

# 2023 Trendshare





# Introduction

Much has been written over the last several years about the state of creativity, the creator economy and the broader economic landscape as it touches on artistry, technology and our well-being. As we move forward into uncharted waters of widely adopted remote work, emerging technologies within the creator economy and the associated repercussions that have taken hold in light of the ongoing pandemic, our hope was to understand the shifts among creative professionals on a personal and professional level.

In this report, Skillshare analyzes the mindset and motivations of those who identify as creative, from professionals to creative dabblers and predicts how these behaviors will emerge in the year ahead. From the growth of AI as a tool (not a replacement) to the shifting role of full-time work, here we'll assess the landscape and anticipate what's next for creativity in 2023.

## Our Methodology

We surveyed 1,000 people who identify as creative professionals, creative hobbyists, creatively interested and those with a creative side hustle. Over half of the survey respondents work full-time in a creative field (51%). Our survey was conducted between December 2022 and January 2023. Gen Z (born between 1997 and 2004) over-index having a creative side hustle, while those with a creative hobby skew older than most other groups.

# The Future of Work is Fractional

As the pandemic has inspired millions of workers to [rethink their relationship with work](#), it's also shifted perceptions from the traditional workplace to a more modern approach. Beyond a global tech shift to remote and hybrid work, many creative professionals are looking to rethink their relationship to their jobs altogether. 60% of creatives indicated they are looking to switch companies or careers in light of the current state of the economy, while most respondents (57%) indicated they will be looking to spend more time on their side hustles in the year ahead. Polygamous careers, fractional roles and [overemployment](#) will continue to grow as working trends among creative and tech professionals as this demographic see a true and permanent break from the nine-to-five.

“In 2023, we will start to see the broader adoption of a new kind of worker—those who are pursuing professions as if they are gig economy workers,” explains Matt Cooper, Skillshare CEO and a former executive at Upwork. “It’s essentially the model we see already working for those who have adopted the creator economy, where multiple revenue streams allow workers to pursue their paychecks and passions, without devoting all of their time and investment to one job.”

## MEET

## Ali Abdaal

Ali has made a name for himself as one of the most prominent thought leaders in productivity and time management, and he has numerous revenue streams to cement that status. From his meteoric presence on YouTube to his Skillshare classes to his podcast, Ali has fostered numerous jobs simultaneously to build himself a composite career.

[View Ali's Profile >](#)

## BY THE NUMBERS

**60%** of creatives are looking to switch companies or careers in light of the current economy.

Skillshare had more than **2,000 new teachers** join the platform and publish their first class in 2022.

Skillshare members watched more than **380,000 minutes** of classes about side hustles or side gigs in 2022.

# The Creator Economy Requires Nurturing

While the creator economy has been going strong for many years, it's more important than ever to ensure that individuals have the tools, resources and guidance to make money from their creative output. Most people are still participating in the creative economy on the side, with 90% of respondents noting that their side hustle has provided them with a higher income or the same income as years prior. For most creative professionals, the current downturn in economic conditions has actually led to a positive impact on their incomes. As more creators note that their earning potential takes far less time from creating content than it does from a standard career, we can expect the growth of the creative economy to continue upwards with both a higher supply of creatives and a stronger demand from those seeking content from authentic voices who inspire. The onus is on platforms such as Skillshare, Patreon, Substack and others to continue cultivating environments where creators can gather, create and get paid for their work.

INSIDER TAKE

Dani Zacarias

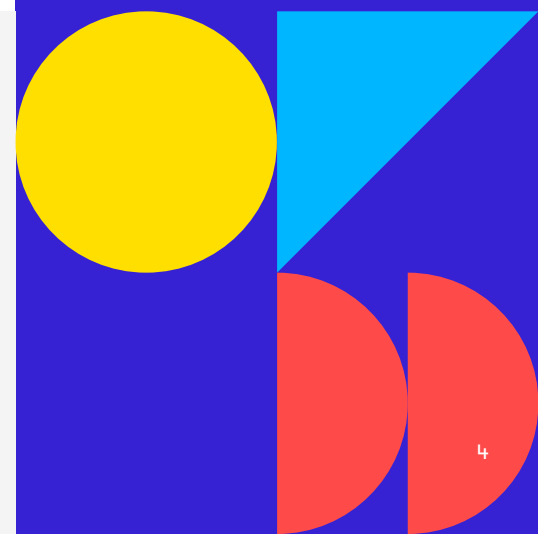
“At Skillshare, we’ve seen incredible growth of teachers joining our platform. Hundreds of top-tier creative professionals are flocking to the platform in order to share their skills, engage with a community of people who want to learn from them and at the same time add a passive income stream as a result,” notes Skillshare’s Vice President of Community, Dani Zacarias.

## BY THE NUMBERS

Over **half** of the survey respondents say earning revenue from content can take as little as a few days.

**More than 90%** of respondents say their side hustle is more lucrative or the same as last year.

More than **one-third** of respondents are looking to learn a creative skill online.



# AI will Aid, not Replace, Artists

Everywhere we look, creatives are talking about artificial intelligence. Whether it's generative tools like DALL-E for designers or ChatGPT for writers, creatives are leveraging or calling into ethical question the use of AI to create work. Our survey respondents show a high level of excitement about generative AI, with only 28% noting concern about emerging technology. Given the [exponential growth in AI](#) and a [continued increase in venture capital investments](#) in the technology, we can expect new tools to be brought to market in the year and years ahead. It's how creatives utilize those tools that will determine their longevity, with an emphasis on tapping into the tools for inspiration and ideation rather than a full replacement of current capabilities.

“Human creativity will always win in these scenarios, but I don't—and our creators don't—see it as an ‘us vs. them’ with artificial intelligence,” explains Skillshare's SVP of Content, Community and Brand, Alicia Hamilton-Morales. “We all know what it's like to stare at a blank page for all too long. The power of these tools isn't in final output, but in breaking a creative block, and then allowing that truly irreplaceable human component to take that seed and run with it. Of course, AI can also assist with just pure velocity of output from there, but its true utility is in all the fits-and-starts we run into in our own brains, and not in overtaking our creativity.”

## BY THE NUMBERS

In 2022, Skillshare saw a

# 162%

increase in classes published on emerging technology.

Creative professionals show the greatest amount of excitement about generative AI, with **only 28%** of respondents showing concern about the emerging technology.

## TEACHER TAKE

### Temí Coker

“I use AI the same way a designer would use stock images. The advantage to AI is that it saves time because I can include exactly what I'm looking for like focal length, texture or lighting and the results are amazing. I often find AI can help me develop an idea or lead me to an image I wasn't originally thinking of and it really helps get to my final product. But at the same time, let's be clear that typing a prompt into an AI generator doesn't make you an artist. The real beauty in art is being able to develop an idea, AI should be used as a tool or for reference to bring that idea to fruition,” said Temí Coker, Multidisciplinary Artist and Skillshare Teacher.

[View Temí's Profile >](#)

# Creativity is a Means to Work/Life Balance

Work/life balance continues to be a [central topic](#) in considerations around the workplace. In the immediate aftermath of the pandemic, many workers sought to [reset their relationships](#) to work in favor of more balance and better mental health, fueling the Great Resignation. As the economy has shifted and the Great Resignation has concluded, many workers are finding themselves searching not just for an ephemeral sense of work/life balance, but for tangible ways to achieve it beyond simply leaving their jobs. Creative professionals are looking to explore creativity in smaller steps, exploring hobbies, skills and side hustles. What's more, among those with current creative side hustles, expect to spend more time on their creative hobbies (not just their hustles) in the upcoming year. Creativity, therefore, becomes not just a productive output, but one that cultivates rejuvenation, rest and joy. Work cultures that value creativity as an energizing practice help set their employees up for a more focused, productive output.

“For most creative professionals, engaging in a creative practice is part of working on their mental well-being and their [emotional fitness](#). Their creative practice not only has great benefits in the workplace but also helps them cope as they face hard times,” explains Dr. Vaneeta Sandhu, clinical psychologist and Head of Operations & Emotional Fitness at [Coa](#), a platform for employee mental well-being, offering live online workshops and on-demand learning.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**87%** of respondents say engaging in creative practice helps them cope during tough times.

Skillshare has seen a **65% increase in classes published** focused on mindfulness and balance.

## MEET

# Morgan Harper Nichols

Morgan Harper Nichols is an artist, poet and Skillshare teacher. Her work includes collaborations with Google, Starbucks and Target, to name a few, and her illustrations are beloved by her nearly two million Instagram followers. Amidst a steady stream of creative work, Morgan created her app, The Storyteller Co, which offers daily encouragement through visual and written stories. Her work offers an authentic and artful perspective that furthers her goals of “connect[ing] with others, stay[ing] curious, and grow[ing] in empathy.”

[View Morgan's Profile >](#)

# The Current Economy Helps Push Creative Boundaries

As uncertainty turns to reality about [another recession](#), creatives are looking for ways to build resiliency and shift out of their comfort zones. While we discussed the growing importance of side income and fractional career development, our respondents also showed an appetite for simply shaking up their work routines and taking a new approach rooted in their creative output. Nearly all respondents agreed that their creative practice helped them manage the stresses and cope with said uncertainty. Many are taking a cue from the current economy to look to switch to a new career path or company. Many also see it as an opportunity to learn a new skill online or to develop more on a personal or professional level, as the economy acts as a catalyst to drive personal and work progress.

## BY THE NUMBERS

When it comes to economic impact, the economy is most likely to drive people to switch companies or careers.

## TEACHER TAKE

### Mimi Chao

“When I switched careers from corporate lawyer to independent creative 10 years ago, I didn’t have any role models to look up to. Life is short, and we spend most of our lives working, so I wanted to make sure I spent my life in a meaningful way, and that meant finding a career path that aligned with that intention. Finding my way back to my childhood dreams and developing a career I love has been life-changing. It doesn’t just change your work life, it changes your entire life. My creative practice has supported me through all the stresses of the past few years, from personal challenges to the global pandemic. While the current economy is challenging for many people, I am excited to see how societal mindsets have shifted to allow more people to consider career pivots and transitions for themselves,” said Mimi Chao, Owner, Illustrator and Skillshare Teacher.

[View Mimi’s Profile >](#)

