

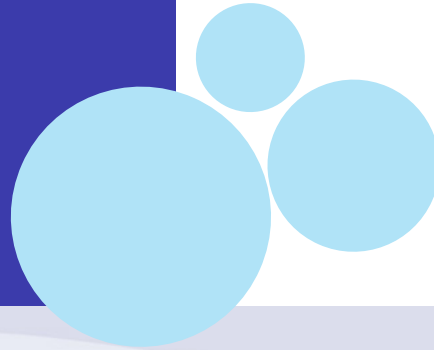


# Next Five Years

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

September 2024





The Studio, Illustration by Spark Loop.

**THE STUDIO** is a dynamic innovation hub that sits at the intersection of art, technology, and creative enterprise. Established by Bath Spa University in 2019, The Studio provides vital support to a diverse group of Residents, including freelancers, small businesses, students, and academics. By offering coworking spaces, access to advanced technologies and a collaborative environment, The Studio has become a key player in fostering creativity, entrepreneurship, and interdisciplinary learning within Bath's creative sector.

A recent survey revealed that 77% of Residents reported an increased **sense of community**, and 62% experienced **professional growth** since joining The Studio. These figures underscore The Studio's role in creating an environment where individuals and businesses can thrive, develop **meaningful connections**, and contribute to the broader creative ecosystem in Bath.



Three Horizons workshop with Slowmentum.

**THE STUDIO** now stands at a critical crossroads. As the University develops Locksbrook on the outskirts of the city, The Studio faces potential relocation, raising questions about its future role and positioning. The pressing issue is how The Studio can continue to balance the needs of the University and the city while remaining relevant in a rapidly changing social, economic, and environmental landscape.

To address this pivotal challenge, Bath Spa University's Vice-Chancellor urged The Studio team to envision a bold future. In the summer of 2024, The Studio collaborated with Slowmentum, a local regenerative economy start-up, to explore its future direction. Utilising Bill Sharpe's Three Horizons methodology, the team engaged staff and stakeholders in reflecting on The Studio's current business model and its potential future, identifying the pathways needed to achieve these possibilities.

## Four Distinct Visions for The Studio's future emerged from the research

- The Studio as a Propagator**  
 This vision offers sustained support for early-stage ideas and businesses, emphasising mentorship and resources for organic growth, in contrast to short-term accelerator programmes.
- The Studio as a Mothership**  
 This vision focuses on creating a nurturing space for professional and personal growth, promoting ethical work that positively impacts society and the environment.
- The Studio as a Story-Shifter**  
 The Studio aims to reframe Bath's narrative by promoting innovation and contributing to both the city and University's long-term strategies.
- The Studio as an International Bridge-Builder**  
 This vision seeks to connect local and global creative networks, fostering cross-cultural collaboration and exchange.





To bring these visions to life, several **strategic steps** have been proposed for The Studio over the next five years:



1.

## Reinvigorating Core Values and Behaviours

A crucial step in revitalising The Studio involves reaffirming its core values—Inclusivity, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship—and the behaviours that support them, such as interdisciplinary work, practice-based learning, and collaboration. Additionally, the concept of “Healthy Ecology” is proposed as a new core value, strengthening the connection between The Studio and environmental sustainability. The introduction of “Right Livelihood” as a key behaviour is also suggested to emphasise the importance of social purpose alongside commercial development.

2.

## Diversifying Income Streams

To ensure financial stability, The Studio must diversify its funding sources. Recommendations include forming strategic partnerships for funding and exploring joint ventures or Community Interest Companies (CICs). A modest Resident membership fee of £40 per month is suggested, alongside free access for Bath Spa University students, staff, and those on low incomes.

3.

## Developing an Independent Research Agenda

Given its strategic affiliation with the University’s Centre for Cultural and Creative Industries (CCCI), The Studio is well-positioned to expand upon its existing impact studies. By identifying critical research questions, The Studio can significantly contribute to the evolution of the creative industries. This research could be used to inform local authorities and policymakers particularly in the realm of creative placemaking. As a hub for practice-based research, The Studio is uniquely qualified to undertake this endeavour.



## 4. Planning for Physical Relocation

The Studio's physical space and location are central to its identity and impact. Given the potential move to Locksbrook, recommendations include adopting a hybrid operational model that balances city centre convenience with the opportunities presented by the new campus. Robust community engagement, flexible memberships, incentives for early adopters, and strategic placemaking initiatives are also proposed to maintain The Studio's relevance and accessibility.

## 5. Embracing Equity in Tech for Social Change

The Studio must diversify its operations and demographic to better reflect Bath's wider diversity. This is crucial for shaping an inclusive and equitable future. By deepening its analysis of operational relationships and its global economic position and fostering peer-to-peer connections between local and international networks of small-scale creative enterprises, The Studio can enhance its role in fostering social change and bridging local-global divides.

## 6. Operating as a Collective Endeavour

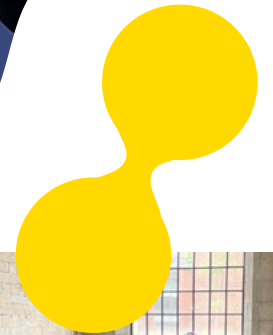
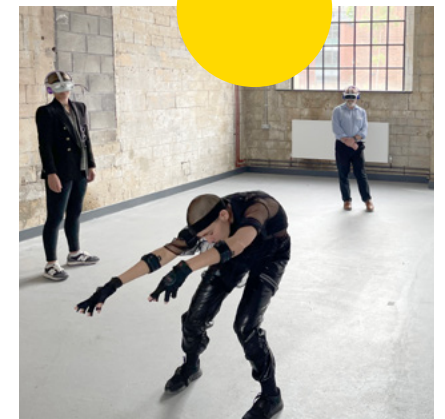
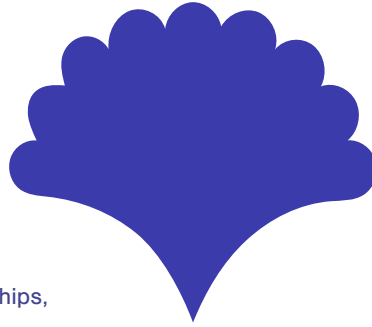
By adopting a hive-like approach, The Studio can strategically redefine creativity and impact through community-driven reciprocity, empowering micro-enterprises. Guided by inclusivity and sustainability, The Studio envisions Bath as a creative powerhouse that addresses societal challenges while fostering resilience and community cohesion.

To be part of The Studio's transformative journey, sign up to our newsletter:

<https://thestudioinbath.co.uk/contact/>

To find out more about our residents and community visit our website and follow us on socials

[www.thestudioinbath.co.uk/](http://www.thestudioinbath.co.uk/)





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