

What's in your toolbox? Resilience for creative freelancers and entrepreneurs

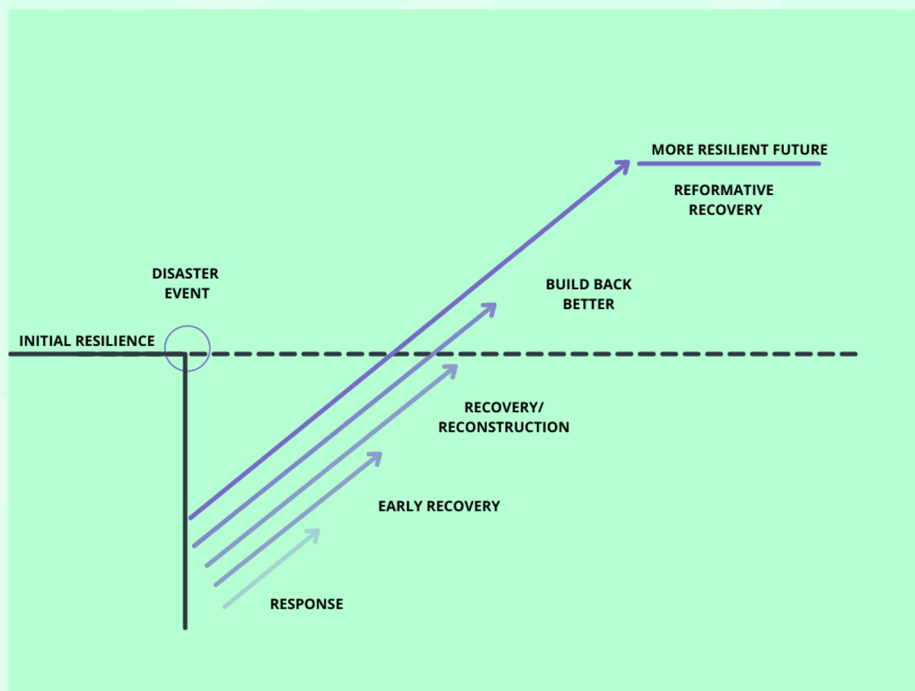
What do we mean by resilience?

The chances are you'll have heard a lot of talk about business resilience, about the need for artists and creative organisations to become more resilient. Resilience has been a buzzword in funder circles for a while now, and is one of those words that's sometimes bandied around without people having a proper understanding of what it means.

Basically, resilience is to do with your (or your organisation's) ability to **anticipate, prepare for, and respond and adapt** to both sudden and major disruptions (like those so many of us experienced as a result of Covid) and incremental change (the gradual erosion of local authority funding, as an example), in order to survive or thrive. It's about evolutionary change as well as the more revolutionary kind - our ability to come back from a major incident, as well as adjust to new environments and new circumstances.

Bouncing back or bouncing forward?

Some people think about resilience as being about our ability to 'bounce back'. We prefer to think about it as 'bouncing forward', because ideally you'll emerge from the change or disruption you've experienced better or broader than before because of what you've learnt. We prefer thinking about resilience not just in terms of it being an endurance test but also an opportunity to grow in some way. This diagram sums it up pretty well we think!



Here's some more on how 'bouncing back' compares with 'bouncing forward':

Bouncing back	Bouncing forward
Surviving	Thriving
Enduring	Evolving
Strength	Flexibility and adaption
Returning to prior state	Changing
Preserving core mission & goals	Developing mission & goal in light of changed circumstance & need

Building your resilience toolkit!

A key part of becoming more resilient as an artist, creative freelancer or entrepreneur is about identifying the assets or resources you have at your disposal. In fact, we prefer to think about resilience in terms of resourcefulness. It gets away from the idea that being resilient is all on us and us alone, and that if our careers and businesses aren't 100% resilient it's all about some kind of personal failing on our part. (If you're interested in finding out more about personal resilience though, do head over to our [Balance Your Mind resilience resources](#).)

Here's a diagram and list of prompts that will hopefully help you get started on identifying the resources you have at your disposal:



Financial assets – cash you (and other investors/directors) have, investments etc

Built assets – buildings, facilities, equipment etc

Motivational assets – your vision, mission, values etc

Social assets – your networks, collaborators, peers etc

Creative and cultural assets – your brand, intellectual property etc

Human assets – your (team's) knowledge, skills, health

Political assets – the power and influence you have

Natural assets – any land, energy and resources you have

One for you to try....

One thing that can help you feel more resilient is creating a mindmap of all of your resources using the categories listed above as prompts. Trust us... experience tells us that it will leave you feeling stronger, more confident and more motivated! And if you find that useful, don't forget to check out the other resources in this [Hello I'm Special](#) part of our toolkit. Together they'll help you get a sense not just of what's going in your business, but also what's happening with your competitors and in the world at large.

