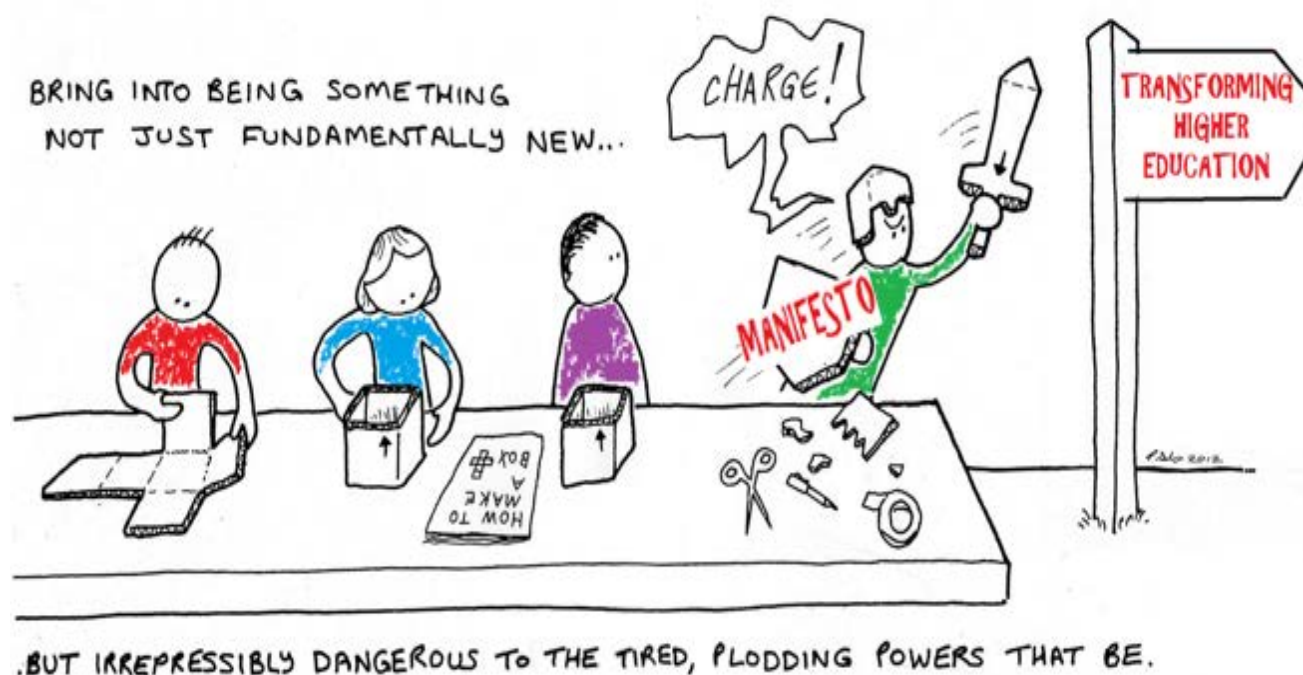


# STEPS TO A MANIFESTO FOR CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



This Manifesto was created through an open conversation facilitated by Creative Academic, #creativeHE and the Centre for Imagination in Research, Culture and Education (CIRCE) in March-April 2019. The manifesto was prepared by Paul Kleiman and the cover image is by Patrick Sanders. The discussion and the background papers to inform discussion are published in issue #13 of Creative Academic Magazine. The conversation continues at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/creativeHE/>



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Based on a work at <http://www.creativeacademic.uk/manifesto.html>.

# TOWARDS A MANIFESTO FOR CREATIVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**We believe** learning is an extraordinary, creative, imaginative, transformative, wonder-full, lifelong and lifewide adventure.

**We strive** to construct a truly creative and imaginative curriculum in and across all disciplines.

**We actively pursue** a creativity that constructs new meanings, new tools and new outcomes, new embodiments of knowledge, new relationships, rules, communities of practice and new connections, new social practices.

**We forge** the creative, imaginative path by thinking, making, doing, solving, dreaming.

**We acknowledge** and are willing to inhabit the discomfort zones of creativity.

**We embrace** the perilous leap, the getting lost, the anxious moment, the fragile courage, the stumbling with confidence, the learning at the edge of chaos, the glorious 'failure'.

**We do not turn away** from the creative challenge and we grasp the imaginative opportunity.

**We believe** criticality & questioning assumptions should dance with the capability of imagining possibilities.

**We expect** the unexpected and we intend the unintended. We unlearn, de-school, and we do not assume that the discourses, practices and tools of the past will serve us well in the future.

**We relish** the passionate inquiry, the inspirational design and the challenging experiment, and we experience it all with all our senses.

**We celebrate** the everyday acts of 'small c' creativity alongside the great leaps of imagination and we do not allow ourselves to become victims of the symbolic violence that blinds us to the value of our acts of creativity, however humble they may be.

**We illuminate** how to act with an eye to the long-term when we combine the power of imagination with the spirit of care, love, respect and justice.

**We acknowledge** the ecological nature of learning, creativity and practice.

**We have** enminded bodies/embodyed minds and we do not separate the heart & the head. We and our environment are indivisible.

**We live** in a wonder-full and story-full world and we harness imagination with social-cultural tools to equip us to tell stories powerful enough to change the world ...and ourselves.

**We pursue** the creative path in a way that allows individuals to have the confidence to do what they need to do when they need to do it with conviction & bravery.

**We rejoice** in our individual and co-operative acts of creativity and we enhance our personal and collective wellbeing through the exercise of our creativity.

**We hold to** the principle that through playful, ludic and thoughtful practices we flourish, blossom, find joy and discover that we are capable of so much more than we believe ourselves to be.

**We resist** the pressure to conform, to comply, to play safe, and we are not affronted by being challenged.

**We repudiate** the standardised blandishments of 'edu-speak' and we are not embarrassed to use and revel in words such as play, fun, spirit, passion, joy, adventure, excitement.

**We value** resilience and perseverance and we reject the 'failure' and seek to recognise and reward the learning not the 'failure'.

**We recognise** creativity as an innate human attribute, and we resist - through our imaginations and creative practices - pedagogies that seek to suppress and dismiss creativity and imagination.

**We accept** that nothing ventured, nothing gained, and that our own anxieties and our fears of breaking the rules are, often, the greatest barriers to our creativity.

**We understand** that some people work best under pressure, some people work best against constraints, some people work best alone, and some people work best in a group.

**We endeavour** to help you do your best work to become the person you want to be.

**We know** that pursuing the creative, imaginative path can be a very personal, emotional, indeed lonely journey, and we welcome the opportunity to share our creative adventures with others.

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**We will not define** creativity for you but we will help you to recognise, understand and express your own creativity so that you can make claims for it.

**We will liberate** the curriculum to fully realise all the contexts within which individuals seek to realise their potential and transform themselves into the person they want to be.

**We will create** the spaces where creativity and imagination can thrive and we will allow the time for it to flourish.

**We will ensure** that what we teach and how we teach, and what we assess and how we assess is fit for creative purpose.

**We will encourage** you to use and develop your imagination and creativity to enable you to sustain yourself through the challenges and opportunities you will encounter throughout your life.

**We will act and behave** ethically and with social responsibility and we will continue to develop our moral compass through the situations we encounter or create across our lives.

**We will encourage and enable** a willful, self-directed, self-regulated and self-aware practice to create our own ecologies for learning and achieving.

**We will recognise and value** our own transformations and the transformations we see in others.

**Standing on the edge of chaos and wonder  
we launch our creative challenge to  
the educational stars.**



Compiled by Paul Kleiman  
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