



# **Writing a Creative Brief for Community design, prototype and fabrication processes**

**SLQ Wiki Fabrication Lab 2026/06/13 15:15**

# Writing a Creative Brief for Community design, prototype and fabrication processes

Keen to get your feedback. As per usual just add your comments as a wrap with your initials or a nickname - Mick

“the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results” is a quote incorrectly attributed to a range or regularly quoted dead white guys (Einstein, Franklin, Twain) and 'insanity' is pseudo-psych term that people like to use anymore. [Huffpost](#) say the first time this was actually found in print was in a 1981 Narcotics Anonymous publication, but this adage does point to the generally accepted truth that *following the same path is \*usually\* going to take you to the same destination.*

Making a plan is something humans only really do when we want to affect change or need to solve a problem... otherwise we just do things the same way we've always done them. Its just easier (less effort) that way.

But as problem solvers, making a plan is something we (humans) often do unconsciously or sometime don't think about. ( its actually an amazing cognitive trick using imaginations that we do but that few other living things do. Its one of the evolutionary traits that made our species successful and allowed us to dominate our eccosytems - but thats a topic for another day)

The first part of making a plan is having a sense of **what** we want to achieve and then working out **how** we want to achieve it. But if its something we want get help with, its pretty important that we communicate around these two things. After all if don't talk about it with the help, the help will just do it the way we've always done it.

And thats basically what a brief is for.

## Why a Creative Brief?

A good creative or design brief will quickly and clearly communicate some key benefits, the intended direction of a creative project and the novel approach we want to take.

It also give us a framework to check our progress against as we go... so we know if we are on track (or not) and what parts of the process are most important- especially when we are making decisions change our plan to adapt to new information.

Stakeholders also use a brief to negotiate whether or not, (or how much) they want to actually commit to a project (this is an important factor when considering who the audience of your brief is

and will be an import factor for ours). An outside consulting firm will accept or reject /win or loose a contract based on how a brief (whether the brief is written/presented by client or the consulting party)is written. In the case of this GRUMPUS project, there's two main groups committing a stake:

1. the library who is commissioning the project and
2. the community participants, tertiary and secondary we want to work with.

The library wants to be satisfied with its investment of resources and ensure the project has a positive impact on its reputation as a significant cultural institution. And the participants want to be satisfied with their investment of time, effort, enthusiasm and ideas.

So the brief will give both the Library and participants some clear ideas of what to expect.

## Whats different between this brief and others you might find?

A sector that you see using Creative briefs all the time is the marketing, advertising and commercial creative industries. You can find heaps of Graphic & Web Design briefs, branding briefs, even video production briefs online. Another area where briefs are used regularly is in industrial or product design sector. A commonality with all these, is the commercial objective (people have invested in developing tools like these template. Its worth investing in because it benefits their bottom line). By and large, the central goal of all these types of activities is creating tools or messages that will help promote a business, brand or get people to part with their cash in return for an actual product or service.

The objectives and measures of most these briefs focus on things like brand exposure and closing sales. You tend to see goals for a brief like:

- increase web traffic and increasing customer engagement,
- brand development, enhancing competitive advantages or differentiation.
- simplifying, enhancing customer experience.
- increasing sales- providing potential customer with a call to action

And just because you can squish the square peg of the grumpus project's objectives into these round holes of a commercially focused template (*brand awareness* of the library and *selling* the idea of participating in life-long learning or something like that), it doesn't mean we should be doing the mental gymnastics of making our project fit these templates. Why not explore how we can adapt a template that meets our needs. *So lets discuss what we need*

The way most people the approach the process is conducting an old school swat analysis. This allows the planners to look at all the things that are likely go right or wrong and plan to optimise the outcomes of your project.

## Creative Brief Headings for discussion

chime in with comments if you have them (drop you initials

## Overview

usually a theres some sort of background info or the business has made some sort of observation that they want to act on. This is where you detail this information and tell us what you want to do. speak generally about your approach and why this is important.

You could also include **the scope** of the project in here or give it its own heading (a good thing to do if you think there's a chance of scope creep....*um yes always with a community project*)

## Scope

😄 Whats in scope and especially whats out of scope. Be specific, especially with the *Out of scope* if you know there are going to be. thing people will want to drag into the project that you are not have time or are resourced to do or don't have permission to.

## Goals and objectives

under this heading you want to be clear and get specific what you goals and objects are ( how you are going to measure success). Here you can be crystal clear about what you priorities are ( as this is the section you can revisit this anytime you need to make a difficult decision.)

## Tasks, Deliverables or output

this allows you to be specific about

- what tasks (or chunks of work ) need to be completed
- what is the products that will come out the end of these processes
- maybe when you expect these to be delivered
- and what kind of specifcations, format and quality you expect these outputs to be delivered at.

*detail the assumptions of what will be delivered*

## Current activities

(digital marketing, programming) this is a heading lots of consulting firms ask the clients to give an overview of what assets and activities the client is already using to achieve its goals in the area. It allows the people doing the work to understand what type of existing things can be leveraged or how the new initiative should link in with. For our purposes this section should provide information about SLQ's usual program exhibitions in the Gallery and the programs. it might refer to previous community engagement projects we've done at the edge in the past.

**Key features**

(What are we going to do that's new? ) this is usually an overview of what sets the deliverables apart from the current activities, or sets it apart from other products available. I think this will be a useful heading to explain the specific way we want to work with community and have the work driven by community ideas and how the process (cause it is a process driven project) will be different to other types of offerings you would see in the SLQ gallery and other cultural institutions.

**Key messaging, tone and or attitude**

Usually this a key message embedded or consumer aspiration that marketers, branders or creatives in the commercial creative industry. want associated with their product. In this context its what messages or sense do we want people involved in the development of this community project or attending the exhibition.

**Target audience**

usually this is pretty straight forward -its usually "who are we making these the above key messages for? but this turns into a meta mess pretty quick. Is the audience the people who'll come along to the exhibition? or is it. the people who'll get involved in the community process to create the exhibition? The answer is...yes! both. But this creative brief is being drafted to inform this community of makers and the art work they make... so lets take this into account when we write this thing.

**Competitors**

What we do is pretty unique, there are very few place our customers can go to have the experiences we are offering. So its not competitors that we need to overcome. Its mainly

- a lack of awareness
- a lack of motivation (procrastination, apathy, value proposition, perceived cost) or
- the administrative friction ( "its too hard to book-in, find information on your website, checkin when i arrive.") involved in participating.

So in this case lets call this section Barriers to Engagement

**Client-side project management**

This one sometimes called contacts and usually explains who'll be the contact people who'll manage the day-to-day aspects for the project on the clients side. Who'll do things like make final decisions. Its about the outlining mechanics of the contract for the creatives who'll be delivering the outcomes of the project and being clear who'll manage the relationship from the client side.

In our case the client is the state library (a government owned institution) so we could rename this one and use it to explain some of the practical impacts of State Library commissioning this work, things that participants should be aware of.

things to mention here are

- Fabrication Lab Safety System,
- Patron responsible conduct
- how the library will reserve the right to decide what are appropriate community standards for a SLQ community led exhibition.
- the implications for individuals contributing ip to a community project and or the the SLQwiki
- how we'd like to make decisions and
- how we want the crews to communicate with us and each other

although these last 2 could probably have their own sections

### **Project timeline**

General expectations about how the project will progress thru time and an overview of tasks and milestones

### **Project budget**

This usually how much a client expects to spend on the project, but in this case, expectations of who will provide resources

## **Examples of Creative Briefs and brief writing toolkits**

<https://flyingarts.org.au/wp-content/uploads/TEQ-RAP-COMMISSIONING-BRIEF.pdf>

[https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/96421/Project-Seed-Funding-Developing-Artists-Brief.pdf](https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/96421/Project-Seed-Funding-Developing-Artists-Brief.pdf)

<https://essexcdp.com/commission-brief-dunton-hills/>

<https://www.canadabay.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/Concord%20Community%20Garden%20Brief%20-%20PUBLIC%20ART.pdf>

[https://creative.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/57065/Community\\_Partnerships\\_Workguide\\_lor es\\_2014edit.pdf](https://creative.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/57065/Community_Partnerships_Workguide_lor es_2014edit.pdf)

# Creative Brief - Community design, prototype and fabrication sprint- Saturday Open Lab Crew

Keen to get your feedback. As per usual just add your comments as a wrap with your initials. Mick

The Saturday Arvo Crew is just one group of people that will be participating in a discrete component of the wider 2021 GRUMPUS Project.

So what is the Grumpus project?.. And how does our little piece of it fit in?

The following brief gives an overview of the wider GRUMPUS project, its goals and objectives. It also details the specific goals and objectives, tasks and milestones of this specific crew.

Having this information spelt out is a process that professional creatives use to make their work effective and efficient. So its good experience for anyone who might choose to go on and do this professionally. It also ensures that we have a clear purpose, can prioritise and have framework to facilitate good communication and collaborative decision making.

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