

# CASE STUDY

## Waverley IWEP

*An Innovation Lab (design jam and incubator) as an alternative to traditional work experience for young people interested in creative careers.*



*Councillor John Wakefield, Mayor of Waverley, with the IWEF participants*

A collaboration of



# What is an IWEP?

*The IWEP, or **Innovating Work Experience Project**, is a contemporary alternative to traditional work experience. The IWEP reframes traditional workplace dynamics by encouraging young people to envision a future in which they create meaningful work for themselves at the Innovation Lab. Young people are supported by specialist mentors and industry leaders, incorporating validation throughout the design process. Project based learning in teams develops individuals' ability to think creatively, act independently, and diligently commit themselves to a social issue they are passionate about. The focus on creative, entrepreneurial and problem-solving skills enables resilience in an ever changing world.*



# The Waverley IWEF

## Creative Careers Youth Forum

*Half-day session in conference with members of creative industries to inspire & engage.*

*14th June*

## Design Jam *30th August*

*An intensive, creatively charged burst of brainstorming in collaboration with fellow young people.*

*The IWEF provides a valuable opportunity for young people of all learning and thinking styles to access careers education at the forum and develop real-world skills at the Innovation Lab.*

## Incubator

*16-26th September*

*The core stage in the process. Teams went through a two week entrepreneurial design program in which they developed and refined their social enterprise ideas. Included in this process were focus exercises such as the **Branding Design** workshop and **Networking Afternoon** session.*

## Community Pitch

*Teams pitched their final business ideas in front of an audience at Waverley Council.*

*27th September*



# PART ONE: Design Jam

*The Design Jam is Step 1 of the **IWEP Innovation Lab**. Participants generate ideas in response to a proposed challenge.*

*A key focus of the Design Jam was imagination without limitation and the role that young people's intrinsic creativity plays in ideating social change.*

*The challenge proposition for the Waverley IWEP was to*

*“create a more vibrant community using a business model”*

*In response to this challenge, young people were given the resources to creatively and collaboratively generate solutions in the form of project ideas and prototypes for social entrepreneurship. The results were an explosion of incredible innovations, representing a huge variety of thinking, design and social approaches.*

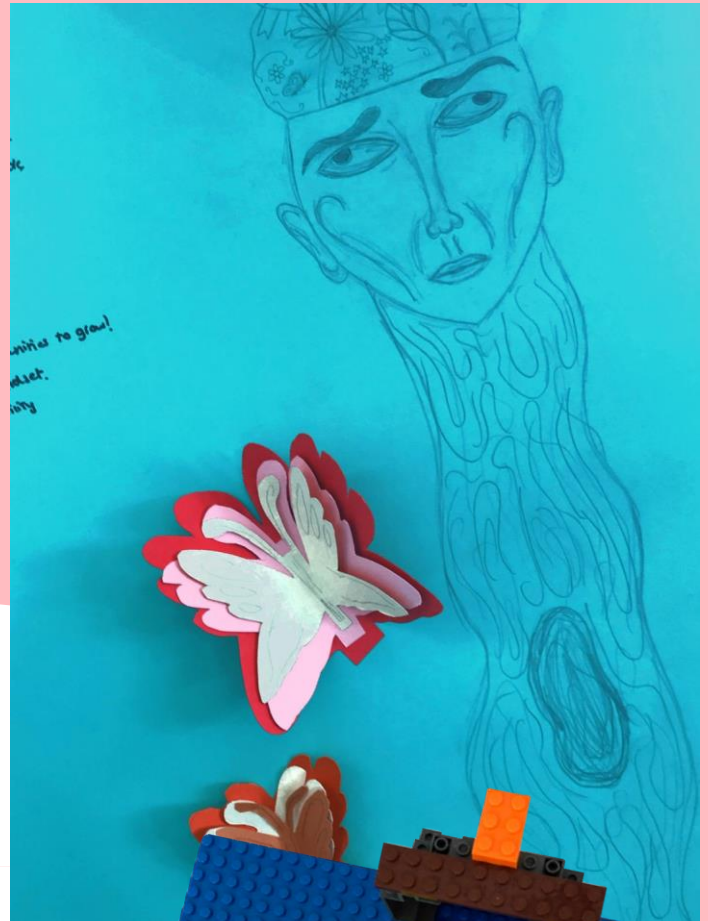


# PART TWO: Incubator

*The core stage of the IWEF Innovation Lab was the nine day Incubator. During the Incubator teams explored, refined and tested their project ideas developed at the Design Jam.*

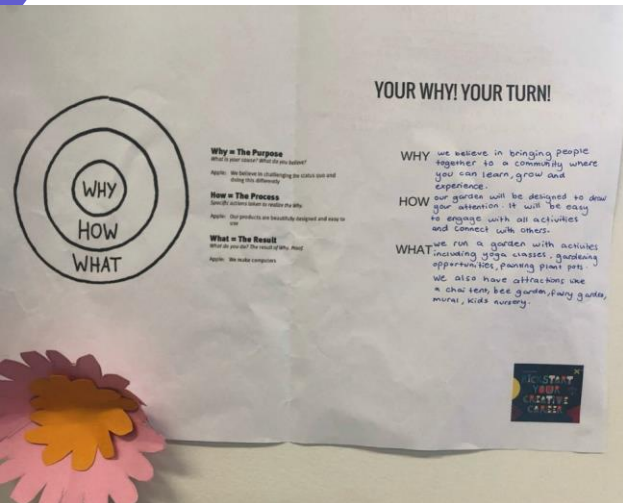
*With the support of the Young Change Agents team the Youth Incubator provided young people with a safe and creatively charged space to build essential business, entrepreneurial and work skills. In this stage of the program the teams gained access to industry mentors and had the opportunity to engage with their community hands-on in order to create a business model ready for pitching.*

- Day 1 Context + Purpose
- 2 Customer Value Proposition + Business
- 3 Model
- 4 Validation Lab 1
- 5 Validation Lab 2
- 6 Prototyping
- 7 Makerspace excursion + branding
- 8 Budgets, Networking
- 9 Digital Storytelling + Mentoring
- 10 Pitch preparation + Mentoring





# Business Modelling

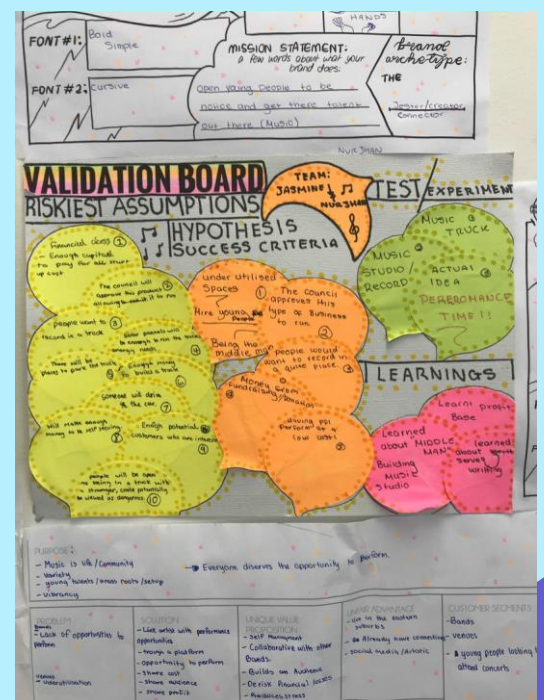


An important stage in the Youth Incubator was business modelling, equipping young people with real world skills and tools in entrepreneurship. As a part of this process, young people used a customer pains/gains model to empathise with their target market and a social lean canvas to finesse their entrepreneurial ideas. The teams were then able to use their business models as a foundation for more sophisticated ideation throughout the rest of the IWE, returning to the basis of their ideas during every step of the process.

## Validation

Another core business skill taught and applied during the Youth Incubator was the process of validation. Young people were given access to real world validation models such as javelin boards in order to create a framework for testing against riskiest assumptions.

As a part of the validation process, each team designed and sent out surveys to sample demographics in order to collect valuable quantitative data. For example, one of the teams - Ignite Youth Events - had over 100 responses to their survey, which were used to troubleshoot features of the business model as it carried through to the next stages of the program.



# Mentoring



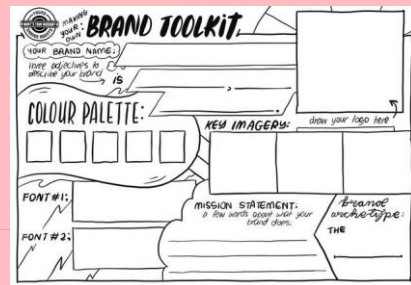
A unique feature of the Youth Incubator is the opportunity it provides for teams to connect with mentors, both internally and externally to the program. *In Week One of the Innovation Lab, 14 mentors came in to connect with the teams.* This opportunity provided a substantial range of benefits to every young person participating in the IWEF enabling a sense of progress. One on one conversations with mentors provide teams with nuanced qualitative data to use in the validation process, aiding significantly in the development of ideas.

More broadly, working with mentors is beneficial to young people in that it equips them with valuable experience and essential soft skills for navigating a contemporary workplace. Mentors act as role models and advocates for their roles in the industries they represent, serving as motivators for young people to set and achieve their goals. Young people also get to practically apply their networking skills, perfect their elevator pitch technique and engage in authentic conversations with adults. Ultimately, mentoring delivers a powerful lesson to young people about the importance of independence in the workplace, while at the same time encouraging constructive partnerships to work towards innovative solutions.



# Branding Design Workshop

*As a component of the Youth Incubator, Young Change Agents ran a Branding Design workshop with the teams to help refine their existing ideas into streamlined branding portfolios. The teams were instructed on colour theory, typography basics and logo design, and given assistance in creating professional digital designs using a "Brand Toolkit".*



## Networking Afternoon Session

*The teams were given a unique opportunity to practically apply their skills in networking and community engagement during a one-on-one session with local industry leaders. Each team presented an elevator pitch to a number of interested parties, and were able to receive valuable feedback through the discussion process. This was a huge asset to the development of ideas entering the final stages of the program.*

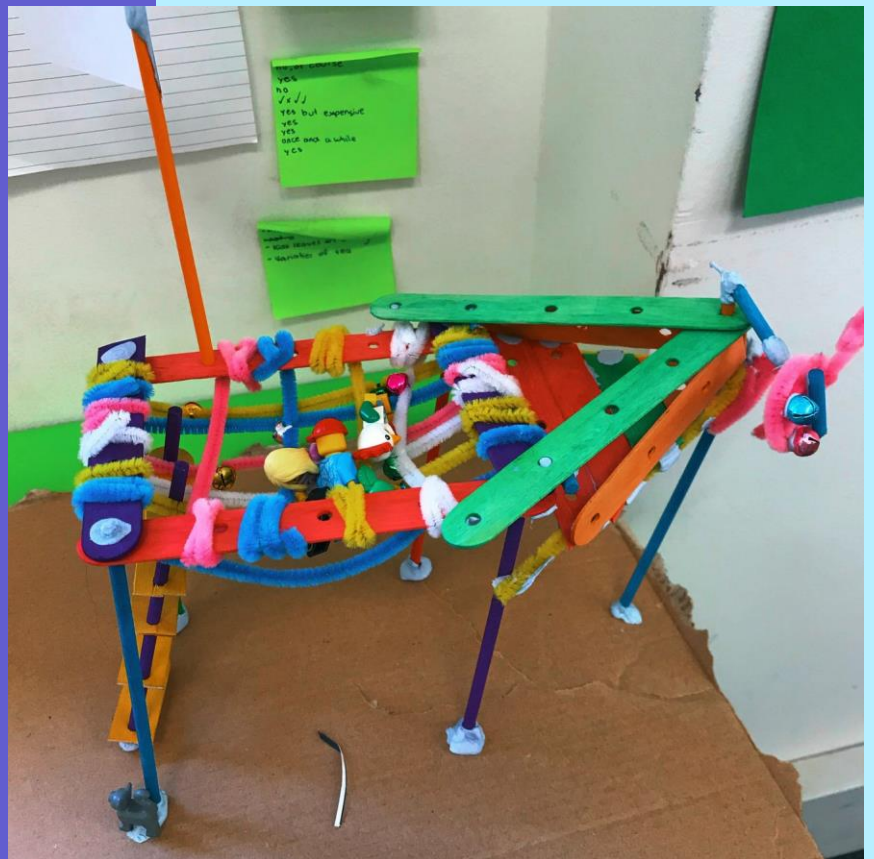




# THE TEAMS

## Rhythm Road

**Rhythm Road** is an innovative solution to the current epidemic of youth addiction to screens. This social enterprise will design, produce and install play equipment with a tactile musical feature in public spaces to encourage young people to engage with their surroundings.



# Ignite Youth Events



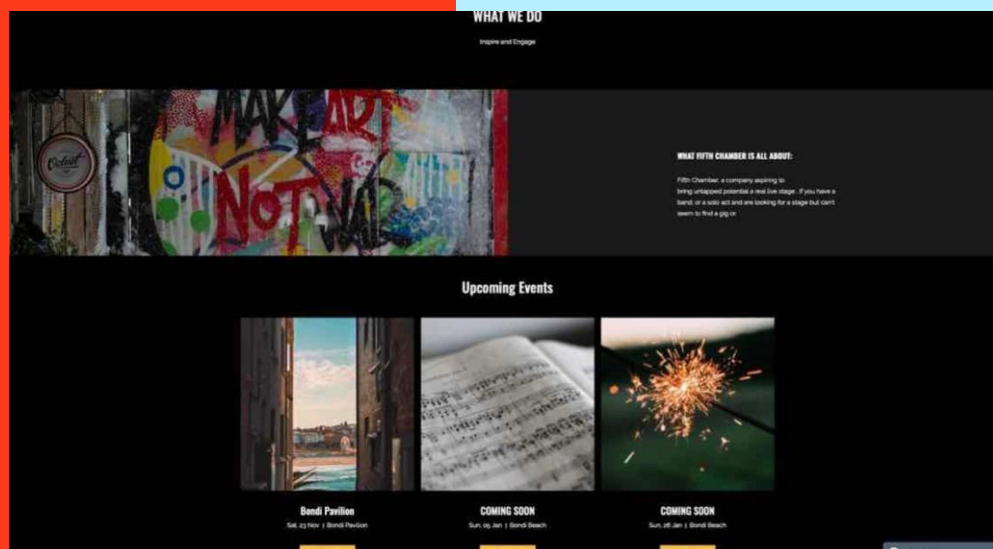
*Ignite Youth Events is a social media platform that seeks to keep teens in the loop with events happening in their local area. In this way, Ignite enriches the social fabric of communities by generating engagement across key demographics.*





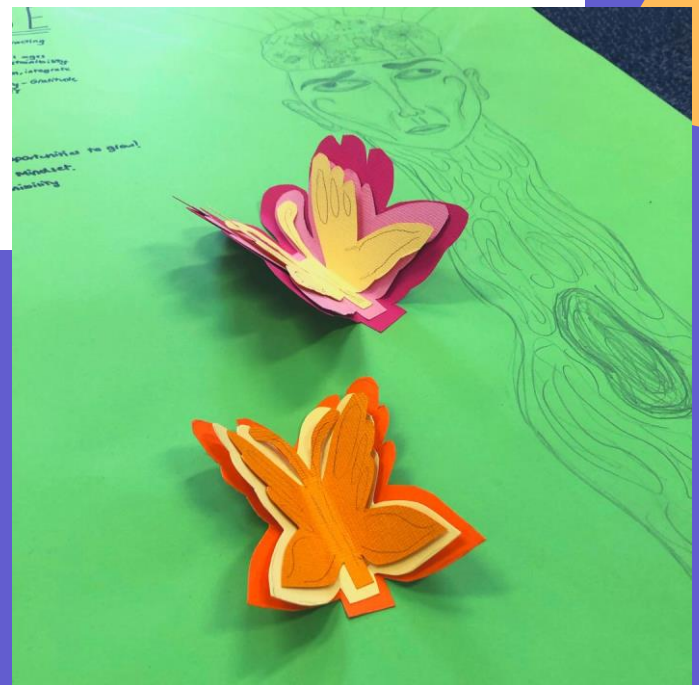
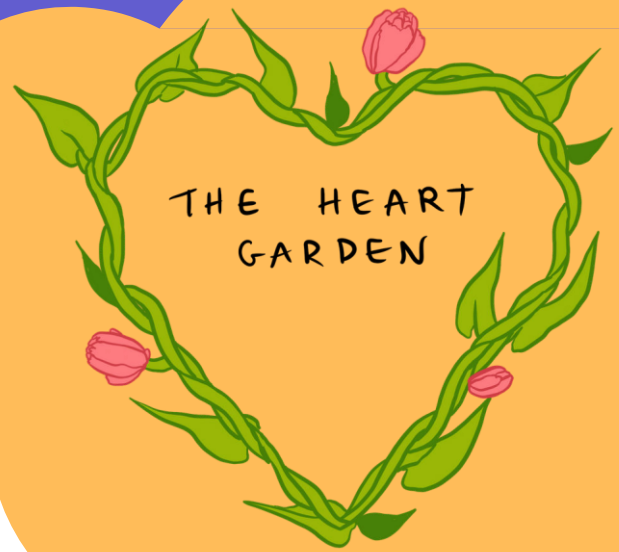
# Fifth Chamber

*Fifth Chamber is a management firm for unearthed bands whereby bands are partnered together to generate exposure and secure gigs. Through this social enterprise, young and aspiring artists are given the stage they deserve (literally!)*



# The Heart Garden

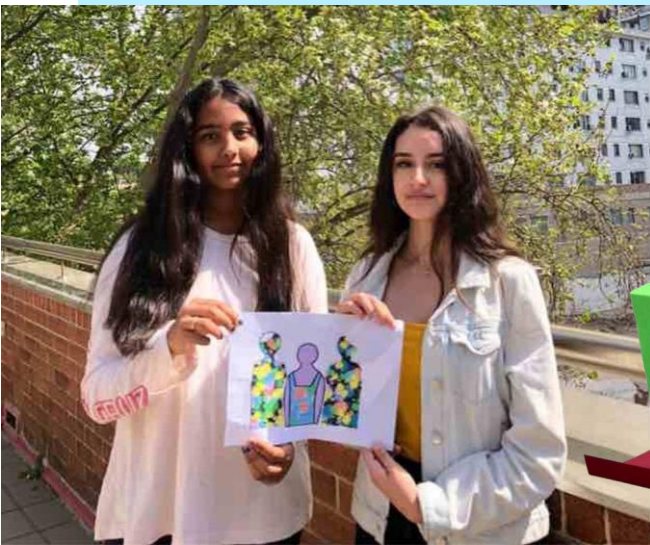
*The Heart Garden promotes wellness through the peace and inclusivity of community gardening. With a host of native, edible and bee friendly flora, the Heart Garden would host a community centre and haven for all.*





# Mimmy Art

**Mimmy Art** gives young artists a much needed venue of entry into the art world. This digital social media platform holds competitions and design challenges to promote creativity and generate exposure for up and coming artists and their work.



# PART THREE: Community Pitch

*With their ideas polished and ready to go, the final stage of the program involved each team presenting a pitch at the Waverley Council Chambers. Time was also allowed afterwards for audience members to engage with each team one-on-one.*

*Being given the chance to present ideas in a semi-formal context is a deeply valuable opportunity for young people. Soft skills such as time management, self-confidence and advocacy with conviction are universally applicable to any workplace, and furthermore, to all real world situations. The community pitch allows young people to experience real-world responsibility in a safe environment, creating a healthy and motivating balance of pressure.*

*The pitch event has another direct benefit in that it provides members of the community with a chance to see young people represented authentically; as powerful change makers, as creators and advocates of a better future. In this way, the pitch strengthens connections in between and across communities, empowering partnerships to achieve change.*





# Wrapping up...

## Where are they now?

*By the end of the program, our teams have successfully completed all three stages of the Innovation Lab . Each has an open ended opportunity to pursue their ideas further using the skills, resources and connections formed through the IWEF.*



*Pictured (left): Nicole Fairley, IWEF Project Instigator, Community Development Officer - Children, Families and Young People*

*"It's time to start building momentum, right now."*

*- Jasmine, 15*

**a collaboration of**

