

Insight

With thanks to Kirsty Grafton, Graphic Designer

Boosting the local economy through commissioning home-grown talent

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The NCIA Field guide design project has been a joy to work on, the team at Sheffield Hallam had a clear idea of what they needed, provided a really clear brief and gave me concise and helpful feedback in a timely way. All of this meant the project ran to schedule, which is really helpful as a small business.

I feel very honoured whenever I work on projects for local universities, as they are well regarded in the area, and have high profiles. When they choose to work with local businesses they are also supporting people working locally and the local economy.

The main barrier I have found when working with large organisations is their procurement frameworks which can be lengthy and require a measure of investment in terms of time up-front, which is hard for small businesses. They can also have lengthy processes when being set up as a supplier, the risk of delayed payments is a worry for any small business.

Large anchor organisations have considerable spending power due to their scale, any policies and practices that encourage them to use that spending power locally to support locally-based people will have a positive effect to the area.

I have previously been employed at Sheffield Hallam Students' Union and have worked on projects for the University of Sheffield, both independently and in my previous roles at design agencies. They are intrinsically linked to many areas of the economy and people's lives locally.