- If possible, please sit at a table with the people that you are most unfamiliar with.

Reforms of cultural provision may be long overdue, but Creative Scotland has wider-reaching implications than the supersession of previous funding institutions: Scottish Screen, Scottish Arts Council. It represents a fundamental change of a key aspect of democratic society with significant implications for the many ways in which knowledge is produced and communicated in Scotland.

Creative Scotland is an entrepreneurial re-orientation of public acts of communication formed from a triangulation of policy geared towards "single purpose government" (the Scottish government's own description) converging on "economic growth", seeing culture subsumed under the banner of "adding value".

What are the implications :
- for a diversity of cultural expression (which include the diversity of political expression) as democratic right;
- for artist-run groups' autonomy through support for freedom of association and communication so as to collectively organise and 'do'?

- In collaboration with Transmission, this workshop facilitated by Variant / The Strickland Distribution will explore wider issues arising from the summer workshop - 'From Funding to Franchise' - for collective self-institutional *doings* (artist-run, artist-led, self-organised) with their specific lexicon of practice.

  We ended previously, asking: What are the rallying points for self knowledge?

  This workshop is an opportunity for artists' groups to try to get to grips with the dramatic shifts taking place in the public re-orientation of culture through, but not confined to, Creative Scotland.

  It seems to us important that individuals affiliated with artist-run and autonomous groups have an awareness of what might be taking place so as to more fully comprehend and, if wished, engage in the review process of Creative Scotland's propositions.

  We meet to collectively better understand our own conditions of practice.

- **The Strickland Distribution** is an artist-run group supporting the development of innovative and independent research in art-related and non-institutional practices. Art-related includes research forms that directly implement artistic practice as a means of research method. Non-institutional includes forms of grass-roots histories, social enquiries and projects developed outside of academic frameworks and by groups and individuals normally excluded from such environments.

  groups.strickdistro.org

- **Variant** is a multi-layered publishing project which brings creative practices and public discourse together. This primarily takes the form of Variant magazine: an intentionally free publication which aims to widen the involvement of a diverse readership in debate, discussion and awareness of the many interconnected cultural and social issues affecting society today.

  www.variant.org.uk

Workshop Structure

- Today's workshop is broken up into two halves.

  The **first half** presents for discussion key themes we have identified as emerging from the previous workshop and research we have conducted since which we believe to be of importance to artists groups.

  These broad themes, which we are then going to explore through facilitated discussions in small groups, are:

    - ecology
    - value
    - labour process
    - freedom of communication

  Each session will be introduced by a short presentation (10mins) outlining the theme.

  These are intended to inform the following small group discussions (20mins) which will be facilitated.

Workshop Structure (cont.)

- For the workshop's **second half**:

  Reconvene into groups of people who you work with, either in a particular project or across projects, and with the previous presentations and discussions in mind, consider:

  - What does this mean for us?
  - Where do we stand within this?
  - What do we need in order to do the work we want to do?

- Reconvene as one large group and feed the key points from your considerations back to the large group.

- This workshop is intended as a proposal or experiment in divergent debate over cultural provision and autonomy.

  The event is envisioned as a space for dialogue and the intention is for the event to have a social element that is inclusive and participatory, conducive and transparent.

  With this intention in mind, that the event brings people together in a spirit of open and reflective dialogue, those organising the event have proposed a structure that includes facilitation – both for the event overall and for the group discussions.

On Facilitation

- Each small group is facilitated by a volunteer.

  The event is centred on the notion of participatory dialogue – on listening and being listened to – and it is important that everyone should have the chance to speak if they wish to, with no one person dominating.

  Group facilitators are there to encourage open, inclusive and participatory dialogue within this framework.

  Facilitators are not neutral, but active participants and can contribute their own points to ongoing discussions.

  The first group session should commence with a brief go round of introduction from everyone in your group.

  We are thankful to Ultra-red, Arika, and Right To The City Forum for the ongoing development of this experimental model, and to Gesa Helms' input. As previous, no person is being paid to deliver this workshop – all our labour is voluntary – any fees will go towards Variant's direct production. Neither Variant nor The Strickland Distribution are FXOs.

Process (for Part 1.)

- Participants' Introductions — To begin, take a few minutes for everyone in the group to introduce themselves.

- After introductions, we will begin with the first presentation.

  When listening, take notes if you wish.

  There will be the chance for any immediate questions of clarification to the presenters directly after their short talk.

  We'd like to reaffirm that the clips and presentations are intended as 'provocations' and constitute the introduction of 'themes' or problematics for discussion — that as propositions we realise they're limited, not least by time constraints, but intended to create some room for self-reflexivity.

Process (for Part 1., cont.)

- Discussing the presentations, 'listening and being listened to' :

  Compare all the responses to the presentation in your group. As you listen to each other, make note of responses that are convergent or similar, and those that are divergent or different.

  Discuss the theme or themes — After going around the group, discuss the most urgent issues to emerge in all your responses to the presentation.

  The tendency in such discussions can be to arrive at agreement around the most important themes or concerns. The process of agreement is often organised around resolving differences in experience or knowledge. In this process, however, try to give special attention to those divergences, not as differences to be conquered or argued but as positions to investigate.