

youngsocialpioneers

Benjamin Hamley
25 years old
Brisbane, Queensland

Benjamin is the Queensland project manager for Smart Artz, a highly collaborative youth-led agency with a focus on inspiring creative thinking.

Smart Artz places a focus on communicating with young people by placing them at the centre of everyday problems. “You can’t expect to just create something these days and hope it will reach the right market – you need to engage, authentically, at every level,” Benjamin said.

Using human-centred design techniques, Smart Artz encourages young people to actively participate in the development of campaigns, products, services and messages that are directed towards them.

Working with both high school and university students across a multitude of disciplines, Smart Artz helps motivate the youth of Australia to explore their creative potential.

Inspired by the work of Ken Robinson and agencies such as OpenIDEO, Benjamin has developed a passion for a new way of thinking. He has hopes to use the work of Smart Artz to assist in the development of the forthcoming National Australian Arts curriculum.

“We want to move away from the traditional idea of creativity that focuses only on technical skill – creativity is so much more than that. We aim to change the way creativity is understood, repositioning it as “applied imagination” and creating for a cause, not simply art for the sake of art.

“Our purpose is to redefine the business model for ‘creativity’. We want young people to be the creators of their own change. I see my role as a leader of Smart Artz in being the ‘wingman’ for young people’s dreams,” Benjamin said.

Smart Artz actively engages young people through hosting workshops across several schools, universities and community centres in Queensland and New South Wales.

After meeting with several of 2010’s Young Social Pioneers and witnessing their growth throughout the program, Benjamin was inspired to apply for the 2011 intake. The program, an initiative of the Foundation for Young Australians, offers twelve months of skills development, mentoring, intensive training and access to a global network of social innovators. Now accepted, Benjamin hopes to forge strong relationships and be inspired to further extend the work he is doing and take it to the next level.

“I have seen not only the growth and change in the lives and initiatives of previous Pioneers since they completed the program, but remain impressed by their long-lasting attitudes and relationships.

“I hope to find ways that Smart Artz can support new creative projects to grow – that’s our bread and butter. I very much believe in the direction and interests of the Foundation for Young Australians and am thrilled to be a part of this year’s Young Social Pioneers program.”

