that there are three major drivers expressed by makers:

- firstly, maker-led organisations are described as route to alleviate loneliness, and the isolation and vulnerability, of individuated craft work;
- secondly, they are conveyed as a form of aspirational labour, an instrumental tool to facilitate access to potential personal and professional benefits and capitals in the future;
- and thirdly, they are described as an expression of altruism, a means to generate common goods and social benefits, and distribute their value more equitably. This is

demonstrated through compassionate and morally motivated practices of care for others, and in the subsequent infrastructure developments, and advocacy practices, that arise.

These three expressions, which are explored individually, co-exist, at times uneasily, for the makers interviewed, and are at times in tension with the external support received from policy makers and funders.

6.1   Maker-Led Organisations: An Antidote to Loneliness

Seeking community and connection with other craft makers was expressed as the initial motivating factor for the research participants to join and participate in maker-led organisations. This community-seeking behaviour was predicated on a sense of loneliness and disconnection that came from their pursuit of solo creative craft practice. Opportunities to meet and exchange with other makers did not occur organically but had to be actively sought and pursued. The research participants described their experience of craft work frequently as "isolating", "solitary" and a "lonely existence", where they could go long periods without interacting with others. While this was especially prevalent for those working in rural and remote locations, and those for whom craft work was undertaken in private workshops and home studios, it was also expressed by those who lived and worked in urban locations and leased workspaces in shared studio and workshop complexes with other makers and creative practitioners. This isolation is therefore predicated not only on geographical proximity with other makers (or lack thereof), but on the disposition of solo-craft practice that motivates makers to prioritise creative autonomy, independence from management and bureaucracy, and uninterrupted 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) in the pursuit of good work. Often realised through long-bouts of lone-working in the research, development, and production stages of craft's practice, this comes at the detriment of social exchange with other makers.

There is substantial literature that aligns group-based craft leisure activities and amateur making practices as a route to developing community and sociality, principally attending to the positive contributions that it can make to well-being through the alleviation of loneliness (Mayne, 2016; Sullivan and Richardson, 2020; Nancy, Lim & Gowans, 2017; MacFarlance & Maidment, 2009; Pöllänen & Voutilainen, 2018; Corkhill et al., 2014). Craft is also understood as pro-social, and communicative, because of its reliance on orally-exchanged received traditions, and ability to store and transmit symbolic knowledge in embodied form

across generations and cultures (Bratich, 2010; Gauntlett, 2018; Ingold, 2013). Conversely, writing in 1987 regarding the organisational behaviours of full-time professionalised potters in New Zealand, Inkson found a positive preference for 'solitude' within the workshop and studio, aligned with the pursuit of 'the craft ideal' of self-employed craft work that enabled 'total organisation of work' and mitigation of the risks of rational management, including loss of autonomy (1987, p. 167). However, while the work itself was isolated, Inkson found a thriving occupational community and noted contact between makers appeared high, even amongst the geographically scattered and rural cohort (*Ibid.*, p. 170).

Drawing on the work of Goldthorpe *et. al.,* Ranson (1989) has proposed that the autonomy of craft work sets it apart from other forms of work, arguing that this results in a solidaristic, rather that bureaucratic, attachment to others of the same occupation. This creative and occupational autonomy, is viewed as laying the foundations of political organising and resistance (Morgan & Nelligan, 2017). Craft makers' non-hierarchical, distributed, forms of collaboration are an increasing subject of study as an alternative model for organising work (Felcey et al., 2013; Kroezen et al., 2021; von Busch, 2013), of interest to sociologists of cultural work and organisations (Bell et al., 2019; Thomas & Luckman, 2024), and scholars of labour organisation (Anderson, 2021). With such widespread expression of loneliness by makers, and the efforts they go to mitigate it – illuminated by my attention to maker-led organisations – it is therefore relevant to problematise the conditions that underpin this.

6.1.1 Connecting Makers / Affective Exchanges

The experience of joining and participating in maker-led organisations was widely expressed as a positive alleviation of loneliness. Maker-led organisations were described as "connecting" structures by their maker-members, where on joining, makers "meet a lot of people" ("Frankie", Interview, 18Apr23), feel "connected and… part of something" ("Louisa", Interview, 01Mar23), and appreciate "you're not on your own" ("Lydia", Interview, 25May23). Maker-led organisations are expressed as enabling friendship and fellowship, through facilitating space for social, informal, and affective exchanges that go beyond the professional work personas that are reproduced in social media accounts, websites, and artist-maker biographies. They provide opportunities for more active and holistic social exchanges. Makers describe others in their organisations as people "of the same ilk" ("Lydia", Interview, 25May23), "the kind of people I want to find", sharing "similar interests" ("Romy", Interview,

24Apr23), and "people like me" ("Danielle", Interview, 17May23). Interactions initiated within committee meetings, member meetups, exhibition openings and workshops, as well as online exchanges in closed organisational social media groups, spill over into less formal WhatsApp group chats, side-meets, in-person studio hangouts, telephone calls, walks, wild swimming excursions, and drinks in the pub.

In fieldwork the intimacies of social relationships within the memberships were expressed frequently in makers' acknowledgement of, and conversation about, each other's life events, family life, health concerns, and leisure interests. This social urge is underpinned by mutual and authentic appreciation of and respect for shared biographies, as well as shared language and understanding of their respective craft practices, that challenges the supposed ephemerality and superficiality of exchange in conditions of network sociality (Wittel, 2001, p. 52). As a form of dialogic cooperation (Sennett, 2012) this brings the membership groups together through what they hold in common, enriching the participants through exchanging and pooling knowledge and experience. These relationships are enabled to develop and deepen over a long period, partly due to the longevity of maker-led organisations, and the reliability of annual programme cycles. This was compared favourably to the ad hoc and short-term structures that facilitate relationships through project working.

Consistency of connection was deemed important when makers are working across multiple and varied strands of work – both craft-related and other – that often-resisted routine and were frequently changing. The organisations provided a structure to makers' calendars, with regular (be that monthly, quarterly, or annual) platforms for social exchange around organisational activity. These were eagerly anticipated and prepared for:

> "I think what I'm most excited about to be truthful, is that we'll be having an opening. And it's to meet some of the people that I've been talking to on Zoom, or, you know, heard about them and so on, but haven't actually met them. I think that would be really, really good." ("Margaret", Interview, 26Apr23)

As the quote above illustrates, while online meetings were frequently the starting point for making connections and exchanging with other maker-members, in-person opportunities were widely seen as providing greater opportunity for developing deeper and more authentic relationships. These were also preferred because of the opportunity they provide to engage physically with the materials, tools, and products of makers' labour with which they are so

closely associated and interconnected with. The ability to share the craft itself in all its sensory dimensions, not just discuss it, was an extension of makers' desire to be seen and connect with an extension of themselves. This quote from furniture maker "Rory" demonstrates:

> "[W]hen you see this chair online, and you see it here, there's two different things. I mean… getting a sense of scale, being able to touch something, feel it you know, appreciate what it does in a space" (Interview, 09Jun23)

Following the pandemic period where digital connections were principally the only form of connection within these organisational networks, physical meetings were both preferred by members and prioritised for development by organisations, despite the higher costs and geographical barriers they posed.

6.1.2 Mitigating self-blame and identifying systemic issues

Many makers experienced the loneliness of individuated craft practice as a problem because it individualised difficulties relating to their craft practice, resulting in "frustrations" and self-blame for failure. This is exacerbated by the tendency for makers to passively follow many makers online. While they may have large digital networks, online presentations of maker-selves through social media accounts and websites tend to obscure the pressures and difficulties of their craft practices, favouring positive depictions that aim to connect with potential buyers and audiences. This resulted in superficial social ties when mediated through these platforms. Makers were both the producers and recipients of 'relentless positivity' (Luckman & Andrew, 2020, p. 229) presented online for the purposes of entrepreneurial self-promotion. While acknowledging this was constructed and purposefully partial – indeed they were often self-aware of their own equivalent practices – they were nonetheless affected negatively by feelings of inadequacy or loss of confidence. Social exchanges around maker-led organisations provided increased scope for what the makers felt were more honest, authentic, and rounded communications, acknowledging both successes and "shared pains" ("Hannah", Interview, 14Feb23).

Exchange with peer-makers enabled my research participants to understand that many of their frustrations were commonly held, systemic issues. The rising costs associated with craft production, loss of apprenticeship opportunities, loss of higher and further education, the lack of dedicated physical infrastructure for craft-exhibition, and the short-term project-based nature of collaborative working practices were all described as underpinning the isolation

makers felt necessitated their self-organisation. In this respect the communities' shared context as national Scottish associations with 'common geographic territory, common history [and] common value system' (Ferdinand Tönnies (1979) Qu. in Wittel, 2001) strengthens the sense of shared responsibilities. By bringing together makers with space for open dialogue from a multiplicity of viewpoints, maker-led organisations were places described as fostering not just dialogic, but dialectic communication (Sennett, 2012), whereby the diversity of experiences, skills and perspectives enabled shared problem-solving, managing of expectations, and mitigated feelings of individual culpability when experiencing difficulty or failure.

This combination of dialogic and dialectic communication was evidenced in the work of SGS. A masterclass on screen printing on glass, organised for members, enabled the assembled participants to develop a technical skill related to their glass-art practice, overseen by a specialist tutor. Additionally, it provided an opportunity to discuss their individual occupational contexts, celebrate successes, commiserate, and share divergent strategies and approaches to mitigate common difficulties. These related to managing their making time between individual creative projects and client commissions, accessing materials, paying for rising production overheads, pursuing professional development, and responding to changing environmental circumstances. One observed discussion, surrounding increase in stained glass restoration and preservation work precipitated by Church of Scotland's recent sale of over 2000 properties, exemplified this. Through this generous exchange, agreement was formed about SGS' organisational priorities and responses.

Similarly, in AAS' Older Maker's group, meeting over Zoom, a member described the benefits of having "a wider context to see myself in" (Fieldwork, 06Oct23). AAS' Closing the Loop Group (CtLG) was similarly celebrated; providing "respite" from the "treadmill of professional making" individually, to enable playful shared inquiry and experimentation of material sustainability that drew from the diverse experiences of the assembled group. This allowed for supportive connections to form across the group, and feed into the organisational support strategies that followed. From these enriched perspectives, makers could better identify and agree the structural and systemic issues affecting their craft work, building opportunities for solidarity, and preparing for action, thereby alleviating a sense of individuated vulnerability.

All three public exhibition outcomes during the field work year — AAS' *APPLIED Makers Offerings* exhibition, SFMA's *Ash Rise Project Launch,* and SGS' *National Icons* exhibition— offered a direct representation of solidarity across difference. They highlighted the togetherness and commonality across the membership, providing platforms for exchange and mutual appreciation between members, particularly through the social gatherings around opening events. They were also a physical manifestation of the makers' divergent approaches taken to respond to the same creative briefs. AAS represented the connections and dialogic interplay between its members with bolts of brightly coloured fabric and undulating corrugated metal surfaces connecting individual members' works with one another. While the diversity of perspectives was manifested in the stark contrast between the scale, material and construction of neighbouring pieces: exemplified by the relationship between a towering, thatched roofed, oak dresser featuring mouth-blown glass panels – a vernacular house "in miniature" ('The Barn', Joe Ginniff) – and the delicate undulating cashmere shawl, a one-off handwoven prototype inspired by the changing seasons of rural Stirlingshire that was hung inside it ('Autumn Transitions', Katherine Cowan).

The widespread isolation and loneliness felt by makers is characteristic of idealised autonomous craft work with long roots (Inkson, 1987; Ranson, 1989). It is also a more-recent symptom of the creative industries policy environment that aims to foster the self-sufficiency, self-reliance, and resilience of creative craft microenterprises. This results in increasing individualisation of responsibility, and competition for scant government resources (Luckman, 2015a). Indeed, the emergence of the case study organisations were precipitated by the falling away of previously active government-funded support structures around which makers could connect and socialise (Olding, 2007; Peach, 2013a). The entrepreneurial 'survival techniques' (Champion, 2020) makers use to mitigate the precarity and low-income levels associated with individuated craft practice are increasingly documented. These include portfolio working, online marketing and selling, exploitation of technology, and the commodification of social networks (Gu, 2018; Luckman, 2015a; Luckman & Thomas, 2018; Naudin & Patel, 2020). These are also the subject of policy interventions by development agencies and cultural funders, aiming to foster increased resilience and economic growth, founded on competitive individualism. These, such as Highlands and Islands Enterprise XPo North and Craft Scotland's COMPASS programmes, aim to support makers to become more adept at

managing themselves as businesses, and responding to external risks, such as those highlighted by the recent pandemic.

The strategies taken by makers to alleviate the feelings of loneliness and isolation that follow from this policy context are less well known. I argue here that maker-led organisations provide a significant intervention; providing connecting structures and regular and reliable social opportunities around which makers can build affective social bonds with each other that resonate beyond the organisations. These connections are important: both for the opportunities for dialogic communication, connecting makers around their shared values, identities, knowledge, and experiences, thereby enriching their overall sense of purpose, and understanding and pooling knowledge of their respective crafts; as well as dialectic communication, forming agreements as to structural and systemic factors affecting their craft work, and the possible responses to it. A sense of "collegiate" ("Margaret", Interview, 26Apr23) shared enterprise is created through regular and cyclical connections that generates both empathy and solidaristic generosity towards others "of the same ilk". This enables the overall enrichment of the group, and celebrates the positive problem-solving capacities of bringing together differences of opinion and divergent thinking (Hackney et al., 2024). This social exchange is at once the initial motivating factor driving maker-led organisations and provides the affective foundations for other pro-social behaviours and compassionate exchanges that follow.

6.2   Maker-led Organisations: The promise of eventual success

While the first driver to organise is social connection, the second driver of maker-led organisations is instrumental, seeking individual benefit. I found that, like the alleviation of loneliness, achieving personal benefits resulted in increasingly altruistic behaviours by maker-members as they sought to pay-forwards the capitals that accrued through their organisations' activities. This provides scope for a refreshed understanding of the progressive politics of craft work. However, makers' organisations also contributed to makers' overwork and exploitation, by encouraging an always-on entrepreneurial sensibility, promoting the possibilities offered by flexibility and responsiveness to the market.

Makers join and participate in maker-led organisations because of the potential future opportunities and capitals they *hope* will accrue to them through the participation in network

exchanges, projects and exhibition opportunities produced through the case study organisations. This is despite, commonly, a lack of immediate tangible or economic rewards, and at times high outlays required to do so. This future-oriented labour, variously theorised as 'aspirational' (Duffy, 2017), 'venture' (Neff, 2012; Neff et al., 2005) and 'hope' labour (Alačovska, 2019; Keuhn & Corrigan, 2013) is widespread within creative and cultural work. These terms form a collection of 'ideologies that rationalize neoliberal workers' investments of time, capital, and labor through the promise of *eventual* capital or future success' (Duffy, 2017, pp. 9–10). In the face of low income levels and high workloads, both characteristics of professionalised craft work in Scotland (Craft Scotland, 2023b), this investment appears to resist reason, particularly when the activities of maker-led organisations require stepping away from established income generating craft-production and selling activity.

This behaviour points to both economic necessities, and the alternative values embodied by craft makers, where the skill and quality imbued in craft is always indicative of financial investment, as well as being more-than-financial (Adamson, 2007; Bryan-Wilson, 2015; Jakob, 2013). Opportunity seeking behaviour is underpinned by the precarity and insecurity of creative craft work, where the makers must always be on the lookout for new work opportunities to self-manage their craft practices, and where valuable opportunities are highly competitive and constantly at risk of being withdrawn. It is widely understood that the capitals produced by these opportunities tend to accrue to the already socially privileged (Banks, 2017), and to existing winners in a 'jackpot economy' (Ross, 2004). This aspirational form of labour is therefore closely intertwined with ambitions for class mobility, and the desire to elevate oneself into a position of privilege (Duffy, 2017), albeit within their fairly closed specialist networks. The tone and forms of aspiration driving maker-led organisations can tell us a great deal about the values, needs and wants of craft makers in Scotland, and the problems and gaps they illuminate in the wider craft ecology. These aspirations were largely expressed as seeking enhanced profile and exposure, extended networks, public presentation, and professional skills development – all of which aligned with the desire for makers to enhance their sense of credibility and self-worth, financial security, stabilise their work routines, and extend their capacity to continue doing what they loved.

6.2.1 Seeking Profile and Exposure

Participation in SFMA, for "Shane" (Interview, 30May23) a young furniture maker who works at his craft part time around other employed work, was described as a means to "get on the right lists" and "get yourself known". This pursuit of profile and exposure was aligned with a desire to move beyond the "consistent paycheck" of his employed work, to pursue furniture making full time. This drove his association with SFMA:

> "I think the sort of main goal at the minute is just to do it full time […] if I can find a way to earn money doing what I want to do, that would be incredible. […] Half the battle is just getting yourself known. So that when somebody is looking for a high-end piece, you want your name to be in that mix. So that's been a focus of mine, and the Furniture Makers Association is great for that."

As an association set up to principally facilitate collective marketing of handmade and bespoke furniture direct to private commissioners and clients, SFMA position themselves as a digital destination and shopfront displaying a showcase of a carefully selected cohort of "the best" work by furniture makers in Scotland. SFMA's members view the work that goes into constructing their website profiles they receive as members, and payment of the annual membership fees (currently £100 per year for professional members), as investment in future visibility, cutting down the time-consuming and persistent labour required to search for commission opportunities individually.

As "Andy", a SFMA committee member, reflected "it's an opportunity to pitch for work that they don't really have to go looking for because it actually comes looking for them" (Interview, 30May23). While "Shane" was complimentary about the promotion he'd received through the association, citing several "game changing" opportunities, they had yet to transition to full time craft work; they lived in hope. There was little evidence provided by interviews and field work that the approaches made through SFMA, while nonetheless evidently important to the makers receiving them, would be of a scale and value to sustain full time craft work in the long term, by themselves.

As in other cases, "Shane's" SFMA membership was one of several profile-raising, and exposure-building, strategies undertaken simultaneously, underpinned by a drive for enhanced visibility to those with capitals to distribute. For SFMA this was geared explicitly to primarily Scottish-based private individuals seeking furniture commissions external to the membership,

this resulted in very clearly targeted and tailored tone, style, and consistency of communications. Image-led, these highlighted the uniqueness of design, hand skill, time commitment, and attention to detail of the maker, and contained the means to contact the maker directly. The audiences for AAS and SGS' work were more varied. A range of audiences were envisaged and sought, including international collectors, museums and cultural organisations, shop owners, curators, and funders, as well as domestic and international publics, and visitors including tourists to exhibitions. As a result, there was less consistency around what exposure looked like, or what the possible returns for participating makers might be. This speaks to the diversity of practices and approaches taken by members within those memberships, that meant there was greater variety of needs and possible modes benefits could take. This was also aligned with the gender profile of the organisations. By and large male research participants were more forward and open about their self-promotion and desire for instrumental benefits, while the female makers interviewed expressed it in more covert terms, that suggests unease about where they fell along the art-commerce spectrum.

Principally the audience makers were exposed to was other makers, resulting in a relatively closed economy. As proposed by Bourdieu (2011), this indicates the primary reward sought isn't necessarily monetary profit. Instead, the focus is on accumulating symbolic capital – prestige, reputation, and influence within the craft world – in the hope that this capital translates into future opportunities, exhibitions, grants, and so on. To overcome this closed economy SGS welcomed and nurtured glass collectors and other enthusiastic (often themselves hobbyists) glass art 'lovers' as part of the membership that were encouraged to contribute patronage to members. Exposure and profile of its members was focused within its annual exhibition and related press coverage (i.e.: Reid, 2023b) where work was frequently sold at openings, to an invited audience of members and their families. Despite profile and exposure being focused inwardly across the membership, with relatively limited social media profile or press reach, several SGS members were able to derive direct financial, symbolic and cultural capital because of the fostering of relationships within the organisation. This leveraged future participation, with beneficiaries being the most vocal supporters of the potential for instrumental return. However, for some longstanding members and more established glass artists, there was a sense this closed economy had been exhausted, and they pursued profile and exposure through other means, at times resulting in the withdrawal from membership.

6.2.2 Opportunity awareness

As a mirror of the drive for profile and exposure through organisations' web profiles and public presentations, makers describe their drive to join grassroots, self-organising structures, as a means to become aware of potential opportunities, variously described as being "in the know", "having my finger on the pulse about things", and "a way in". Members' behaviours illuminate the sociality that underpins the distribution of opportunities through informal networks, and the instrumentalization of social connections, where, as Wittel describes, there is an 'explicit acknowledgement of the importance of networking, and the perception of social relations as social capital' (2001, p. 56). This instrumentalization of social connections interweaves, at times uneasily, with the more authentic affective community relationships, with makers quick to criticise those exchanges seen to be superficial, insincere, extractive, or self-interested.

Ostensibly, each maker-led organisation distributes information about upcoming opportunities equitably to its members – grant deadlines, job postings, development opportunities, commissions, travel bursaries and residencies from external sources were a feature of information contained in organisational newsletters, e-bulletins, and social media posts. These were often the same opportunities circulated in waves across all three organisations as deadlines neared for regular national opportunities such as VACMA grants, QEST scholarships, Craft Scotland programmes, and calls to contribute to surveys and sector reviews. This also demonstrates the investment by external agencies in maker-led organisations as a means through which to communicate with the disaggregated and distributed sector. A passive member could notionally access this information as easily as a highly active member. However, interview discussions and field work illuminated the ways in which maker-members sought out and exchanged information within their organisations with trusted peers through insider networks operating discretely in parallel to the more overt opportunity promotion from the organisational voice. In these opportunities, not only financial reward was sought, but creative challenge and inspiration, as well as structure through which to gain and apply newly discovered technical skills and craft processes.

Despite the competition between makers for relatively few opportunities to develop, showcase, share, display or sell their work, this information – which included insights about

expected but unpublished opportunities, the personal and professional preferences of application assessors, previously successful approaches, and themes and keywords that aligned with external organisational priorities – was actively and generously exchanged. It formed part of the way in which members felt supported by their organisations; they created and enabled the conditions necessary to develop trusted relationships with peers operating in similar fields with whom this discrete knowledge could be shared. This is expressed as being "invited in", which in turn builds makers' confidence and sense of credibility as an "insider" to the practice-based community and motivates them to pay it forwards to others within their organisations.

The reliance on these insider networks, resulted in concerns from some research participants when opportunities were not forthcoming, or applications were repeatedly rejected that the organisations were "cliquey" or practiced favouritism in how this insider knowledge was exchanged. Frustrations were levied at "the system" of opportunity creation and distribution, wherein relatively few makers seemed to receive the biggest share of opportunities:

> "What do I have to do to be selected for Collect? What do I have to be for these big galleries to want to showcase my work? I don't seem to be getting past, I don't seem to be getting into that, into that field of that next step up, which seems to be if you get up to there, then other things start happening for you. And I don't seem to be getting there. And I just everything I apply for, it's just, it's just a no every single time." ("Louisa", Interview, 01Mar23)

For the maker, above, they were driven to join an increasing number of maker-led organisations over the course of field work (including two case study organisations). They hoped that network access would unlock future opportunities through generating both symbolic capital and insider knowledge about how to apply themselves to fit into the system; learning the unspoken *rules of the game* operating within the craft habitus (Bourdieu, 2011). There was both an active use of and contribution to these insider networks – access to which formed a major (if often unspoken) driver to join and participate in maker-led organisations – as well as concerns about how they contributed to inequity of opportunity distribution and cultural representation across the craft ecosystem.

Makers' entrepreneurial survival skills – network sociality, flexibility, responsiveness to the opportunity market, and self-promotional activities – are demonstrably reproduced through

peer-learning in these organisations. They are also encouraged by policymakers and external support organisations who use maker-led organisational networks to promote opportunities. However, this also illuminates the importance of, and intersection with, practices of mutual aid and morally construed social relations in that survival arsenal, that challenges some of the fatalistic accounts of neoliberal hyper-competition in cultural work.

Increasingly, aligned with similar initiatives by public funders and development bodies, both AAS and SFMA – as recipients of public monies – were clarifying and improving the transparency of application procedures, eligibility criteria, and selection processes for their own project opportunities. Open information sessions, extensive written guidance, and publication of assessment criteria being some of the strategies to democratise the knowledge of these processes; both within their membership, and beyond, aligned with recruitment drives for new members. This drive to be "in the know" that underpins much of the motivation to join and participate in maker-led organisations illuminates the discrete rules and language of the craft habitus in Scotland, particularly in the access to public resource, and the necessity of social ties with peers through which navigate it. Rather than representing habitus as 'conservative and inert', a critique levelled at Bourdieu's depictions of it by Noble and Watkins (2003, p. 524), makers' behaviours to seek out and participate in maker-led organisations, suggests that they provide a means through which to habituate oneself to otherwise inaccessible social codes and customs, thereby accessing new forms of social capital, with the possibility of transcending class positions. It raises further questions about how the isolation and loneliness of self-employed makers, discussed above, works to reduce awareness of eligibility for – or processes of obtaining – public resource. This is potentially exacerbated for those without organisational ties, entrenching inequality.

6.2.3 Public presentation opportunities

The most consistent instrumental benefit expressed by research participants was for public exhibition opportunities. Awareness of the maker-led organisations' member exhibitions was a significant driver to join, and a promoted member benefit around which new member recruitment was prioritised. Public exhibitions were felt by the makers to indicate the 'seriousness' of their pursuits (Elkington & Stebbins, 2014; Stebbins, 1992), whether or not they derived a livelihood from it, to claim formal status as a craft 'professional'. Exhibitions were understood to increase public visibility, credibility for the quality and skill expended in

their practices, and legitimate their status as "artist" makers. It elevated the prices they could command for their work that followed.

In this activity they hoped to achieve three things. Firstly, they aspired to positively distinguish themselves from both the mass of hobbyist and amateur makers; whose low-key DIY presentations of kitschy, "shonky", homespun handmade work at low price points in church halls and community centres were widely criticised as devaluing craft in the public's perception, and downplaying the time, skill and efforts involved in its production. Secondly, they wished to distinguish themselves from the mass-produced commodities marketized as homemade, artisanal products, with limited consideration for the labour conditions or economic relations involved in their production. In this respect makers believe that maker-led organisations hold some capacity to legitimate their occupational status, communicate the authenticity of their craft products, and provide an increased resource context to raise the quality of any presentation, compared to what could be achieved individually. Further, makers were keen to disrupt what they saw as an elitist and manifestly unfair exhibition system – marked both by what they felt were exploitative private galleries, charging high (and increasing) commissions on sales; and infrequent, decidedly competitive publicly funded opportunities seen to be "for the honoured few" ("Katherine", Interview, 29Jun23). The latter also increasingly raised questions about the role of institutionally-formed narrow craft canons in perpetuating inequity of representation (Patel, 2020c, 2020a; Patel & Dudrah, 2022).

Awareness of the deficiencies of the infrastructure for craft exhibition in Scotland have a longstanding basis (Olding, 2007; Peach, 2013a). The lack of a dedicated national craft gallery or regular (routinely funded) public craft exhibition programme has been repeatedly pointed to as a persistent gap. A gap that contributes to an overall lack of awareness and low- and mis-perceptions of craft (particularly Scottish craft) in the public imaginary, where 'invented tradition' and reproduction of cultural stereotypes for tourist markets continues to diminish appreciation for craft's role representing contemporary national cultural identity (Peach, 2013b). This also contributes to gaps in adjunct skills and intermediary roles that could support craft makers, such as craft project production and curation, as research from Dr Stacey Hunter highlights (Creative Scotland, 2021). Craft Scotland has invested significantly in this area through the facilitation of a Craft Development Network of craft curators working in Scotland, and (more recently) a curatorial development programme, for emerging aspirants.

AAS actively responded to this priority by employing two freelance curators to support the realisation of their 2023 members' exhibition, providing a developmental opportunity for emerging curatorial talent.

This instrumental drive highlights the ecological interdependence between makers and the institutions they rely on for their legitimation and presentation. This is a relationship marked by deep imbalances of power. Maker-led organisations disrupt the power imbalance in exhibition production two ways. Firstly, as not-for-profit legal entities they remove the (potentially, if not always) financially extractive and exploitative nature of the private gallerist / maker relationship. Exhibition fees and commissions are widely understood to be more affordable to makers, financial arrangements are made in the interest of makers, and profits are reinvested back into maker-led organisations' practices for the common good of the maker community they serve. Secondly, maker-led organisations prioritise open opportunities; any member seeking an exhibition opportunity is eligible to apply, and will most likely have their work included, albeit usually for a small fee.

As a result of these priorities tensions appear. Working with the limited resources provided by makers themselves in the form of membership and exhibition application fees – and faced with rising venue hire and promotion costs – the maker-led organisations must seek support from competitive and unreliable funding streams to realise their presentation quality ambitions. Alternatively – as was the case for SGS in 2023 – they produce exhibitions "on a shoestring", relying on meagre financial reserves, existing venue relationships, and volunteer committee members' labour to curate, install, and invigilate. This raises questions of the organisations' capacity to elevate their members' craft work in these fora and distinguish it from the rickety trestle tables of amateur practices. Public funding, when it is forthcoming, comes with significant conditions and administrative requirements. Producing public presentations to meet the needs of maker-members is restrained by the need to demonstrate wider public benefit and instrumental outcomes aligned with fluctuating policy priorities. The regular, reliable, routine annual open exhibitions offered by the case study organisations enabled member-makers to work towards consistently available opportunities over long periods, overcoming lack of personal confidence and challenging themselves to raise their skill-level in the process. It also enabled organisations to manage financial risk and members' expectations, as well as build longstanding audience relationships. However, these were seen as un-appealing to public

funders and grant-giving trusts and foundations who makers viewed as prioritising supporting novel, innovative and developmental initiatives that sought to disrupt existing structures and take creative and financial risks. This can lead makers and their organisations to 'opt-out' of funded culture when the priorities and values do not align, particularly in relation to the 'unreasonable' demands to demonstrate continual growth (Munro, 2020, p. 184).

The prioritisation of open-ness of opportunity likewise creates tensions. Whilst open opportunities were seen as fairer and more democratic than selective juried opportunities, the case study organisations often acknowledged that, should all members put themselves forwards, they would not have the capacity to support them all. Either due to the physical constraints of exhibition venues or time commitments of organisers. The organisations were reliant on members opting out to manage demand; with limited assessment of how this impacted the fairness of opportunity distribution. Exhibiting under the umbrella of an organisation was seen as legitimising members' status as artist-makers, this open opportunity was felt to be a first rung on a developmental ladder towards a credible future as a full-time creative.

Once achieved, further distinction was sought, and repetitive opportunities were viewed as having diminishing returns. In terms of the instrumental benefits, public presentation opportunities selected by elite juries, selection panels or more coherently themed and professionally curated, were anticipated as more valuable to makers. These often came with larger financial resources from external collaborators and funders – and frequently micro-grants or stipends for participating makers. The selective opportunities were more likely to be cited as opportunities to validate professional credentials and distinguish themselves to potential patrons, commissioners, or funders through generating *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu, 2011). They were also more likely to encourage, as one project producer described "ambition and risk and adventure" (Interview, 29Jun23) supporting makers to develop their practices creatively in response to specific briefs. Thereby shifting away from well-worn stereotypes and outdated cultural reference points; opening makers up to more valuable and selective future opportunities, as well as improving the public perception of craft.

6.2.4 Instrumental returns underpin makers' altruism

While the drive for instrumental benefits may superficially appear self-interested, members not only sought out maker-led organisations for their own opportunities for profile and exposure, access to networks and public presentation, but for their peers too. The drive to self-organise was viewed as a means to personally benefit through increasing exposure and credibility, as well as hold open the potential of these opportunities and instrumental benefits to exist for others in the future. Many longstanding makers – particularly those who could be classed as established, elite makers, with highly regarded and celebrated profiles in their respective crafts – recognised they were not reliant on the type of opportunities that could reasonably be produced by maker-led organisations. Nonetheless they retained membership, and contributed to discussions, promotions, and public presentations. One glass-artist spoke of the pleasure of seeing other makers "lifted by the experience" of being selected for exhibition ("Katherine", Interview, 29Jun23). They recognised the possibility of utilising their own cultural capital and habituated knowledges and experience to benefit others within their occupation to access the internal good located within the practice (MacIntyre, 2007). In this way they demonstrate compassion, through 'hooking the interests of others to our own personal goods' (Nussbaum, 1996, p. 28).

Newer members too were keen to hold open the door for others to meet, exchange, and collaboratively present their work, by joining and participating in maker-led organisations, even when they were not yet able to benefit directly, or when their practices did not align with opportunities offered. These newer members, often recently transitioned from amateur self-taught practices, seek to demonstrate occupational solidarity with other makers through their membership; aspirational about the future potential to benefit, hopeful that the display of solidarity will lead to opportunity for themselves and others, as well as viewing their organisations as a common good to be maintained and invested in. Maker-led organisations in this way operate as practice-led economies, with the potential to generate community benefit beyond the market (Banks, 2007b).

Attending to the instrumental drive behind their work illuminates the ways maker-led organisations construct a space for individual and collective aspiration and hopefulness in the face of precarity, structural instability, and individual vulnerability. Maker-members' labour, expended in the pursuit of instrumental benefits, is aspirational; not only for their own gain,

but those of their wider maker-communities and craft ecology. The work of the case study organisations to support these instrumental ambitions is powerful in its generative capacity to help makers imagine (if not fully realise) a better future for craft in Scotland. This holds open possibilities for rethinking craft's progressive politics – challenges to 'new capitalism' and its 'climate of competitive individualism' that undergirds much of the work in the so-called creative industries with conditions of 'overwork, exploitation and poverty' (Morgan & Nelligan, 2017, p. 131). This does not negate the need to attend to craft makers organisations' commercial motivations, which can at times engender problematic labour practices: indeed, despite the altruistic tendencies, field work demonstrated makers often encourage and support each other to be always-on, ready to flexibly respond to the latest opportunity for self-promotion, as the means to achieve creative and commercial distinction in a crowded market. The final major driver expressed by makers underpinning their contributions to maker-led organisations is compassion (Nussbaum, 1996); expressed as an ethic of care through consideration of the needs of human and non-human others (Tronto, 2013). This is explored through attention to the production of shared infrastructure and common goods, and the ways in which this is manifested through both challenging and disrupting creative economy policy, as well as attaching to it through the instrumentalization of craft.

6.3   Maker-Led Organisations: Creating Common Infrastructures

Pursuit of occupational and creative autonomy drove many of my research participants to develop individuated creative craft practices, in keeping with Inkson's assessment of the longstanding romantic attraction of 'the craft ideal' (1987) and more recently work by Crawford and Marchand (Crawford, 2010; Marchand, 2022). Their drive to self-organise and contribute to maker-led organisations and their work, however points to another impetus; a drive to demonstrate, claim and enlarge the social value of autonomous craft work. This speaks to the contradictory prospects of work in the 'social factory' (de Peuter, 2011; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Morgan & Nelligan, 2017). To claim social value maker-led organisations are complicit in interpellating neoliberal values present within Scotland's creative industries policy. They foreground the individual economic activity of their members, and uphold a sense of personal agency and individual responsibility for success or failure, that appears to negate more radical forms of political activism or cooperation (McRobbie, 2002). However, in keeping with the more hopeful assessments of autonomist Marxist theorists (Hardt & Negri, 2011; Lazzarato, 2006) they also support the construction of common resources, and

infrastructures with social and ethical purposes, that, whilst on a small scale, point to the potential for broader political resistance and solidarity with a range of publics. This points to the possibilities of maker-led organisations to amplify and direct the 'moral sentiments' (Banks, 2006) of their individual members.

This compassionate, moral drive leads maker-led organisations to create, maintain, and advocate for common infrastructures for craft's development, production, dissemination, and exchange, both materially and, as a way of thinking and being in the world, symbolically. They do this both within the craft ecology and – in keeping with their drive to demonstrate craft's role in the world and produce social impacts – with a multitude of partners and collaborators. Craft's public value is often predicated on claims of the unalienated pleasures and satisfactions that come with individual 'entitlement to make what they feel they want to make' and the property rights that come with 'authorship' and control over the means of production (Kowolik, 2021, p. 108), as well as providing market choice to consume commoditized 'positional goods' that distinguish the owner (Hirsch, 1977). These largely emanate, argues Kowolik, from the same values that underpin neoliberal capitalism. However, the not-for-profit forms these organisations take, and the strong social and cultural bonds, and altruistic tendencies they encourage, discussed above, also illuminate their 'desires for social transformation' and 'moral commitments' (Banks, 2006, p. 466).

The three case study organisations demonstrate the diversity of approaches and forms this work takes, and speaks to both common purposes, and a heterogeneity of values and capacities from which this compassionate drive emanates. The specifics of the case study organisations' infrastructure development practices, and the members' expressions of the drivers that underpin them, illuminate the forms of social transformation imagined and their desired effects. These are explored illuminating their strengths, as well as some of the limitations of this work. Finally, the future potential of a morally construed craft commons in Scotland is posited, drawing on nascent conversations about the maker-led organisations' ambitions to collaborate around shared priorities.

6.3.1 Supporting the wood community: makers and material ecologies
Every four to five years SFMA produces a major public project, working collaboratively with the Scottish wood ecology of landowners, foresters, tree surgeons, sawmillers, arborists,

botanists, and furniture makers, to realise public presentations, newly commissioned texts, films, and informational resources relating to tree health, and material sustainability. Through this SFMA's aim is to draw attention to the ecological interdependency between the constituents of the Scottish hardwood industry. This work (the *Wych Elm Project* 2010*; After the Storm,* 2016; *Ash Rise,* 2024) consistently positions their membership, Scotland-based furniture designer-makers, as central to the generation of public appreciation for the historical and contemporary role of local hardwood as a material imbued with ethical and symbolic value, and encouragement of investment in sustainable, local, material economies, including craft labour. The imaginative responses of their members, turning diseased, storm damaged, or otherwise disregarded wood destined for the log pile, into durable, beautiful objects with lasting use value, speak to the power of craftspeople to illuminate the provenance and possibilities of materials that come from skill-laden and creatively autonomous craft practice. It also speaks to the drive of SFMA to contribute to shared values, that go beyond the day-to-day business of generating private furniture commissions for their members.

During field work this work continued with the development of the *Ash Rise* project. Utilising a single felled ash tree, this aimed to raise awareness of the tree-health and material sustainability issues posed by fungal infection ash dieback. SFMA were in the process of commissioning 20 makers (furniture maker-members and others) to make an 'exceptional object' to 'illustrate the versatility and beauty of ash wood' (*Ash Rise Call Out*, n.d.), and further exhibit and tour the resulting commissions. This work is underpinned by SFMA's development of a shared infrastructure and resources held in common for the membership, both tangible and intangible. This includes relationships with funders and partners; knowledge and documentation of successful project models; a significant skill bank; and in-kind resources – tools, equipment, and materials – mobilised and exchanged through the member-community. This has enabled the projects to develop despite the changing personnel driving the projects within the membership. This speaks to the organisation's care for the common good, and the ongoing custodianship SFMA has for both its members, and the conditions within which furniture is being made and publicly valued.

Maintaining that custodial role drove SFMA membership, but the infrastructure development largely remained predicated on the ability to secure infrequent and piecemeal partnership support and project grants, working to boom and bust schedules that were at times disrupting

of members ongoing furniture making practices. There were tensions that arose from this collective work. One longstanding member spoke of the frustration that came with the disruption to regular programmes; association resources were directed at larger projects with more selective exhibition opportunities and longer-term impacts at the expense of more egalitarian distribution of open calls that provided immediate instrumental benefits to members. Another member felt the shift to more 'serious' socially engaged practices were largely managed from without. A form of instrumentalism (Belfiore, 2002; Gray, 2007; Hadley & Gray, 2017) directed by policy, that was increasingly disrupting the casual and social exchange that had initially brought the furniture makers together:

> "It's just, you know, a bunch of a bunch of makers getting together. And you know, having a blether meeting in a pub, you know, getting just having to just, we make furniture, this is fun. We love it. Here you go. And world's changed and people don't do that, it's all got very, very serious." ("Rory", Interview, 09Jun23)

Adding to this sentiment, they expressed "being told what to do is just an anathema" (*Ibid.*) suggesting they felt this collective work was in tension with the creative and occupational autonomy they sought through their furniture making practice.

6.3.2 Glass Education for the Common Good

Supporting the glass sector in Scotland increases in importance with duration of membership of SGS, while personal benefits remain relatively consistent, according to a survey of the membership completed as part of their 40th Anniversary programme (Gow, 2020, p. 22). This evidences social exchange within maker-led organisations leads to greater appreciation of systemic and environmental conditions affecting individual makers' practices, and thus the desire for mutual care. This sectoral development work was focused on the threats posed by loss of glass education infrastructure and professional development opportunities (Gow, 2020, p. 32). SGS members sought to positively advocate for the wider social role of practice-based glass education, not just as a means to acquire creative employment, or as leisure pursuit for the affluent few, but sustain social goods including Scottish-specific intangible and tangible cultural heritage, museum collections, and the built environment of historic and contemporary public buildings. *The Care Manifesto* proposes the capacity to care relies on commonly held resources and infrastructures (Chatzidakis et al., 2020), which for the glass sector are increasingly depleted. Caring about the future sustainability of glass education, for these reasons, was for many I spoke to the main driver of their association with the society.

Partnerships were proposed with the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society, ahead of their 50th Anniversary, to draw attention to the role glass art skills had in building heritage, preservation, and conservation, and plans were drawn up to involve schools in introducing glass art and related skills. Museum tours were planned to raise the profile of Scotland's historic glass collections, and the Society's annual Journal featured articles that levelled responsibility at Government to 'Demand Education', better fund and support apprenticeship schemes, and require new public building to make use of contemporary glass-art skills in their fabrication to preserve and sustain the skills involved (Graham, 2023). In this SGS are seeking to demonstrate already-existing interweaving of glass art into everyday life, and the potential for loss of cultural heritage, if skills and knowledge are not cared for.

While the longest running of the three case study organisations, SGS' commoning practices were largely at an earlier stage than the other two case study organisations, with other than publicly accessible listings of external support organisations and other information resources online – proposals being speculative, or unfunded. The potential for collective actions and pooling cross-sectoral knowledges and resources for public benefit, promoting the social value of glass and glass art skills "rather than just promoting the work of individual artists" ("Gary", Interview, 27Feb23) was nonetheless a driver of membership. In this SGS members aligned with critiques of the continuing neoliberalisation of higher education, that has decimated materially specific, practice-based craft courses, due to their failure to turn a profit, thereby shifting public goods into increasingly privatised realms, as craft instruction increasingly takes place only within paid-for leisure classes (James-Beith, 2021). Challenging the loss of common educational infrastructure was the focus for the SGS Chair's opening speech at the annual members' exhibition, and the 'Welcome' to the SGS journal made commitment to 'lobby to keep alive hope' for the reinstatement of glass art education and apprenticeships. This speaks to the potential for alliances around the reclamation of non-profit-making cultural goods as social goods – including the ongoing work to secure the UK's ratification of the UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Lovett, 2024) – in the absence of market-mechanisms to protect them.

The 40th anniversary report included a number of recommended actions, including developing and strengthening broader 'cross- and inter-sector communication and identify opportunities

for collaboration' and 'developing international partnerships' (Gow, 2020, p. 32). SGS'
proposals however – driven in part by two co-optees working within the organisation's
committee – were stymied by the failure to generate external resources to support this work.
The low resource context resulted in a retraction of more outward facing ambitions, to focus
on the survival of the society, maintaining membership through delivery of instrumental
benefits for members such as income-generating annual exhibitions and masterclasses. As a
result, there was a sense of resignation from members that their compassionate drive to
contribute socially would be unrealised within the society, raising existential concerns about
its future sustainability and value, as well as that of the glass sector more widely. The moral
sentiment of the glass artist makers persisted in inward-facing and small-scale actions of
mutual aid between members, facilitated by their networked connections within the society,
sharing tools, ideas, resources, and materials. Wider educational infrastructure developments,
although contributing to the drive to self-organise, had not yet developed.

6.3.3 Making Sustainable Livelihoods

AAS' development from the outset was explicitly predicated on policy advocacy. Maker-
members were therefore more attuned to political aspirations, and the pragmatics of funding
and policy alignment, positioning craft and the work of makers as instrumental to achieving a
range of social priorities. Operating under the objective 'making sustainable livelihoods' since
transitioning to a SCIO, AAS is active in its development of shared infrastructures through
collating and hosting resources, both tangible and intangible, that have the potential to persist,
even within the changeable policy context. During field work this included initiating a shared
resource library of physical digital equipment, the continuing dissemination of an open-source
Craft Toolkit to support nascent craft business development and planning, the development
and maintenance of international partnership and funding relationships, and the active
development of individual members' organising, fundraising and project management skills
that aim to "build the board of tomorrow" (Fieldwork, 13Oct23), continuing the capacity for
policy advocacy and sectoral development.

Craft skills are increasingly valued for their contribution to innovation, particularly in relation
to sustainable futures (Luckman & Thomas, 2018, p. 11). AAS' work aligned with their
members' moral imperative to contribute to environmental sustainability practices, taking a
broad approach interwoven across the organisation's programmes. This included: disrupting

industrial and business waste flows with Scrap Antic, diverting materials that would otherwise end up in landfill to member-makers to repurpose within their work; facilitating maker-led research and creative exchange around material explorations with waste, and the use of sustainability tools, in the CtLG members' sub-network; using upcycled, borrowed, and reclaimed materials within their open members' exhibition; and partnering with British Council Indonesia and others on *Altermatter* to develop collaborations between Indonesian and Scottish designer-makers and material scientists to draw on indigenous knowledges to 'explore experimental approaches to making, with a focus on using and adapting design processes combined with material experimentation' (*Altermatter in Glasgow - Applied Arts Scotland*, n.d.). In this work AAS positions its members as willing and active social entrepreneurs, compassionately driven to care for human and non-human others, aligning with the assessments that craft micro-enterprise is always interested in more than their own economic return (Bennett, 2020; Naudin, 2015).

AAS have been adept at securing partnership support that enables it to, as chair of the organisation expressed, "become a conduit and vessel for our members to realise their ambitions" whilst also mindful of the need to demonstrate "benefit to the wider making sector and wider public benefit" (Fieldwork, 13Oct23). While members of other organisations expressed concerns about the disruptive or extractive nature of policy instrumentalization and funding mis-alignment, AAS members were largely positive about the enlarged capacity the organisation created to contribute socially, aligning with assessment that generation of a collective identity within crafts communities is used as a means to 'give something back' to the common good (Gu, 2018, p. 23). The maker-led constitution was viewed as underpinning the ability to align the needs and wants of makers with policy goals in an authentic and mutually beneficial way compared to exploitative uses of craft and makers in other fora. This included makers' concerns about crafts' uses in marketing to 'craftwash' (Black & Burisch, 2021) unethical practices or exploitative labour and economic relations, as well as top-down management of craft makers by business development consultants, and policymakers who hoped to change makers' mindset applying economic-growth focused development principles to craft to transform makers' value orientations towards profit motive, increasing the vulnerability of craft to rational management techniques (Banks, 2010). Led by makers who view their members' orientation towards craft, and craft skills, as socially useful competencies, AAS sought to demonstrate and disseminate these values widely in society.

However, those within the organisation recognised that resourcing these ambitions was increasingly difficult and was at times in tension with members' desire for their own instrumental returns.

6.3.4 Future potential for a craft commons in Scotland

Overall, while maker-led organisations demonstrate a morally construed social orientation, these commoning initiatives take place on a small scale. Due to the scarcity of resources to support documentation, archiving and research practices this work is fragile and patchy, resulting in missed opportunities to generate wider recognition of this work or influence increased uptake. There was however a hopeful development during the field work. Aspiration to federate, sharing resources, knowledge and pooling potential for advocacy was a noted priority for maker-led organisations in Scotland as far back as 2003 (Scottish Arts Council, 2003), but had proved difficult to instigate due to mis-aligned priorities between the various organisations and their diverse memberships. During the course of research this co-operation and collective work began to re-emerge, with the potential to enlarge, as de Peuter and Dyer-Witheford propose, the potential for a 'parallel economy through practices of inter-cooperation' (2010, p. 39). This involved meetings between the various leaders of maker-led organisations to develop a shared exhibition platform for their members, and a terms of reference around which to collaborate effectively, as well as an application to Creative Scotland for funding to realise these collective presentation ambitions.

Despite its nascent state, organisers across all the case studies were actively involved in contributing to conversations and proposals aiming to generate both enlarged public appreciation for craft makers and their work, and wider social goals aligned with, principally, driving environmental sustainability through craft. This work relied on continuing appeal to policy makers and funders to support maker-led organisations, as well as maintaining the support of the memberships for this work through ensuring instrumental returns. The resulting tensions between authentic community-driven grassroots social goals and extractive or exploitative instrumentalization of these intentions still require to be worked through. However, this development provides potential for an increased craft commons in Scotland to emerge around which makers could better stabilise their work and public policy valuation in conditions of advanced precarity.

6.4   Chapter Summary and Conclusions

Makers, across the three case-study organisations, express the drivers underpinning the formation and continuation of maker-led organisations in Scotland in three ways: connection, instrumental, and altruistic. These expressions are at once mutually imbricated and contradictory. Makers pursue and join these organisations to reduce isolation and alleviate loneliness, and these organisations are shown to positively contribute to makers in this way, generating connection and community. This social connection often evolves into deeper networks of mutual support and collective identity that reinforce the role of maker-led organisations in makers' lives. These relationships prove crucial in helping makers identify and address systemic challenges, rather than interpreting difficulties as personal failures, so mitigating self-blame.

Makers also join and participate in these organisations to unlock personal and professional opportunities: for profile and exposure; access to discrete unpublished sector knowledge; the 'rules of the game'; legitimation and insider status; and public presentation opportunities. Gaining benefits – social, cultural, symbolic and financial capitals – through these organisations, makers seek to hold the door open for others, even when they no longer benefit personally. While seemingly individualistic, this often transforms into a desire to create sustainable infrastructures benefiting the broader craft ecology, particularly in relation to public exhibition infrastructures, that are accepted as fragile currently. This transformation reveals how personal aspiration can catalyse collective action and social value creation, facilitated through occupational solidarities, developed through the work of maker-led organisations.

Significantly, the study identifies a strong altruistic motivation among makers to develop common resources and advocate for craft's broader social value. This manifests through environmental sustainability initiatives, educational advocacy, and efforts to preserve cultural heritage. Makers contribute to these organisations for morally motivated, compassionate, reasons; to contribute to the common good and care for commonly held resources. However, these ambitions often face tensions between authentic grassroots activism and policy-driven instrumentalization. The case study organisations' structures and practices are shaped by these

drivers, and critically, by the demands of the policy context, including requirements relating to cultural funding.

While operating on a small scale, these organisations nonetheless demonstrate the diverse and multifaceted collaborative and commoning work taking place within Scotland's craft sector that is often hidden from view by the creative industries statisticulation focused on individual economic entities. It points to the potential for makers' organisations to contribute to broader forms of alternative economic organising, political action, and solidarity. This collective activity is shown to produce surplus social value. This goes beyond driving the creative development and profitability of individual maker-members, upon which creative industries craft sector value propositions rely. However, the reliance on external agencies support through policy instrumentalization, was at times felt to be extractive and exploitative of makers and their work, particularly due to the unpaid nature of this socially-engaged activity. There were concerns this support landscape drives the organisations to rely on precarious, project-focused neoliberal work regimes and frequently demands a growth-focus, limiting their progressive potential.

The nascent development of a future, federated, maker-led craft commons, provides some hopefulness about the potential for the development of parallel craft economy, less reliant on unstable project funding; better able to advocate for policy attention and equitably distribute the resources held in common. The drive to self-organise, upon which this chapter focuses, provides a foundation from which to consider firstly, the conditions and characteristics of the work and labour of those running and maintaining these organisations, and secondly, the accessibility and equitability of the distribution of membership and participation and its benefits for those involved. These are discussed in the subsequent findings chapters.

CHAPTER 7:   MAKERS LEADING MAKERS – CARE IN CULTURAL LEADERSHIP

The three case studies – Applied Arts Scotland (AAS), Scottish Furniture Makers Association (SFMA), and Scottish Glass Society (SGS) – are all *maker-led* organisations with constitutional requirements to position makers in leadership and governance roles. This chapter makes a novel assessment of the role of peer leadership in shaping, structuring, and directing craft makers and their organisational activities by exploring it as an other-oriented, morally construed, care practice (Fisher & Tronto, 1990, p. 40). I build here on Alačovska's 'caring inquiry' approach (2020), which aims to disrupt the predominant individualization thesis of creative and cultural work, and illuminate the socialized and moral dimensions of creative craft work. It explores the leaders' roles in nurturing the 'progressive or transformative potential' (Banks, 2007b, p. 183) of craft work, and considers the potential of attention to care to 'rehabilitate' creative work as good work (Campbell, 2022).

There is a growing scholarship attending to care and its intersection with creative and cultural work that provides an opportunity to explore hidden and underappreciated labour practices and values (Alačovska, 2020; Alačovska & Bissonnette, 2021). In paying attention to care as a moral imperative there is ambition to challenge some of the overly pessimistic characterisations of creatives as either proponents or victims of neoliberal governmentality and individualization. In centering care, there is an opportunity to look at who cares for craft workers, and on what basis (Dent et al., 2023). This chapter attends to the impact of the policy context on this care role, finding it both drives makers' care needs and caring practices in the context of withdrawal of other forms support and, at times, restricts the capacity of makers to give care.

Tronto (1998, pp. 16–17) describes an ethic of care as having four key interrelated phases:

Caring about: the act or recognising and being attentive to the needs of others
Caring for: taking responsibility for addressing those needs
Care giving: the actual meeting of the material needs expressed

Care receiving being responsive to, and adapting, the care based on feedback from the recipients

This framework positions care as a necessary and morally construed series of nested and interrelated practices. It acknowledges the potential for care to be incomplete, incompetent, or otherwise lacking. The analysis within this chapter looks first at the practices and experiences of those providing, largely unpaid, care labour as organisational leaders. This explores the tensions between their compassionate intentions to do good for their communities and others – through sustaining and reproducing compassion and caring competencies of themselves and others – and the recognition of the not wholly positive experiences of undertaking the labour they provide. Following this, I account of the ways in which care, as both value and practice (Held, 2005), shows up in the leadership activities of the case study organisations. This chapter points to future potential for an enlarged recognition for care as a moral quality in leadership practices in the cultural and creative industries, with the potential to generate broader opportunities to 'care in common' with others (Chatzidakis et al., 2020) and (re)socialise individualized workers around non-economic values (Banks, 2007b).

7.1   Care labour in the work of maker-leaders

There is significant and growing academic interest in cultural leadership (Bilton, 2015; Caust, 2018; Cray et al., 2007; Hadley, 2024; Hewison & Holden, 2016), and burgeoning scholarship on the organisation of craft work (Bell et al., 2019; Luckman, 2015; Luckman & Thomas, 2018; Thomas & Luckman, 2024). There is also a growing parallel body of work on artist-led organisations (*ARIs in Britain - British Art Network*, n.d.; Biddlecombe, 2022; Wright, 2019). Despite this there has been surprisingly limited attention to the work practices, labour conditions and internal motivations of craft makers who also hold leadership and management roles guiding and supporting other makers.

Leadership and management formed a significant theme throughout the research process. Indeed, the research process for this thesis was largely supported by, and negotiated through, the three chairpersons who volunteered their time and attention to lead these organisations. The majority, 20 of the 24 makers interviewed for this research, were either currently or formerly involved in organisational leadership and governance. This section draws from the maker-leaders' testimonies about their work. It explores the ways in which they seek to rationalise the tensions between a compassionate drive to 'do good' and benefit others through

their work – often supporting and encouraging others to contribute – and the recognition of the challenging, and at times difficult conditions within which this work takes place.

7.1.1 Care-ful underpinnings of maker-leaders

Craft maker leaders and those contributing to their work in governance and administrative roles, do not currently consider their work as a form of care work. However, throughout the research process, I found that their practices were 'other-centred' (Lynch, 2007). They were based on compassionate and solidaristic care-based relations with others in their occupational field and beyond, motivated by 'understanding and improving the material and emotional conditions of others' (Wood et al., 2020). Their labour was also, for the most part, voluntary, and as such aligned with definitions of care as 'labour undertaken out of affection or a sense of responsibility for other people, with no expectation of immediate pecuniary reward' (Folbre, 1995, p. 75, quoted in Alačovska and Bissonnette, 2019, p. 136). Mirroring the survey findings (Section 4.1) the responsibilities assumed by a small and dedicated team of volunteers, drove the activities of the maker-led organisations, contributing significant resource. The sustainability of the organisations' activities was principally predicated on the ability to continually reproduce and refresh the voluntary commitments of others.

While care is increasingly advocated for as 'both value and practice' (Held, 2005) that can disrupt widespread 'carelessness' and 'organised neglect' at local, national, and international scales (Chatzidakis et al., 2020) care is not intrinsically morally good nor politically neutral. As Puig de la Bellacasa states: 'To care can feel good; it can also feel awful. It can do good; it can oppress.' (2017, p. 1). The implication here is that the maintenance, continuation, and repair of one 'world' can be destructive to others' worlds, and that care can be both a gift, given freely, and at times a heavy burden of responsibility. As will be seen below, the leaders' aspirations to do good, and sustain, continue, and repair the life-worlds of their organisations and memberships, were often in tension with their capacity to self-care.

Throughout the research period, participants expressed their individual and collective practices and associations as value-laden; motivated by compassion, aiming to realise sustainable prosperity for themselves and others. As such, I find the makers leading the case study organisations demonstrate a moral imperative and ethical orientation to undertake this work, despite the at-times difficult conditions, because they are compassionate and other-centred.

This aligns with Alačovska and Bissonette's findings (2021). As Alačovska writes, drawing on the work of Banks (2017b) and Hesmondhalgh (2017), these workers:

> 'care about' changing and bettering society by leveraging the symbolic, emancipatory, politically progressive value of their [and their members'] artistic products to enhance people's lives. (2020, p. 731)

Attending to care in this way can help account for the ways in which creative and cultural leadership and management practices are different 'by degrees' to other forms of leadership and management, more aligned with the goals of profit accumulation and extraction and exploitation of resources (Bilton, 2015). It points to opportunities to reassess the 'progressive or transformative potential' of such work (Banks, 2007b, p. 183). However, as will be seen below, the individualised imperative to care for others also contributes to issues of self-exploitation and overwork, in the absence of institutional and state support, and rising expectations of individual 'resilience' (Gupta & Gupta, 2022). And, while these roles came with a number of internal rewards, they were also 'faced with obligatory responsibilities' (Stebbins, 1992, p. 192) that impinged on their creative and occupational autonomy, and ability to carry out their own craft work.

7.1.2 Voluntary leadership as good bad work

Craft work, in terms of the design and making process, was commonly expressed by my research participants as 'good work', something they were called to, providing 'autonomy, interest and involvement, sociality, self-esteem, self-realisation, work–life balance and security' (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011, p. 36). This continues longstanding associations between craft and pleasurable, meaningful, satisfying work (Crawford, 2010; Luckman, 2013a; Marchand, 2022; Sennett, 2008). The work they carried out within craft organisations, conversely, was frequently aligned with ideas of 'bad work' that is 'involving control by or dependence on others; boredom; isolation; low self-esteem or shame; frustrated self-realisation, overwork and risk' (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011, p. 36). Organisational leaders expressed concerns about potential burnout and difficulties maintaining other (often significant and multifaceted) commitments, both professional and personal, in the face of "relentless" and growing administrative pressures related to their organisations' charity statuses and fundraising activities. They also expressed, due to the voluntary nature of the roles, their leadership work had imprecise and permeable boundaries, increasingly encroaching on other aspects of their professional and personal lives. Nonetheless those

contributing time to the running of these organisations expressed sincere pride, satisfaction and often pleasure in the work they did, especially when longstanding plans were realised, and benefits were achieved for others.

My interviewees talked at length about their own craft practices, starting with childhood stories of inspiration, before relaying incidents of self-discovery within formal and informal educational contexts, and often circuitous trajectories into craft work. Some navigating long periods where their interests took a backseat to other forms of paid employment in professional contexts, or around familial caring roles, before arriving at a making practice that they fiercely protected (sometimes not wholly successfully) against encroaching financial pressures and a raft of other responsibilities. These personal narratives articulated their work within the maker-led organisations as extensions of their 'occupational dedication' to craft (Stebbins, 2017). Luckman defines this dedication as 'vocation', or 'the importance of pleasure and pride in work well done and of a commitment to something larger than simply the work or a job' (2013a, p. 29). They were motivated to give back to their practice-based communities as a result of personal understanding of the pressures facing their peers, and lack of care available to them from other means.

SGS' chair took responsibility for the organisation because they felt there were no other means to care for the needs of the membership "there's nobody in Scotland looking after the interests of glass artists" ("Lynsey", Interview, 23Jan23), while SFMA's chair acknowledged the organisation's focus was unique, with no equivalents in the UK that the membership could turn to in their absence. AAS emerged at a point where both business development support and cultural funding for craft were being withdrawn by the state, leaving makers without policy representation or support infrastructure. AAS' more recent transition to a SCIO constitutional model in 2018 was predicated on the then-chair's concern for the continuing lack of confidence and insecurity of makers faced with unstable institutional support and increasing individual risks. While collective responses, the maker-led organisations are predicated on a small number of compassionate individuals stepping in and up to create the conditions for care to be given and received. Care was provided by these individuals in response to an accepted care-less-ness in the wider ecology.

The chairs had little to say about the actual work of care giving they undertook within craft organisations. It was frequently expressed as a series of mundane tasks. One Chair's response to my prompt was "you don't want to know about the boring stuff?" Followed by recounting what that entailed:

> "A lot of activities that we were doing were just really kind of boring, like operational stuff, making sure we had policies in place, making sure we had policies and procedures and making sure that actually the systems were in place, and we're not relying on knowledge that sat within individuals' heads or individuals' laptops, and that actually that kind of business intelligence was secured… and yeah, I'm kind of working on that." ("Hannah", Interview, 14Feb23)

While another noted: "you've got to do all the graft boring stuff. The minutes. The agendas. The following up there." ("Lynsey", Interview, 23Jan23). There was a recognition that these tasks had to be done, but the tasks in and of themselves were not the motivation for their voluntary contributions, expressed as a burden of care that they took from others. Indeed, the case studies' organisational structures are instituted to mitigate individual burdens for makers and provide for continuity of care in the face of both internal personnel changes and environmental shifts in the broader craft support landscape.

The care labour provided by maker-leaders was freely given, but it was not free; it required, as Tronto (1993) cautions, significant resources – including material resources, time, skills, and energy. There were costs and negative impacts for those providing care to makers as organisational leaders. The care labour they provided to the maker-led organisations was at times in conflict with their capacity to self-care, including as Alačovska recognises 'efforts to accomplish artistic aspirations and economic sustainability' (2020, p. 731). SGS' Chair "Lynsey" expressed increasing frustration during the field work that their role, originally taken on as a temporary commitment in the absence of other volunteers, was impinging on their own making practice, having "never intended to still be here at this point in time" (Interview, 25Jan23). While a board member of AAS described the labour as "highly demanding… challenging [and] often quite thankless." (Interview, 07Feb23) However, the provision of this labour was also an authentic expression of the leaders' values and professional self-image as caring individuals, committed to developing the internal goods available to their wider practice-based communities. Lay members recognised the leaders' commitment and

contributions. They were frequently reverential towards current and previous chairs for the "self-sacrifice" that sustained the organisations.

7.1.3 Sustaining and reproducing care labour

The sustainability of these organisations, and the practices held within their communities, were predicated on individuals' altruistic tendencies, and voluntary contributions. These were expressed as an established expectation for craft makers, with fewer paid leadership roles compared to other cultural sectors. This was understood to be increasingly difficult in the face of reducing welfare and increased workloads, particularly for younger makers undertaking portfolios of work around their making practices. This resulted in older, more financially secure makers extending their leadership responsibilities:

> Interviewer: you've obviously got quite a significant role as chair now. How did you progress into that role?
>
> "Lynsey": There was nobody else! There was nobody to be the secretary… I can't remember… I was a committee member. And it was basically because there were no bodies. I mean, it's been struggling, society's been struggling for a long time. So, in 2016-17, there weren't enough people to get to make the committee function. So that's how I joined. And I suppose… I'm the only one who joined at that time that really stuck it out... when the chair resigned in 2020, there wasn't really anybody else who wanted to do it, I don't really want to do it. But if I don't do it, then there's no society, you know, somebody has to do it. And there's nobody in the pipeline to do it either. So, it's a bit of a challenge. (Interview, 25Jan2023)

It was not insignificant that all three organisational leaders were career changers, having moved into professional craft practice later in life, with relative financial stability. For those that had the means to retire from, or move away from, professional paid work in other sectors, the privilege that came with being able to be a craft maker (and the resultant pleasure and satisfaction experienced) resulted in motivations to pay it forwards, and support others in their craft career aspirations. This often came in the shape of drawing on administrative skills and processes gained in previous professional contexts that maker-leaders had hoped to move beyond in their transition to more 'pleasureable' craft practices. This was understood, by these leaders, as serving the community to support them to acquire the 'internal rewards' (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 178) of their practice, while at times diminishing their own rewards.

With a growing acknowledgement that there were fewer makers putting themselves forward for board membership, as well as an ageing profile of those who do, there were concerns over the long-term sustainability of these organisations. As SGS' chair expressed: "the members of the glass society are getting older. And are more reluctant to get involved, or to go to places, so it's a bit of a struggle." (Interview, 23Jan23). This led to, in some cases, the need to change constitutionally to enable board members and chairs to serve for longer terms. SGS' chair had recently had their term in leadership extended in the absence of suitable replacement, and the organisation was constantly at risk of losing the capacity for functional governance, with only the minimum number of active committee members. Discussions in interviews and field work highlighted the tensions between leaders' ambitions, and the risks of putting additional pressures on other volunteers whose capacities fluctuated, and whose informal contributions could be easily withdrawn with limited recourse:

> "[E]verybody's voluntary... We're all volunteers. We do what we can. We are ambitious to do more, but the physicality of doing some of that is beyond us"
> ("Lynsey", Interview, 25Jan23).

SFMA committee member "Rory" described his contribution as "a role I've been trying to shed for a while", adding "this is not something people come forward and take, people are wise to volunteering." (Interview, 09Jun23) This comment recognised the burden of responsibility to provide unpaid care labour was often hard to shift for those that assumed it. SFMA had recently amended the allowed term of service for the organisational chair, enabling the existing chairperson to continue in their role in the absence of suitable or willing replacements. Those already undertaking voluntary roles commonly felt a duty of responsibility to step in, and stay on, to ensure the organisation continued to function. Concerns about widespread lack of, and reducing, care available from elsewhere were prominent in interviews.

Following a long period where the organisation had been led by one individual, who had recently stepped down as chair, AAS had instituted a leadership development process to enable future chairs to shadow the existing chair for a period as Vice Chair. Members were supported to 'step up' in a staggered process to learn from peers in board roles. This demystified the skills and responsibilities required of them, and instilled confidence in makers who had limited opportunity to gain leadership and governance experience in their ongoing practices as (primarily) sole-traders. The care practices were therefore being actively

reproduced within the organisation, despite recognition of the problems of this work. AAS'
sustainability in this respect was relatively assured due to the commitment to board
development and succession planning within the organisation. This was not always the case in
other organisations.

The organisational leaders also sought to augment the voluntary labour with paid roles, to
ensure both continuity and sustainability of the organisations. Gaining some core paid
resource was considered a way to motivate others to contribute to the organisation's mission,
as well as sustain those already in care-giving roles, by providing relief from the more
frustrating or taxing aspects of these practices. Mike Whittall, Chair of SFMA, who asked to
be named within the research, shared:

> "It leaves the committee in a position where, rather than having huge demands in terms
> of going to places and doing things, it's more about making decisions and having the
> ideas or the creativity." (Interview, 16Feb23)

Remunerated contributions, though, are predicated on the organisations generating income,
which due to the nature of cultural funding was often short-term, piecemeal, and uncertain.
Funding applications also required significant unpaid labour to prepare for them.

Paid-for labour interacted uneasily at times with maker-volunteers when drawn from beyond
the practice-based community. Their commitments to shared values were routinely questioned.
While volunteer labour is understood to be freely given, 'unforced and unobligated'
(Alačovska, 2020, p. 736), the responsibility to care by those in paid roles is disciplined
through the provision or withdrawal of external reward. Those based within the maker-
community often extended their contributions beyond what was remunerated. SFMA's
organisation's administrator was himself a furniture maker. He was willing to take the
relatively unfavourable employment terms, compared to his previous employment, due to his
furniture making ambitions and the freedom the part-time role would give him to dedicate to
his craft and contribute to his occupational community. The *Ash Rise* project producer,
embedded within the craft sector and its values, was consistently complimented as going
above and beyond their contracted hours: "she's spending her holiday time meeting people
making weird things from ash" (Fieldwork, 31May23). However, SFMA's chair sought to
"find somebody more in tune" (Fieldwork 31May23) when another paid contributor, who did
not have a craft background, was felt to be insufficiently aligned to the organisation's needs

and values. This demonstrates the way in which passion and compassion interweave. Paid contractors are not just expected to complete their work, but also to compassionately care for others in the process, sometimes to the point of self-exploitation.

The development of strategies for remunerating makers for their labour within the organisation was discussed by AAS' board as a means to sustain and reproduce the labour required to keep the organisation functional. This was also challenging the expectations for makers to provide unpaid labour, which was widely recognised to contribute to the precarity of craft makers in Scotland. In this process AAS sought to make visible and raise appreciation for their members' labour to those outwith the organisation, not just as craftspeople producing marketable commodities, but as creative producers and thinkers developing non-market aesthetic and social goods, for which they are often unpaid. This was also informed by wider changes in the policy environment. AAS was, during the fieldwork year, pursuing Multi-Year Funding from Scotland's national development body for the arts, screen and creative industries, Creative Scotland. In so doing, AAS had to explicitly demonstrate a commitment to the principles of fair work, providing work that is 'good, fair and decent' (Culture Radar, 2022, p. 19), following Scottish Government's commitment to becoming a Fair Work Nation by 2025. To demonstrate this commitment AAS developed a memorandum of understanding with Scottish Artists Union (SAU) to uphold SAU's recommended rates of pay for artists. They also produced an equality diversity and inclusion plan setting out actions for improving equity of opportunity and progression. This demonstrates AAS' role in increasing alignment and solidarity between makers and other cultural workers.

AAS' chair was keen to express that the organisation was increasingly moving, wherever possible within the confines of its charity governance structure and SCIO constitution, to remunerate maker-members for their labour rather than outside contributors. Remunerating members, embedded in practice-based relations of mutual respect and care, was understood to be benefitting the 'whole community who participate in the practice' (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 178), not just the person being remunerated. Nonetheless AAS continued to be reliant on volunteer labour for its operation, particularly in the development of new projects and fundraising for them. This at times interacted uneasily with those receiving financial benefits for their contributions. There were concerns from some unremunerated board members that this would operate to instil 'selfish and acquisitive tendencies' (Banks, 2007b, p. 110) within

the organisation; shaping decisions on what work to pursue based on individual benefit rather than community care. Further, there were concerns raised that the distribution of paid opportunities and responsibilities were unfair. Following a board meeting where this was discussed, one volunteer board member resigned, withdrawing their labour.

Sustaining these organisations, and the rewards that they offered their members, was therefore predicated on maintaining and reproducing the capacity to care, and the underpinning other-oriented compassionate motivations that drove and structured this labour. There were tensions between the expectations that care for their maker communities should be freely given and understanding that additional rewards – in the form of fair remuneration for contributions – would motivate increased participation and improve the equitability of who could provide this labour. Throughout the fieldwork maker-leaders were active in soliciting for volunteer contributions from others, and developing future leaders, despite recognising that this work was often poorly or un-remunerated, unsatisfying, and frustrating.

7.1.4 Compassionate Voluntary Leadership in Scotland's Craft Ecology

Unpaid labour is an acknowledged contributor to inequity in the demographic profile of cultural workers (Brook et al., 2018, 2020b; Siebert & Wilson, 2013). It is also a contributor to the overall functioning and economic contribution of the creative industries but rarely accounted for in official statistics. There is limited recognition or awareness of the scale of volunteering taking place within Scotland's craft sector. Significant attention has been given to low or no-pay in entry-level cultural work, particularly in the highly competitive spheres of screen industries (Eikhof & Warhurst, 2013), contemporary visual art (Kompatsiaris, 2015), fashion and beauty blogging (Duffy, 2016, 2017), where aspiration and hope for future work drive – primarily freelance creatives' – participation in uneven power relationships and exploitative conditions (McRobbie, 2016). This body of research primarily relates to unpaid labour's deviation from the ideal of fair remuneration for work, where the market logics of creative industries policy emphasises the economically productive and profitable, while ignoring other forms of economic organisation (Banks, 2007b). It tends to account for 'passion' (Hong, 2022) and self-interest motivating volunteer labour as an enterprising means to generate future paid opportunities, and the contribution this plays to creative labour's precarity and exploitation in the context of neoliberalism and individualisation (Alačovska, 2020).

As yet, there is limited attention to the voluntary labour performed by cultural leaders or their motivations. I evidence here that maker-leaders' practices are underpinned by commitment to shared values, and social responsibility to meet the caring needs of makers as a form of compassion, with moral considerations and internal rewards (Banks, 2006, 2017b). While these roles could, and indeed sometimes did, lead to external goods in the form of future economic reward, prestige, or opportunities for themselves, these were not expressed by leaders as the motivations to undertake this labour. Rather the ambition was to sustain and develop the possibilities for internal goods and rewards that could be shared by the practice-based community.

The work of care-giving, the 'actual material meeting of the caring need' (Tronto, 1998, p. 16), is undertaken by a small number of individuals with governance and administrative responsibilities. It is often unpaid, and relayed as frustrating, unsatisfying, and frequently un-creative. Voluntary contributions to these organisations can also detract from makers' individual enterprising and income-generating work, contributing to poverty, precarity and inequality. In this context voluntary contributions were falling, raising concerns about the sustainability of these organisations. Maker-leaders had to increase their unpaid contributions as a result; through taking on increased responsibilities, extending the terms of their service to the organisations, as well as working to secure resources for paid roles and leadership development and progression aligned with Scotland's Fair Work policies. These increased the administrative and bureaucratic responsibilities of their roles, raising the potential for rational management to encroach on craft work's autonomy (Banks, 2010). Those who carry out this labour continue to derive pleasure and satisfaction from the effects their work has on others, as well as themselves. This work is underpinned by a compassionate and care-based basis for economic action, whereby the practices are motivated by a shared understanding of need. However, meeting the needs of others was often in conflict with maker-leaders capacity to meet their own needs.

7.2 Care in the practices of maker-leaders

In seeking to understand how *care* as both value and practice (Held, 2005) shows up in the behaviours and decisions of those leading maker-led organisations, I look to the phases of care approach proposed by Tronto (1998, pp. 16–17). Looking across the practices and testimonies

of the maker-leaders, I seek here to articulate the ways in which their intentions to be, and be seen as, compassionate care-giving individuals, invested in improving the conditions of others, underpin their actions. I also seek to evaluate the extent to which the care is complete, competent, or appropriate. I propose some restrictions and frictions that exist between the good intentions, and the actual provision of care.

7.2.1 The foundations of care – Leaders' attentiveness to makers' unmet care needs

Across board meetings, committee meetings, project working groups, and interviews with organisational chairs and board members, there was a common refrain "what are they struggling with?" (Fieldwork, 18May23) This question demonstrated a persistent attentiveness by maker-leaders to the memberships' needs. It underpinned conversations about the roles of the organisations, and decisions about how to direct their time, material resources and attention. I observed significant organisational practices relating to *caring about* makers, developing understanding of the members' unmet needs. However, with at times limited resources, and shifting priorities, members' needs were roughly sampled, mistaken, presumed, and assumed, often in favour of board and committee needs, whose care needs were understood to be a proxy for the wider membership, and took on a hierarchical value. This was also due to craft makers' lack of confidence in expressing their needs. One advisor to AAS considered their silences as a symptom of longstanding lack of attentiveness from the wider craft ecology, which had resulted in a reluctance to speak up.

For leaders and contributors, the drive to be maker-led was underpinned by a belief that the organisations would be more attentive to the needs of their members as a result. Research participants directed criticism at other development or support initiatives, whose practices were described as "about us without us" (Fieldwork, 13Oct2023), in the wider craft ecology. They were, felt makers, unable to fully recognise or attend to makers' needs, without being undermined by contradictory external interests. While leaders drew extensively from sector reviews produced by the likes of Craft Scotland, Creative Scotland, and Crafts Council UK, often relaying key facts and recommendations in my interviews with them, they were often critical of the gaps in understanding. The needs of their particular constituents were described as poorly- or under-represented in the findings. One exchange, with the Chair of AAS really emphasised this underpinning:

> Interviewer: you've mentioned multiple times, about being grassroots, member led, community oriented. What does that mean to you?
>
> "Hannah": What does it mean to me? It means that what the organisation does is informed immediately and dynamically by the needs of professional craft makers who are operating within Scotland. That we are, as professional craft makers ourselves, that we have already that understanding of what's working well within the sector and what's not working for us, where the gaps are. And we have ideas about how to address them. And all of that then kind of feeds into how Applied Arts Scotland works and what it is that we're trying to achieve. (Interview, 14Feb2023)

Shared experiences and values between the leaders and the community to be cared about were seen as important to driving the underpinning attentiveness to the caring needs. Shared respect for the practice and its internal rewards, is understood to provide maker-leaders with an 'ethical centre' that encourages them to maintain and sustain the practices of their communities, thereby challenging the supposed desocialising effects of individualization (Banks, 2007).

Membership applications often provided the clearest indication of need: applicants expressed frustrations, gaps in support, or ambitions that motivated their action to join. The organisational chairs discussed trends they were seeing in both the profile and professed needs of applicants during assessments of membership applications. However, these did little to illuminate continuing members' needs and were rarely analysed as a data set or circulated beyond the review panels that assess them. SFMA's chair recognised that this was not a formal process, and that this information was inconsistently captured. SGS, with its open membership, gained limited understanding from new members about their needs beyond their name, location, and capacity to pay membership fees. Social media use, including the use of organisational hashtags, comments on profiles and groups, were often cited as a means by which the organisations' leaders "scan the horizon" and learn about the members' needs. While this was framed as a "crude temperature check" (Interview, 07Feb23), there was limited recognition of the bias towards those most digitally competent and active online, or the extent to which certain needs would be more likely to be expressed within that format than others. Concerns were raised about the potential for image-based social media, Instagram in particular, to obscure makers' unmet care needs due to its 'relentless positivity' (Luckman & Andrew, 2020, p. 229).

Lay members expressed their concerns about no longer meeting membership criteria, as financial pressures (recently exacerbated by fuel, food and housing price rises under the so-called cost-of-living crisis) meant making practices were stalled, paused, or no longer economically viable, often deprioritised around a portfolio of employed and freelance paid work, voluntary responsibilities, health and wellbeing considerations, and family caring responsibilities. Needs that would undermine the individual's supposed authority to claim membership of the making community were less likely to be shared and were often purposefully obscured from organisational leaders. Within interviews these were regularly "off the record", accompanied by expressions of guilt or shame, at not meeting presumed thresholds of active practice or quality. This self-blame for failure, understood to be a corollary to increased individualization (Beck, 1992), disrupted makers' sense of embeddedness within their practice-based communities, and instigated increased self-coping behaviours aligned with market-driven enterprise and the acquisition of external rewards, resulting in withdrawal of their presence from fora where organisational leaders could assess their needs.

Face-to-face engagement between members and their organisational representatives, were felt to be the most important mechanism for developing an understanding of needs. Makers were more able to share their care needs openly within synchronous exchanges, whether online or in-person, compared to survey and social media use that was felt required a more 'professional' identity aligned with superficial network sociality (Wittel, 2001, p. 52). When lockdown occurred in early 2020, in-person connections between members became increasingly difficult, and this had consequences for the organisational chairs' ability to be attentive to the needs of their members. Following SGS' 40th Anniversary programme, COVID-19 restrictions curtailed the organisation's member communications and planned activities. With limited engagement digitally to date, SGS were unable to 'pivot' to online exchanges, leaving members' needs increasingly unknown to the committee. The faceless and empty web-profiles of more than one-third of SGS' members online is indicative of the silent withdrawal from the community. Inattentiveness to members' needs resulted in frustrated plans, low engagement by members in planning and delivery, and loss of confidence from organisational leaders and board members in their actions.

In 2020 AAS already had a foundation of digital engagement and a broader digital skills-base. Responding quickly to the lockdown conditions, the organisation set up initially weekly, and then monthly, coffee morning style Zoom meetings titled *Connecting Makers*. This convivial exchange was warmly received and expanded into a range of subject-specific interest groups and geographically focused sub-groups. It allowed not only the organisation's leader a platform from which to be attentive to the members' needs, but the members to be attentive to each other's needs, generating compassion. SFMA likewise initiated, with support from a creative producer, a regular online forum called *Assemble.* Following the lockdown period, as venues and studios reopened, the ability to maintain online engagement stalled. SFMA found it could not sustain *Assemble.* AAS likewise wound back their programme of regular online meetings.

Over the fieldwork year, particularly from those that took on board and committee responsibilities in the period following the wind-down of online meeting schedules, board members expressed frustration at the absence of understanding of members' needs: "I feel like I know nothing, and it really drives me nuts" ("Frankie", Interview, 18Apr23). There was throughout the lockdown period, and following it, a recognition that needs were shifting in the context of increasing isolation and economic precarity precipitated by the pandemic. Those already digitally skilled and resourced had significant headway to refresh their understanding of member needs, make changes and sustain them. Lack of awareness of care needs was a significant disruption to the foundations of care, both to planning, and to motivating voluntary labour contributions to realise planned activity.

As a former chair of SFMA noted, the functionality of these organisations requires that the "people taking responsibility can hear what people need" (Interview, 16Feb23). The organisational chairs, often praised by members for their listening skills and attentiveness were described as "conduits", drawing in and filtering members' needs on behalf of the organisations. Their experiences as makers themselves, embedded within practice-based communities, were critical to this work, with the basis of caring actions requiring, as Alačovska writes 'context-specific knowledge and personal awareness of local adversities, hardships and despair' (2020, p. 735). However, the weaknesses of this approach were also discussed by one interviewee "Arthur" from SGS:

"[T]hat can become like a single point of failure in an organisation […] that puts pressure on individuals, and it also means that the knowledge is lost." (Interview, 09Jun23)

Indeed, there were limited means by which leaders' assessment of makers' care needs were communicated back out to the memberships, that would enable them to be reviewed, challenged, or confirmed.

The practices of caring about members' unmet needs, conceived as a form of attentiveness, therefore underpins the work of those leading the case study organisations, and is the 'foundation of justice' (Noddings, 2015, p. 75). Leaders within these case study organisations are overtly aware of attentiveness' foundational role. Those with formal board and committee roles, who took responsibility for *caring about* the needs of the membership, expressed a lack of knowing in emotional terms as a lack of intimacy between themselves and their members. It was also described as a lack of mandate for leaders' action. Maker-leaders undertake a range of practices to develop understandings of their members' care needs; reviewing applications, surveying members, engaging with sector reviews and policy publications, and drawing from their life-worlds as makers socially connected with other makers. They are also alert to some of the limitations of these practices, and the necessity to make best use of what information they have at any point, within the confines of time and financial resources available. There are multiple factors at play here, not least in who is given (or takes) the opportunity to speak and express their care needs, and to what extent those in positions of responsibility respond fairly and effectively to capture and record those needs. How care needs are documented and attended to, as largely volunteer roles, move in and out of the organisation, taking their knowledge with them, is also a prevalent concern.

7.2.2 Taking Responsibility – Caring for Makers

Underpinning the organisations' capacities to assume responsibility for meeting the identified care needs of makers is a necessary trust between the members and leaders. Leaders are those who have assumed delegated powers for setting organisational priorities, and meeting external governance requirements, in organisational roles. The resources available to these organisations (material, social and political) are dependent on members' participation, which in turn is reliant on continued consensus for their priorities and actions. This is indicative of 'a relational ethic' within the organisations, which 'recognizes the roles of both carer and cared-

for in establishing and maintaining the caring relation.' (Noddings, 2015: 73). Decisions about what to take responsibility for, and how, were therefore of significant importance to the work of the organisational leaders.

Maker-leaders assume responsibility through the collection, protection, development, and allocation of resources. This starts, for each of the case study organisations, with pooling resources from the membership themselves, to initiate the caring relationship. For AAS' Chair, who had recently set the membership fees at a low level (£25 for professional membership, £15 for students and associates), payment was understood to be a gesture towards approval of the organisation's mission. This both acknowledged the rights of the member to receive care and indicated individual members' commitment to care-giving to the wider membership. The organisation's board and chair then drew from that capital, provided by the membership, to seek additional resources, in the form of partnerships, grant funding and earned income, which in turn supports a range of paid roles who undertake activity on behalf of the organisation. SFMA's membership costs significantly more, at £100 for 'Individual / Professional' membership (although reduced rates are available for start-up businesses, the unwaged, students and associates). The organisation's responsibility became delivery of core 'membership benefits' related to the upkeep of the website and online profiles, annual exhibition opportunities, and collation and circulation of commissioning inquiries. Members' payment was deemed delegation of that responsibility to the organisation and its volunteers. Additional resources beyond membership fees, in the form of partnership income and grants, were sought only for activity that would demonstrate a broader social benefit, such as project funding with educational and public engagement outcomes.

For SGS the membership fees cost £35 for professional membership providing 'eligibility to enter our annual exhibitions' (*Join SGS – Scottish Glass Society*, n.d.) alongside access to both share and receive news, among other benefits. Payment of the fees was considered entrance to the society, and a demonstration of members' commitment to the core upkeep and maintenance of the society and its aims. The organisation was almost entirely dependent on membership income, so in practice this meant supporting the organisations' administrative and bookkeeping costs, and subscriptions related to webhosting to enable digital communications and promotions of member events and exhibitions to take place. Additional responsibilities

came with additional resource asks of the members, who paid fees once selected for exhibitions or masterclasses, and were asked to volunteer time towards exhibition invigilation.

In each case study the payment of membership fees acted as a proxy for determining consensus for the assumed caring responsibilities of the organisations, as well as a commitment from members to contribute to the care of their peers through generating common goods and services. These formalised the ties between the memberships as morally construed relationships of both 'commitment and mutuality' and 'obligation and solidarity' (Lynch, 2007, p. 12). The process of collecting membership fees – as relayed by board and committee members in interviews – were continually being refined. To negate friction surrounding the assumed responsibilities of the organisations, these processes were made as simple as possible; this included automated annual payments and streamlined membership application processes. In this way maker-leaders take responsibility, but they are also given responsibility to assume care-giving through the constitutional processes afforded by the membership-led structures. This enabled the maker-leaders some freedom to pursue additional resources, permitted by the authority of delegated leadership provided by the members' approval. Pursuing resources – and the attendant administrative and reporting requirements that came with it – was therefore not only a means by which the maker-leaders assume responsibility, but a major part of their *care giving* practice.

7.2.3 Giving and receiving care – creating the conditions for reciprocity

In Tronto's schema phases three and four are *caregiving* and *care receiving* respectively. The ethical quality of the former relates to the competence and skills of those providing care, while the latter relates to the receptiveness of care givers to respond to the care receivers fairly and equitably. It also relates to the commitment to continually refresh and improve care as new needs emerge. These phases are closely linked and are thus explored here together.

The care given was not always satisfactory; member-makers expressed frustration when their expectations were unmet or when the offer of care was unclear. Leaders were aware of the limitations on the scope and scale of their caregiving labour, and frequently expressed the desire to do more, but were restrained by the resources they could access. This included limitations to their own labour power, those of their boards and committees, and access to financial resources. Chair of SFMA, Mike Whittall, described this as an ongoing "balancing

act" between ambitions for improving and extending the work of the association, and managing the fit within the resource context: "[W]e want to do all sorts of things. But then we have to tailor that to what we can actually secure in terms of financial help to do it" (Interview, 16Feb23). Chair of SGS "Lynsey" also expressed continuing ambition to "do more" and "organise more things for members", with a focus on increasing the opportunities for networking between the members and online promotion – both an acknowledged draw for membership (Interview, 25Jan23). This ambition was unrealised due to ongoing lack of access to resources. Across all three organisations there was resignation that the reducing resource context was increasingly creating a gulf between the rising needs and expectations of members, and the care giving capacities of the leaders.

Those in leadership roles recognise they are not wholly competent to provide for the full range of care needs expressed by their members. They are often the best option in the absence of other volunteers, or other means to provide care in the wider ecology. While all three leaders brought a wealth of skills and experience into the organisations, largely developed through their previous non-craft professional experiences in other sectors, they recognised skill gaps. SGS' vice-chair "Arthur", acknowledges this constrains the society's action, particularly in relation to declining glass education infrastructure:

> "[W]e're kind of like, oh, my God, this problem… what can we do about it? But it's… we're kind of overwhelmed by the problem. I think we're kind of, we'd like to do something about it. But we can't quite come up with a solution." (Interview, 09Jun23)

There were limited opportunities for the craft-maker leaders to upskill or develop their competencies in areas such as fundraising and project management that could enhance their caregiving capacities, due to lack of time and suitable opportunities. They tended to augment their own skills by drawing together a range of skills and experiences in the boards and committees, as well as seeking paid labour on an ad hoc project basis aligned with funded activity, as can be seen in Section 7.1.3. Overall, this demonstrates that leadership competency in Scotland's craft ecology is largely left to individuals to self-develop, without clear routes for development support, or strategic investment at a national level.

Maker-leaders themselves have unmet care needs, for their leadership skills and capacities. This further contributes to burnout, overwhelm and sense of self-blame when ambitions are unrealised. Increasingly (as discussed in Section 6.3.4) there was evidence that the leaders of

the various maker-led organisations in Scotland were sharing practice and developing the possibilities for collaboration, suggesting a hopeful possibility for peer-support and mutually beneficial exchange to develop in the future.

When discussing experiences of participating in maker-led organisations, the receipt of care is not a simple one-way transaction; lay members align the reception of care with the ability to give-back to their community, to contribute fairly and generate shared internal goods. Care giving and care receiving are closely linked, indicative of the relational basis of the caring ethic that infuses these organisations. The case study organisations operate as places to share and exchange ideas, resources, and materials, as this example from AAS' Closing the Loop Group member "Romy" demonstrates:

> "I love the way they operate. Because it's like a bring and buy sale. It was just like, I've got some of that stuff, what have you got, and the jewellers bring off cuts and the silversmiths bring off cuts and metal workers bring other things you know, so it fits in the whole ethos, just works with my brain and my way of working." (Interview, 24Apr23)

SFMA member "Shaun" also shared that there was significant use of the network for barter exchanges; swapping tools, wood leftover from projects, and other materials, often facilitated through member email lists and newsletters. This also prompted non-members to gift tools and materials to the Association's members (Interview, 30May23). AAS board member, "Vivian", described the organisation as:

> "[A] place where our members can kind of come together and we can have conversations about the support that they need, or desire, or currently have, or had before, with a view to supporting others." (Interview, 07Feb23)

Members frequently shared opportunities they had to give and receive gifts to other members, barter and exchange physical tools, materials, and equipment, as well as intangible goods – sharing knowledge, experience, ideas and opportunities through their organisational networks and during events. These hidden compassionate exchanges that take place within maker-led organisations – mutual aid, bartering, gifting, sharing – illuminate the ways in which craft workers use their organisational ties to mitigate low pay, precarity and risk (Alačovska & Bille, 2021; Sandoval, 2016, 2018) whilst also contributing to good lives for themselves, their creative communities (Dent et al., 2023) and others. They demonstrate a socially progressive potential in their work, promoting alternative economic organising, albeit on a small scale.

This reciprocity is a sought after and promoted aspect of the case study organisations' membership benefits. AAS member "Romy" described the "reciprocal ethos" as something that is "available" to her:

> "[I]t's almost like having a massive directory of very clever people that you can they can call on you, and you can call them. And I think that's, that's a really useful, useful thing, because it also links, you know, we're geographically quite spread, but [through AAS] we can contact each other." (Interview, 24Apr23)

These reciprocal caring exchanges did not happen without intervention, and the organisational leaders were active in developing and improving the platforms and structures that would enable them. Tronto articulates this 'responsiveness' as part of the moral quality of care (1998, p. 17). This included being receptive to makers' feedback that this was increasingly a sought-after resource, but that it still required too much labour on their part to coordinate; the infrastructures to facilitate these exchanges were fragile and inconsistent.

Incoming SGS chair "Arthur" saw developing mutual aid and reciprocity between the membership as the major priority for the society's development. While Mike Whittall was also alert to this in his discussion of what might be improved in the work of SFMA:

> "I've always felt we could… join up the membership a little bit better… There has always been a real willingness among people, among members, to talk and to share ideas. And I haven't quite alighted on how we might bring that more to the fore. And part of it's down to creativity, part of it is down just having the time to see something like that through. But if I'd like to do one other thing, it would be to try and just put some kind of framework in place, which might encourage that a little more."
> (Interview, 16Feb23)

The chairs' attention to facilitating mutual aid within the membership was informed by an appreciation that – like many cultural workers who valorise non-marketised values – makers' unmet care needs were largely unlikely to be met by 'the market', due to their ambivalence or outright rejection of 'capitalist norms such as profit maximisation, disinterested exchange or wealth accumulation' (Banks, 2007b, p. 184). Leaders also recognised that that makers were well attuned, and often best placed, to meet the needs of their peers through orientation around a shared understanding of the internal goods and social imperatives underpinning their craft work. In this way leaders' behaviours demonstrated considerations of 'competence' in care

giving (Tronto, 1998, p. 17) beyond their own roles, and as such these decisions were morally construed.

7.2.4 Other-oriented leadership practices

Maker-leaders' actions and decision-making practices align with Tronto's schema in that they demonstrate an active intention to meet the care needs of makers through attending to makers' unmet care needs, assuming responsibility to care for their members, directly giving care, and responding to the care that has been given (1998, pp. 16–17). They also create the conditions by which this responsibility can be shared by the membership; creating and maintaining tangible and intangible infrastructures that are held in common, through which makers can care for one another. By taking responsibility for meeting the unmet care needs of makers – through gathering, allocating, and distributing resources – organisational leaders and those that work with them create the conditions for caring relationships and mutually beneficial non-financial exchanges to develop more broadly. This aligns with Lynch's assessment that care is a form of capital that 'help[s] to establish a basic sense of importance, value and belonging, a sense of being appreciated, wanted and cared about' (2007, p. 32). This 'nurturing capital', according to Lynch, can enable people to flourish and can increase their capacity and propensity to care for others in response.

There is evidence that care is multiplied and extended through the care practices of those leading the maker-led organisations, generating increased compassion – ethical and moral commitments and attachments – within Scotland's craft ecology. In this way, care extends from being a practice within the organisations that disrupts selfish and acquisitive market-driven tendencies, to a broad social value orientation aligned with 'democratic commitment to justice, equality, and freedom for all' (Tronto, 2013, p. 23). The organisational leaders' practices reflect the wider memberships' aspirations to be, and be seen as, contributing socially, exemplified by one member of SGS who had recently joined:

> "I want to be able to use my work to link into something, a bigger message or something. So, it's not just oh that's pretty. To me, the prettiness of it is nice, but the making people think, and possibly changing views or helping promote a view is something that I would love glass to do more of." ("Becky", Interview, 17May23)

As individuals, makers expressed limitations on their capacity to contribute socially. Many I spoke to incorporated processes, practices and symbolic meaning related to their ethical,

social, and environmental values within their craft work. As individuals, however, they worked independently, and were subject to market forces, largely reliant on entrepreneurial skills and enterprising behaviours to market their products as cultural commodities to receptive middle-class consumers, or undertake work to contract, where the power dynamics transformed care into a controlled form of service provision. However, as collectives they understood their labour could be directed towards caring in common with others, beyond 'the market'. These compassionate good intentions were often idealistic and utopian, heterogeneous and inconsistent. The maker-leaders worked to align and direct their members' compassionate intentions, and through their organisational structures, generate surplus social value and common goods.

For both AAS and SFMA, facilitating mutual aid deepened the caring commitments and social bonds between the memberships, and brought these social values to the fore. Both organisations, during the field work, were delivering collaborative projects with third parties, around themes such as environmental sustainability that extended the care within the practice-based community to 'care in common' (Chatzidakis et al., 2020) with human and non-human others. This motivated increased volunteer contributions and unlocked grant income, thus providing an increased resource context for the organisations, and an increased capacity to give and receive care. For SGS, who struggled to facilitate exchange and mutual aid between their members during the field work year – partly due to wider disruption in the glass sector precipitated by institutional closures and reducing infrastructures – the social bonds between the members were more fragile and voluntary contributions were lower.

Attention to maker-leaders' support for and development of makers' practices of caring with others within the case study organisations trouble the persistent characterisation of creative workers as *care-less* and self-interested (Alačovska, 2020, p. 730). It adds to growing scholarship on the moral imperatives and ethical attachments underpinning creative labour and its organisation (Banks, 2017; Hesmondhalgh, 2017). In 'acting together in solidarity' (Alačovska, 2020, p. 737) maker-led organisations contribute to a re-moralisation and re-socialisation of the economy that brings forth opportunities for non-market value exchanges and alternative economic practices. These 'love, care and solidarity labours', argues Lynch, create 'nurturing capital available to us personally, socially, and politically' (2007, p. 8). This nurturing capital is shown to raise makers' capacity and propensity to care. The maker-led

organisations (resourced by the voluntary labour that underpins them) enables makers to contribute socially, and raises appreciation and recognition for these contributions. This work both illuminates the ecological interdependencies of makers' lives with others, and draws attention to the persistence of 'more-than-capitalism values' (Luckman, 2018, p. 314) underpinning makers' self-organisation. It speaks to the possibilities and practices of social re-embedding taking place within cultural production, as increasingly individuals choose to align themselves to ethical and moral initiatives that produce opportunities for meeting shared care needs unmet by market forces.

Collective organising around non-market values might challenge the 'neo-Foucauldian' or 'governmental' readings of cultural work that articulates cultural workers as increasingly responsible for their own exploitation and subordination to the interests of capital (Banks, 2007b, p. 42). However, there is no doubt that this 'social turn' (Heelas, 2002) is both a reaction to and a product of the current cultural policy context. As Borgen writes 'traffic flows according to a system of roads' (2013, p. 48); the leaders' organisation of caring in common increasingly takes shape within a socio-political context that demands it. As individualised resilience and biographic free choice replaces institutional welfare and more traditional forms of social attachments in conditions of institutionalized individualization (Beck, 1992; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002b), there is increased need for grassroots organisation and mutual aid as a system of survival and coping. The maker-leaders seek opportunities to develop reciprocal caring arrangements between their memberships to develop nurturing capital within an existing system that appears careless. These caring practices – including developing practices of *caring with* others – was understood by the maker-leaders as a necessity of organisational survival, as much as an extension of authentic compassion for others. 'Care' in this respect could be understood as the corollary to both 'self-organise' and 'be creative'; 'either you do it, or you drown' (Verwoert, 2013). Compassionate practices, from both leaders and maker-members, have the possibility to create opportunities to generate 'nurturing capital' from beyond the practice communities raising the perception and value of craft (and its attendant values) in the world. It also has the potential to be exploited and instrumentalised to further non-cultural aims (Hadley & Gray, 2017), where the strongly held compassions of a relatively small and precarious group are called upon as a salve to the deleterious effects of globalised neoliberalism.

7.3   Chapter Summary and Conclusions

In the chapter I have explored some of the nuances in the maker-leaders' practices of care. Looking across these practices of care-giving, caring about, taking responsibility for caring for and with others, and caring in common. Organising in the face of an antagonistic policy landscape these leadership practices demonstrate solidarity with wider political ideals by 'taking collective responsibility' (Baker & Burke, 2023, p. 33). The intention to work otherwise operates from the micro-contexts of intimate, interpersonal relations, through community-building work, to the macro-sphere of inter-agency co-operation and solidarity with broader political ideals. Maker-leaders running these organisations provide care as a 'labour of love' motivated by 'a combination of feelings of affection and responsibility' (Cancian, 2000, p.137 quoted in Tronto, 2013, p. 20) towards their memberships as practice-based communities with shared internal rewards. Through care practices, maker-leaders also acknowledge their, and their members', 'embeddedness and inseparability' from the world, expressed as *Dasein* or 'being in the world' (Heidegger, 1927/2011, quoted in Horrigan-Kelly et al., 2016). In so doing, they are motivated to develop solidarity and opportunities to care in common with others beyond their memberships.

While the caring ethic has been shown to infuse the practices of the maker-leaders, there is also no doubt that this work is small-scale, fragile, and relatively unsustainable, not least because of the unpaid and 'bad' characteristics of the work itself. At times the care provided is incomplete, inconsistent, and there is an obvious gulf between the care needs expressed by the maker-members and the resources (both human and financial) available to meet those needs. By considering the maker-leaders running these organisations as compassionate, value-laden catalysts driving other-oriented behaviours and generating nurturing capital for both individual makers and craft as a cultural form, the hope is that their own care and development can be more fully attended to by the wider ecology.

CHAPTER 8:   PARTICIPATION IN MAKER-LED ORGANISATIONS IN SCOTLAND – QUESTIONS OF EQUITY, DIVERSITY, ACCESS, AND INCLUSION

In this chapter the conditions of membership, enablers and barriers to participation, and the organisations' attitudes towards questions of equity, diversity, access, and inclusion are explored. It finds that each of the case-study organisations are preoccupied by ethical concerns for their respective communities, particularly in the fair distribution of opportunity and reward in the form of both internal and external goods. However, there is an overall underdeveloped assessment of their roles in contributing to continuing justice or injustice in the distribution of – and opportunities for participation in – cultural work. This chapter seeks to highlight some of the emergent practices of the case study organisations, and the makers' responses to them; both those positively contributing to increased and socially diversified access and inclusion, whilst also highlighting the attitudinal and structural barriers that constrain them.

Questions of equality, diversity and inclusion are increasingly prevalent in Scotland's craft sector. Recent commitments to 'tackling ableism and… supporting anti-racism action' (Craft Scotland, 2021, p. 3) from the national development body for craft were published in the wake of: firstly, growing evidence of the resolutely unequal negative impacts of the Coronavirus mitigations (Craft Scotland, 2020); and secondly, recognition of lack of progress on racial diversity in the professionalised sector at a UK level (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2020; Patel, 2020b). 'Fair access to craft and making' was highlighted as one of nine *MAKE Manifesto* commitments following research conducted with 'Scotland's many-sided craft community' (Panel, 2018). Diversity and inclusion is positioned as a key priority area, alongside education, and digital resourcing and connectivity, to frame programmatic interventions and strategy, with a focus on school craft and making education driving improvements in access and inclusion (James-Beith, 2021, p. 9). A recently published sector review, drawing from interviews with sector leaders, also highlighted both racial and class diversity as a key challenge, noting:

> In terms of equalities and inclusion, all stakeholders felt there should be greater
> diversity of makers as the sector (both makers and people in support organisations) are

predominantly white and middle class, particularly at more established and professional levels. (Craft Scotland, 2023b, p. 52)

These responses acknowledge the limited attention this area of craft work has been given, relative to other forms of cultural work. Sector bodies seek to address the problems of inequitable access, representation, and progression through awareness raising, direct delivery of interventions, and encouragement and resourcing of inclusive practices in the sector.

While maker-led membership organisations are acknowledged and celebrated as contributing to makers' promotion, development, and progression (see e.g. Lapeyre, 2021), they have played a heretofore undetermined role in the equity, diversity, and inclusivity of craft work in Scotland. This chapter aims to make a productive intervention through illuminating the ways in which maker-led organisations' practices intersect with questions of equity of opportunity, fair distribution of resources, inclusion, and diversity in Scotland's craft ecology.

8.1   Free to Craft?

As we have seen, much of the literature argues craft's disrupting and liberating power revolves around the supposed freedom to choose to undertake craft and thereby benefit from its unalienated pleasures and satisfactions. Luckman however proposes that while craft work may be experienced as freeing and enjoyable, self-employed craft micro-enterprise – particularly for women – is often undertaken out of economic necessity as a flexible occupation that can fit around other responsibilities (2015a). There is limited account, by the proponents of craftwork as a route to emancipation, of the gendered or otherwise socially patterned access to craft work, or the ways rewards – internally or externally derived – that follow from it, accrue in unjust ways. Indeed, many evangelical proponents of craft work's liberatory potential, rarely consider the ways in which this 'liberation' is correlated with increased individualization of risk, leaving 'workers alone – without job security or the safety net of state or social welfare protections – to bear the risks of fragmented, precarious and discontinuous working lives' (Banks et al., 2013, p. 3).

Craft's supposed freedoms and rewards and are contingent on individuals' capacities to bear the personal risks of this individualised work. The economic viability of the craftsperson's pursuit of quality over quantity is only present when consumer demand is there to receive it, as Pye writes, 'at any price' (1968). Without sufficient demand, the craftsperson must fall back

on their own resources, or economic, cultural and social capital in the terms of Bourdieu (1986), to underwrite their autonomy and self-directed craft work. As acknowledged by Patel in her recent work on diversity initiatives, while formal barriers to entry are understood as low relative to other forms of cultural work, 'it is generally the relatively privileged who can establish and sustain a craft career' (2020a, p. 177). In craftwork, while there are undoubtedly unalienated freedoms, this does not come without a cost. Risk is individualised (Beck, 1992), and reliant on a receptive market, undercutting the 'romantic notion' of creative freedom based on, as Ettema discusses, 'aesthetic sensibilities or insensibilities' of individual craftspeople (1981).

The associations between craft and free and voluntary participation disregard the extent to which craft is practiced (often relatively informally) around other forms of employment and both paid and unpaid economic activity, most often on sole-trader or microenterprise bases for very low income levels, leading to it being largely absent from formal creative industries workforce statistics (Craft Scotland, 2023b), or confused with skilled manufacture (Brook et al., 2020a). Limited attention to workforce demographics and inequity of craft opportunities follows these intersecting ambiguities (Patel & Dudrah, 2022, p. 1551). This has resulted in a lack of impetus for change: in 2020's *The Market for Craft* report published by the UK Crafts Council, survey data showed the proportions of BAME makers had not changed in over a decade, with 2-4% of makers surveyed identifying as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2020), despite significant change to the overall population of the UK in that time.

The rhetoric of freedom, personal responsibility, individualized risk, and access to 'unrestrained opportunity' is rife in literature pertaining to the CCIs (Eikhof, 2017, p. 294). It is pervasive in relation to entrepreneurial craft work also (Anderson, 2012). Makers, though, are the object of many decisions that affect their engagement with and participation in craft work and related opportunities, including those mediated by maker-led organisations. As Adamson contends: 'craft costs money, and so wherever it manifests itself, a cultural observer should be ready to look for the interests involved.' (2007, p. 74). Freedom to pursue craft work, and advance within it, is therefore contingent on access to opportunity and relationship to various advantages, interests, or capitals. Attending to maker-led organisations' practices offer the prospect of interrogating how this notionally good work is or is not just and fair in its

distribution – a 'pressing concern' in the face of mounting evidence of the 'accelerated inequalities' of cultural work (Banks, 2017, p. 43). In the first section the conditions of, and practices underpinning, membership and access to its benefits are explored. In the second section the factors affecting parity of participation in the organisations and their activities are detailed, and the impact of 'affirmative measures' (Banks, 2017) are considered.

8.2   Membership of Maker-Led Organisations

There are significant differences between the approaches of the three maker-led organisations towards membership (see Table 2, overleaf). SGS has an open membership policy that facilitates self-identification as a 'maker' or indeed 'lover' of glass, encouraging a range of collectors, curators, and amateur enthusiasts, alongside glass artists producing novel work, and those working in professional glass-restoration, scientific glass production, and architectural glass work. Whilst AAS and SFMA tender applications from prospective members to ensure they meet a set of criteria, which aim to limit membership, and its benefits, to makers based on quality of craft practice and professionalism, with stepped membership types (and costs) for students, supportive associates, and those in the process of establishing themselves. The former is open to 'applied artists' across all craft disciplines, often incorporating multifaceted and interdisciplinary practices, while the latter sets specific parameters narrowly focusing on one form of practice: furniture making, which must be designed and produced by hand in Scotland.

For the case study organisations there is an appreciation that growing membership is a priority, not least due to the financial imperative; during the fieldwork year SGS were almost entirely reliant on membership income and members' voluntary labour for their operation, while AAS and SFMA both used their membership subscription income and numbers as a financial floor with which to develop grant applications and partnership agreements.

Case Study Organisation	Applied Arts Scotland	Scottish Furniture Makers Association	Scottish Glass Society
Membership Types	Professional: Professional makers working in any discipline or material predominantly in Scotland Associate: Student, beginning a career as a maker, curator, writer/journalist, gallery owner, retailer, lecturer, educator, and/or working with an organisation supporting the making community in Scotland International: based outwith Scotland but involved in an AAS International project	Full Member: furniture makers, based in Scotland, who work full time or part time as professional designers and makers. Student: unwaged individuals currently studying courses in furniture making, furniture design, design production etc. Associate / Supporter: open to all with interest in the association, including gallerists, educators, and professionals with interest in contemporary craft in Scotland.	Individual: artist working with glass Corporate: relevant organisations and businesses Student: on a full-time related further education course Friend of the Scottish Glass Society: not an artist but enthusiast in glass art
Application Process	Complete online application form identifying discipline(s), medium(s), business status, educational qualifications, professional experience, and professional biography.	Online enquiry form with website, CV upload and brief statement of interest.	Complete online form and return by post or email with payment.
Application Review	Undertaken at regular intervals by organisational chair and voluntary board members. Three possible outcomes: accept, clarify credentials with request for more information, decline.	Undertaken at regular intervals by association's chair and voluntary committee members. Three possible outcomes: accept, clarify credentials with request for more information, decline.	Applicants, once payment has been received, are immediately conferred membership.
Cost	£15-25 per annum	£15-100 per annum	£17-70 per annum

Table 2: Approaches to membership

All three case study organisations were, to varying degrees, concerned about the diversity of their memberships, and appreciative of their role in constructing both distribution of opportunities, and representation of the craft sector publicly. Despite their efforts, each organisation's membership was demonstrably comprised of a narrow demographic: SFMA largely older, white, and male; SGS older still, and white; and AAS concentrated around white and female makers in middle age and above. Monitoring of the profile of the memberships were informal and inconsistent, with limited use of data to develop recruitment approaches, preferring to rely on organic uptake and personal networks aimed at growing membership overall:

> "Don't think we're sort of specifically looking for any demographic or skill set joining
>
> us. I think we're... we'd always like more members." ("Arthur", Interview, 09Jun23)

This was acknowledged, by those working within the organisations, as an area that needed development. For all three case study organisations, outright rejection of membership

applicants is rare. The narrow demographics of each organisation was largely understood to be representative of, and contingent on, the broader demography of the craft sector.

8.2.1 Members Invited In

The experience of joining a maker-led organisation was a decision primarily negotiated through, and informed by, existing members and their work. Interviewees described the experience of joining as one of being 'invited in' by other members, often through direct approaches at events and targeted phone calls. This was true even for SGS, whose indiscriminate open membership policy has been in place since the Society's founding in 1979. For SGS and SFMA, this was understood to be a largely "organic" process taking place around organisational exhibitions and projects, and existing members' craft practice, including leisure classes. AAS' board members express targeting potential members as an intentional practice, an extension of an organisational commitment to "conscious inclusion". Participation in non-AAS-related work, such as maker mentoring and participation in other craft-related regional or local networks, are part of purposeful approaches to grow their networks with a view to expanding the organisation numerically, geographically, and demographically, and as such improve its credentials as a representative body for applied artists nationally.

The organisations targeted potential members that could, in turn, raise their profile and bring benefits to the existing membership. Recruiting and maintaining 'elite' members was seen as important for the overall prestige of the organisations. The caché of being associated with recognised names in the field was considered, by organisers, a significant draw for potential members. The chair of SGS was keen to demonstrate "we have got some very prestigious glass artists in our membership" and that work was ongoing to encourage returners "I keep nurturing a few more back" ("Lynsey", Interview, 23Jan23). Chair of SFMA was likewise keen to highlight "primo" members, relaying their credentials (Mike, Interview, 16Feb23). The current Chair of AAS described their own process of joining as a humorous experience of being stalked and hunted over a period of months by the previous Chair, a practice in which potential members, demonstrating "prime" credentials, are rounded up like livestock:

> "When she has you in her sights [laughs] there's no escape [laughs] and anyone who has any kind of a making practice that she comes across is encouraged to join the fold" ("Hannah", Interview, 14Feb23)

Across all three case study organisations there was a focus on pursuing new members who would raise the profile of the organisation through their standing in the craft sector, bring new skills and knowledge to the memberships, broaden their social networks, and enhance their diversity *vis-à-vis* socio-demographic characteristics, geo-location, and form of craft practice.

This 'elite' membership development was primarily an informal process, reliant on pre-existing network relationships. The qualifications and credentials that positioned them as 'elite' included: awards, major exhibition opportunities, teaching roles, major grants, and public commissions conferred by institutions from beyond the case study organisations themselves. While these were understood to be in keeping with what Banks articulates as 'meritorious assessment' (2017a), the financial, social and cultural capitals required to pursue and undertake these types of 'elite' craft activities, undoubtedly results in the marginalisation of those less able to pursue them. As Amis, *et al.* write, meritocracy acts as a 'legitimising myth' that works to obscure unjust or unequal practices in organisations (2020). Despite the organisations' stated intentions to enhance socio-demographic diversity, and to confer membership based on 'merit', membership to a large extent has socially and demographically reflected those individuals' making approaches. This raises concerns about the likelihood of 'homophilia' in membership development, whereby as Banks articulates, selectors 'might consciously or unconsciously tend towards favouring those candidates who best reflect their own social class positions' (2017a, p. 75).

While there were no formal quotas or 'blinded' membership application processes, there are several strategies employed to disrupt this potential for homophily. AAS board members acknowledge the need for personalised invitations to join the membership, and explicitly target those with underrepresented demographic characteristics in other professional craft networks and projects. SFMA committee members encourage younger makers and target female furniture makers to join with the draw of time-limited funded projects. Project funding allows for diversified and expanded communications channels for opportunity marketing that supports this targeting. To the concern of committee members SGS' membership has increasingly narrowed in profile, particularly in relation to age: members were primarily older self-taught glass artists, working occasionally around other work responsibilities, or retirees, with the socio-economic means to pursue glass later in life. Their response has been to develop proposals for educational projects with higher education and community partners to

drive younger and emerging glass artist memberships, however, due to repeated grant rejections, these plans were largely unrealised, with concerns regarding the lack of membership "offer" and hesitancy recruiting new members as a result. Despite efforts to diversify, the broader unpropitious economic climate means that the demographic profile of participants is narrowing.

8.2.2 Implicit membership criteria

All three case study organisations communicate membership criteria online; however, the standards of practice expected of members, and eligibility to join are usually obscure for those outwith the organisations. Maker-members need to be encouraged to join to overcome a sense of professional insecurity. Lack of confidence and a fear of rejection often delayed membership for months or years, after awareness of the benefits and social and professional connections developed. For prospective SFMA members, once it was determined that they were designing and making furniture – conceiving and executing their craft themselves – in Scotland, the main barrier to membership was personal confidence that they would align with the technical skill and quality thresholds exemplified in membership communications and exhibitions. These thresholds were not expressed in any technical detail but were discussed by existing members in terms of a feeling or sense of alignment; memberships were pursued when they felt they had achieved the necessary level of skill, knowledge, and experience to do so.

As one Committee member involved in making membership assessments expressed:

> "I think I'm carrying on a tradition in appraisal. I don't think it's I don't think it's the current committee that have set the standards or the rationale. I think it's something that exists and has done for a while." ("Rory", Interview, 09Jun23)

Aspects of quality and skill were largely understood to be learned through the process of making and exchanging with other furniture makers. These judgements were founded on a shared aesthetic language based on 'implicit, diffuse criteria' as well as:

> [T]he unconscious criteria of social perception on total persons, whose moral and intellectual qualities are grasped through the infinitesimals of style or manners, accent or elocution, posture or mimicry, even clothing and cosmetics. (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2000, p. 162)

This relies heavily on 'normative' judgements of quality (Penn, 1986, p. 171), and understood as timeless and objective – separate or distinct from those making the judgement. The examination of the woodworkers' 'talent' in this way, which included both an assessment of their crafted products and the way in which they presented them online, including their use of language and social connections articulated in their applications, is understood as meritocratic and fair by those undertaking the assessment, but ultimately contains the possibility that it 'misrecognises' the social advantages within which the skill has been cultivated (Banks, 2017). There was limited consideration of the extent to which this could act to cement class privilege, or other forms of social status, in the distinction that is conferred through entry into these organisations.

Observing an SFMA committee meeting where prospective members' applications were discussed, the assessment ranged from casual comments "all pretty strong… maybe it's just a nod" (Fieldwork, 31May23) to seemingly formal scrutiny of individual pieces' workmanship – admiring the detail of a dovetail joint, book-matched front, or surface finish of a piece within an Instagram profile or website. Audible "oohs" and "aahs" from the group, at one image of a handcrafted wooden spiral staircase, elicited "they're really doing it aren't they" from the Chair, with no further clarification of what 'it' meant, while one applicant's hand-turned wooden objects were met with quizzical faces and queries about derivativeness. No scoring or documentation of the assessment process was undertaken that would enable objective inquiry into criterion for achieving a quality threshold, or the biases at play. There was an unspoken sense that questioning the assessment process, for the makers present, also had the possibility of delegitimising their competency to participate in it.

The esoteric nature of membership eligibility is demonstrated too in exchanges with non-member glass makers in field work. Inquiring about whether a studio visitor was a member of SGS, their response was: "I don't think I'm quite ready for that yet. My work isn't good enough" (Fieldwork, 28Jul23). What 'ready' or 'good enough' meant in this context was indeterminate, highlighting how self-assessment and self-exclusion is an important consideration when judging inclusivity. This research acknowledges that attention to the reasons and motivations for non-participation require greater scrutiny but are beyond the scope of this study. Despite the absence of membership criteria on the basis of quality of work, and low-cost to SGS membership – both described by Committee members as purposefully

designed to encourage applications – the Society outwardly projects membership as open to those who can demonstrate a professional glass artist identity, and craft expertise. This is done through its use of 'individual membership' determined as 'artist working with glass' (Scottish Glass Society, 2020). The thresholds of when an applicant counts as an 'artist' are implied rather than stated. This is part of the ways in which implicit cultural codes are deployed subconsciously by membership organisations to cohere members together around shared tastes and cultural values that act as a form of invisible *symbolic power* 'exercised only within the complicity of those who do not want to know they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it' (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 164). Again, like the need to be 'invited in', this reflects the ways in which craft's quality standards and makers' credentials are deemed to be learned through processes of socialisation with other makers, resulting in exclusion for those that are not yet socially connected.

With a formal assessment of prospective members' applications, against a list of published eligibility criteria, AAS seeks to demonstrate a commitment to uphold and promote 'an authentic, collective and professional voice for the sector' (*How to Join & Benefits - Applied Arts Scotland*, n.d.). This includes a purposeful refreshing of the expectations of professional applied arts practice eligibility criteria, listed in detail online. This was well-received by recent members as "evolving" and increasingly open. In this respect AAS acknowledged the previously imprecise and obstruse criterion for membership had created a barrier to joining. AAS seeks to better, and more explicitly, communicate membership standards and thresholds. They also seek to appeal to a broad range of makers, diversifying the credentials upon which judgements are made, whilst still targeting those who demonstrate active and professional practice. Indeed, of the three case studies, AAS had the most demographically and artistically diverse member-cohort. This was an ongoing balancing act, to preserve the shared commitments to practice, and its internal rewards, whilst challenging preconceptions about what professional applied arts practices consisted of.

Scrutiny of membership applications is considered to have an important function for AAS. Membership applications are reviewed to uncover the value prospective members have to the wider membership, in terms of professional expertise, as well as the needs of the individual, as expressed by the chair, here:

"...we want to make sure that we're actually serving a defined community, who are active within the Scottish craft sector [and] have skills and expertise and opinions that are valuable. So yeah, it's important for me, to make sure that we actually have a community that we understand, who understand each other, and who are able to have some kind of shared language in the conversations that they're involved with." ("Hannah", Interview, 14Feb23)

Speaking "shared language" and "understanding" one another is a coded way of expressing the socialisation that determines entry into the occupational identity of professional craft maker. As a professional body, AAS receives applicants from a pipeline where judgements of quality and professionalism have already been made. Considering what we know about the persistent injustices in cultural work – including the capitals required to sustain oneself in low paid and 'discontinuous' work (Banks, 2017) and the persistent homophilic tendencies of those who distribute opportunity and resources – those who have the means to meet the required credentials are likely to fall into a narrow, and socially privileged, demography.

This was acknowledged by the organisation, who took a broad view of what was a marker of quality and professionalism in terms of applicants' prior experience in assessments, however this process was nonetheless a barrier to applying in the first place. Expanding and diversifying the socio-demographic characteristics of those undertaking such assessments, through diversifying board recruitment, was a strategy employed by AAS to enhance the overall inclusivity of the organisation, which also included targeting those with professional experience of EDI policies drawn from other professional contexts to participate in board roles.

Acceptance into the membership of SFMA and AAS, as a result of the vetting process, is experienced as a validation for makers, of their craft practice's quality and professional credibility:

"That's a really good validation, that's great. Because you know that you go through a vetting system, because I'm now part of that system, you don't just get to pick the membership and join. So, to be kind of accepted into something that has a has a very strict criteria is a validation of going… I'm on the right pathway. Doing the right thing." ("Romy", Interview, 24Apr23)

The 'strict criteria', though, was often invisible to outsiders, who had limited understanding of how to navigate the application process. Despite makers expressing confusion or lack of understanding about how the membership eligibility criteria are used to assess applications or determine suitability, once they have been accepted into membership organisations, makers tend to endorse the process they have been through. For those that are accepted, the positive experience of the process of acceptance increases the good-will towards the organisation, validating assessment procedures. This in turn motivates new members to recruit others that may positively influence the profile of the organisations and uphold and influence the refinement of the membership criteria. Once members of AAS and SFMA, makers were keen to uphold stringent eligibility criteria, often questioning whether it was now too open, and should be enforced more strictly.

The process of applying and progressing into membership is necessarily onerous, explained current members, to create commitment to the organisation and other members, binding them together within a shared understanding of upholding certain values and standards of practice. As one furniture maker expressed:

> "Having that sort of vetting process probably clears out a lot of people who would just apply, because it's quite nerve racking, you know, applying, you know, and because you know, everybody is self-conscious about what they do. And so, you know, that people who are you assume quite talented are going to be reviewing your work. So, I think if you're doing standard stuff, you're probably going to think twice about applying, which is probably quite good to be honest. You know, you want people to be serious. If they commit to it." ("Liam", Interview, 14Jun23)

While members of AAS and SFMA are shown to develop commitment to membership assessment processes once they have been through it themselves, for SGS, the open membership policy resulted in a more passive engagement; they are not bound together by shared understanding of what counts as 'good', 'valid' or 'credible' practice in the same way. SGS' members are critical of the lack of obvious credentialising of where they "fit in" to the membership. This is shown to limit the socialisation into occupational identity of 'glass artist', reducing the social exchange between members, and contribution to the organisation's goals.

To receive the edifying validation of membership on the basis of quality of craft practice and professionalism applicants must have confidence that they meet the thresholds and put

themselves forward to be judged. The process of being judged, even when it is simply administrative, as in the case of SGS, is nerve-wracking, particularly so for those that are underrepresented or disadvantaged within the craft ecology. As Bourdieu and Passeron write 'the self eliminated… count themselves who fail, while enabling those elected from among a small number of eligible candidates to see… proof of a merit or 'gift'' (2000, p. 162). These value judgements are not documented or published, and therefore not accessible to those outwith organisations who might want to understand whether they "fit the bill" or challenge the basis of the assessments.

In SGS a lack of membership criteria has not entirely reduced the barriers associated with implicit quality judgements. Members need only pay for membership in the form of an annual membership subscription, to be eligible to receive the benefits of membership; no assessment is made of those applying to join, other than to query the category of membership and ensure they contribute the associated fee. The processing of membership applications is described as an administrative and bookkeeping function of the organisation, updated in committee meetings during treasurer reports. It was accepted that, as a result of course closures and increased costs "opportunities to get into glass are getting less" ("Lynsey", Interview, 23Jan23) and that the Society needed to be inclusive to the diversity of routes into the medium, not least to realise their aims related to Scotland-wide knowledge exchange and technical development of glass art skills. However, this diversity was not reflected within the language surrounding membership types available to prospective members.

To cultivate younger members, a 'Student' membership is available, at a reduced rate, with the requirement that these members are 'on a full time related further education course' (Scottish Glass Society, 2020). There was limited scrutiny of the effect of this type of membership on the overall age-profile of the Society; indeed all those who had progressed from Student membership to full membership I engaged with had done so as mature students. Thereafter, prospective members would need to identify as an 'artist working with glass' as Individual Members, or as 'Friend' of the Society, an 'enthusiast in glass art', excluded from the opportunity to exhibit (*Ibid.*). No intermediate membership that would appeal to those who identified as 'hobbyist', amateur maker, or "on the cusp" of professionalising through non-standard and self-taught routes was articulated. This is despite the growing appreciation that this was the primary means new members would be recruited through.

8.2.3 A socially patterned pipeline

Overall, in terms of membership, a snowball effect is imagined by members of the case study organisations, that by encouraging membership from minoritised individuals, and diversifying representation within board roles, the organisations will appear more welcoming to a diversity of makers, and those members will in turn encourage and recruit those with shared characteristics. There was limited evaluation undertaken by the organisations on the impact of membership criteria, administrative processes, marketing, and promotional activity, on the diversity and representativeness of membership.

New members were most likely to mirror the socio-demographic characteristics of the majority of existing members of each case study organisation. The 'network sociality' (Wittel, 2001) and informality of assessment processes at the heart of membership development raises the possibility of unchecked homophily (Amis et al., 2020; Bourdieu & Passeron, 2000) and commodifies relationships based on the supposed capitals they can contribute to these organisations. This has tended to result in the pursuit of 'elite' or 'premium' members that fall into gendered, classed, Eurocentric expectations of quality; this is the case whether membership criteria are used to assess applicants or not. As Amis *et. al.* write:

> By drawing on in group ties and social closure practices, this efficient process can
> sustain or exacerbate inequalities without overt hostility toward already disadvantaged
> groups. (2020, p. 15)

While outwardly appearing open to all, the 'efficiency' of developing membership through the existing social networks of members has the possibility of obscuring membership and its benefits from those dis-connected from the organisations.

There was an overall sense of resignation from both lay-members and organisers that the resolutely un-diverse profile of memberships would persist in the absence of wider policy interventions in the craft sector. This related to two key areas. Firstly, the costs of and access to educational and training opportunities were considered to be a major barrier affecting the development of younger makers who might become the professionalising and artist-maker members of the future. Secondly, the dearth of platforms for high-quality exhibition and public presentation of craft was seen to diminish opportunities for public awareness, understanding and appreciation. Both factors were seen to reduce craft consumption and lower

aspiration to participate in craft labour from already underrepresented groups. Overall, the case study organisations imagined themselves quite rightly, in this respect, as on the receiving end of an already socially patterned pipeline. While they could adjust their membership price, selection criteria, promotional materials, or membership development targets, they were bound to recruit from, and provide participation opportunities to, a relatively affluent, and demographically narrow, cohort of potential members.

8.3 Participation in Maker-led Organisations

Once members of the case study organisations, makers were notionally given equal rights to the benefits, rights, and responsibilities of membership. However, the capacity to participate was variable and informed by a range of factors. This included organisational decisions, and individuals' varying capacities because of intersecting socio-demographic characteristics and responsibilities. As Banks writes:

> [S]ome people are already disadvantaged when they come to enter the competition for positions – and equality of opportunity only works if the starting conditions are the same for all candidates. (2017a, p. 151)

This section focuses on three areas; (1) the way financial capital and financial responsibilities impacts participation, (2) the impacts of caring responsibilities (including self-care for those managing disabilities and life-limiting conditions), and (3) 'affirmative measures' undertaken by the organisations that 'seek to compensate for pre-existing social disadvantage and increase participatory parity' (Banks, 2017, p. 151).

8.3.1 Freedom and choice to participate: underpinned by financial capital

Ostensibly, in keeping with the assessments of craft-work advocates (Crawford, 2010; Marchand, 2022), craft work for the research participants, was pursued because of its freedoms, pleasures, autonomy, and enjoyment. The independent nature of their craft work is key to these freedoms: "Margaret" a jeweller says she can "pick and choose what I want to take part in" (Interview, 26Apr23), "Rory" a furniture maker moved into the practice, away from "very formulaic" upholstery work he was doing previously (Interview, 09Jun23), while Jonathan (real name) pursues furniture making primarily because of the opportunity it provides for "self-expression" (Interview, 16Feb23). Participation in maker-led organisations largely follows that same pattern, where the voluntary nature of association, and the freedom

to choose what to take part in, based on individual mores rather than 'enforced obligation' (Stebbins, 1992, 2017), is key to its appeal.

While the participants had different entry points to craft work, once experienced, craft became something that was frequently described as an "addiction" that took up increasing space within their lives. The pleasures, and satisfactions of which they themselves became keen to promote to wider society. Once the financial position of the research participants was queried, it became clear that the pursuit of craft – quality of material, time-served skill, and attention to detail – required makers to carefully balance these benefits with a variety of strategies, due to the low incomes this work provided them. Relocating, downsizing, and going without non-essentials were regular trade-offs, around which the financial and time commitments of participation in maker-led organisations were also negotiated.

The majority of research participants began their craft careers as amateurs, with significant socio-economic privilege required to undertake self-funded leisure classes, and purchase tools, materials, and access equipment, rent workshop space or, as one maker described have "the luxury of a room" they could dedicate to their craft work ("Becky", Research Participant, 17May23). This pipeline into craft work is already socially unequal. This is acknowledged by maker-led organisations. To drive more equitable participation and encourage diverse memberships the organisations responded by both reducing the costs associated with membership and participation and exploring ways in which participation in, and contributions to, organisations could be remunerated.

Participation in maker-led organisations was one way in which the research participants demonstrated the seriousness and commitment of professional practice – even when it wasn't formally connected with making a livelihood (Stebbins, 1992). Participation in practice-based communities is seen to enable external assessment of 'standards of accomplishment' (Wolek, 1999, p.402), that can contribute to various capitals. As discussed in Section 6.2, the time and financial commitment of participation in maker-led organisation activities, at times requiring significant outlay, were often described as a form of 'aspirational labor' (Duffy, 2017) aiming to generate future opportunities at the expense of current financial security.

Participation was principally appreciated to be voluntary time taken away from the potentially income-generating practices within the studio or workshop. This was enabled by access to (and careful balancing with) other income generating activities or access to resources, including supportive family members. "Nicola" a glass artist in her 60s who'd set up a studio in Scotland after a career in the public service expressed that:

> "If I didn't have an alternative income, I couldn't do it. And I think you'll find that with an awful lot, a huge number of artists. There are some that managed to make it work financially, but I hate to say it, but most of them have a partner or husband in the backgrounds who is the main earner… It is very hard to make a living at it."
> (Interview, 13Jun23).

One young furniture maker in his 30's, "Shane", described the conscious decisions he has taken to cultivate and develop non-craft-related work to pursue his craft work:

> "I've sort of used coffee, because that's just how the jobs I was having while I was at uni… I sort of made that as a conscious effort as a good international transferable skill, that like when I came here, I knew I needed a job. Café work's pretty good for that kind of thing. And it's also super flexible. So, I found that it's quite good for like, I can work full time. And then if I've got a few more projects coming up, it's pretty easy to reduce my hours so that it gives me more time at the workshop. So yeah, I tend to do three or four days in the café and then previously another sort of three to four days at the workshop. So, while I think the challenge that I found is that it's there's a lot of sort of upfront costs for this kind of making. So just like buying the wood and the materials, extra materials, and tools, most of what I'm making I'm making at a loss, and then it's only further down the line that when somebody buys that, so it's a lot of like outlay to sink 1000 pounds into something to hope that you can then sell it for 1500[GBP]. So yeah, it's been I was lucky that like, living at home, until I moved here, I had no real bills, so I managed to come over with enough sort of savings to have a pretty good runway. So, at the moment, I'm kind of breaking even a lot of the time."
> (Interview, 30May23)

In this exchange, "Shane" acknowledges both the financial planning he has had to undertake, and the cushion of "a pretty good runway" that supported his nascent business. This sense of being, as both "Shane" another maker "Arthur" express, "lucky" to be able to pursue participation in craft-related maker-led organisations, and to have the "choice" of participation available to them is common in the interviews. Luck and choice, in these testimonies stand in

for the privileges that have scaffolded many of those that engaged with the interviews. The casual nature in which they were shared in field work and interviews highlights the extent to which these financial and social capitals are anticipated and assumed within the professionalised craft ecology.

Over one-third of those interviewed had made the switch into professionalised craft work and joined organisations later in life, financially enabled due to combinations of state and occupational pensions, inheritances, and unspecified private wealth, with many having taken early retirement. The ability to sustain the quality of their making practice, accessing the "best" materials, tools and equipment, and time making, was frequently pursued with limited consideration of recouping the associated outgoing costs:

> "I love making that... I didn't make it for money. And I thought, well, I'll just give it a shot, you know. I'll just say, well, if you want an honest appraisal of how long this has taken in some sort of financial quantification, then that's what it is, of course. No one is ever likely to pay that for a cabinet, although they will pay that for a picture." ("Rory", Interview, 09Jun23)

Others retained full and part-time employment, ran non-craft businesses, or juggled multiple freelance contracts, as their main income sources, understanding that craft would have to fit into the margins of their economic life:

> "I'm selling stuff and I'm going to exhibitions but I'm not selling enough to pay... to live. And so, I have to have this other job, you know, that kind of sustains my practice." ("Arthur", Interview, 09Jun23)

While some acknowledge their primary income will continue to be derived from non-craft-related work, others are hoping that income from their craft work would increase over time, enabling them to pull back on other work commitments.

This 'hope labour' (Alačovska, 2019; Hong, 2022) undergirds the multi-jobbing and portfolio working of craft makers. The participation in maker-led organisations was often described as an extension of this hopefulness, and management of the financial risks, in that engaging with other makers within networked organisations could help to identify and develop coping mechanisms from peer-exchange and provide access to developmental opportunities, as detailed in Section 6.2. Indeed, in a period of increasing costs and reducing welfare,

membership and participation in maker-led organisations was deemed increasingly important for makers.

The capacity to participate was impacted negatively for those whose participation required higher financial outlay. This was particularly notable for those working in remote and rural contexts. The costs associated with participation were larger as a result of travel expenses and higher time commitments taking them away from other economic and domestic responsibilities. This is exemplified by "Chiara" a recent member to SGS, who joined largely to access exhibition opportunities, but refrained from participating due to their remoteness from her place of work:

> "I noticed an opportunity they gave week or so ago, to show in Glasgow. And when I looked it up, I thought, okay, I've already spent the £35, or whatever it was to join it. To apply for this, I've got to spend another £40, or I think it was per piece or something, and then you've got to pay more to kind of something about setting up the stands, and then you've got to invigilate it, you've got to be there. I'm miles away from Glasgow, and then you've got to transport stuff there, transport it back, and I thought this just won't work for me, I'll make a loss, you know. Obviously, possibly I'd make something there. But all the costs involved and the logistics, adding up the cost of getting trains there and you know… So that that's the only opportunity I've seen so far. And I decided not to go for it." (Interview, 18May23)

The question of fairness in relation to geography was critical in the thinking of SFMA, whose application to Creative Scotland for the second phase of *Ash Rise* included a national tour of the work to enable a more equitable engagement with the exhibition outcome of that project from members based in rural and remote locations. SGS also applied for funding from Creative Scotland to tour their annual members' exhibition to Inverness, to service and support the growing membership in the Highland region. However, SGS' application was unsuccessful. While the case study organisations all work on a national basis, with members across Scotland, participation increases relative to the physical geography of opportunities.

Proponents of craft work purport it offers freedom from repetitive, alienated work, and an alignment of thinking and doing, or in the words of Sennett 'head and hands' (2008) with 'alternative' non-financial rewards. Pursuing such work often relies on significant financial capital, and navigation of precarious, intermittent contracts. Participation in maker-led

organisations was both predicated on access to financial capital drawn from other sources and navigated around the schedules and responsibilities that these other income-generating activities required.

8.3.2 Care Responsibilities, Disabilities and Participation

For female research participants in particular, craft work was also managed around unpaid care responsibilities and family commitments. The decisions around pursing craft, and participation in maker-led organisations, were made with dependants' needs in mind. "Hannah" only recently gave up a non-craft related employment contract when they felt they had reached a tipping point that would enable them to maintain an income level conducive to caring for themselves and their children as a single parent. "Lydia", a recent entrant into glass work post-retirement from a highly pressured professional job, expressed a desire to find more "balance", and contribute to care of grandchildren was partly behind their decision to retire, around which their glass work, and contributions to SGS had to be negotiated. Both "Danielle" and "Louisa" had developed their respective craft businesses alongside caring for infant children. Craft had been pursued partly because of the flexibility it provided around childcare responsibilities, compared to more routinised employed work, echoing findings that craft micro-enterprise was frequently a pleasure and an economic necessity for women with caring responsibilities (Luckman, 2015a). As parents of older children, they now had increased capacity to participate in their respective membership organisations; their care responsibilities were previously a significant barrier. "Nicola" had recently had a disrupted year due to elder care responsibilities and was grateful for the flexibility her craft work had provided during that period, while also acknowledging the limitations it had placed on her contributions to SGS during that period. Others noted they had allowed membership to "lapse" and participation to reduce once children were born, exacerbating issues of isolation and loneliness (see Section 6.1).

The female members of AAS' Older Makers Group – makers in their 60's and 70's who meet monthly online – noted the positive capacity for craft practice to persist and scale to fit around changing life-stages, care responsibilities and priorities. Simultaneously, they questioned the financial precarity many in the group now faced due to low national insurance contributions and limited pensions. Their craft practice and participation in AAS was now increasingly navigated around caring for older relatives and grandchildren, as well as managed around their

own fluctuating energies and health conditions. While they too may have had these responsibilities, male research participants were less likely to raise them in interviews. They viewed their family as a supportive structure that enabled their pursuit of craft work, and participation in maker-led organisations, rather than drivers to seek out flexibility of occupation, or barriers to participation, as many of the female participants did.

Two-fifths of the research participants disclosed disabilities, long-term life-limiting health conditions, including neurodivergence and mental health issues. This adds to the survey data that found over a quarter (26%) of makers self-identified as having a disability or long-term, life-limiting health condition. For these individuals, craft work was discussed as a flexible occupation that was pursued actively because of could fit around their own fluctuating capacities and needs, with the capacity to self-manage through determining their own schedules, routines, and priorities:

> "I come in late morning, and I stay until early seven o'clock maybe in the evening... I think maybe you know; routine is not... has never been one of my strong points."
> (Interview, 09Jun23)

Their craft practices, and levels and style of participation in maker-led organisations, could scale up and down, changing with them as their lives progressed and changed with age, stage, and capacity.

Craft was also seen as a way that those facing barriers to other forms of work could claim value as productive members of society:

> "As a result of that [illness that created long term health complications] my, my job was no longer feasible to me. If we say tactfully…. But it then allows, you know, they've set me on a path to do different things, including 12 years of permanently not doing very much. But during my kind of years of not being able to do much. One of the things that I actively relied on and consciously relied on was my creativity. And even if there's something about not being a productive member of society, in that kind of capitalist sense… I would meet new people, and they say, "Oh, what do you do?" And the, the instinct of grumpy response was, "not very much". You know, and it's, you're immediately feeling kind of down a few rungs in somebody's estimation. But, even when I was at my most ill, I could knit socks or I could spin something or I could, at my very worst, I would imagine." (Interview, 24Apr23)

Much like the female participants who expressed the positive flexibility of self-employed craft work around child-care responsibilities, craft, for those with disabilities, was a form of self-compassion. It was seen to promote the capacity for self-care, and self-expression, enhancing a sense of purpose, productiveness, and well-being, when faced with exclusions from, or barriers to, other types of paid work. Participation in maker-led organisations was seen as an important means to continue to claim an occupational identity through these fluctuations, where internal rewards and peer-recognition helped to sustain them in the absence of secure external rewards.

SFMA and SGS acknowledged barriers to inclusivity – SGS members specifically noted the lack of workshop facilities for glass-artists with disabilities. However, formalised strategies for enhancing inclusivity were present only in one case study organisation in any meaningful level. AAS demonstrated a commitment to access and inclusion in their planning and had begun implementing access riders for makers participating in funded projects. This included budgeting for inclusion in funded projects, instigating individual assessments for participants' support needs, building regular breaks into group meetings, meeting online to reduce expenditure on travel, and working with third party support organisations, such as Neuk Collective, an organisation made up of neurodiverse artists, to provide sensory kit and access resources for their open members' exhibition. Despite this, the at times frenetic pace of 'boom and bust' organisational activity around areas of AAS' work, such as meeting external funding and reporting deadlines, was difficult to navigate for those experiencing fluctuating energy levels and care responsibilities.

For those individuals with care responsibilities, disabilities and life-limiting conditions, participation fluctuated, dependent on supportive inclusive practices being in place from the organisations. COVID-19 restrictions offered a catalyst for thinking about access to participation opportunities for each of the case study organisations – as online meetings, remote and digital participation were introduced and refined. During the fieldwork period individual members relayed positive increases in access to participation because of online meetings, particularly for those with fluctuating health conditions and physical disabilities, or those for whom immunity was compromised. There were "record turnout" to AGMs noted in the year before the research, and regular weekly or monthly member meetings online were well received. Despite these benefits, online meeting structures stalled during the fieldwork

period, with rapidly reducing attendance and a falling away of scheduled meeting structures. There was a return to prioritising physical events and networking meetings for members, whilst board and committee meetings largely remained online. In this shift, the organisations were increasingly considerate of resourcing inclusion in other ways, however the organisations were at different stages in their practical application, and there were limited affirmative actions taken beyond the work of AAS.

8.3.3 Affirmative Measures and their frictions

Affirmative measures are those actions 'that seek to compensate for pre-existing social disadvantage and increase participatory parity in cultural education and work' (Banks, 2017, p. 151). Acknowledgement of this was at the heart of AAS' recent shift to a SCIO operational model, whereby those makers contributing to the organisations' running were remunerated as freelance contributors, and participants in time-limited funded projects were eligible to receive payment for their time, with fees set at Scottish Artist Union (SAU) rates for practising artists. This 'affirmative measure' was widely praised by those receiving such remuneration; however, as discussed in Chapter 7, the organisation was still heavily reliant on voluntary contributions. At times members questioned the differentiation between voluntary roles contributing to the ongoing maintenance, governance and operation of the organisation, and paid project work funded by external bodies.

AAS' commitment to developing paid participation opportunities in funded projects was expanded during the fieldwork period. This was influenced by wider policy commitments to Fair Work in Scotland's cultural sector, driven largely through the requirement to demonstrate fair remuneration in all activity funded by Scotland's national cultural development body, Creative Scotland (Culture Radar, 2022). AAS are a recipient of Creative Scotland funding, and at the time of the fieldwork in the process of developing further grant proposals. During an online board meeting AAS' chair "Hannah" explicitly aligned the development of fairly paid opportunities with the organisation's ambitions for developing more equitable access to cultural work:

> "We want to be working towards a system that is sustainable for everyone who's involved with it and is not just something that's in the gift of those who are somehow independently self-funding…" (Fieldwork, 13Oct23)

There was recognition, though, that paid opportunities were limited.

There were concerns raised earlier within this meeting that – compared to the more open voluntary participation in membership activity – the selection processes underpinning who took part in paid activities, were entrenching inequality, rather than improving equality of opportunity. This was due to their tendency to accrue to a small number of highly active individuals. Following an account of who had been paid for recent project work, and who was lined up to carry out upcoming paid activity, one vocal member and oft-volunteer contributor, "Margaret", raised their concerns within this board meeting:

> "It's a small group of people who do everything, and the membership are out there…
> the projects that are set up it's all the same people." Further adding "it's not necessarily
> widening access to ordinary members" (Fieldwork, 13Oct23).

The organisation's chair was keen to defend the processes, stating that what the organisation was doing "what we can get funding for" (*Ibid.*). However this raised questions over the possibility of producing meaningful equity, and parity of participation. The needs of the members were recognised to be in tension with the expectations of funders.

Observing the board meeting, this discussion caused significant discomfort, as various board members sought to highlight their organisation's ethical credentials and endorse the veracity of past decisions. The chair, though, acknowledged limitations on the equitability of this activity; the development of paid opportunities often required members to put themselves forward, and undertake significant unpaid work, to develop proposals and grant applications. When funds were available those most capable of undertaking this unpaid work were the ones to benefit: "those that are active in seeking funding are the ones driving the activity… it's their own kind of interests that are pursued" (*Ibid.).* It was seen to be the funders' influence driving inequitable distribution – through requiring extensive unpaid labour in the project development, application and reporting phases of fundraising. While simultaneously the same funders were demanding increased attention to issues of Fair Work and equity of opportunity.

Another board member highlighted the ongoing frictions between the organisation's ambitions to distribute opportunity fairly, and the capacities and resources to realise distributive justice, noting:

> "We don't have enough funding for everybody to benefit from it, but everybody does
> have an opportunity to benefit from it, and there's a difference" (*Ibid.*)

What this, at times heated discussion, points to is the ongoing informality of opportunity distribution within maker-led organisations, even those who commit to uphold Fair Work principles. This can be shown to favour those already established and confident enough to put themselves forwards, and resourced enough to undertake preparatory work on a voluntary basis, further entrenching inequality. While the intention to compensate for pre-existing social disadvantage is present within the work of AAS, particularly in their commitment to providing fair pay, and other forms of non-pecuniary resource, such as access riders, there was an overall underdeveloped understanding of how to redistribute limited external reward away from those that were already adept at seeking it out. Silent members lacked the understanding, connections, or confidence to participate, or indeed the time and financial resources required to work for free in the 'hope' that rewards would eventually follow (Alačovska, 2019; Duffy, 2017; Hong, 2022).

Barriers, particularly those associated with care responsibilities, disability, and life-limiting health conditions, meant financial support and opportunity were not equitably received. The organisations, working with limited financial resources, and voluntary labour, had limited means to mitigate the entrenched inequalities in the wider craft ecology, including those associated with pursuing public funding.

8.5   Chapter summary, discussion, and conclusions

This chapter highlights some of the issues – and responses of maker led organisations – related to questions of equalities, diversity, access, and inclusion. Craft is widely understood to have low formal barriers compared to other occupations (Jakob, 2013, p. 128), however at the professional level the ability to shoulder the high financial outlays, and individualised risks, result in inequity of opportunity and reward. The supposedly 'meritorious' assessment of professional credentials tends to legitimise and reproduce patterns of social injustice, based on gender, class and race. The case study organisations all position themselves as supportive structures that can help makers develop the networks, skills, opportunities, and broader survival skills required to sustain their making practices. They were all concerned with the equity of access to their organisations and the fair distribution of opportunity and rewards. Largely, though, the organisations accept that they are recruiting from an already narrow, socially patterned, pipeline of prospective members, not least because of Scotland's particular demographic make-up. In the latest census (Scottish Government, 2023b) 12.9% of the

population are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly concentrated within Glasgow and Edinburgh, less than 5% outside of urban locations, with over 20% of the population aged over 65 years old.

There were some fatalistic makers within the research cohort, who tended to downplay the possibility of their, or their organisations', actions making any improvement to the overall equity of the craft sector, pointing to wider issues in the pipeline, particularly the retracting educational opportunities, public funding, and increased costs required to sustain craft practices. However, there were also emergent actions demonstrably geared towards improving access and diversifying representation, including increased prominence of questions of fair pay, suggesting these organisations could be a key mechanism through which to generate a more just and equitable craft ecology in Scotland.

For participants, the pleasure of productive hand-based occupation, coupled with flexibilities and freedoms to set work schedules, and vary working patterns, around caring responsibilities, fluctuating energy levels and disabilities, motivate makers to navigate the low-income levels and high upfront costs of their craft practices. They do so with a range of strategies, including reducing outgoings, living simply, going without non-essential items, and carefully balancing income-generating activities, including paid employment, teaching, freelancing, and grant-seeking, with their making practices; some of which is obtained through the networks of the case study organisations. There is a spectrum of socio-economic privilege. Some were free to undertake craft work full-time, knowing their financial needs (however modest) were met by pensions and private wealth. While for others this capacity was hard fought for, navigating persistently precarious non-craft incomes and fluctuating care needs for themselves and others, that meant craft was practiced in the margins of their economic lives, and participation in maker-led organisations was navigated around complex schedules of work and care responsibilities. The freedoms and pleasures of craft work experienced by these various socio-economic positions were not equitable, nor were the capacities or resources to support or enable participation in maker-led organisations. As such, the benefits and value that participation in maker-led organisations could bring members were not equitably experienced.

The knowledge of the memberships' socio-demographic profiles in the case study organisations, and the development of targeted recruitment, were largely enhanced by

interactions with grant-giving bodies, namely Creative Scotland. Preparation of funding applications drove demographic data gathering and discussion of members' socio-demographic characteristics and profiles, as well as their support needs. In turn these highlighted gaps in practice and generated targeted approaches to recruiting in particular geographic locales and within particular demographic characteristics, responding to published research from Craft Scotland and others. The desire to access public resource came with an acknowledgement of the responsibility to be more equitable and representative, and to meet, as one project producer shared "obligations" to deliver public benefit, that cut through the meritocratic assumptions of craftwork's supposed low barriers to entry and freedom of participation. This demonstrates the impact equalities, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) policies within public grant-making bodies have on the practices of maker-led organisations, and suggests that enhanced access to public resource, and the reporting and administration requirements that follow, would be a mechanism to improve their overall fairness. However, the cultural funding system also required significant outlay of voluntary labour, and came with schedules and expectations that at time also exacerbated the concentration of capitals to existing 'winners' (Ross, 2004).

It should be noted that missing from this research were young makers under 30, and makers of colour. Although they were present within the field work, the numbers were insubstantial, and they were wholly absent from in-depth interviews. More research is urgently needed to uncover the barriers facing young people and people of colour from membership of and participation in maker-led organisations, including reasons motivating non-participation.

CHAPTER 9: MAKER-LED ORGANISATIONS – EXTRA/ORDINARY CARE IN SCOTLAND'S CRAFT ECOLOGY

Maker-led organisations have heretofore had limited critical attention in Scotland. This is despite rising academic interest in practice-led communities (Thomas, 2018; Thomas & Jakob, 2019); the labour organisation of craftspeople as precursors to the trade union movement (Anderson, 2021; Luckman, 2013a); increasing attention to artist-run initiatives (ARIs) (Brown et al., 2018; Wright, 2019); and mutual aid and grassroots organising in the emergent labour politics in the creative and cultural industries (de Peuter & Cohen, 2015). These organisations' practices, and their effects on the makers who participate in their activity and contribute to their operation and management, have largely been unaccounted for in assessments of sector needs, strengths, working practices, and public value within cultural policy and sector mapping activity. The beliefs, values, and ambitions around which makers coalesce within these organisations, their foundations, and implications for policy seeking to drive fairer work practices and improve equity of opportunity have also been left unscrutinised.

The overall aim of this research was to uncover the role played by maker-led organisations in the working lives of Scotland's craft makers: exploring, firstly, the prospects they might offer for improving the working conditions of makers and access to craft work, something of noted concern by Scotland's cultural policy makers as well as sector leaders; and secondly, evaluate the socially progressive potential their informal organisational practices might point to. Both are pressing issues as theorists urgently point to the need to 'reclaim' the value of culture and cultural production away from profit-generation, to foundational social good held in common (O'Connor, 2024), and 'rehabilitate' cultural work as 'good work' in the eyes of government policy makers, with the potential to produce imaginative responses influencing our social lives and view of the world (Campbell, 2022). This research contributes to a refreshed understanding of maker-led organisations' effects and impacts on participating makers, and their working practices, and points to possibilities for future policy actions and research.

9.1   Maker-led organisations: an understudied component of 'Craft's Third Wave'

In the contemporary moment, frequently labelled the 'third wave' of craft (Jakob, 2013), there is rising appreciation and demonstrable appetite for artisanal and handmade products. There is, too, concomitant respect and interest in 'good' manual craft labour as non-alienated, pleasurable and fulfilling work (Crawford, 2009; Marchand, 2022; Sennett, 2008). This interest is indicative of growing concerns with loss of agency, digital forms of control, exploitation, and 'bad work' within contemporary labour practices. Within the creative and cultural industries quality of work is of growing significance alongside the overall quantity of employment and economic return (Carey et al., 2023). Interest in the potential craft labour, and the values it signifies, might hold to challenge or provide a meaningful alternative to the rampant extraction of profit, and exploitation of natural resources and people within late-stage capitalism, is growing (Hofverberg et al., 2017; Jakob, 2013; Luckman, 2018). Simultaneously though, there is also increasing acknowledgement of the expanding definitions of 'artisanal' that exploit these associations, leading to renewed interest in the 'craft' of service jobs that bear little resemblance to, and trouble the definitions of, more traditional crafts (Gandini & Gerosa, 2023). Warnings about craft's capture within the *New Spirit of Capitalism* (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Gaugele, 2021) – as yet another means through which workers' passions and aspirations are exploited – are also mounting (McRobbie, 2016).

Low-income levels, the precarity of those labouring to produce craft products, and the lack of diverse representation within the professionalised sector are of pressing concern by craft practitioners, policy makers and sector leaders alike (Craft Scotland, 2023b; Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2020; Patel, 2020b). There is increasing ambivalence as to the radical political potential of craft and craft work, when those factors are brought together (Black & Burisch, 2020). Despite their marginal economic returns and precarious multi-jobbing work lives, practitioners of craft are frequently the most ardent supporters of craft's positive social role (Jakob & Thomas, 2015). With such a complex intersection of theoretical framings, and gap in current understandings of these practices, a grounded empirical approach, using a Constructivist Grounded Theory methodology (Charmaz, 2017) was employed to explore the practices of maker-led organisations, as well as the values, beliefs and motivations of participating maker-members.

This research points to the value of studying makers, not just as economically productive (or precarious) individualised, self-interested, and self-reliant passionate entrepreneurs, as is so common within the creative industries discourse they are situated within, but as *compassionate* social actors enmeshed within affective relationships and community structures. In so doing, this research – which has focused on three national maker-led organisations active in Scotland, Applied Arts Scotland, Scottish Furniture Makers Association, and Scottish Glass Society – identifies the other-oriented and care-laden principles variously motivating, structuring, and organising craft work in Scotland. This research adds to a growing body of literature on organisation of craft work, and management of craft entrepreneurship (Bell et al., 2019; Bouette & Magee, 2015; Champion, 2020; England, 2023; Gandini & Gerosa, 2023; Luckman, 2015a; Luckman & Thomas, 2018; Naudin & Patel, 2020; Ocejo, 2017; Sennett, 2008; Thomas & Luckman, 2024), that finds that standard entrepreneurial values and strategies sit uneasily within craft practice, and are rarely aligned with growth for growth's sake.

Facilitated by the in-depth qualitative research methods undertaken, this research has revealed makers in Scotland to be working collaboratively to create commonly held infrastructures and resources for themselves and others. This perspective has illuminated the centrality of practices of care in the working lives of craft makers, and the role that an ethically construed other-oriented compassion, for people, materials, practices, and the environment, plays in the motivation to undertake and sustain craft practice, and advocate for its public value, despite its often-marginal financial returns. It adds to growing interest in the role of care ethics and other-oriented compassion in the organisation of creative and cultural work, and the practices and structures that entails (Alačovska, 2020; Alačovska & Bissonnette, 2021; Campbell, 2022; Dent et al., 2023; Sandoval, 2018).

This research proposes that maker-led organisations contribute to the development and reproduction of compassion, as an other-oriented moral sentiment, and this precipitates care ethics and practices between makers that create opportunities for developing, maintaining, and sustaining commonly held goods, developing support infrastructure, as well as contributing to wider social goods and generating surplus value. This has significant positive effects for the participating makers, reducing isolation, reducing self-blame, and improving collective problem-solving. However, there are also harms and negative implications, not least due to the

imbalance between the care needs expressed, and the resources available to respond to them. Drawing on the work of Maria Elena Buszek (2011), and recent explorations of the role of creative intermediaries as morally-motivated caring infrastructures (Dent et al., 2023) I propose a theoretical framing for maker-led organisations as drivers and intermediaries of extra/ordinary care. Thereafter, the implications for government policy relating to craft and craft work in Scotland are considered, and some recommendations are proposed. The challenges experienced during this research, and its limitations, are acknowledged, with particular attention to the generalizability of the findings. The thesis concludes with some propositions as to the future application of this methodology, and the role of extra/ordinary care in creative intermediaries in other research contexts.

9.2   Revisiting the Thesis Findings

This research developed from my interest in the collaborative working practices of notionally independent self-employed, sole trader craft makers in Scotland. This followed rising awareness and critical appreciation of their ecological interdependencies, grassroots organisation, and mutual aid practices in a MSc study of their policy advocacy activities in 2019-2020. The thesis research was undertaken between late 2022 and early 2024 using a CGT methodology, and developed iteratively, cycling between the various research data, literatures, and coding and analysis processes. This was conducted through a survey of craft makers; interviews with policymakers and sector leaders; documentary and archival analysis; and multi-sited case studies of three maker-led organisations, developed through in-depth interviews with maker-members and ethnographic participant observation.

This research puts forward new data and critically evaluates the following findings:

1. Role, reach and practices of craft organisations in Scotland: I found membership and participation in self-organisation practices to be widespread in Scotland's craft ecology. This increased with age, suggesting correlation between this activity and the sustainability of craft practice. Care-responsibilities and disability status were prevalent within the survey sample, illuminating a relatively under-considered aspect of makers' socio-demographics.

2. Influence of government action and inaction on the emergence, development, and contemporary practices of national maker-led organisations: I uncovered significant interplay between the retraction and withdrawal of forms of public support for craft and craft workers, and the emergence and development of maker-led organisations. This points to their contemporary practices reflecting current gaps in support, highlighting makers' individualised responsibility to respond to their own unmet needs, and advocate for policy attention. It draws attention to the successful policy advocacy and social value created by these longstanding features of the Scottish craft ecology, as well as the fragility of these structures in the contemporary moment.

3. Drivers underpinning makers participation and membership in national maker-led organisations: three mutually imbricated and contradictory expressions driving membership and participation were identified – social connection, individual instrumental returns, and altruistic desire to give back socially. This underscored deficiencies within Scotland's craft ecology, particularly in the craft exhibition infrastructure, which all three case studies sought to respond to. Further, this analysis illuminated the role of social connection and exchange within the organisations; reducing isolation and self-blame for failure within makers' individualised work practices. Social connection enhanced consideration and care for others within the practice-based communities, demonstrating maker-led organisations' role in fostering compassion and generating care-based practices. This results in increasingly altruistic, morally motivated, behaviours that extended into other social realms; driving environmental sustainability, and contributing to commoning and infrastructure development practices, generating public goods and social value beyond supporting individual makers.

4. Structures and resourcing of national maker-led organisations, and how this shapes the experience of the work and labour involved in their operations: my research identified these organisations were largely resourced by voluntary labour contributions from a small number of maker-leaders. They undertook this labour out of a sense of responsibility for their practice-based communities that was compassionate, care-laden, and other-oriented. The experience of this labour was frequently aligned with ideas of 'bad work', and detracted from maker-leaders' ability to continue their own craft

practice and self-care. This raises concerns for the sustainability of these organisations, currently faced with ageing memberships and reducing volunteers. The practices of the case study organisations were found to be structured in-line with Tronto's phases of care (1998), and developing mutual care between maker-members (giving and receiving care) was a strategic priority to overcome resource limitations to meet the unmet care needs expressed.

5. Access to, and barriers affecting, membership and participation, and the implications this has for questions of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and distributive and contributive justice: I found a narrow demographic was represented within each of the case study organisations, despite professed commitments to improving equity of opportunity and diversity of representation. This resulted from membership development strategies that favoured in-group ties, and weak and small-scale affirmative actions to account for pre-existing social advantages and disadvantages. This research acknowledges that these organisations are at the receiving end of an already socially-patterned pipeline as a result of the specific socio-demographic context of Scotland, the rising costs and increased individualised risks of craft work, as well as retractions in publicly supported craft education and development support.

Overall I argue that, focusing on the compassionate, other-oriented sentiments and caring behaviours that I found were prevalent within the field of study, maker-led organisations can help us think about, as Nussbaum proposes, 'the relationship between the individual and the community' (1996, p. 28). As such, maker-led organisations illuminate the experience of and compassionate motivations towards craft work at an individual level. They also draw attention to the current and potential social role of craft and craft makers in contemporary Scotland, highlighting their potential as conduits for developing and directing caring practices with and for others, through their solidaristic rather than bureaucratic attachments.

9.3   Extra/Ordinary Care in Craft Work's Organisation
Art historian Maria Elena Buszek proposes craft's role within contemporary art practice is something that is both ordinary, being ubiquitous and pervasive, and yet simultaneously extraordinary, having a special quality that can illuminate the human labour, materiality and

conditions of production within a work of art (2011). Drawing from Buzsek's language, and looking across the thesis findings, I propose that maker-led organisations practice, and help to reproduce, 'extra/ordinary' care within Scotland's craft ecology. This has significant implications for both the experience and qualities of craft work for Scotland's makers, and the social value craft and craft work holds for wider publics. I find that maker-led organisations' role within Scotland's craft ecology can be articulated as care-laden creative intermediaries; their practices underpinned by morally motivated ethics of care, which results in the generation of responsive and relational caring practices for craft workers. This includes the gathering and distribution of resources and policy advocacy practices this entails. This aligns with increased attention to the ethics of care found within creative intermediaries by Dent *et al.* (2023), and the care they provide creative and cultural workers (CCWs). Maker-led organisations are also communities of care-practice. Compassion – as the drive to care – as well as the knowledge, skills, competencies, and infrastructures underpinning makers' capacity to undertake caring roles for one another, and for wider social issues, are manifestly developed within the situated social learning experiences enabled by membership and participation.

This work contributes to ongoing theorisation of the moral economic characteristics of cultural work (Banks, 2006, 2017a; Hesmondhalgh, 2017). It provides a hopeful outlook on the political potential of craft work; challenging some of the more pessimistic accounts of craft's capture within neoliberal late stage capitalism as a contributor to hyperindividualisation and exploitation of labour and natural materials (Gaugele, 2021; Kowolik, 2021). At a time when the quality and fairness of cultural work is forefront in Scotland's cultural policy agenda (Culture Radar, 2022; Scottish Government, 2020) it adds to longstanding associations between craft work and ideas of 'good work', as autonomous, non-alienating, and value-laden economic activity, that have persisted since the Arts and Craft Movement of the late 1800s (Luckman, 2013a). It further adds to assessments of craft's contemporary role in society, driving more humane and quality-focused social relations within work, and beyond (Kroezen et al., 2021; Mignosa & Kotipalli, 2019).

In attending to makers' compassionate behaviours and the ethic of care developed within maker-led organisations – as well as the common resources and infrastructural developments these precipitate – this research extends and augments a line of thinking that tracks through

from Marx, Ruskin, and Morris, through Braverman, to Sennett, Crawford, and Marchand, that craft work holds the potential within it to disrupt alienation, exploitation, and industrialisation, and provide alternative measures of what counts as the good life and prosperity. As an empirical study it does this whilst avoiding some of the more utopian, pastoral, and romantic overtones ubiquitous in studies of craft work that have constrained its critical appraisal (as cautioned by e.g. Adamson, 2007, 2008; Nenadic, 2022). It provides a refreshed understanding of the political potential of craft makers' organisational practices, contributing to meaningful, socially useful work, that operate within 'more-than-capitalism values' (Luckman, 2018, p. 314). The contemporary practices of maker-led organisations can reinvigorate claims for craft's role in demonstrating new forms of social organisation between individualised subjects, with the potential to contribute to 'creative renewal' (Morgan & Nelligan, 2017, p. 14) and drive sustainable prosperity (Luckman, 2018) for the common good.

Notwithstanding this progressive potential, this research also illuminates some of the less propitious aspects of maker-led organisations' practices and their effects in Scotland's craft ecology. Firstly, as distributive mechanisms for capitals, goods, and resources, maker-led organisations are complicit in ongoing inequality, injustice, and lack of equitable representation in Scotland's craft sector, replicating broader social inequalities. While work is developing to enhance the equity of their practices and diversify their memberships, this research finds that this is still at a small scale. It is contingent on a socially patterned pipeline of education and talent development in other sector support structures, that maker-led organisations have yet to meaningfully confront. Secondly, operating within an austere policy regime that prioritises self-centred acquisitiveness, competition, self-reliance and economic returns, the findings also acknowledge maker-led organisations' role in the promotion and practice of exploitative neoliberal work regimes and values in their members. Following this, the instrumentalization of social networks within the memberships resides uneasily alongside, and at times trouble, the more authentic community relationships and mutual interdependencies between members.

Thirdly, compassion, as a 'way of hooking the interests of others to our own personal goods' (Nussbaum, 1996, p. 28) is demonstrably developed through participation in maker-led organisations' activity. It creates significant value and benefits for makers, lubricating the

reciprocity, development of common resources, and mutual aid that occurs within the membership communities. However, this research also finds that this compassionate orientation acts as a contributor to self-exploitation. Makers' acceptance of poor working conditions and low or no-pay – in the hope that eventual success, recognition or benefits will accrue to the maker-community in question – is connected to an acknowledgement of, and attempt to provide for, makers' significant care needs, currently unmet by market forces or public policy. This is particularly true for those in leadership roles and raises serious questions over the long-term sustainability of maker-led organisations in Scotland's craft ecology within the current cultural policy and economic context.

To summarise, I therefore propose that care within the practices of maker-led organisations within Scotland's craft ecology is extra/ordinary. It is at once ubiquitous and pervasive, and yet has a special quality that can account for craft work's 'humane' organisation (Kroezen et al., 2021; Mignosa & Kotipalli, 2019) and 'more-than-capitalism values' (Luckman, 2018, p. 314). The particularities of the labour practices, and conditions of craft production, that demands care from within the practice-led communities illuminate the absence of other forms of care from without. I argue here that attending to care and compassion within the work practices of craft workers – particularly in relation to its impacts on grassroots organisation practices, provision of mutual aid, and development of soft infrastructures – can demonstrably foreground wider carelessness in the socio-political context they operate within. This focus can counter concerns for decline in labour organisation and collective forms of political solidarity within craft's practice (Banks, 2010; McRobbie, 2002), and point to micro acts of resistance and disruption to neoliberal capitalism and its values taking place from within the craft economy. It points to ways to improve the quality and experience of craft work, as well as creative and cultural work more broadly, aligned with growing interest in how to foster more inclusive and sustainable economies.

Foregrounding compassion as a driver of craft's practice and organisation, and care ethics as a structuring force for practice-based self-organisation, can also provide a renewed assessment of craft's socially progressive, and socially useful, competencies. This includes consideration of how craft, in both its organisational logics, and more-than-profit values, can be drawn on to care for social and cultural needs unmet by market forces. This research has demonstrated that investment in the collective endeavours of craft makers creates surplus social value beyond

supporting the economic output of individual makers, challenging the creative industries doctrine that value is located primarily within the creative individual.

9.4   Implications for Policy and Practice

This research was undertaken with an interest in improving the prospects for good work in Scotland's craft ecology, and the creative and cultural industries more broadly, as well as reimagining the potential of craft and craft work to contribute to positive social impact. As such this thesis aims to make productive interventions into the field of study, both the craft ecology, and the policy landscape that it operates within. In this respect I cannot claim to be a disinterested and objective researcher. I align here with Derickson and Routledge (2015, p. 3) who contend:

> it [is] important, given the ongoing economic, political, and ecological crises confronting humanity for aspiring scholar-activists to enter the logics of insurrectionary imagination.

As a result, I navigate between the importance of retaining a critical perspective, that is not unduly aligned to any particular institutional project, whilst acknowledging the potential to have not just theoretical, but real-world impacts. In this I find middle ground between the positions of Bennett, who sought to utilise cultural policy studies to directly influence government policy-making and its implementation (1998), and McGuigan, who challenged the potential for that approach to reinforce existing power imbalances and forms of control, impinging on culture's, and by association cultural workers', capacity for nonconformity and challenge to dominant policy rationales (2008).

The proceeding recommendations for policy, practice and sector interventions have been developed drawing on the triangulation approach for scholar-activism proposed by Derickson and Routledge, considering how the theoretical debates explored may resource or otherwise inform grassroots practice *and* institutional projects, and provide new empirical data and forms of knowing to a range of publics. This includes a compassionate, ethical, intention to contribute positively to the case study organisations, and the research participants, and to ensure that their contributions to this research are useful and productive, whilst also illuminating areas for improvement and adaptation.

9.4.1 Attend to maker-led organisations as 'bellwethers' for Scottish craft ecology

This research points to the potential for maker-led organisations to act as indicators for the overall vitality and health of the Scottish craft ecology. Their practices illuminate both the impacts of government policy on makers' working practices and experiences of craft work, and the needs currently unmet by that policy context. This research found limited formal engagement between policymakers and maker-led organisations currently. No coordinated tracking or documentation of their developments was being undertaken. This includes acknowledging gaps in understanding within Creative Scotland, Craft Scotland, MAKE, and regional enterprise development agencies (HIEnt and SOSE), as well as regional and local craft development initiatives, and the maker-led organisations themselves. This speaks to the potential for a more active policy attention to document, track, and engage with, makers' organisations, to develop craft-specific policy interventions. This could better develop, sustain, and maintain crafts' tangible and intangible infrastructures and improve the quality, equity, and sustainability of craft work in Scotland.

This requires a coordinated and thoughtful effort to develop an appropriate agent or consortium to undertake this role, and an approach to mapping and tracking their practices and memberships that resists reductive and superficial assessments of their contributions aligned with creative economy policy 'orthodoxy' (Schlesinger, 2017) and economic impact. Overall, initiating an ecological assessment of craft intermediaries active in Scotland and their role and membership profile, including that of maker-led organisations, is well overdue. Considering Craft Scotland is focused (necessarily) on professional, income-generating, and contemporary craft – a consortium approach involving MAKE as a project set up to represent Scotland's many-sided crafts community, and the maker-led organisations themselves, would be positioned to take on a more inclusive approach. This could include a broader assessment of craft intermediaries across and between the contemporary/heritage, amateur/professional, and art-craft-design-commerce spectrums, and building on recent craft education advocacy, include the interdependencies with higher and further education institutions, as well as informal learning contexts.

9.4.2 Care for craft's 'soft' infrastructures and craft's infrastructural care potential

The drivers underpinning makers' membership and participation in maker-led organisations points to several sector-wide deficiencies that demand attention. This includes the absence of

structures that enable connection and exchange of knowledge, skills, and aspirations across and between the isolated, stratified, and fragmented Scottish craft ecology. Resourcing sector-wide communication and exchange through both digital and physical means, would, in line with the research findings, reduce isolation and loneliness for individuated makers, reduce feelings of self-blame, illuminate systemic factors impacting the quality and experience of craft work, and encourage shared problem-solving and imaginative responses to social and environmental issues affecting craft's practices. Again, MAKE is currently placed uniquely to catalyse connections across and between 'Scotland's many-sided craft community' (Panel, 2018), without the requirements to demonstrate alignment with particular craft practices, material disciplines, model of operation, professional status, business profile, or income levels. This could provide a platform to enable greater exchange and collaboration between maker-led organisations.

The research also points to the potential for enhanced intra-craft communication and exchange to support the development of makers' capacity to 'care in common' (Chatzidakis et al., 2020) with human and non-human others. Drawing on craft skills and values, and applying them to a range of social issues, craft makers' organisations can create surplus public value through maintaining intangible cultural heritage, developing responses to environmental crisis, and fostering new forms of political solidarity. The research findings point to the necessity of resourcing and coordinating makers' social connections, to avoid reproducing existing social inequalities that hamper the contributive justice of the craft ecology currently. This suggests that craft makers' development in Scotland needs alternative resources to the small-scale and individually focused development grants offered through the Creative Scotland coordinated VACMA scheme – which also restricts collaborations across and between local authority areas. A targeted fund dedicated to encouraging connection, collaborative endeavours, and peer-knowledge-exchange between makers and other sectors, related to policy priorities in a range of social spheres, such as environmental sustainability, well-being, digital connectivity, Fair Work, and equalities, diversity, and inclusion, would enhance the propensity and equitability of contributions from craft makers to these issues, as well as raise their knowledge and skills.

The drivers of self-organisation also point to the need to attend to the distributive logics of craft work and related opportunities, particularly access to high-quality public presentations of

contemporary craft work. While work is developing to enhance curatorial skills and practices relating to craft (Craft Scotland, 2022), those developing and producing annual exhibitions through the maker-led craft organisations, do so with minimal (if any) public support. As a result, these presentations are often criticised for their low quality and frequently disregarded by cultural funders. However, the research shows that they provide a significant, and much-appreciated, intervention into an otherwise exclusive or financially exploitative exhibition ecology.

The policy analysis demonstrates that when maker-led public exhibitions are better resourced, as in the period of public subvention of craft overseen by the Scottish Arts Council (1994-2009), they enhance the quality and critical content of those exhibitions, with evident improvements in public appreciation and perceptions of craft that follow. Their propensity to invigorate the market for craft in Scotland, and its international standing is also evident. This in turn diversifies the range of venues, funders and partners willing to collaborate on craft exhibition, and opens up craft's presentation to a broader range of publics and sector aspirants. This research found the current dynamic was currently resulting in a gradual erosion of public resource-commitments and narrowing of presentation approaches to well-worn and risk-averse models as a result, further eroding funder confidence, and exacerbating risk-aversion within maker-led organisations[7]. Shifting this requires maker-led organisations, craft development body Craft Scotland, and funders including Creative Scotland to better communicate and align their needs and expectations relating to public engagement with and presentation of craft. Opening up the Craft Development Network, which is positioned as a network of craft curators and those involved in curatorial and production processes relating to craft exhibitions, to a broader range of maker-led organisation members, could enhance the development of shared sector strategy and collaborative approaches for craft's public engagement.

9.4.3 Care for the maker-leaders

Those makers who provide labour in the governance and leadership of maker-led organisations, contribute significant resources, skills, and care for Scotland's craft ecology.

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[7] Following Creative Scotland's Multi Year Funding announcements and the stabilisation of public funding, a number of craft exhibition and curatorial development initiatives have been initiated in Scotland in 2025, including Craft Scotland's *HARVEST* programme launching in October 2025, suggesting positive action in this area is already underway.

Despite this, their needs – including material needs, personal and professional development and training needs, and emotional support needs – have not been attended to by the policy context, and their contributions are underappreciated. This affects both the sustainability of the organisations, and the diversity of representation within leadership and governance roles. The research points to the need to more proactively resource and support the development of existing maker-leaders and put in place affirmative measures to develop the diversity and range of maker-leaders for the future.

The research proposes the importance of providing this support, and developing this initiative informed from within the practice-based communities. To ensure the care for the internal rewards of craft's practice, and those that undertake it, are forefront in the motivations driving leadership practice. Importing leadership values from other sectors could result in increased extractive instrumentalism and dissonant value-propositions, and rational management, diminishing craft's autonomous organisation (Banks, 2010). This suggests that peer-to-peer learning and mentoring, fostering greater exchange between, and interrogation of, existing maker-leaders current governance and leadership development practices would initiate critical reflection and support the development of future priorities. Craft sector-led approaches to investigate and draw on the leadership skills and experiences of other sectors are also required, rather than importing wholesale the competencies and values of others. As with recommendations made above, and the principles of Fair Work policies, external resource would be required to ensure this doesn't fall on existing maker-leaders to resource their own development, further exploiting their compassions and constraining who is able to participate.

While aspirations to federate maker-led organisations, build policy advocacy, and form social issue alliances, were present and growing during the research period, the resources required to realise these ambitions were not forthcoming. Maker-leaders expressed significant concerns about being unable to meet expectations for additional voluntary commitments, despite their appetite for the benefits that could follow. Facilitating collaboration and exchange between the maker-leaders, and those in governance roles, across the Scottish craft ecology – this research contends – would foster enhanced opportunities for identifying structural and systemic issues impacting craft's development, and makers' working lives, across that ecology. It would also enhance shared problem-solving and the development of supportive infrastructures for sharing knowledge, skills, and resources more equitably; contributing to effective policy development.

Again, the existing craft leadership cannot be expected to resource this activity themselves or further diminish the equity of opportunity to contribute. In this, the organisations recently announced as recipients of Multi Year Funding from Creative Scotland responsible for developing craft's infrastructure have a moral responsibility to consider the development needs of current maker-leaders, and future sustainability and diversity, of sector leadership.

9.4.4 Attend to the socially patterned pipeline

This research contends that maker-led organisations could play a more active and effective role in developing the equity and inclusiveness of the Scottish craft ecology, not least through developing greater diversity of perspectives within craft leadership roles and improving their knowledge and understanding of inclusive practices drawn from other cultural sectors. But critically, they cannot be expected to account for the lack of action taking place at an earlier point in the sector and talent development pipeline. Entry points into, and progression within, craft work are evidently narrowing, as a result of the loss of publicly resourced education and training, and the pressures placed on makers to be increasingly self-reliant for their own development. This is shown to favour those makers (and sector aspirants) already in possession of a range of capitals (financial, social, cultural), and compounds existing social inequalities, through providing membership opportunities and care to those best resourced to receive it. Affirmative actions, driven through maker-led organisations, are currently small-scale, and unlikely to have significant impact on the overall fairness and diversity of the Scottish craft ecology. The findings demonstrate the need for urgent attention to expand access to craft skills and processes in early education, encourage critical appreciation for craft broadly in society, better resource training and professional development opportunities, and improve accessibility practices across Scotland's craft ecology. The *MAKE Learn* projects and advocacy initiative, developed, and delivered in collaboration between Panel and Craft Scotland, is ongoing, and this research points to the potential for maker-led organisations to play a more active role in contributing to and supporting its recommendations.

Consideration of the structural and systemic barriers facing those with intersecting marginalised identities, including – as this research indicates, the largely underappreciated factors of care responsibilities and disabilities that are highly prevalent within the research cohort – is not currently a development priority for craft nationally. This research identifies the urgent need for sector-wide research into the disability status and care responsibilities of

makers, both quantitively and qualitatively, to provide a stronger evidentiary foundation from which to develop affirmative measures to enhance the equitability of the craft sector in Scotland and improve accessibility and inclusivity. It also demands attention to the non-participants. Particularly younger makers, and those from minoritised ethnicities and cultural backgrounds – who were largely absent from the field of research, and as such likely to be at greater risk of the harms emanating from individualised labour practices, including social isolation, self-blame, and overwork. This research contends these contribute to sector withdrawal, and inequity of opportunity and progression, contrary to the priorities of Fair Work policies. Evidence-based, affirmative actions are urgently required, and this should, following the work of Tronto, begin with a sector wide commitment to 'care about' sector injustices, through attentiveness to the unmet care needs of marginalised and excluded craft makers. This requires a suitable lead organisation or organisations who can take responsibility for this attentiveness and mobilise resources to respond.

9.6   Final conclusions and opportunities for future research

This thesis proposes that there has been an underdeveloped attention to the role of other-oriented care ethics and compassion as drivers of, and structuring forces for, self-organisation in the creative and cultural industries. It also alerts us that care as value and practice significantly impacts the draw towards, and experience of, creative and cultural work, and its social values and applications. In foregrounding care across the research findings, as a novel emergent theme grounded in the empirical data gathered and analysed, this research illuminated heretofore underappreciated practices, values and beliefs. This research contributes new understandings of the role and value of self-organisation and practice-specific social exchange and collaboration for individuated freelance craft workers, and its effects; finding that it contributes to the development of caring practices for themselves, for others within their practice, and for social goods. This also illuminates the discrepancies between the care needs expressed, and the resources available to respond to them, which result in injustice, inequity, and (self-)exploitation by those makers motivated to labour as a result of compassion for others with unmet needs. This highlights potential policy responses to better attend to the needs of craft workers, and therefore improve the quality of their work, and working lives.

Care also accounts for the role craft organisations can play in developing common goods, and soft infrastructures, with moral intentions. Craft organisations play a significant role in generating knowledge, skills, competencies and infrastructures that underpin makers' capacity to care for each other, and human and non-human others. This critically demonstrates surplus value is housed not just in the creative individual – but in collective endeavours – challenging longstanding creative industries policy focus on the creative individual, as an economic entity, as the main producer of value. It suggests new thinking is necessary to recognise and support these collective structures that foster social bonds, shared resources, and sustainable practices. The value generated through these organisational networks extends beyond economic metrics, encompassing cultural heritage preservation, environmental stewardship, and community resilience. This calls for policy frameworks that acknowledge and nurture these collective infrastructures, moving beyond individualistic measures of success to embrace more holistic evaluations of craft's contribution to society. Such a shift would better reflect the actual dynamics of how value is created and sustained within the creative and cultural industries, where individual creativity flourishes within, and because of, robust collective support systems.

It therefore follows that there are opportunities to expand the application of the methodological and theoretical approaches undertaken within this research project to other research contexts – further interrogating the extra/ordinary care of self-organising practices within creative and cultural work, and its effects. In so doing, there is the potential to disrupt dominant characterisations of creative and cultural workers as resilient entrepreneurial subjects, vulnerable to individualization and desocialisation, and produce new accounts of their solidaristic and inter-relational organisation. This can, I argue, refresh thinking about creative and cultural workers' socially progressive credentials, as well as the mechanisms underpinning their (self-)exploitation and instrumentalization. Attending to care as value and practice within creative and cultural work, can illuminate the often-overlooked emotional and relational dimensions of these fields, emphasising – as Tronto (1998) articulates – the importance of empathy, responsiveness, and responsibility (from within and without the practice) in fostering inclusive and sustainable work environments, informing organisation, and motivating both creative practices and social and political action.

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APPENDICES

A: Participant and Interview Overview

Interview Participant(s)	Description	Association / Org	Date	Duration	Location	Research Notes
"Andy"	Maker-participant. Aged 45-54, male, furniture designer-maker. Based in North East Scotland.	SFMA	30-May-23	59mins	Online (via Zoom)	Virtual tour of workspace included in interview process.
"Arthur"	Maker-participant. Aged 45-54, male, glass artist and researcher. Based in North of England.	SGS	09-Jun-23	1hr 6mins	In Person (Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh)	Interview included tour of Edinburgh College of Art Glass Department, meeting with colleagues and introductions to postgraduate students and their work.
"Beatrice"	Non-maker participant. Craft curator and producer. Based in Edinburgh.	SFMA	29-Jun-23	56mins	Online (via Zoom)	Had previously participated in Masters dissertation research, with ongoing informal communications in intervening period.
"Becky"	Maker-participant. Aged 45-54, female, glass maker and tutor. Based in South-East Scotland.	SGS	17-May-23	1hr 5mins	In Person (Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh)	Interview accompanied by walk around Edinburgh College of Art and visit to Dovecot Studios to view Tapestry Studio.
"Bianka"	Maker-participant. Aged 75-84, female, glass artist and researcher. Based in Edinburgh.	SGS	26-May-23	1hr 16mins	Online (via Zoom)	Interviewee followed up with documents and press cuttings by email with informal asynchronous exchange over 1 month thereafter.
"Chiara"	Maker-participant. Aged 55-64, female, glass maker and multidisciplinary artist. Based in South West Scotland.	SGS	18-May-23	32mins	Online (via Zoom then Phone due to connectivity issues)	Unstable connectivity meant interview was cut short. Interviewee sent web links to work after meeting to provide more context, including

						images of studio and workspaces.
"Colin"	Maker-participant. Aged 45-54, male, digital project manager. Based in Glasgow.	AAS	08-Jun-23	58mins	In Person (ARC Building, Glasgow)	Interviewee and I crossed over informally at a variety of meetings and events during course of the thesis project through other freelance work.
"Danielle"	Maker-participant. Aged 45-54, female, furniture designer-maker. Based in East Scotland.	SFMA	17-May-23	58mins	Online (via Zoom)	Originally met and discussed project and interview process with interviewee during SFMA public event. Interview included virtual tour of workspace and introduction to a colleague.
"Frankie"	Aged 55-64, female, glass artist and performance maker, based in North East of Scotland.	AAS / SGS (former)	18-Apr-23	1hr 30mins	Online (via Zoom)	Met interviewee twice in person, and a further three times virtually over the course of the project.
"Gary"	Maker-participant. Aged 55-64, male, glass artist and educator. Based in West Central Scotland.	SGS / AAS	27-Feb-23	1hr 22mins	In Person (WASPS, East End, Glasgow)	We had previously communicated, and maker had contributed to a freelance project I had led. Interview accompanied by tour of Glasgow Glass Studio and introductions to other studio members, a visit to Glasgow Ceramics Studio, and a tour of WASPS Studios in Hanson Street, Glasgow. Communications have continued intermittently thereafter.
"Grace"	Craft leadership and policy participant: craft organisation director. Based in East Scotland.	Independent Craft Org	06-Mar-23	54mins	Online (via Zoom)	Interviewee was a public attendee at two field work events run by participating organisations.

"Hannah"	Maker-participant. Aged 55-64, female, textile artist. Based in Aberdeen.	AAS	14-Feb-23	1hr 27mins	In Person (WASPS, Aberdeen)	Interviewee and I were in contact for three months asynchronously leading up to interview. Interview accompanied by brief introduction to Aberdeen WASPS Studios, and visit to Aberdeen Art Gallery to visit Jerwood Art Fund Makers Open exhibition. Communication continued by email throughout the project.
"Hayley"	Craft leadership and policy participant. Craft and design curator and project manager. Based in Edinburgh.	Independent Craft Org	23-Feb-23	1hr 30mins	In Person (Code Base, Edinburgh)	Interview accompanied by introduction to CodeBase building, and brief introduction to other studio and office holders
"Katherine"	Maker-participant. Aged 45-54, female, glass artist and academic. Based in Edinburgh.	SGS	29-Jun-23	1hr 32mins	In Person (at home, Edinburgh)	Interview involved reviewing physical and digital documents and materials relating to SGS held at their home.
"Liam"	Maker-participant. Aged 35-44, male, furniture maker. Based in South East Scotland.	SFMA	14-Jun-23	48mins	Online (via Zoom - some connection issues)	Brief interview due to connectivity issues – gained some insight into their furniture practice due to pieces on display in their home.
"Louisa"	Aged 45-54, female, glass artist and tutor. Based in Glasgow.	AAS / SGS	01-Mar-23	1hr 5mins	In Person (WASPS, The Briggait, Glasgow)	Interview accompanied by visit to The Briggait WASPS Studios and tour of makers' studio and physical engagement with their tools, materials and works. I met interviewee in person a number of times during the project, including attending exhibition

Note: the table headers are not shown on this page; columns are pseudonym, description, organisation, date, duration, format, and notes.

						openings and craft-related events in Glasgow.
"Lydia"	Maker-participant. Aged 65-74, female, glass maker. Based in North of Scotland.	SGS	25-May-23	44mins	Online (via Zoom)	Makers' work shared with me virtually during interview.
"Lynsey"	Maker-participant. Aged 65-74, female, glass artist and tutor. Based in Glasgow.	SGS	23-Jan-23	1hr 14mins	In Person (ARC Building, Glasgow)	Interviewee and I were in asynchronous communication by email for 6 months prior to interview, and remained in contact throughout project. Some documents and digital materials exchanged by email, including newsletters.
"Margaret"	Aged 65-74, female, jewellery-maker, and tutor. Based in North-East of Scotland.	AAS	26-Apr-23	1h 20mins	Online (via Zoom)	Interviewee and I met in-person and virtually during field work four times over course of the project, augmenting initial interview exchange. They updated me by email on participation and membership changes.
"Morven"	Maker-participant. Aged 35-44, female, fashion, and textile designer. Based in Glasgow.	AAS	19-Jun-23	1hr5mins	In Person (home studio, Glasgow)	I met interviewee twice in-person and twice virtually during field work, augmenting the interview discussion. I met their family members, and got insight into their home life and remote working practices by meeting them at home.
"Nicola"	Maker-Participant. Aged 65-74, female, glass artist. Based in North of Scotland.	SGS / AAS	13-Jun-23	51mins	Online (via Zoom then Phone due to connectivity issues)	I viewed makers' work and development process during fieldwork exchanges virtually,

						where studio was visible.
"Paulina"	Non-maker participant. Aged 25-34, female, craft curator. Based in North East Scotland.	AAS	06-Jun-23	1hr 23mins	Online (via Zoom)	I met interviewee in-person during field work and interview augmented our initial exchange.
"Romy"	Maker-participant. Aged 55-64, non-binary, interdisciplinary artist, and maker. Based in North-East Scotland.	AAS	24-Apr-23	1hr 48mins	In Person (Private Studio, North East Scotland)	Interview was accompanied by guided walk around makers' home town, visit to studio, and physical engagement with tools, materials and finished works.
"Rory"	Maker-participant. Aged 65-74, male, furniture maker, based in Edinburgh.	SFMA	11-Jun-23	1hr 59mins	In Person (WASPS, Nr Haymarket, Edinburgh)	Interview took place in WASPS near Haymarket, Edinburgh, and included introduction to the building, discussion of other tenants, and physical engagement with materials, tools, and finished craft products.
"Shane"	Maker-participant. Aged 25-34, male, furniture designer-maker. Based in Edinburgh.	SFMA	30-May-23	34mins	Online (via Zoom)	Interview provided limited engagement with makers' craft practice, but was augmented by viewing their work in exhibition during field work.
"Susan"	Maker-participant. Aged 55-64, female, ceramicist, and project manager. Based in North East of Scotland.	AAS	20-Nov-23	2hr 25mins	In Person (Modern 2, SNGMA)	Asynchronous email communications were started six months prior to interview, and continued afterwards. Interview included walk from Haymarket Station to Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and back. Not audio recorded.
"Vivian"	Non-maker-participant. Aged 45-54, female,	AAS	07-Feb-23	1hr 17mins	Online (via Zoom - some	Interviewee and I had previously worked together

	freelance craft development and business consultant. Based in Glasgow.				connection issues)	during freelance project. We met virtually and in-person informally during thesis project, including during four of the field work events.
Catriona Duffy & Lucy McEachan	Craft leadership and policy participants: Co-directors of independent cultural organisation. Based in Glasgow.	Panel	24-Jan-23	1hr 18mins	In Person (Private Office, Glasgow)	Panel had previously commissioned me to undertake freelance work, and we have longstanding professional relationship. They were also contributors to my Masters dissertation, and communications were and are ongoing.
Daniel Carpenter	Craft leadership and policy participant: Executive Director, Heritage Crafts. Based in England.	HCA	06-Mar-23	53mins	Online (via Zoom)	Had no previous communication with interviewee prior to interview. Have subsequently kept in contact by email, including providing summary of thesis findings.
Jeni Oliver & Iain Hamilton	Craft leadership and policy participants: Head of Creative Industries and Senior Development Manager, Creative Industries, Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Based in North Scotland.	HIE	06-Feb-23	1hr 6mins	Online (via Zoom)	Had no previous communication with interviewee prior to interview. Have subsequently kept in contact by email, including providing summary of thesis findings.
Jessica Bonehill	Craft leadership and policy participant: Creative Scotland, Creative Industries Officer. Based in Edinburgh.	Creative Scotland	30-Jan-23	1hr 15mins	Online (via Zoom)	This interviewee had previously contributed to my Masters dissertation research, and digital communications were intermittent thereafter. Attended a number of CS-related online events where they

						were present, including Visual Arts and Craft Maker Awards information sessions.
Jonathan Rose & Mike Whittall	Maker-participants. Both aged 65-74, male, furniture designer-makers. Based in North-East Scotland.	SFMA	16-Feb-23	1hr 40mins	Online (via Zoom - some connection issues)	Had previously exchanged with Jonathan, who contributed to Masters dissertation research. Email communications with both had begun 3-4 months ahead of interview. Interview was originally due to take place in-person in a Banchory-based cafe but had to switch to online due to illness.
Mark Geddes	Craft leadership and policy participant. Creative and Cultural Capital Strategy Manager, South of Scotland Enterprise. Based in South West Scotland.	SOSE	07-Feb-23	53mins	Online (via Zoom - some connection issues)	Had no previous communication with interviewee prior to interview. Have subsequently kept in contact by email, including providing summary of thesis findings. They provided a number of policy and research reports and data sets on South of Scotland regional creative industries.

B: Fieldwork Overview

As an active participant in the Scottish craft ecology, with ongoing participation in a range of networks, events, exhibitions, and organisations, it is a complex task to provide a robust and exhaustive list of everything attended and participated in during the thesis project.

Provided here is a composite list of fieldwork carried out within the programmed events and meetings of the three participating case study organisations during the principal data capture year, January to December 2023, as well as a range of meetings, events, conferences, and exhibition openings relating more broadly to Scotland's craft ecology, and linked with both my academic research and freelance employment in the sector throughout the PhD period, September 2021 – December 2025.

Event	Specific to Case Study org?	Date	Duration	Location	Participation Notes
Stories Exhibition: The Scottish Potters Association annual exhibition	No – general background info	7th May 2022	3hrs	The Barony Centre, Craft Town Scotland, West Kilbride	Attended afternoon exhibition launch, spoke to participating potters and SPA organising committee members and Chair.
RESolve: A Creative Approach to the Circular Economy, Exhibition (Fife Contemporary)	No – general background info	8th May 2022	3hrs	Kirkcaldy Library, Fife	Attended exhibition on its final day. Quiet – no interactions with other attendees. Limited notes taken.
Initial meeting with SFMA Chair	Yes – SFMA	20th May 2022	1hr	Online (Zoom)	Initial scoping discussion to explore possibility of SFMA participating as case study organisation.
MAKE Learn Steering Group Meeting	No – general background info	1st June 2022	2hrs	Edinburgh Printmakers, Edinburgh	Attended and participated in meeting to discuss advocacy priorities for Craft and Making education in Scotland.
Organisational Development Workshop with Craft Organisation	No – general background info	9th June 2022 & 21st July 2022	6hrs (plus 4 days prep work)	Glasgow	Working with a freelance client, a craft organisation based in Glasgow, I developed and delivered 2 x ½ day organisational development workshops. Notes taken and short report produced (for client only).

Visits to Various Craft Centres and Shops on Isle of Lewis	No – general background info	12th – 14th July 2022	Over 3 days	Isle of Lewis	Casually visited 6 craft shops on Isle of Lewis during family holiday. Spoke to shop owners and participating / exhibiting makers.
Fleece to Fashion Conference – Creativity, Authenticity and Sustainability in Knitted Textiles	No - general background info	8th & 9th September 2022	2 days	University of Glasgow	Conference attendee – spoke to many contributors and attendees during breaks – handwritten notes captured but not formal field notes
CRAFTHOUSE Exhibition Opening	Yes – exhibition featured SGS, SFMA, and AAS members and was curated by interview participant	10th September 2022	3hrs	The Briggait, WASPS, Glasgow	Attended evening drinks reception and spoke to curator, organisers, and various makers who were in attendance.
Online meeting with Highlands and Islands Enterprise Creative Industries Team	No – general background info	14th September 2022	1hr	Online	Participated in initial discussion with HiEnt to understand more about their Creative Industries support offer and Xpo North programmes.
Stories – Whispers from the Past and the Present. Scottish Glass Society and Contemporary Glass Society Annual Exhibition	Yes – SGS	20th September 2022	1hr	Trades House of Glasgow	Visited exhibition during regular public opening hours. Met SGS Chair and discussed participation potential as case study. Notes taken, but not formally used as field notes.
MAKE Website Development Workshop	No – general info	8th November 2022	2hrs	Online	Actively participated in a workshop with web designer and craft sector leaders to consider needs and functionality of MAKE Manifesto website for future development process. Notes taken, but not formally used as field notes.

Rural Arts Network Scotland – residency	No – general info	11th – 13th November	3 days	Deveron Arts, Huntly, Aberdeenshire	Attended and participated in a 3-day rural arts network conference, exploring the issues facing rural arts and cultural organisations with artist presentations, workshops and policy discussions.
Craft Scotland Conference 2022 - The Power of Glass	No – general background info – but did involve significant numbers of SGS members and previous committee members	18th November 2022	7hrs	The National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh	Attended full day of conference and ate lunch with three glass makers who were members of SGS. Spoke to Craft Scotland team members and two prior chairs of SGS. Hand written notes taken but not formal field notes.
Craft Scotland Listening Session	No – general background info	22nd November 2022	3hrs (plus approx. 2 days prep time)	Online (Zoom)	I was commissioned by Craft Scotland to host an online "Listening session" for their members, facilitating discussions about the organisations' priorities and forward plans. I produced a short report afterwards.
Engage – AGM and Marsh Awards	No – General background info	12th December 2022	2hrs	Online (Zoom)	Attended Engage Annual General Meeting as a member of the organisation – which is for gallery education in the arts (including craft).
Jerwood Art Fund Makers Open exhibition.	No – General background info	14th February 2023	2hrs	Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museum	Attended exhibition after recommendation from interview participant. Spoke briefly to staff at venue about visitor profile.
Dovecot Studios Tapestry Studio Visit	No – General background info	17th Mat 2023	2hrs	Dovecot Studios, Edinburgh	Attended studios and observed resident tapestry artists at work at looms.

Glasgow Connected Arts Network – member consultation event	No – general background info	24th May 2023	4hrs	Civic House, Glasgow	Attended and participated as a member of the organisation to explore the strategic forward plans of the organisation and needs of artists and creative practitioners in Glasgow.
Makers' Offerings Exhibition Launch Event	Yes - AAS	26-May-23	2hrs	Custom Lane, Leith, Edinburgh	Travelled through on train from Glasgow with AAS member, viewed exhibition and engaged socially with 20+ makers and visitors. Field notes written up on train home.
Visits to various craft exhibitions and Shops - Mull	No – general background	28th – 30th June 2023	3 days	Calgary, Mull; Tobermory, Mull and Island of Iona	Visited a variety of independent craft shops and exhibitions on Island of Mull and spoke to owners, shop staff and participating makers.
Board Meeting	Yes - AAS	13-Oct-23	2hrs	Online (via Zoom)	Zoom meeting viewed asynchronously as recording due to scheduling clash. Did not actively participate in meeting, but was actively involved in extensive email exchange before and after event. Notes taken, and related email exchange saved and annotated.
Closing the Loop Group Meeting	Yes - AAS	14-Jul-23	2hrs 30mins	Online (via Zoom)	Participated actively in meeting discussions and contributed to exhibition proposal development. Field notes taken during, and augmented after meeting.
Older Makers Group Meeting	Yes - AAS	06-Oct-23	1hr 30mins	Online (via Zoom)	Actively participated in discussions, asking questions and contributing to

					conversations with AAS older makers group members. Field notes taken.
Altermatter Project Presentation	Yes - AAS	14-Jun-23	1hr 30mins	Online (via Zoom)	Participated passively as event attendee, asked questions during Q&A sessions. Took notes – although these were insubstantial. Meeting was recorded.
Ash Rise Project Launch	Yes - SFMA	27-Apr-23	2hrs	The Fruitmarket, Edinburgh	Attended as "associate member" of SFMA, spoke to 15+ members of the association during the event, plus a small number of general public attendees. Listened to speeches, viewed documentary screening. Field Notes taken.
Committee Meeting	Yes - SFMA	31-May-23	1hr 30mins	Online (Google Meet)	Attended as "associate member" – committee asked that I observed with camera off as they went through committee business. Field Notes taken.
Board Meeting	Yes - SGS	18-May-23	1hr 30mins	Online (via Zoom)	Attended as "Friend of the Society" – actively contributed a short presentation on the research process, and my background as researcher. Field Notes taken.
Annual General Meeting	Yes - SGS	28-Oct-23	2hrs 15mins	Online (via Zoom)	Attended as "Friend of the Society" – actively contributed a short presentation on the research progress and initial findings. Discussed this with attendees. Field Notes taken.
Glass Screen-printing Masterclass	Yes - SGS	03-Jun-23	2hrs	South Block, Glasgow	Joined masterclass group during the lunch break and observed the workshop directly

					before and after lunch break. Field Notes taken.
Studio Visit with Committee Members	Yes - SGS	28-Jul-23	1hr 30mins	WASPS, Hanson St, Glasgow	Attended and spoke to SGS chair and co-optee, as well as other glass artists present. Field Notes taken.
National Icons Exhibition Instal and Opening	Yes - SGS	12-Sep-23	2hrs 30mins	Trades House, Glasgow	Visited during install and discussed installation process with members. Helped to clear up the space and set out opening event refreshments. Went home for dinner and returned for opening event in Evening. Listened to speeches and spoke to 10+ members of the organisation. Took field notes, updated on way home.
New Scottish Furniture: Scottish Furniture Makers Association Exhibition	Yes – SFMA	22nd September 2023	30mins	Glasgow Art Club, Glasgow	Attended Glasgow Art Club to view SFMA exhibition. No-one else there, picked up some print materials, no notes taken.
Visual Art and Craft Makers Awards – Creative Scotland Information Session	No – general background info	6th November 2023	2hrs	Online (Zoom)	Information session run by Creative Scotland's Creative Industries team, aimed at makers and visual artists seeking to apply. I participated passively as an event attendee.
Scotland RE:Design Scottish Fashion Festival	Yes - AAS Included 'Hidden Floors' exhibition installation	18th November 2023	4hrs	V&A Dundee, Dundee	Attended opening event and catwalk show for Scotland Re:Design. Met AAS members, including Chair, at event, and viewed installation of AAS co-produced 'Hidden Floors' virtual reality fashion experience.
Applied Arts Scotland AGM	Yes – AAS	23rd January 2024	3hrs	Online	Attended and presented brief outline of initial

					research findings – drawing out specifics relating to Applied Arts Scotland. Presentation notes available.
SGS Member Follow Up	Yes – SGS	12th March 2024	1hr	Online	Follow up conversation 1-2-1 with board co-optee who requested update on the research process and discussion of timescales and initial findings.
If Only We Had The Space – COMPASS Exhibition, Craft Scotland	No – general background info	19th October 2024	3hrs	Platform, Easterhouse, Glasgow	Visited exhibition of emerging craft curators supported through Craft Scotland's COMPASS Programme, led by Curator Katy West. Attended panel discussion feat Deirdre Nelson and Dr Adele Patrick. Discussed project with contributors, participants and audience members.

C: Participant Agreement Example

PhD: Self-organised makers in Scotland's craft sector

PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

I understand that Rosemary James-Beith is carrying out a research project based at the University of Glasgow about craft membership organisations in Scotland. This project received ethical clearance on 5th August 2022, application reference number 100210175.

The project will start with individual interviews followed by a series of observations and short creative tasks. This will form the basis of a case study of the membership organisation you are involved with and will contribute to the completion of the PhD Thesis.

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE
I agree to participate in this project on the understanding that:
- I have read the information sheet outlining the project and its methods and had the opportunity to ask any questions arising from that.
- I do not have to answer any question or complete a task if I choose not to.
- Interviews may be paused or stopped at any point.
- I can withdraw from creative task or observation at any point.
- There will be no impact on me if you choose not to participate or choose not to allow use of the resulting materials.
- Interviews will be recorded and then transcribed, and the recordings deleted once the transcription has been checked.
- All names and other material likely to identify individuals will be anonymised unless otherwise agreed.
- NAMED PARTICIPATION: If I choose to take part as a named participant, I may withdraw from the project at any time up until its completion date without being obliged to give a reason. In that event all record of my remarks of will be destroyed immediately.
- ANONYMOUS PARTICIPATION: If I choose to take part as an anonymous participant, I understand that once the data collected has been anonymised, then in accordance with UK legislation (UK GDPR) I have no rights relating to the processing of the data unless I have legitimate grounds for concern that I remain directly identifiable from it or that it has been used for purposes other than those stated.
- I can withdraw from the project at any stage and at any time before the completion of the project.
- I understand that once the project is completed, selections of the resulting materials may be used in future publications, both print and online, as well as in public events.
- The academic project resulting from this work and related project materials will be kept by the University for ten years for archival purposes (longer if the material is consulted during that time). Consent forms will also be retained for the purposes of record.

TICK AS APPROPRIATE:

☐   I agree to take part in the above study on the condition I remain anonymous.

OR

☐   I agree to take part in the above study and wish to be cited by name. I understand that I will be allowed to see and approve use of my comments in pre-publication drafts of any outputs.

DATA PROCESSING AGREEMENT

In accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR)

- I understand and accept that the 'lawful basis' for the processing of personal data is that the project constitutes 'a task in the public interest', and that any processing of special category data is 'necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research'.
- I understand that I have the right to **access** data relating to me or that I have provided and to **object** where I have reason to believe it has been misused or used for purposes other than those stated.
    - o Requests for access and objections should be submitted via the UofG online proforma accessible at: https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/dpfoioffice/gdpr/gdprrequests/#.
        - ▪ Please note: The fact that access and objection are formal procedures is not intended to intimidate participants into not raising issues, but rather provides a framework as part of which the University is legally required to respond to requests and address concerns.
        - ▪ Anyone submitting a request is required to provide proof of their identity. Again, this is not intended as dissuasive, but rather reflects the University's duty to guard against fraudulent approaches that might result in data breaches.
- Project materials in both physical and electronic form will be treated as confidential and kept in secure storage (locked physical storage; appropriately encrypted, password-protected devices and University user accounts) at all times.

ALL PARTICIPANTS:

☐   I agree to the terms for data processing outlined above.

☐   I confirm I have been given information on how to exercise my rights of access and objection.

Name of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Researcher's name and email:	Rosemary James-Beith rosemary.james-beith@glasgow.ac.uk
Supervisor's name and email:	Mark Banks mark.banks@glasgow.ac.uk / Melanie Selfe melanie.selfe@glasgow.ac.uk
Department address:	Centre for Cultural Policy Research, University of Glasgow, 13 Professor's Square, Glasgow, G12 8QQ

D: Survey Questionnaire

Craft Associations in Scotland – A Survey for Makers, Craftspeople, Craft Artists & Applied Artists

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Start of Block: Introduction

Q1 **Craft Associations in Scotland – A Survey for Makers, Craftspeople, Artisans, Craft Artists & Applied Artists** Are you a maker, craftsperson, craft artist or applied artist based in Scotland? We're interested to know what networks and associations you're currently engaging with: what you contribute, what value they offer, as well as any barriers to participation you experience.

This survey is exploring membership organisations, associations, societies, and networks in Scotland's craft sector. It forms part of a 3-year PhD research project *Making it Together* carried out by researcher Rosemary James-Beith at the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, University of Glasgow.

The survey aims to support a better understanding of the forms of organisation available, their role in supporting those that work in the craft sector, and how they contribute to shaping the values, priorities and working practices of makers.

This survey will take around 20minutes to complete.

ACCESSIBILITY - To request a large print paper version of the survey, and / or support to complete it, please email rosemary.james-beith@glasgow.ac.uk

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Q2 **About You** This research is interested in the behaviours and values of craft workers based in Scotland. To proceed, please confirm you meet ALL of the eligibility requirements to participate in this research:

☐ You are a craft worker (Meaning you identify as a maker, craftsperson, craft artist, artisan, applied artist or related title) (4)

☐ You are over 18 years old (5)

☐ You are based primarily in Scotland (meaning you are ordinarily resident in Scotland and/or the majority of your work takes place in Scotland) (6)

Page Break

Q3 **Data Protection, Privacy and Confidentiality**
Before we begin we need to confirm you have read and understood the privacy notice and consent to having your personal data processed. This survey is being undertaken by Researcher Rosemary James-Beith as part of a PhD project based at the University of Glasgow, which is the 'data controller' for the purposes of this survey.   Personal data is defined under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) as 'any information relating to an identifiable person who can be directly or indirectly identified by reference to an identifier'. While you are not required to provide it, responses to this survey may include personal data.   Your participation is voluntary and you are free to exit the survey at any time without submitting any responses. All personal data provided will be treated as confidential and your contribution will be processed in keeping with the University of Glasgow's Privacy Policy, which adheres to the UK GDPR. Personal data provided through the survey will be deleted and the raw data will be anonymised before it is shared with University of Glasgow.

Legal Basis for Processing Personal Data The legal basis for processing your personal data is a task in the public interest. Special category personal data, that is data relating to your age, gender identity, and ethnicity, will be processed under the legal basis that it is necessary for archiving, scientific or historical research or statistical purposes.

Data Storage and Security The personal data you provide will be securely stored for the duration of the project. It will not be used for any other purpose or shared with third parties. Anonymised excerpts and aggregated results will be used within research outputs, including a thesis, academic articles, and at least one craft sector-facing event. Once the PhD is completed the data will be archived by the University of Glasgow for a period of 10 years.

Your Rights* You can request access to the information we process about you at any time. If at any point you believe that the information we process relating to you is incorrect, you can request to see this information and may in some instances request to have it restricted, corrected, or erased. You may also have the right to object to the processing of data and the right to data portability. *Please note that the ability to exercise these rights will vary and depend on the legal basis on which the processing is being carried out.*

Questions and Complaints If you have a question or wish to raise a complaint on how your personal data has been handled, you can contact the Researcher, Rosemary James-Beith in the first instance rosemary.james-beith@glasgow.ac.uk
Alternatively the academic supervisors for the project can be contacted: Professor Mark Banks, mark.banks@glasgow.ac.uk or Dr. Melanie Selfe, melanie.selfe@glasgow.ac.uk   If you are unable to contact any of those named above, or prefer not to, our Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotectionofficer@glasgow.ac.uk
If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are not processing your personal data in accordance with the law, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) https://ico.org.uk/ Please keep a note of this information should you need it in the future.

Q4 **Please confirm your consent to participate in this survey.** Alternatively please exit the survey - in which case no data will be saved.

○ I confirm that I have read and understood the privacy notice, and consent to the terms and conditions of this survey. (1)

Q5 **About Your Craft Work** This section asks some questions about your craft work, such as materials used, duration of practice and current concerns and priorities.

Q6 What words do you use to describe yourself in relation to your craft work? [Select all that apply]

☐   Maker (1)

☐   Designer-maker (2)

☐   Applied Artist (3)

☐   Artisan (4)

☐   Craftsman, Craftswoman, or Craftsperson (5)

☐   Craft Artist (6)

☐   Craft Worker (7)

☐   Crafter (8)

☐   Designer (9)

☐   Artist (10)

☐   Other (Please give details) (11)

_____

Q7 How long have you been a practicing craft worker? [Choose one answer]

○ Less than a year (1)

○ 1-2 years (2)

○ 3-5 years (3)

○ 6-10 years (4)

○ 11-15 years (5)

○ 16-20 years (7)

○ More than 20 years (6)

Page Break

✳

Q8 What material(s) do you use in your work? [Select all that apply]

☐ Wood (1)

☐ Metal (2)

☐ Stone (3)

☐ Fabric (4)

☐ Yarn (5)

☐ Clay (6)

☐ Paper (7)

☐ Plastic (8)

☐ Glass (9)

☐ Leather (10)

☐ Other [Please give details] (11)

_____

Page Break

Q9 What craft disciplines does your work encompass? [Select all that apply]

☐ Basketry & Willow Weaving (1)

☐ Bookbinding (2)

☐ Ceramics (3)

☐ Furniture Making (furniture and lighting) (4)

☐ Glass (5)

☐ Jewellery (6)

☐ Leather Working (7)

☐ Metal Working (blacksmithing and large-scale work) (8)

☐ Millinery (9)

☐ Mosaics (10)

☐ Paper Making (paperworks and wallpaper)   (11)

☐ Silversmithing & Goldsmithing (12)

☐ Stone Working (carving, lettering, sculpture, plasterwork) (13)

☐ Textiles (weaving, knitting, crochet, printed, embroidery, tapestry, felting, quilting, tufting and lace) (14)

☐ Wood Working (15)

☐ Other (Please give details) (16)

_____

Page Break

Q10 Which of the following would you use to describe your work? [Choose all that apply]

☐ Restoration Craft (1)

☐ Heritage Craft (2)

☐ Traditional Craft (3)

☐ Design-Led Craft (4)

☐ Contemporary Craft (5)

☐ Applied Arts (6)

☐ Fine Craft (7)

☐ Studio Craft (8)

☐ None of the above (9)

☐ Other [Please give details] (10)
_____

Page Break

Q11 On what legal basis do you practice your craft? [Choose all that apply]

☐   As a self-employed person (1)

☐   As a director / owner of a limited business (2)

☐   As an employee (3)

☐   As a volunteer (4)

☐   Other [Please give details] (5)

_____

Page Break

Q12 Do you carry out your craft work: [Choose one answer]

○ On a full time basis (more than 30hours per week) (1)

○ On a part time basis (less than 30 hours per week) (2)

○ It depends (please give details) (3)
_____

Page Break

Q13 As a practising craft worker, what are the three biggest challenges you face currently?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Page Break

Q14 What are the three main priorities for your craft work in the next 12 months?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

End of Block: About Your Craft Work

Q15 **About Your Associations, Organisations, Memberships, Societies and Networks** This section asks a series of questions about your interactions with associations, organisations, networks and societies related to your craft work.

- -

Q16 Are you a member or participant of one or more associations, organisations, networks or societies related to your craft work?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Skip To: If are you a member or participant of one or more associations, organisations, networks or societies... = No

Page Break

Q17 Please name the craft associations, membership organisations, networks and societies that you are actively involved with currently.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

- -

Page Break

Q18 Are any of the associations listed above new to you (i.e. you joined in the last 12 months)?

○ Yes (please give details) (1) _____

○ No (2)

- -

Page Break

Q19 Are there any others not listed above that you would like to mention? (This helps us map as many as possible across Scotland, even if you are not an active member or participant currently)

○ Yes (please give details) (1) _____

○ No (2)

Page Break

Q20 How much TIME (Hrs) did you contribute on average PER MONTH towards this activity in the last year? (i.e. January 2022-December 2022)

○ Zero Hours (1)

○ 1-5 Hours (2)

○ 6-10 Hours (3)

○ 11-15 Hours (4)

○ More than 15 Hours (5)

Q21 Briefly describe what this involved? (i.e. Attendance at regular meetings, exhibition invigilation, board meetings, events, etc.)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Page Break

Q22 How much MONEY (£GBP) do you spend on this activity in the last year in total?

    ○ £0 Zero Pounds (6)

    ○ £1-£50 (7)

    ○ £51-100 (8)

    ○ £101-150 (9)

    ○ £151-200 (10)

    ○ More than £200 (11)

Q23 Briefly describe what did this expenditure related to? (i.e. Membership fees, exhibition costs, travel to meetings, events etc.)

_____

Page Break

Q24 Do you formally volunteer for one or more associations, organisations, networks or societies related to your craft work? (ie as Board Member, exhibition invigilator, meeting host, treasurer etc)

    ○ Yes (please give details) (1) _____

    ○ No (2)

Page Break

Q25 Which of your memberships or associations do you consider to be the MOST beneficial to you and your craft work currently? Why is this?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Page Break

Q26 Which has had the biggest impact on you and the way you work? Why is this?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Page Break

Q27 Which do you feel need to change or improve? Why is this?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Page Break

Q28 Have you ever wanted to join or contribute to organisations, associations, networks or societies related to your craft work but didn't?

○ Yes (please give details) (1) _____

○ No (2)

Skip To: Have you ever wanted to join or contribute to organisations, associations, networks or societies... = No

Page Break

Q29 Which if any of the following applied? [Select all that apply]

☐   I didn't meet the stated membership criteria (1)

☐   The costs were prohibitive (2)

☐   It wasn't available in my geographical area (3)

☐   I didn't feel welcome (4)

☐   I didn't have the time / capacity (5)

☐   I wasn't sure how to join (6)

☐   Other (Please give details) (7)
_____

Page Break

Q30 Are there any types of support or activity missing or unavailable that you are looking for currently? If so, please give details.
_____

End of Block: About Your Associations

Q31 **About You** To understand more about who is completing this survey you are invited to respond to a small number of demographic questions. All data provided will be treated as strictly confidential in keeping with the UK GDPR.

Q32 What Local Authority are you based in? (If you live or work across multiple local authorities, please select the one where your main residence is located.

○ Aberdeen City (1)

○ Aberdeenshire (2)

○ Angus (3)

○ Argyll and Bute (4)

○ City of Edinburgh (5)

○ Clackmannanshire (6)

○ Dumfries and Galloway (7)

○ Dundee City (8)

○ East Ayrshire (9)

○ East Dunbartonshire (10)

○ East Lothian (11)

○ East Renfrewshire (12)

○ Falkirk (13)

○ Fife (14)

○ Glasgow City (15)

○ Highland (16)

○ Inverclyde (17)

○ Midlothian (18)

○ Moray (19)

○ Na h-Eileanan Siar (Western Isles) (20)

○ North Ayrshire (21)

○ North Lanarkshire (22)

○ Orkney (23)

○ Perth and Kinross (24)

○ Renfrewshire (25)

○ Scottish Borders (26)

○ Shetland (27)

○ South Ayrshire (28)

○ South Lanarkshire (29)

○ Stirling (30)

○ West Dunbartonshire (31)

○ West Lothian (32)

Page Break

Q33 How do you describe your gender?

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

○ In another way (please give details) (3)
_____

○ Prefer not to say (4)

Page Break

Q34 What is your age range?

○ 18-24 (1)

○ 25-34 (2)

○ 35-44 (3)

○ 45-54 (4)

○ 55-64 (5)

○ 65-74 (6)

○ 75 and over (7)

○ Prefer not to say (8)

Page Break

Q35 Do you consider yourself to have a disability or life-long limiting illness?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

○ Prefer not to say (3)

Page Break

Q36 What is your ethnic origin? (*Please specify where appropriate)

○ White British (1)

○ White Irish (2)

○ Any other white background* (3)
_____

○ Asian British (4)

○ Indian (5)

○ Pakistani (6)

○ Bangladeshi (7)

○ Any other Asian Background* (8)
_____

○ Black British (9)

○ Black Caribbean (10)

○ Black African (11)

○ Any other Black Background* (12)
_____

○ Chinese (13)

○ Any other ethnic background* (14)
_____

○ Mixed or multiple ethnic background* (16)
_____

○ Prefer not to say (15)

Page Break

Q37 Other than your craft work, do any of the following apply? (Select all that apply)

☐ I am a student (1)

☐ I am retired (2)

☐ I am in full time employment (more than 30 hours per week) (3)

☐ I am in part time employment (less than 30 hours per week) (4)

☐ I am a carer for a child or children under the age of 18 (5)

☐ I am a carer for a dependent adult or adults over the age of 18 (6)

☐ I am a freelancer / sole trader (7)

☐ I am a business owner / director (8)

☐ I am a volunteer (9)

Page Break

Q38 When thinking about your current financial situation, which of the following statements best applies to you? (Basic needs includes food, housing, energy, and transport).

○ I am comfortably able to meet all of my basic needs (1)

○ I may have concerns about meeting my basic needs but I regularly achieve them (2)

○ I frequently have concerns about meeting basic needs and don't always achieve them (3)

Page Break

Q39 Any final comments?

_____
_____

_____
_____
_____

Page Break

End of Block: About You

Thankyou for taking the time to complete this survey.
Your answers have been saved.

You may now close your browser tab.

For any questions please contact

Researcher, Rosemary James-Beith
Rosemary.james-beith@glasgow.ac.uk

E: Interview Questions Example

Interview Questions for Case Study Maker-Participants

30-60mins online or in-person

Welcome and Housekeeping – recap aims of the project, confirm consent form completed, how interview data will be used, stored and shared, and ask if they have any questions. Confirm consent to record interview.

Question 1: Can you tell me your name, and a bit about yourself and where you're based?

Question 2: How would you describe your relationship to [case study org]?

Question 3: [If not covered] How long have you been involved with [case study org] and have you held a different role to the one you have now (ie Board / committee member)?

Question 4: [If not covered] What motivated you to join [case study org]?

Question 5: What are you trying to achieve together with the members?

Question 6: Has this changed over time?

Question 7: How is [case study org] responding to members' needs, aspirations and concerns?

Question 8: Do you think the type and level of support and development is appropriate?

Question 9: Is there anyone missing or excluded from [case study organisation]? Why do you think that might be?

Question 10: Are there any other networks, associations or membership organisations that you think are functioning really well in the craft sector currently?

Question 11: What, if anything, would you change about [case study org] if you could?

Question 12: Could you give me a run-down of what activity is planned for the year [2023]? What can I expect from [Case Study Org] as a member?

Question 13: Do you have any final questions for me?

Thankyou and close – recap next steps and timescales for the research

Interview Questions for Policy Maker / Craft Leader Participants

30-60mins online or in-person

Welcome and Housekeeping – recap aims of the project, confirm consent form completed, how interview data will be used, stored and shared, and ask if they have any questions. Confirm consent to record interview.

Question 1: Can you tell me your name, role, organisation / institution and a bit about your responsibilities there?

Question 2: Can you share the current policy priorities that you are working to?

Question 3: What approaches / activities are you employing to respond to these priorities?

Question 4: What type of engagement do you currently have with craft and craft makers in Scotland?

Question 5: What are you aware of in terms of craft makers' current needs, aspirations and concerns?

Question 6: How do you think this has this changed over time? (adapted depending on length of tenure in role etc)

Question 7: Where do you think craft makers are seeking support and development currently?

Question 8: Do you think the type and level of support is appropriate to craft makers needs and aspirations?

Question 9: Are there any networks, associations or membership organisations that you think are functioning really well in the craft sector currently?

Question 10: What, if anything, would you change if you could?

Question 11: Do you have any final questions for me?

Thankyou and close – recap next steps and timescales for research

F: Records, Documents and Archives consulted

Type	Materials Reviewed	Location	Notes
Formal Archive	Books, pamphlets and documents relating to historical craft guilds and communities in Scotland, including Marwick (1909) *Edinburgh Guilds and Crafts,* Scottish Burgh Records Society: Edinburgh Baird, C. and Watban, R (2007) *The Cutting Edge: Scotland's Contemporary Craft,* NMS Enterprises: Edinburgh Letter / Facsimile (1977) 2 page typed letter issued by John Lawrie to the Assistant Secretary of the Society of Glass Technology, discusses the life and achievements of Helen Monro Turner following her passing: Scottish, Edinburgh, 15th October 1977, museum reference V.2024.202.107	National Museums of Scotland, Scottish Life Archive, Edinburgh	Two visits to archive completed, December 2021
Formal Archive	Scottish Society of Arts Workers Constitution and Rules (c. 1898); Scottish Society of Art Workers Minute Book (1898-1900); Member letters relating to Scottish Society of Art Workers (1901); Records of the Scottish Society of Art Workers (1898-1901) https://gsaarchives.net/catalogue/dc-001-1 DC 001/1	Glasgow School of Art Archive and Collection	Accessed digitally
Formal Archive	Papers of Mary Lonsdale (1904-1986), general secretary of the Scottish Co-operative Women's Guild. Includes; correspondence, books, typed and handwritten notes relating to running of the Guild, conference speeches, photographs. Relevant to business of Scottish Committee of the Council of Industrial Design. Archive Reference: GB 1534 GB 1534 ML	Glasgow Women's Library Archive	Accessed in person
Documents	SGS Constitution approved 07/11/2020 SGS Newsletters May 2023, June 2023, November 2023 SGS 2021-2022 Approved Accounts SGS Approved Accounts 2016-2017 SGS Committee Meeting Minutes SGS Report (Kirsten Gow authored, 2020) Mapping the Future SGS Funding proposals – exhibition and project plans for 2023-2024.	Provided digitally as copies, PDFs, Scans by Chair	
Documents	SGS: Behind the Scenes – powerpoint presentation on previous committee members and society activity, presentation delivered at ECA, 9th November 2019	Provided digitally as PowerPoint Presentation by previous chair	Discussed at length with interviewee who produced and presented it.
Documents	6 photographs of Interpretation Panels (installation view) from SGS at 40 exhibition held in Trades House, Glasgow in 2019	Provided as digital copies by SGS Committee member	Originals in personal collection

Documents	Collaborative Exhibition and Events Programme proposal for joint funding bid between Scotland's craft membership organisations. PDF and Word Documents containing governance and curatorial roles and responsibilities, budgets, and proposed activity.	Provided as digital copies by AAS Member and SGS Member.	Originals in personal collection.
Documents	AAS Multiyear Funding Application text and programme overview for Creative Scotland application process (Dated 25th October 2023)	Provided as digital copies by AAS Chair.	Originals saved digitally by AAS.
Documents	AAS Email Communications AAS Members Invitation to Altermatter: June 2023 AAS Exhibition Opening Invite: May 2023 AAS Exhibition update – Meet the curators: May 2023 AAS Members Bulletin: June 2023 AAS News: Exhibition Opening, June 2023 AAS Members Bulletin: Circular Hackathon Costume Slam Invitation: June 2023 AAS Newsflash: Circular Hackathon, June 2023 AAS Members Bulletin: August 2023 AAS News: Sustainable Cyprus: August 2023	Authors' Personal archive of emails received during fieldwork period.	Archive of AAS Newsletters also available online here
Documents	AAS SCIO Constitution (Updated October 2020)	Digital Copy downloaded from AAS website	Constitution available here
Web Archive	Documentation of SFMA Exhibitions including *The Wych Elm Project, After the Storm, and AshRise* i.e. https://stories.rbge.org.uk/archives/18921	Digital copies viewed through Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh website using WayBack Machine on the Internet Archive	Specific documents listed in reference list
Web Archive	SFMA Exhibition plans, committee meeting agendas and minutes, past newsletters, blog posts, promotional materials, website development plans.	Digital copies viewed through Scottish Furniture Makers Association website using WayBack Machine on the Internet Archive	Specific documents listed in reference list
Web Archive	Scottish Arts Council documents relating to craft and craft strategy 1998-2009.	Digital copies viewed through Scottish Arts Council website using WayBack Machine on the Internet Archive	Specific documents listed in reference list
Informal Archive	Physical SGS Exhibition Catalogues (2009-2016), Exhibition Posters and Promotional Materials (2009-2016), Print Copies of SGS Journal (2009-2016), third-party exhibition catalogues for glass-related craft exhibitions in Scotland.	Private collection of past chair of SGS	Multiple copies of some items. Author was provided with a small selection to take away and

			retain for research purposes.
Informal Archive	AAS Member had begun process of building a print archive of AAS past exhibitions. This was discussed in interviews but not accessible due to lack of time and communication with individual. This supposedly includes photographic documentation of exhibitions, catalogues, promotional materials, programmes, posters, and other documents related to the planning and installation of trade fairs and exhibitions between 1992 and 2012.	Informal private collection of AAS member	NOT ACCESSED DURING RESEARCH
Informal Archive	SFMA Chair and Administrator have shared informal archive of documents, meeting minutes, agendas, exhibition plans and marketing materials. Held on a Google Drive. Current chair noted sequential chairs have had different priorities as to what to retain. No clear organisational policy. Materials not accessible to lay members / general public.	Informal digital archive.	NOT ACCESSED DURING RESEARCH
Web Archive	Really Interesting Objects CIC – promotional materials relating to Craft Biennale Scotland and review of Scottish Indigenous Crafts	Digital copies viewed through website using WayBack Machine on the Internet Archive	Specific documents / webpages listed in reference list
Web Archive	Craft Research Blogspot Articles relating to craft in Scotland, including Rose, T., (2011) Craft Research: Craft in Scotland – a reflection on the first Decade of the 21st Century, *craftresearch.blogspot.com* published 4th March 2011 http://craftresearch.blogspot.com/2011/03/craft-in-scotland-reflection-on-first.html	Digital copies viewed through website using WayBack Machine on the Internet Archive	Also includes user comments underneath articles
Web Archive	Listings of Scottish Arts Council grant recipients and accompanying press releases relating to craft, including 2004-2005 National Lottery Funds, core funds, Craft Strategy pages, and overview pages.	Digital copies viewed through website using WayBack Machine on the Internet Archive	Many links no longer accessible
Web Archive	AAS Blog – including 30 year history of Exhibitions https://www.appliedartsscotland.org.uk/2023/02/a-30-year-history-of-exhibitions/ History of the organisation – reproduced from print bulletins published between 2000-2006. https://www.appliedartsscotland.org.uk/history-of-applied-arts-scotland/	Includes collection of links to digital documentation, promotional listings, and images of works on display.	Some links accessible only through WayBack Machine

G: Field Notes Example

Photograph taken during fieldwork visit to Scottish Furniture Makers Association *AshRise* project launch at The Fruitmarket, Edinburgh, 27th April 2023 © Rosemary James-Beith

A excerpt of field notes taken during, and developed directly after (on train journey home, and at home that evening), the Scottish Furniture Makers Association *AshRise* Project Launch Event and Exhibition, held at The Fruitmarket, Edinburgh, 27th April 2023.

I walk through (a fairly empty) Fruitmarket Café and am immediately greeted by someone I know who works with another case study org AAS – they are drinking coffee and chatting to two young(ish) late 20s to early 30s, men with neat dark clothes and beards. They immediately stop and turn to say help – "oh you're here, of course you are!" she exclaims.
"Let's talk later, I'm just wrapping up a conversation here" – obvious it's a business chat rather than social from that phrasing. The young men smile and nod and they go back to their conversation. I note the espresso cups and notebooks.
Perils of being known in the sector now – it's such a small community. No chance of being incognito or flying below the radar!
I walk on towards the event space at the back of the café.

I've handed my jacket to someone to hang in the cloak room (a clothes rail in the corridor). They comment on the colour (mustard yellow) and we laugh about having colour phases when

we buy clothes. Fruitmarket staff wearing branded t-shirts and lanyards, guide me into the space.

"Danielle" is on the door (a SFMA member).
She has made laser cut wooden name badges for all the maker-members of SFMA to wear with the logo on it. She shows them off with pride and invites me to sign in… I glance quickly at the names on the list, at least 30 signed in already.

It's quiet inside at first with small groups chatting, existing friends and colleagues standing in small groups. So I take a wander through the exhibition and try to drink in the atmosphere, catching sporadic words and phrases as I wander past people.

About 10 are like me looking at the exhibited work. Another 20 are standing by the drinks table sipping prosecco or orange juice. People keep arriving. The sound levels increase and reverberate around the room, excited exclamations as visitors and guests recognise each other. I can see lots of exuberant shaking of hands and smiling reddened faces and bright eyes in my peripheral vision.

The objects displayed are all wooden, handmade and produced from bright near-white and golden ash wood. Includes a bookcase, a bow and arrow stood upright in a frame, a large clam-shell shaped vase or bowl, a chair, a bench with bold geometric parallel lines… small white square cards typed with object interpretation are neatly displayed alongside.

After taking in the objects and reading the posters along the opposite wall I circle back to "Danielle" on the door and manage to strike up a chat – she's aware of the research and keen to take part. She mentions proudly that she helped to set up today's event. "I'm on the committee" she says beaming a big smile. First time she's been involved in an event like this for SFMA. She looks around keen to introduce me to other members, again mentioning that they'll be visible by their wooden name badges.

It's about 70% men in the room, with a number of members accompanied by female guests, partners presumably by the body language. But there are female SFMA members in amongst the group - "Danielle" is keen to point that out.

"Anne" walks through the door and picks up a member name badge, signs in… she's less keen to chat, mentions she already rejected opportunity to take part in research when "Danielle" introduces me to her… she looks uncomfortable in busy space and moves off to the side to look at the objects displayed.

20minutes later and the room is buzzy now. At least 50 people, 70:30 M:F. I try to count but everyone is moving around more quickly.

Lots of tweed and wool and cords and polished boots from older makers. Young male makers stand in groups with brightly coloured beanie hats and wool coats layered over jeans. The volume of conversation and laughter is increasing, and the evening is being punctuated by regular loud echoing POPS as the prosecco bottles are uncorked. It feels celebratory.

Room is set up with around 30 chairs in three curved rows taking up one half of the space, with the drinks tables behind. In front is a low stage with a large screen above, lectern (made from a raw, recently felled trunk of ash) microphone, and branches of ash wood and leaves.

In the corner by the stage is a sound desk, a nervous looking technician is hovering and fidgeting waiting for the "event" to start.

Posters are dotted around the space with info from partners – i.e. Forestry.gov.uk, Scottish Forestry Ash Rise Project Print – in bold white, black and neon green, in piles on the welcome desk.

I take a seat so I can take notes down. Noise levels growing as peers meet and chat excitedly, palpable excitement about being in space together. The prevalence of older people (50 / 60 / 70+) in space when I first arrived is shifting towards younger demographic. Partners and spouses are present dotted in amongst the members, and I can hear them being introduced – "this is my wife" – this is first meetings. Young couples (late 20s / early 30s) increase in space, in jeans and high top trainers. Large bold hipster shoulder bags…

A photographer is documenting the event – individual portraits, groups, displayed objects. The sound guy pacing nervously by the desk – eager for cue to start – something is about to happen!

Smiles and hugs ripple around room – the occasional clink of glasses, or "heeeeeey" from across the room as members recognise eachother. I spot the Chair and previous Chair who I've been liaising with, deep in conversation within their own small groups, across the room.

More smiling / milling about.
Interlopers are asking questions about the work on display.
- A bow and arrow
- A bench, sweeping parallel lines
- A modular shelving system – produced to display ceramics
- Raw logs, twigs, bark
- Chairs
- All ash
- A large portion of trunk four metres long (ish) is displayed on its side, sliced in inch thick planks vertically, with square dowel (?) spacing the planks apart… the centrepiece of the room it creates division between the drinks / seating / stage on one side and the exhibited objects spaced equally on the other.

Colours / textures of the space
- Muted, dimmed lights in a black box space
- With print / screen / posters lit along one wall
- Monochomatic (light / pale ash wood) with a splash of almost neon green on the marketing materials reading "ASH RISE" in capital letters… this is no hobbyist event – this shouts slick, polished, produced, edited, curated – and very coherently a singular organisational message, rather than multitude of disparate / diverse member voices.
- Textured charcoal rubbings of bark, wood grain, leaves appear in the promotional project materials too.

A "shush" – the chatter hushes…

Mike Whittall, the organisation's chair steps up to the lectern, grinning. He stands – tall (6ft+) commanding figure – on stage and speaks to the assembled crowd who gather closer and turn to face him. "We are the SFMA" he opens. "Whoop" from the audience. "A collective of furniture makers" Mike goes on, independent but "joined by a common thread".

He goes on to introduce the core premise of the event – the framing of the Ash Dieback issue encroaching on Scottish Woodland on one hand, and the beauty and potential of ash wood on the other. He wishes to [paraphrased] raise profile of the issue AND of the potential of the wood, showcasing the work of members and contributors, and "show off our craft and skills" in the process. Clapping and cheering from the crowd. They approve warmly of the message.

He steps off stage and passes over to Dr Helen McKay, Chief Forester of (for?) Scotland: "not often that foresters are allowed to mix with creatives as I believe you are known" she says as she steps towards the lectern. A laugh ripples through the room.

Dr McKay, an older woman (possibly early 70's) short stature, grey hair pulled back into bun, court shoes and maroon skirt suit. Energetic, with passionate and confident voice, she's used to delivering messages to large audiences.

She gives more scientific background to ash as a species and the issue of dieback
- Native common ash
- Likes deep fertile soils
- Light hungry – thinning needed

She has brought props onto stage
- Ash stem, black buds showing
- New leaves sensitive to frost

She has a warm open face, smiling, making eye contact across the room. This is key public engagement / knowledge exchange for her… a new audience to convert.

Possibilities of steam bending she goes on… The quality and colour of the wood is so unique – a white wood, often used for domestic purposes because of its clean appearance – she holds up a hand-turned wooden salt cellar. She notes Ash wood needs treated for outdoor use, decays quickly, releasing CO2 into atmosphere as it rots.

Now onto the Dieback issue
- Lesions are caused by a fungus
- Cuts off water and nutrients to stems, branches and trucks.

The audience goes quiet and shifts weight feet to feet shuffling – serious message is going in and getting processed… Now she points towards possibilities / resources – Scottish Forestry Website… How to avoid transmission, what to do as a forestry manager etc etc

I'm suddenly distracted…

I've spotted a few key people I know – curators, producers I've worked with previously standing together. They must have slipped in once lights dimmed for presentations. The event has drawn them together, I wonder what relationship they have with the SFMA, and if they are involved in the AshRise project going forwards. They are whispering back and forth during the presentation, smiling and nodding in approval.

Audience is also nodding along with recommended Ash Dieback mitigations, a couple in front in particular appear to be involved in forestry management and are taking notes rapidly. Claps as she steps off stage.

Mike Whittall now invites "Andy" to give a project introduction – arms open. "Andy" is SFMA member who first initiated the idea of a touring exhibition related to ash / dieback.

He starts his presentation by swinging a small wooden handled axe into the wooden lectern on stage, drawing attention to both the wooden material of the lectern and the axe's handle. It creates a loud "crack" sound. It's a performative moment that elicits a gasp and giggle from the audience. He begins with historical relevance of ash – the Mesolithic period introduces wooden handles to axes – changing human's relationship to tools forever. It was made of ash wood. Ash has been "makers' materials of choice" he says "because it's…
- Durable
- Useful
- Incredibly beautiful"

Usefulness known across the world… I note the connection to makers across the world through this work coming through strongly in his presentation – "Andy's" prose has been very carefully considered, and is being elegantly shared. The gathered audience is hanging on his words, transfixed.

It's importance / reverence ended quite recently, he goes on to note – once plastic was discovered – resulting in a fragmentation of knowledge. The connection between the AshRise project, the value of craft and craft makers, and questions of material sustainability and environmental impact is woven together, without being didactic.

Nature – material – craft – product
His talk traces the relationships between these – and the role of the makers within the storing and sharing (preservation) of that knowledge – pointing subtly and implicitly to SFMA's role in this.

His aims? To bring the "wood" community together, highlight and celebrate the provenance of materials.

[Note: event then included screening of a first cut of a short (15min) documentary film produced for *AshRise*, followed by drinks and networking]