

Bristol + Bath Creative R+D: Our Story so far...

@Bristol_BathRD ✕ bristolbathcreative.org

BRISTOL + BATH CREATIVE R+D



Creative Industries ✕ Clusters Programme

Funded by the Creative Industries Clusters
Programme managed by the Arts & Humanities
Research Council as part of the Industrial Strategy.



Bristol+Bath Creative R+D offers a suite of support to the region's businesses, creatives, artists and thinkers to experiment with new and emerging technologies, conduct research, and develop prototype products and experiences to share with the public.

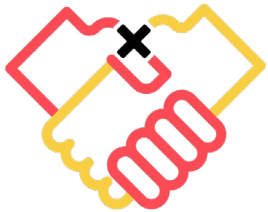
We are contributing to the development of Bristol and Bath's thriving creative economy by supporting a socially responsible environment for innovation that is inclusive and sustainable, which puts people first, and is underpinned by careful research.



Our team is drawn from the universities of UWE Bristol, Bath, Bath Spa, and Bristol, and from Watershed, a Bristol-based cultural organisation focussed on talent development, innovation, and creative technology.

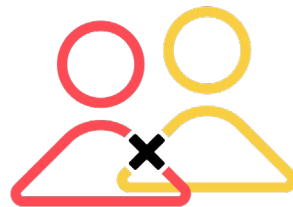
We have been awarded £6.8 million between 2018 and 2023 by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to carry out this work as part of its Creative Industries Clusters Programme (CICP).

Our Values



Co-creation

Bring in users and partners as co-commissioners and co-designers of challenges; helping companies to deliver their values in order to create value.



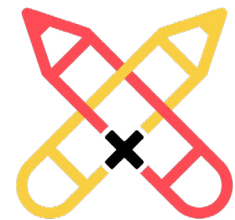
Inclusivity

Be inclusive: developing new models for sustainable cluster growth and tackling societal and grand challenges for the widest benefit.



Sharing

Sharing outcomes wherever possible: maximising learning and impact for the whole cluster.



Creativity

Be as creative as we can be in all that we do: helping to raise the ambitions of our cluster at every stage.

Our journey so far...

**Enabled
£1.7 million**

in further investment across 29 of our companies

Supported 43

new prototype products and experiences

**Made 90
investments
in Research +
Development**

across Bristol + Bath

Connected

**238
businesses**

via events,
networking, and
collaborations

Funded

**20
teams**

to make brand new
ideas a reality

Published 194

written outputs

Supported

56

Pathfinder Fellows to
conduct their own research,
and work collaboratively.

Developed 78 formal collaborations

between new and established companies like BBC R&D, Future
Publishing, Audible, Sennheiser and more...

Shared our research in

211 public appearances

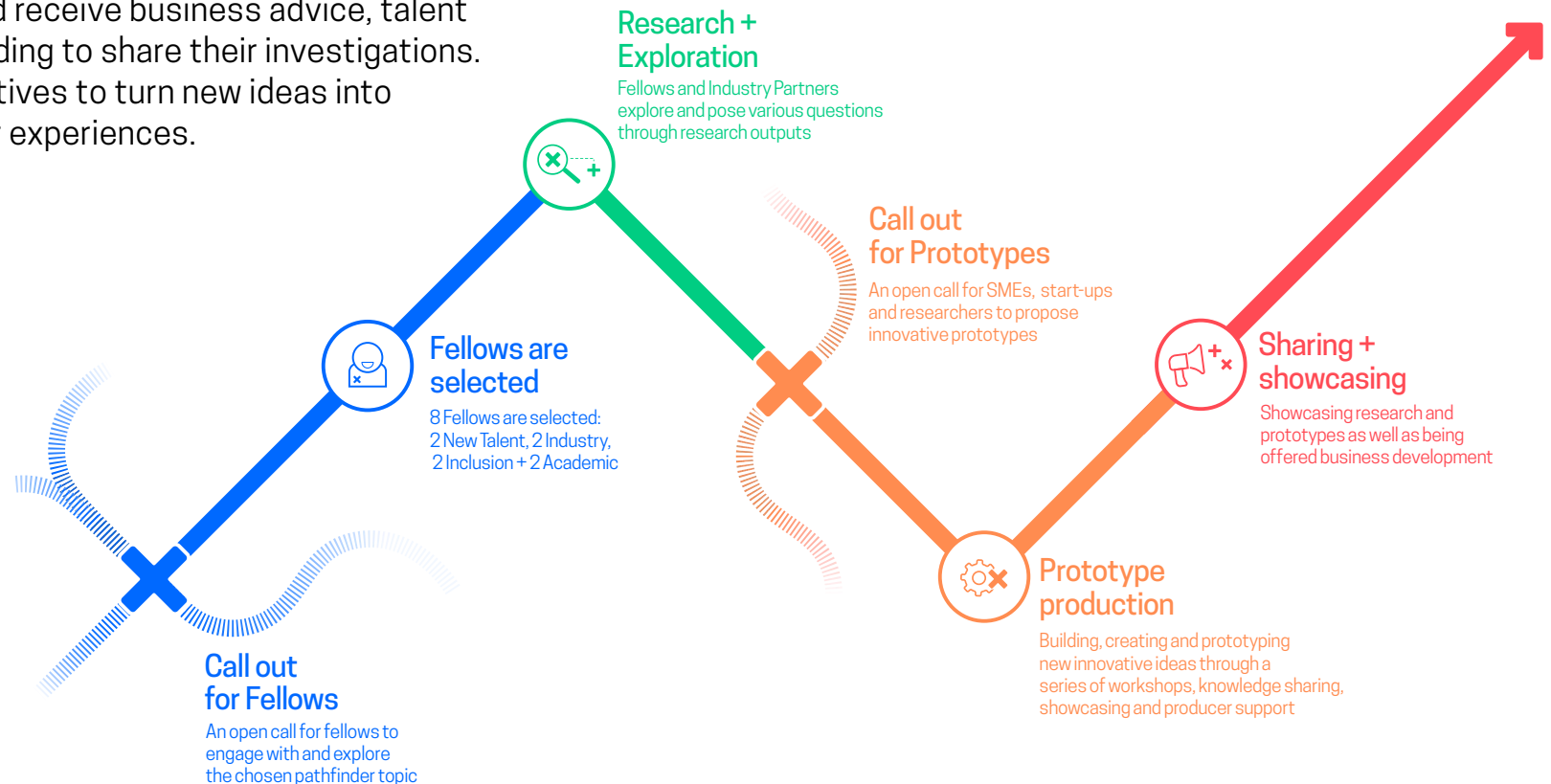
**10 new
businesses**

formed to carry forward the work our companies
started with us.

Our Process

We support artists, creative businesses both big and small, third sector organisations, and academic researchers from across Bristol and Bath to explore the creative possibilities offered by new and emerging technologies.

We do this via themed deep-dives which we call **'Pathfinders'** in which participants take part in a scheme of workshops, events and collaborative research, and receive business advice, talent development support, and funding to share their investigations. We then offer funding for creatives to turn new ideas into prototype creative products or experiences.



Our Activity



1. Digital Placemaking

considers how digital technology can deepen our relationship with public places



2. Expanded Performance

explores the concept of liveness and togetherness enabled by new technologies for theatre and live music



3. Amplified Publishing

investigates future models of content creation, discovery and distribution for the publishing industry



4. Creative Ecologies

investigates creativity as a networked, connected practice, not something that happens in isolation



5. Here + There

explores how being locally rooted allows us to understand ourselves as part of an interconnected global network

Funded Projects: Everything is Music

Everything is Music is a prototype created through the Digital Placemaking Pathfinder. The AI music tour guides visitors around Bristol & Bath City Centre, highlighting influential music stories for the areas. The tour is accessed natively on a smartphone browser and is free for all, offering an immersive, accessible guide to the city for music lovers.

Created in collaboration with music publication Crack Magazine & geo-location tech specialist Landmrk. EIM has been shortlisted for; Heritage in Motion Award 2020 & ACE Digital Storytelling award 2021. Nominated for the Best Innovation to support Musicians & Music in Cities for the Music Cities Awards 2020. Featured during Bath Digital Festival 2020.



Funded Projects: breathing.systems

Breathing.systems is a flexible, wireless multichannel sound system worn by performers, through which vocal performances can be processed and amplified to explore ideas of remote networked presence, polymorphous bodies and vocal transformation.

Led by Nik Rawlings at a time when Covid has made live group singing impossible, they're interested in the possibility of creating a chorus of their own voice by temporarily inhabiting the presence of their performers.

Created through support with minirigs and sennheiser breathing.systems has been exhibited in Bristol and featured at Beyond Conference, 2020.

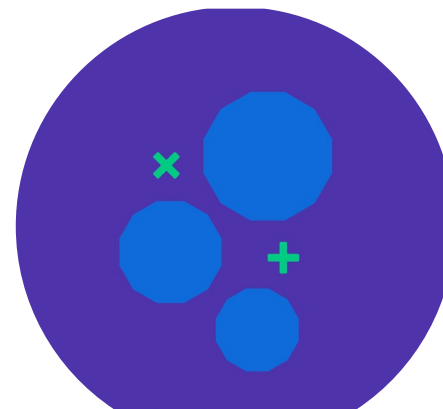
Inclusive Practice


Since it was formed, Bristol+Bath Creative R+D has been tackling questions and ideas on how to make the creative technology community of Bristol and Bath a more inclusive space to think, make, and do.

As a team we have been asking big questions about, what we mean by 'inclusion' in the first place, and who we are trying to be inclusive of. This involves looking at ourselves, too, and we have also been reflecting on how B+B R+D is governed, who applies for our research and prototype call outs, and who joins our cohorts.

So far we have:

- supported Inclusion Fellows to work alongside Industry Partners, and Prototype teams to bring diverse perspectives to the work we support in our Pathfinders.
- engaged in community mapping and experimented with new recruitment practices, both for our funding opportunities and for staff recruitment.
- launched State of Play, an ongoing data gathering process to understand who we are as a cluster. The findings from this data have influenced the design of many aspects of this programme.





Outside of our pathfinders, we also:

- Offer business investment via our Trailblazer fund.
- Run an online magazine about creative technologies called Container.
- Curate a public events programme to share our work and hear from our audiences.
- Support a development scheme for academic researchers early in their careers called New Scholars.
- Conduct research into audience experiences, responsible innovation, environmental action in the creative sector, resilient business models, and more.

Funded Projects: Connecting Bath

Stephen Hilton the founder of Bristol Futures Global Ltd and an Industry Fellow from Digital Placemaking. Since joining B+B R+D Stephen has altered his business model to expand his business into Bath. He created Bath Global Futures as a subsidiary of City Global Futures and was able to hire a new member of staff.

He has since worked on additional research with Bath looking at 5G development in the city. An expert on Smart Cities, Stephen has researched on Digital Twins for the City of Bath and digital breadcrumbs left by the City of Bristol.



Funded Projects: Celestial

Celestial are the natural successor of fireworks, this company uses sustainably charged drones to light up the night sky for performances. With funding from Bristol + Bath Creative R+D's Trailblazer scheme, Celestial were awarded £10,000 to research and develop a printed circuit board, this has allowed them to have direct remote control of their fleet of 300 drones. This funding opened up the creative potential of their technology and will enhance their shows which are currently only pre-programmed.

Featured performances: Glow in the Park Frome England, Eden Project COP26 in England, Amnesty International Freedom Flight a global collaborative film.

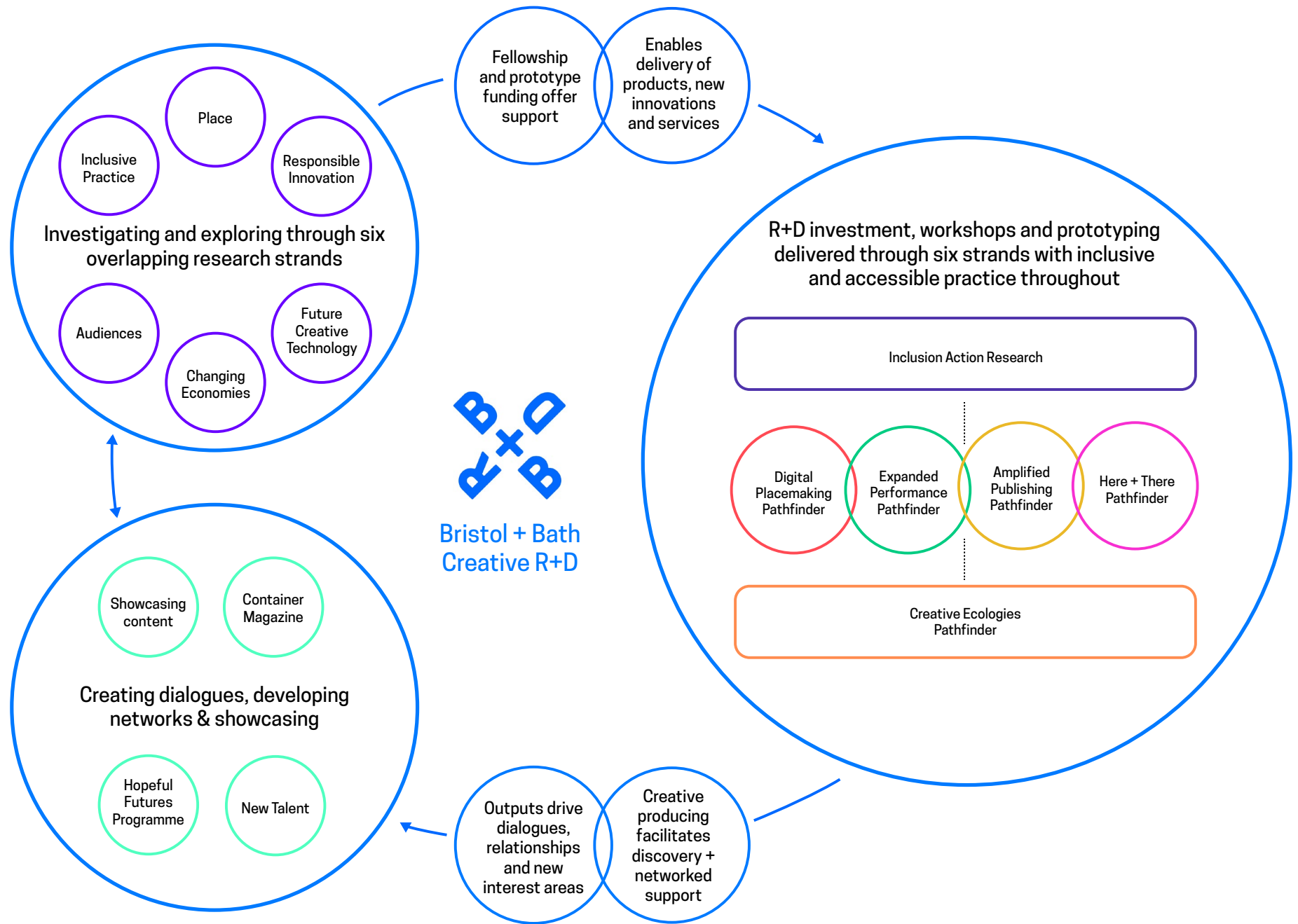
Our Way of Working

Our approach to supporting R&D is based on the belief that the development of creative ideas, businesses, and talent happens best when diverse networks of people, organisations, institutions, and places are supported to collaborate.

Our process for enabling this to happen uses workshops, investment, consultations, and networking to produce a platform for R&D. This platform supports academics, thinkers, creatives, makers, and community stakeholders to explore things that matter to them. This work happens across all strands of our work, from our Pathfinders to our academic research. We make sure all parts of our programme are in dialogue, so findings from one area of our network can help to inform, iterate, and build new ideas in another part.

This leads to all sorts of anticipated and unexpected outcomes, from new collaborations and products, to social, cultural, and economic impacts.





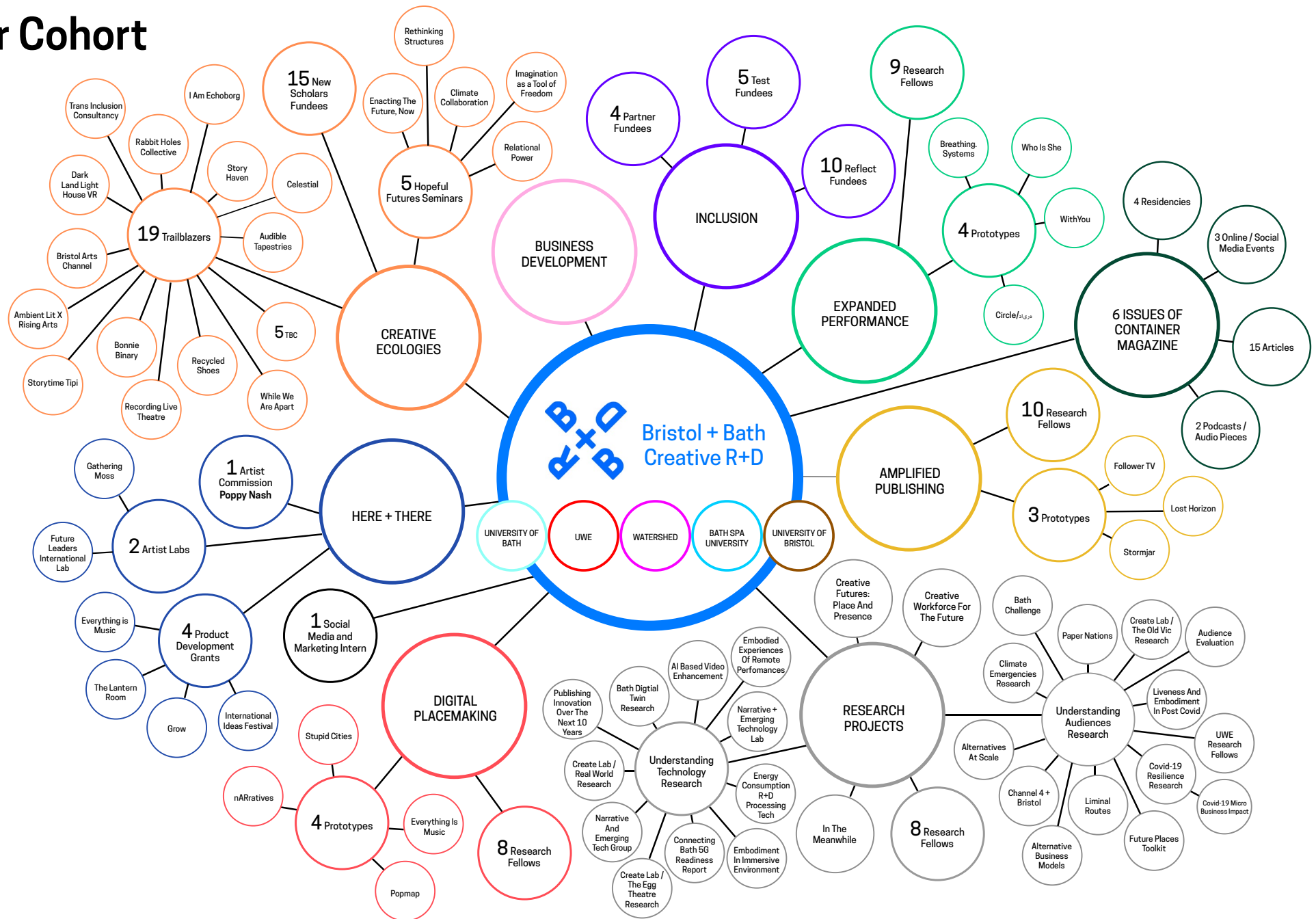
Container Magazine

One of our core offerings, Container is an online magazine focused on creative technology. Aiming to avoid the 'techno-heroic' narratives, instead Container raises up a multiplicity of voices – ones that question, dissent and explore.

Publishing 5 issues of the magazine so far topics include whether Virtual Reality might help us grieve, the environmental cost of streaming, poetry and deepfakes, censorship and obscenity in gaming, and how online spaces are being used to build solidarity for precarious migrants, undocumented individuals, asylum seekers and refugees.



Our Cohort



Our Final Year

As we enter our final year, we've still got so much happening:

- Our **Here + There Pathfinder** will connect the creative clusters of Bristol and Bath to international collaborations through a programme of talent development, research exchange and business development. We're already working with creatives in Durban, Lagos, and Seoul and there's more collaborations in the pipeline.
- Our work on building equitable and positive tomorrows for our creative ecosystem will continue as part of our **Hopeful Futures programme**. We'll be sharing even more of our learning about everything from making the creative sector more environmentally aware to understanding audience experience in immersive experiences.
- We'll be widening our **Inclusion Action-Research** further. We have been reflecting on how B+B R+D is governed, who applies for our research and prototype call outs, and who joins our cohorts. Now we've launched funding calls for paid contributions to help gather more insights into these areas from other organisations and individuals.
- We'll be **showcasing** all the amazing things made by our network of businesses, artists, technologists, practitioners and thinkers across Autumn 2022. With activities planned in Bristol, Bath and further abroad, we've got great work to share.
- Finally, we will be **taking our core approaches and principles, research, and learning onwards** into new projects, to stakeholders, and policy makers, to advocate for sustainable change in our sector.



Want to follow our journey?

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Connect with us on LinkedIn
Bristol + Bath Creative R+D

Visit our website and sign up to our newsletter
www.bristolbathcreative.org



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Credits

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UWE Bristol unless otherwise noted

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The Bristol + Bath Creative R+D has included:

UWE Bristol:

Jon Dovey, Simon Moreton, Tarek Virani, Kerry Vernon, Liz Roberts, Amy Mifsud, Juliet Lennox, Susie King, Alice Quigley, Fozia Ismail, Jess Connett, Gizelle Allan, Will Hunter, Jack Jones, James Dack and Abbie Rogers.

Watershed:

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Bath Spa University:

Kate Pullinger, Natasha Kidd, Caroline Anstey, Amy Spencer, Sarah Addezio, Simon Rollings, Louise Chapman, Adam Powell and Naomi Smyth.

University of Bristol:

Dave Bull, Tim Cole, Paul Hill, Angeliki Katsenou and Pui Anantrasirichai

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WATERSHED



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