27.
Human Creativity as a Skill: Generative Artificial Intelligence and Employability in Tunisia's Creative Industries

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Introduction

Labour is a fundamental value, structuring human identity, serving as both a means of livelihood, a vector of recognition, and a place of self-expression. It represents a characteristic of the human species that defines the essence of humanity, forging a meaningful individual and collective existence (Enriquez, 2013). Several correlates are attached to it, and reflections are multiplying on its technical and conceptual approaches, the future of labour, and the employment crisis, especially in a changing, and often threatening, economic, social, and technological context. Indeed, labour is in constant redefinition, projected into a future of transformation, where new paradigms emerge under the influence of new technologies. These transformations deeply question not only the forms of labour organisation but also the essence of humans at work.

Bernard Perret (1995) questioned the future of labour in contemporary democracies. He confronted the concept of labour with unemployment and questioned the political and cultural resources resistant to the forces of disintegration threatening post-industrial societies. Dominique Méda (1995) proposed a philosophical reflection on the disillusionment with labour, emphasising the desacralisation and loss of the foundational values of labour under the pressure of global economic transformations and the constraints specific to developing countries. The premise that we are entering an era where societies can produce more with less human labour (Méda, 1995), has a long history in theories on work, labour and technology (Graeber, 2018; Mueller, 2021), as does the potential for a radical redefinition of the relationships between production, employment, and human activity. However, recent technological developments, notably the emergence of generative artificial intelligences (AIs), now produce new challenges that touch on the core of human activity, the relationship between humans and labour. The debate will be even more intense if the labour addressed is infused with a living soul and a singular breath: we talk about creative labour.

This chapter focuses on creative work in the creative industries in Tunisia at the crossroads of Generative AIs. In light of transformative technologies, it becomes imperative to question the impact of Generative AI on creative labour, its forms, and its evolving values. The debate is even more urgent in Africa's creative industries, where youth represents crucial human capital based on originality, intuition, sensitivity, and identity values, and where the creative economy represents a strategic development lever.

What role does creativity play in the field of labour? Is it a true paradigm of employability? What will be the future of creativity-based labour, under the influence of technological acceleration through AI?

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Can AI enable humans produce with less effort at work? Is there still a place for humans in the labour market? Are we, humans, victims of forced disenchantment due to Generative AIs? What is the value of creative labour when executed by a human compared to a machine? To answer these questions and clarify the new representation of creative labour in the era of Generative AIs, this chapter addresses the following key question: To what extent does generative AI impact designers' creativity, and how can it foster a renewal in their employability?

The research that this chapter reports on is informed by multidisciplinary research on the idea of creativity in work. Creativity makes a significant contribution to organisational innovation, effectiveness, and the survival of companies (Madjar et al., 2002). The conceptual foundation of creativity is based on the reflections of Amabile, who defined it as "the ability to produce a response that is both new and adapted to constraints in a given context" (1996, p. 35). In line with Felder et al. (2017), who often associate creativity with workers who possess relevant skills and experience in their field, this conceptualisation proposes a model built around expertise, intrinsic motivation, and skills. Amabile (1988) further specified two forms of creativity: individual creativity and collective creativity, where the first must integrate the second for innovation to be implemented, thus acknowledging an idea as the product of creativity. The approach by Chader and Beyeme (2019) on collective creativity follows and discusses complex human interactions in the labour environment.

In this context, linking work with creativity seems natural and presents creativity as an indicator of excellence and human aptitude for innovation in performed labour. The conceptual base is expanded to integrate the term employability into the equation, questioning creativity as a paradigm of employability. Grey literature produced by globally recognised institutions like the ILO (Brewer, 2013) and OECD (OCDE, 2014) firmly declares creativity as a key driver for personal growth and development, as an exercise in active citizenship and social integration, and as a competence necessary for employability.

The human fabric in work, or human creativity, in a strict sense, must be reconsidered in light of the new working environment, undergoing transformation under the influence of generative AI. Opinions differ on the impact of generative AI on the job market. IBM advocates for more agile processes through AI, which offers solutions and helps recruit highly skilled talent. Some companies see artificial intelligence as a transformative tool that impacts key sectors, including human resources management, which is crucial for the production and success of all societal activities (Geetha & Bhanu, 2018; Imran, 2021).

Along these lines, Generative AIs are invading the human domain and are now a reality in the working environment across various sectors of the creative industries. Their positive aspect increases design processes, and their uses and effects assert themselves, tending towards zero risk. The International Labour Organization (ILO) recognises these effects and considers that these technologies provide more solutions than problems, focusing instead on "potential changes in terms of labour quality, intensity, and autonomy" (Gmyrek et al., 2023). However, the use of generative AI solutions in the creative industries remains questionable concerning artificial creative aptitude. In this context, we examine the impact of generative AI on work in the creative industries in Tunisia, particularly in the areas of art and design, to test the hypothesis that generative AI impacts the paradigms of creativity, such as creative genius, the creative individual, and creative collaboration (Glaveanu, 2014).

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Field and methodology

We conducted an empirical study to examine the perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, and reactions of design professionals in the creative industries. Our sample is based on creative industries positioned "at the crossroads of arts, culture, business, and technology, in a contemporary world dominated by images, sounds, texts, and symbols... [having] its origin in individual creativity, skill, and talent, with the potential to generate wealth and employment through the creation and exploitation of intellectual property" (Vincent & Wunderle, 2012, pp. 8-9). The creative industries in our sample are classified in the field of design and creative services, with sub-sectors such as graphic and digital design, fashion design, game design, motion design, UX design, etc. To optimise the research sample, we conducted a survey through the Prosdelacom.com platform, which is a portal for Communication, Marketing, and Advertising in Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. The agency guide lists numerous agencies, but only six were available to participate in the interview.

The study was conducted with a sample of six small and medium-sized enterprises, employing creative professionals and managed by young designer entrepreneurs, graduates of various public and private art and design schools in Tunisia. Being self-employed does not exclude hiring employees or freelance designers for specific projects requiring particular technical skills, nor the use of interns for final-year projects. Sixteen people were interviewed, including ten copywriters (aged 27 to 35) and six art directors (four between 30 and 35, and two aged 58 and 50). Qualitative data were collected using oral interviews with respondents who showed a willingness to discuss and interact directly. Some interviewees preferred to send their responses by email for reasons of availability and to take a step back from the information provided. We used an interview guide with questions grouped into major themes, with follow-up questions to deepen some responses.

The questions focus on creativity as a fundamental concept in the creative industries. The choice of questions and the themes that arise from them is based on bibliographic references around different approaches to creativity, with the aim of re-questioning them in the current artificial context. These included the factors influencing designers' potential in their creative process: individual and collective creativity (Amabile, 1988, 1996). A second theme was the integration of Generative AI as a possible stimulator of creativity, aiming to position it in relation to Lubart's "7 Cs" theory (2017), which includes: creators, the act of creating, required collaborations for creative activity, contexts of creative expression, creations, consumption of creative products, and necessary curricula. A further theme concerned the impact of Generative AIs on creativity, viewed through the lens of enhancing human potential towards transhumanism in the workplace, in contrast to Batemon and Gayon's theory (2017). Finally, the empirical approach through the perception of Generative AIs by the Tunisian creative industries regarding threats, particularly the transformation of work and the risks of job losses, as well as the urgency of training in AI.

The interviews were conducted in a gradual manner, starting with the presentation of the company and the actors involved in the creative act, progressively moving toward responses to the research question. New themes emerged as the interviews progressed, particularly in the final open-ended question for interviewee suggestions. The issue of updating education was actively recalled to reflect the formative aspect of work mentioned at the beginning of this article (Rénault, 2016). The question

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of how to integrate young graduates into the new professional landscape ultimately leads to the main question: how to train in AI for better integration into the workplace?

The responses and transcribed verbatim statements, refined and submitted to qualitative analysis, allow us to highlight results discussed under the following headings: (1) Creativity as an employability skill; (2) Generative AI as a general-purpose transhumanist technology serving the creative industries; and 3) the influence of Generative AIs on the value of creative labour.

Creativity as an employability skill in creative work labs: the Tunisian creative industries

After introducing their agencies, interviewees were asked to define creativity in their own way. The results reveal several definitions of creativity by design professionals. The differences reflect the profiles of respondents, either exclusively professional or (also) engaged in doctoral or postdoctoral scientific research, producing two types of formulations: one rooted in practice and the other enriched with bibliographic references. The common denominator among the responses from different sources is the abundance of lexemes such as *innovation, originality, emotion, intuition, complex, simple.* "For me, creativity is the result of several combinations: cultural background, emotional depth, intellect, and intuition. It's an entire paradigm that is both complex and simple at the same time. It cannot truly be measured or commanded. Each person's creativity is rooted in their individuality" (K.G., art director, illustrator.)

The artistic aura is also evident in the interviewees' responses, and the interplay of individuality and culture aligns with Amabile's theoretical frame (1988; 1996), which promotes an approach to employability based on individual creative competencies, an idea that finds broad consensus. "For me, creativity is about combining multiple ideas and art forms that we already know to create one's own work, adding a personal touch. In the end, we get a new artistic piece that precisely expresses the creator's idea" (H.Z., art director, game designer.)

All respondents confirmed that creativity is a decisive criterion influencing the performance evaluation of an intern or a designer. Candidates are assessed based on their personality traits, motivation, technical skills, and cognitive abilities, with the adjective "creative" consistently associated. "Recruiting a designer in our agency, or in any major agency, happens after reviewing their portfolio. Once we've looked through it and observed interesting work that demonstrates creativity, that candidate already has a better chance of being hired. So yes, it is a sought-after criterion when recruiting an advertising designer. That's actually why we call them 'creatives'" (M.B., art director, graphic designer, PhD candidate in audiovisual and cinema studies.)

The portfolio, whether in paper or digital format, represents the primary reference point for creativity, showcasing samples of the designer's work and allowing for assessment on a scale ranging from minimally to highly creative. Questionnaires and interviews are also at the top of the list, along with simulated creative processes and design projects, as well as academic and professional prerequisites evaluated by expert peers.

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The emotional and affective approach is also present, involving the assessment of the candidate's motivation, sensitivity, and ability to externalise and infuse emotional aura and expression into their creations. "To assess a designer's level of creativity during a job interview, dialogue is key. It's about placing the designer in a friendly setting where they can speak more spontaneously about themselves. We can then identify their artistic influences, passions, motivations, and even lifestyle. Asking questions about creativity, their personal approach to design, and their expectations regarding the designer's role" (K.G., art director, illustrator.)

These assessment methods, though omnipresent and subjective, still serve to validate the theory of individual creativity (Amabile, 1982), and the idea that it is a personality trait found in those who demonstrate perseverance, curiosity, openness to new experiences, and individualism (Lubart & Sternberg, 1995). Creativity, as an individual trait, can emerge during the creative process or through the proposed solution that is tested throughout the process. It allows the designer to stand out from the group, which is why it serves as a lever and a criterion that increases employability.

However, this does not exclude the ability to collaborate, which is an essential part of the candidate's profile. Once hired or during a probationary period, the designer is expected to integrate into the team with a collaborative creative spirit. The stimulation of collective creativity is supported by various techniques such as brainstorming (Osborn, 1953). Its use, confirmed by our sample, strengthens team solidarity and reinforces awareness of the effectiveness of collaborative labour.

All these methods clearly demonstrate the dominance of human judgement when it comes to evaluating creativity, a point supported by the unanimous confirmation from respondents that artificial intelligence is not used to assess creative potential in designers. One respondent stated: "I honestly don't think that a programmed intelligence, guided by a predefined database, can evaluate the creativity of a human being. The role of AI is not to determine whether someone is creative or not, but to help them find answers and results that can facilitate their work as a designer." (M.B., art director, graphic designer, PhD candidate in audiovisual and cinema studies.)

Nevertheless, Generative AI has a place in the creative industries. Designers and creative project stakeholders report using Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Midjourney, DALL·E, Sora, Suno, Playground AI and Nightmare AI, depending on the needs of each project. The free vs. paid model often guides usage, with a preference for free versions, particularly among small businesses with limited financial means. Nonetheless, the professional needs of certain agencies and clients may require paid versions due to the advantages they offer.

Generative AI as a General-Purpose Technology (GPT) in Service of the Creative Industries in Tunisia

According to Bresnahan and Trajtenberg (1995), a technology that qualifies as a General-Purpose Technology (GPT) must be pervasive across most sectors. It should also improve over time, continuously reduce user costs, and serve as a source of innovation, enabling the invention and production of new products or processes. The use of digital platforms evolves with Generative AIs marking a logical progression of digital technology towards becoming a new GPT (Trajtenberg, 2019). Indeed,

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Generative AIs have begun integrating into Tunisian creative industries "over the past two years", automatically generating various types of content (e.g., scripts for TV commercials, visuals for social media, etc.). Guided by the theme of GPTs, interviewees shared field-based insights regarding the use of digital technologies in general in creative industries. The quantitative data reveals both frequent and infrequent use, depending on the type of application and agency's culture.

From our sample, a typology of usage emerges: Firstly, a renewed communication-oriented use through internal communication tools among employees. These tools facilitate access to information, idea sharing, and creative content exchange. Such practices help establish a culture of transparency and openness within organisations, enhancing the strategic intangible value of active creators: creativity.

Firstly, an interactive labour environment is also fostered through shared data and file platforms. The analysis of interview responses reveals significant findings: 100% of the agencies surveyed use collaborative file storage and management platforms. Google Workspace is cited by 83% of agencies for its efficiency in co-editing documents, real-time sharing, and remote meetings via Google Meet. Microsoft OneDrive is used by 4 out of 6 agencies (67%), mainly for synchronisation, automatic file updates across devices, and secure project management. Eighty% report improved internal communication flow, and 79% note time savings and increased team productivity thanks to instant content accessibility.

A second professional usage highlights both the adopters of Generative AI (90%) and those who reject it (10%). The former emphasise the use of Generative AI in creative work, which allows the creative process to be optimised through digital tools. Generative AI is gradually but significantly being integrated into various stages of the creative process. At the inspiration and ideation stage, designers often draw from online image banks such as Shutterstock.com, Pinterest.com, Burst (powered by Shopify), Stock.Adobe.com, or Freepik.com. It is worth noting that agencies operating in the fields of visual communication, design, and advertising (100% of our sample) report using these platforms at the early stages of their projects. The most common uses are observed during the moodboard creation, brainstorming sessions, and graphic trend research. Pinterest, for example, is systematically used by five out of six agencies (83% of our sample). This choice is justified by the abundance of images and the personalised recommendation algorithms offered by the platform.

In the production phase, Adobe Creative Suite software is widely used alongside human intervention: Photoshop is used by 100% of agencies for photo montage operations. Illustrator is used by 100% for vector illustrations. After Effects is used by 4 out of 6 agencies (67%) for animation and motion design. Regarding hardware, illustration specialists report using graphic tablets "daily for an average of five hours." However, they are aware of the health implications: "Given the complexity and precision of the work, I try not to use these devices too much for personal projects, for health reasons." (K.G., Art Director, Illustrator.)

It is important to note that creators' acceptance of Generative AIs varies, moving from initial scepticism to growing adoption. Regarding Generative AI use within the creative process, 76% of our sample report frequent use, 24% report moderate use, while 12% refuse to use Generative AIs entirely.

The perceived advantages of this technology include creative momentum (indicated by 84% of respondents); expanded possibilities, including animations previously difficult to execute (84% of

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respondents); peer pressure and market relevance (72% say they use Generative AIs to stay current and meet client expectations); whereas 12% perceive no significant advantage.

According to Taddy (2018), AI solutions can automate and accelerate tasks previously carried out only by humans. Indeed, Generative AIs are designed to mimic human behaviour and collaborate with humans in a deeply interactive creative process. Currently, in Tunisia's creative industries, the creative process remains primarily human-driven, though increasingly open to collaboration with AI. This evolving landscape outlines a tripartite model of creative work. First, Human Creative Work (individual human creativity): according to statistics provided by the surveyed agencies, 40% of projects over the past three years were driven by human imagination and intelligence, with digital tools used only in production and post-production, and without Generative AI intervention. Second, Collective Creative Labour (collaborative human creativity): 60% of projects were the result of team-based collaboration, and 87% of art directors confirm that collaborative work, especially during brainstorming phases, is a powerful catalyst for creativity and a source of innovative ideas. Third, Co-Creative Labour with AI (human/AI collaborative creativity): in the most recent year (2024–2025), 76% of creations were generated or co-created with AI, though this percentage varies by project and client needs. This surge is largely attributed to growing Generative AI adoption among competitors and the optimisation these tools offer to creative workflows.

The association of creativity with Generative artificial intelligence remains, however, controversial. This tension allows for the substitution of the concept of *creation* with *artificial generation*, or, as we propose to call it, artificial Generative creativity (Ouerghi, 2024). This term refers to the virtual functioning of Generative AIs, understood as a form of reproductive and creative intelligence, mirroring the human ability to reproduce and create images through the operation of artificial neural networks.

The generated artefact is a manifestation of a collaborative projection, insofar as it reflects the dialogue between humans and algorithms. This interaction begins with prompt input words, which carry meaningful value for the human user and are then processed through a probabilistic path of interpretation before producing outputs whose meaningfulness must be validated by the human. Iteration reflects this collaborative exchange and demonstrates the quantitative creative abundance of Generative AI. Its frequency highlights the decisive role of the human as the initiator of the project and the judge of the qualitative validity of the AI's proposals, based on their alignment with the original request, guidelines and constraints of creative labour.

In this light, Generative AIs can serve as a new cornerstone for professional approaches to creativity, particularly for those viewing creativity as an employability skill (Saint-Germes, 2021). We may now speak of an augmented employability competence. Generative AIs introduce hybrid creative teams where human and artificial creators coexist and sometimes even simulate or surpass human cognitive abilities. The act of creating thus becomes reactive, generative, and regenerative, with the ability to produce content more rapidly, though not always with consistent efficiency. Such collaborations mobilise, within a larger collectivist scale, both individual skills and human cognitive capacities (learning, problem-solving, decision-making). The contexts for creative expression are multiplying, driven by the pervasive integration of Generative AI into nearly every human field, activity, and practice. As a result, the scope of possibility for creation has expanded. The richness of images generated by

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generative AIs nourishes the creator's imagination and contributes to the enhancement of human capabilities, especially reflexive and cognitive ones.

These enhanced capacities shaped by algorithms anchor humans further into transhumanist ideology. However, despite their benefits, Generative AIs also raise serious concerns, especially as their rapid rise increases competition and thrusts humans into a race for relevance. Our respondents discussed several risks associated with the use of Generative AIs in creative industries. The first of these is excessive technological dependence (52% of our respondents), which can lead to a loss of manual and technical know-how, especially in artisanal and design professions. Linked to this is the problem of technically flawed output (24%). Professionals in image animation cited technical defects in AI-generated motion graphics, especially in rendering perspective and foot movement.

A further concern is about lack of human involvement (25%). Some interviewees reported diminished human engagement, with labour increasingly handed off to AI. This echoes earlier concerns and touches on mental health, with references to impulse control disorders, ADHD, anxiety, etc., which weaken human resources and increase business vulnerability. Finally, 28% of our respondents mentioned job loss risk. This percentage reflects a direct concern over employability. Some creatives express anxiety about their future, while others adopt a more optimistic view, urging the need to upskill, update their profiles, and adapt to technological change, now seen as an unavoidable reality.

The influence of generative artificial intelligence on the culture of creative work

The articulation of lived experiences shared by interviewees regarding the use of generative artificial intelligence in design projects helps to understand the reception and practical implementation of Generative AI in professional environments. At the intersection with Generative AI, all results converge toward an enhancement of creativity, through the stimulation of imagination, innovation, and novelty production. This implies a transformation in the value attributed to creative work and workers. Generative AI tools are now embedded within the human resources systems of creative industries and influence recruitment practices for designers. All surveyed agencies that have adopted and implemented AI technologies emphasise their creative potential and underline their role in supporting the well-being of art directors and designers. Generative AI services ensure productivity and creative fertility while relieving managerial pressure. By freeing designers from repetitive tasks, space is opened for innovation and the search for original solutions to human challenges.

While recognising the advantages of Generative AI, interviewees express an urgent need for tailored training in AI aligned with various design practices. They describe recent graduates from art and design institutions as lacking AI expertise due to gaps in academic training. This raises critical questions: What is the new designer profile expected by the industry? What are the most in-demand AI-related skills in Tunisia's creative sector? And how should we train for Generative AI to enable effective professional integration? Answers to these questions reveal the emerging employability requirements in AI-augmented creative work

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Updating the designer's profile: AI as a lever for skills differentiation

What skills are required for creative work enhanced by artificial intelligence within the context of the creative industries in Tunisia? Creative work driven by designers now integrates various competencies that are enhanced by AI. At the top of the list are technical skills, optimised by Generative AI tools, that foster creativity and execution speed, aligning with client expectations, increasing productivity, and thus boosting hiring prospects. Beyond this, essential skills include writing and editing content, analysing and identifying coherence or incoherence, and generating or synthesising visuals.

Despite their visually appealing outputs, Generative AI-generated designs often contain flaws, reinforcing the importance of human intervention and reaffirming the designer's critical role. Interviews reveal a strong correlation between Generative AI use and designer autonomy. Designers still perceive themselves as essential creative actors, as guardians of non-standardisation, artefact quality, and alignment with ethical and social values. It is also essential to recall that Generative AI systems can reproduce and amplify clichés and stereotypes (e.g., sexist, racist, religious, ethnic) rooted in their training data and algorithmic choices. These are not accidental; they reflect dominant representations. Designers must learn to master these mechanisms to ensure originality, training data diversity, and the avoidance of bias. In this sense, creative outputs must remain deeply human.

The ability to train generative artificial intelligences, to collaborate and interact with them, and to derive relevant responses from them is becoming an essential skill for designers. Integrating skills that stimulate empathy and interaction alongside behavioural, social, and cognitive skills (soft skills) into creative work is also necessary to keep pace with acceleration. This opens the way for acquiring such competencies through tools and artificial agents that now coexist with humans in today's technological and ever-evolving labour environments.

New roles or facets of the designer's job are thus emerging to strengthen effective interaction with AI and open the design field to other disciplines, notably computer science and mathematics. This includes the need for coding skills, understanding algorithmic bias, mathematical problem-solving, probabilistic methods, data visualisation, machine learning, deep learning, and more. AI also offers platforms that provide these features, which increases the complexity of the designer's evolving role. This development is prompting some creative industry directors to reduce human staff in favour of AI platforms or to recruit profiles specialised in AI. As F.B. (art director and lecturer) puts it:
"In creative work, a designer must be unique, creative, and impactful. This model changes with AI: only creativity remains, absolutely, the beating heart of creative work. Difference gains meaning when data is effectively used. The real impact lies in knowing how to best leverage AI in campaign design and post-campaign strategies." Thus, shaping a new designer profile capable of meeting the demands of current creative work is a key challenge. Successful integration into today's AI-driven professional ecosystem requires a fundamental rethinking of academic pathways and learning modalities.

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How to Train for Generative Artificial Intelligence to Ensure Better Professional Integration

The testimony of respondents who teach technical courses in design schools reveals an academic landscape that is poorly invested in Generative AI education. Knowledge in this field currently stems from individual teacher initiatives or, more often, from the personal curiosity and experimentation of young designers exploring AI platforms on their own. In the absence of official reform in higher education to integrate AI into curricula, our only guide is the feedback from interviews. From this perspective, suggestions point toward a new work ecosystem built on an academic, critical, technical, and professional approach to preparing future creators for technically efficient, ethical, and responsible collaboration with Generative AI.

At the technical level, our respondents recommend training on some of the most used creative tools for text, image and video generation, such as Midjourney, RunwayML, ChatGPT, Adobe Firefly, among others. Understanding how generative algorithms work (GANs, NLP, diffusion models) is considered essential. Moving from basic understanding to expertise and optimisation is now a key requirement and a critical lever for augmented creative work. Furthermore, mastery of prompt design has become an indispensable professional skill, highlighting emerging roles such as "Prompt Designer." It also emphasises the need for training and learning opportunities within creative industries, including internships in design workplaces adapted to evolving market demands.

Some promising initiatives are nonetheless emerging in certain universities that aim to keep pace with AI developments. These include training sessions led by creative designers, art directors, and faculty, such as those organised by the Career and Skills Certification Centre (4C) at the Higher Institute of Fine Arts of Tunis (ISBAT) and the University of Tunis ("AI at ISBAT: A Laboratory of Pedagogical Revolution," "Should We Fear AI?", etc.).

In rethinking the new culture of creative work through the lens of Generative AI and empirical data, one key value stands out: the ethical and critical awareness necessary when using such technologies. Innovation today requires a fluid and open co-creative mindset between Generative AI and the designer along with a critical outlook on algorithmic bias and AI's broader implications. This critical distance and questioning of meaning is the essence of critical thinking, allowing creatives to consciously engage with AI tools. Therefore, the following skills become indispensable for creative labour: the ability to choose, interpret, infuse meaning, subvert, question, and re-question and thus, to innovate.

Conclusion

The analysis of algorithmic uses and their effects on creative work within a sample of Tunisian creative industries has provided a snapshot of creativity as an employability paradigm at the intersection with generative artificial intelligence. This contribution offers an overview of the characteristics of creativity, enabling a comparison between key theoretical frameworks and the perceptions of professionals in the fields of art and design. Creative work emerges as an activity shaped by both individual and collective stakes, closely intertwined with technique and technology. Ultimately, the findings suggest

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a shifting perception of creativity under the influence of generative artificial intelligence, toward a model of individual and/or collective creativity assisted by AI. Yet, creativity remains a crucial skill within the creative industries labour market. It is a core recruitment criterion for designers, evaluated individually through portfolios, interviews, and tests, and collectively through group dynamics and associative techniques such as brainstorming.

Whether as a process or its outcome, human creativity is undergoing a transformation, reshaped at the crossroads with Generative AI, which is already accepted as a global technological reality. Design practice is now facing the necessity of urgent reform. In Tunisia, creative industries are gradually shifting toward a culture of the artificial, although this shift has not yet reached deep structural levels. Some agencies and professionals already operate with clear benchmarks. Others are still in the process of defining them, while a minority remain sceptical about the relevance of integrating Generative AI into their creative workflows or evaluation criteria.

Reducing repetitive tasks and saving time in design projects may be interpreted as a form of humanisation of labour, made possible by Generative AI. Physical strain, concentration load, and human energy are reduced through algorithms. Costs go down, productivity goes up, an attractive proposition for businesses, especially those facing financial constraints and subject to current hyper-competitive markets. However, this trend also raises significant risks of precarity and job loss, should employers favour a rationalisation of labour by replacing human resources with artificial ones.

The new performance-oriented trajectory enabled by Generative AI redefines the concept of labour but does not necessarily make things easier for human labourers. Hyper-competitiveness now exists between humans and machines, demanding greater innovation and creative output from human workers to avoid the disappearance of designer roles and their replacement by Generative AI systems. Demanding equality between human and machine labour is no longer a distant vision.

The designer becomes a mediator between client and Generative AI, with their role potentially reduced to prompt-writing, the only remaining space for their creative linguistic expression. If Generative AI continues to evolve and humans fail to keep pace, new domains for creative intervention may not emerge, and the artificial may fully take over the human. While Generative AI should help humans avoid tedious labour, the nature of the labour assigned to it must be clearly defined. It must assist human production, not replace it. The human and artisanal act must endure, preserving expertise, manual skills, and the cultural aura essential to the creative industries. At the conclusion of this chapter, we maintain that it is humans who remain the true drivers of innovation and creative work, not artificial systems or processes. Generative AI must be regarded merely as a standardised tool capable of stimulating creative thinking and enhancing the creative process.

Digital literacy and ethics stand out prominently in the critical discourse surrounding Generative AI, as expressed by professionals in the Tunisian creative industries. There is a clear necessity to accompany this professional transformation with the urgent integration of artificial intelligence skills into current academic and pedagogical programs. The desired profile is performative, projecting designers who can become autonomous with a creative, critical, and responsible mindset, committed to preserving and innovating manual and cultural know-how, and demonstrating collaborative, unifying, and operational skills that meet the demands of today's labour market.

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Creativity is understood as a state of mind, a capacity to express and produce original ideas and to perceive things through an innovative lens. Beyond this core competence, now optimised and augmented by artificial systems, and in addition to the necessary technical knowledge and skills linked to the profession, the designer's profile must undergo an urgent update to meet the demands of a critical employability criterion. What we ultimately hope for, when reflecting on the essence of creative work in the age of Generative AI, is not better creativity generated by AI, but rather better creativity enabled by effective, rational, and ethical collaboration with AI.

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