# Student as Co-Creators End-of-Project Report

July 2024

**Project Title**

Co-creating Careers in Humanities Co-curricular Event

**Project Overview**

This Students as Co-Creators (SSC) employability-focused project aimed to engage students in event planning and marketing, fostering a collaborative environment between students and staff. The report outlines the team’s reflections, challenges encountered, achievements, and recommendations for future projects.

**Key Participants**

Saskia Huc-Hepher, Employability Director (School of Humanities)

Heather Pagan, Associate Employability Director (School of Humanities)

Kristian Kand, Recruiter Engagement Officer (LAS)

Janet Willoughby, Careers Consultant (LAS)

Sayema Khawja, Level 6 (BA French and International Business)

Luwan Wang, Level 7 (MA Creative Writing)

**Initial Group Reflections**

* **Promotion and Engagement**
* The event was not well-promoted, leading to lower student engagement. More efforts are needed to advertise future events effectively.
* Students relied heavily on staff for organisation. Encouraging greater student autonomy in planning and promotion is essential.
* **Recruitment and Participation**
* Only two students (from the original six) were involved in the project. Increasing student recruitment is crucial to generate more excitement and distribute tasks more evenly.
* Students participated for varied reasons—some for CV building and networking opportunities, others for monetary incentives.
* **Target Audience**
* Diverse Participation: Targeting only Level 6 (L6) and postgraduate (PG) students might have limited participation. Including Level 4 (L4) and Level 5 (L5) students, who may have more availability, could be beneficial.
* Preparation: Engaging lower-level students could help bridge the transition from A-levels to university by providing valuable experience.

**Challenges and Observations**

* **Leadership and Roles**
* Staff vs. Student Leadership: There was uncertainty between staff-led and student-led organisation. While staff felt students should take the lead to develop leadership skills, students preferred staff to set clear goals.
* Employer Involvement: Securing enough employers to attend the event was challenging. Prominent industry names are necessary to attract student interest.
* **Event Perception**
* Employability: Students may not have viewed the event as directly related to employability. Clearer connections between the event roles and employability outcomes are needed.
* Industry Network: The shift to remote work made it harder for professional services’ staff to connect with employers. Building a strong network of interested employers is critical.

**Positive Outcomes**

* Collaboration: The initiative successfully brought staff and students together, especially in professional services where such collaboration is rare.
* Survey Insights: The survey provided valuable insights into student preferences and expectations regarding employers and career paths.

**Recommendations for Future Projects**

* **Strategic Promotion**
* Rebranding: Consider rebranding the student partner title to something more appealing and CV-friendly, such as "Event Planner/Marketer."
* Talent Bank: Advertise the project through Talent Bank and explore funding options with the CES team.
* Diverse Roles: Clearly advertise the different roles available within the project to attract a wider range of students.

**Leadership and Organisation**

* Project Management: Assign a dedicated project manager to drive the initiative forward and ensure effective coordination.
* Student Union Collaboration: Partner with the Student Union’s events and marketing teams to share expertise and resources.

**Employer Engagement**

* Alumni Involvement: Engage alumni by offering incentives for participation, such as gifts or networking opportunities, to share their experiences and insights.
* Big Names: Focus on attracting major employers to the event to increase student interest and participation.

**Continuous Improvement**

* Use of Survey Data: Utilise the survey data from this year to inform the planning of future events.
* Document Lessons Learned: Create a video summarising the project’s achievements, challenges, and recommendations for future initiatives.

**Immediate Actions**

1. Employer Outreach: Develop a strategy to attract major employers to the event.

2. Initial Planning Meeting: Set a date for the first meeting, gather opinions, designate a project manager, and create a detailed timeline.

**Conclusion**

The SSC initiative provided valuable insights and experiences despite the challenges faced. Implementing the recommendations outlined in this report will enhance the effectiveness of future projects, ensuring better promotion, greater student engagement, and more successful collaboration between students, staff, and employers.