Arts Council letter

Description

Subject: A Revolutionary Visual â??Dictionaryâ?? Approach for Domestic Machine Knitting â?? Seeking Guidance & Support

Dear Arts Council England Team,

I am writing on behalf of thesouk.uk as its Founder & Creative Director. As a not-for-profit online platform, we connect, support, and economically empower authentic makers across the UK and Indian textile and craft industries.

Today, I am seeking your advice and support on expanding the reach and impact of the late Anne Laveneâ??s innovative Visual Pattern System for domestic machine knitting. I originally digitised this system on Anneâ??s behalf in 2021; having previously been sold on Etsy, these patterns are now offered directly through our own dedicated online store. This groundbreaking approach simplifies machine knitting into ten easy-to-learn, symbol-based steps. Since their development in 2011, these Visual Patterns have empowered both beginners and experienced makers to create professional-quality garments, accessories, and textiles using single-bed hand-operated domestic knitting machines, while inspiring many to launch their own independent knitwear businesses.

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Key Elements of the Visual Pattern System:

- **Downloadable Visual Patterns and Creative Guides:**
  Professionally designed, symbol-based patterns and step-by-step guides that enable users of all skill levels to create high-quality knitwear, supporting independent creative expression and digital up-skilling.
- **Accessible Digital Learning Resources:**
  A free video tutorial series, **acting in concert with the Visual Patterns,** developed to make both textile and digital skills more accessible and break down learning barriers for diverse audiences across the UK.
- **Inclusive, Universal Education:**
  A visual language approach designed to support learners from every background and neurodivergent profile, advancing Arts Council aims of real inclusion and equal access to cultural participation.
- **Cross-Cultural and International Exchange:**
  The symbol-based system supports direct skill and heritage-sharing across language divides, strengthening connections between UK and Indian craftspeople and broadening understanding of their textile traditions.
- **Heritage and Community Engagement:**
  Promotes preservation of knitwear and textile heritage by making the craft accessible to all generations, encouraging intergenerational skill-sharing and strengthening local creative communities.

- **Expanded and Participatory Learning Opportunities:**
  Planned future workshops, live online seminars, and additional educational videos will give makers, educators, and new learners hands-on experience, foster audience interaction, and help develop a resilient creative ecosystem in line with Arts Council Englandâ??s commitment to lifelong creative learning.
- **Accessible Marketplace for Patterns:**
  The Visual Patterns are made available for purchase through our online marketplace, which, provides e-commerce services at cost, ensuring makers retain more of their earnings. By combining affordable, paid access with free educational content, we are able to support the ongoing development of new patterns, fund outreach initiatives, and help makers monetise their creativity in a sustainable, socially responsible way.

In honouring Anneâ??s legacy, I am committed to further digitising, archiving, and expanding the reach of this pattern system so it reaches out and benefits more communities. I would greatly appreciate your guidance on relevant forms of support, potential partnerships, or funding opportunitiesâ??such as the Place-Based Peer Learning Programme, Arts and Culture Peer Learning Initiative, or National Lottery Project Grantsâ??as well as any connections to related organisations or networks that could help bring the Visual Pattern System to a broader audience.

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For further details about Anneâ??s journey and the origins of Visual Patterns, you may wish to view an **Interview with Anne Lavene**. For a deeper understanding of the project, please see **About Visual Patterns**, view an **Example Visual Pattern**, or (watch Part 1) of our **Free Five-Part YouTube Tutorial Series**.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I look forward to your suggestions and recommendations.

Warm regards,
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Category

1. Images

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