

# POWER TO CREATE

## Take control of your creative future

*A taster from **The new digital learning age:  
How we can enable social mobility  
through technology***

*A **Power to create** report  
From RSA and Google*



# POWER TO CREATE

## Welcome to your creative future

You are reading an exclusive taster from the new RSA and Google report *The new digital learning age: how we can enable social mobility through technology*.

Discover how technology is shaping our society and how you can take back control.

Join us as we take a look at one of the most important issues of our time.

## Digital winners and losers

Digital technology is already having an enormous impact on the economy and society.

For some, a new vista of creative opportunity has opened. Others see the possibilities but have yet to fully realise the full potential that new technologies might offer them.

But new technology is not a force of nature - its impacts and who gets to share in its potential benefits depend on the choices we all make as a society.

The question is what are the right choices that government, institutions and individuals can make to enhance life opportunities for the greatest number as we experience this widespread technological change?

# POWER TO CREATE

## Which group are you – confident creator or safety firster?

There are three main groups that we have identified through a 2014 survey of 2000 UK adults conducted by Populus who experience technological change in different ways:

The **confident creators**, who are adept at using new technology to develop their knowledge, creativity and social capital. They are confident in a rapidly changing technology environment.

The **held back** not only see the benefits of new technology but they are using it to learn. They are ambitious and seek the chance to turn their ideas and hopes into realities and they are trying to work out how. However, they feel that they need more support, a greater level of learning and more confidence to make their hopes a reality. With some support they might just get there but as it stands they feel a sense of frustrated ambition.

Finally, there are **safety firsters**. This group is least engaged with new technology and the internet. It's not that that aren't connected; it's just that they see it less a part of their lives than the other two groups. They are not particularly satisfied with things but they do not see the world as particularly stacked against them as the 'held back' do. Without realising it, they may be missing out on opportunities to learn, progress and connect and consequently, this may pose greater risks as the economy changes.

# POWER TO CREATE

## We need a new form of social mobility

Our research shows there is great deal of support for the role of technology in our society. However, these groups face different opportunities and outcomes from the spread of new technology.

Whilst there are considerable benefits for many, there are also losses and risks for others- whether they see them or not. These risks include changes to the labour market that can make certain roles and work obsolete whilst downgrading the pay of others.

So public policy needs to widen its lens to focus on the interventions that will help the 'held back' realise their creative ambitions and help to ensure that 'safety firsters' are supported as technology spreads. These interventions begin early-on in life but must be continued throughout an individual's working life.

However, we think that leaders at national and local level need to go much further if we are to ensure than the real benefits of new technology are to be democratically distributed.

This is what we term **inclusive social mobility**.

# POWER TO CREATE

## The change we want to see

We believe that everyone should have the confidence and resources to turn their ideas and aspirations into reality. We call this the Power to Create, and it helps guide our call for a more inclusive technological revolution.

There are three main policy changes that we propose:

**A new approach to learning through and with new technology in schools.** We advocate new ways of teachers working together to apply knowledge of what is effective in the use of digital technology in schools and being supported in that endeavor.

**Greater frequency, quality and range of contact with employers for students.** This will be supported throughout the education system through improving careers networks developed in schools and beyond.

**A new 'city of learning' initiative.** Based on similar approaches in the US to expand formal skills and learning, this approach is led by local leaders, employers, informal learning networks and institutions and increases skills-acquisition through peer-to-peer as well as institutional accreditation. It is based on 'open badges' technology where an individual is able to demonstrate new learning and skills as they progress.

Inclusive social mobility seeks to improve the life chances of *all* from a young age in education, in work and in life; narrowing the gap in pupil attainment and broader life outcomes between those from disadvantaged backgrounds and their more affluent peers and ensuring everyone has access to the power, resources and opportunity for advancement.

# POWER TO CREATE

## Unleash your own Power to Create!

But it's not just about governments changing policy or institutions teaching in a new way – there are ways you can join the 'confident creators' at your fingertips right now.

**Join a digital university.** Online 'institutions' like Udacity, Github, and Khan Academy have an amazing variety of learning options, some with courses supported by the likes of Google and Facebook, some with free courses in everything from mathematics and computer science to expressionism and pop art!

**Learn from others.** Peer-to-peer learning through language platforms like italki and the general skills learning exchange platform, Udemy (which claims four million students and 20,000 courses) lets you digitally boost your capacity to learn new skills by learning from others. More and more workplaces, institutions and organisations are using open badges to accredit and approve peer-to-peer skills.

**Keep it simple!** People are increasingly learning through digital technologies in very simple ways. YouTube and advice boards, for example, have become enormous platforms of learning. Lifelong learning, especially in the workplace, has been shown to help establish the dense networks of contacts, attitudes and skills we all need to succeed.

# RSA

8 John Adam Street  
London WC2N 6EZ

+44 (0)20 7930 5115

Registered as a charity  
in England and Wales  
no. 212424

Copyright © RSA 2015  
[thersa.org](http://thersa.org)

# POWER TO CREATE

## Five things you can do now

1. **Find out more.** Watch our video
2. **Discover your creative tribe.** Take our quiz
3. **Read our report.** Download our full report for free
4. **Join the debate.** We want to hear your views – register and comment on our website
5. **Support our work.** Become a Fellow of the RSA