

Issue: A radical shift in the relationship between artists, institutions and funders

Convener(s): Robert Laycock

Participants: Stephen Pritchard, Louise Tyrner, Jane Gray, Anna Snell, Ilana Mitchell, Caroline, Chris from Vane and ~5 others who flitted in without introductions.

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

As I noted it, these were the questions and points that came up. They follow in the order they were said, mostly, although in some cases I have joined bits together. There are in the mix lots of needs and calls to action. There is probably another way to organise these notes that would give more clarity. That's for the next stage. (I might even be up for it if you send it back, or anyone else wants to do it to). Ilana, note taker.

- Artists as most vulnerable both economically and potentially socially in the current set up. Can this change?
- “Do we need a bonfire of the vanities” – is there any possibility to shift the infallibility of large, usually building based, institutions that are on the whole not allowed to fail, or be seen to fail?
- Are artists working outside of institutions doing the most active work to change the status quo?
- Self-funding and burn out: how far can artists keep on being energised to be doing this work?
- Lots of discussion around the difference between people as individuals and as representatives of institutions and funding bodies. Difficult to have conversations honestly with people rather than policy or institution. Eg “do you still have the same aims as you came into this job with, or is it now a job to pay the bills.” “Is it possible to not get molded-to-fit the shape of the institution as individual rises up the ladder?” Is it possible to be able to continue to shape shift and become successful?
- Trickle down of hierarchical public funding system. (DCMS-ACE-Institutions-Artists) has artists at the coal face delivering top down policy for rock bottom fees.
- Can we change the audience development rhetoric from “how do we get more people into the Royal Opera House” – which gets met by often tick-box quotas that don't really address issues, to “can we redistribute money from large institutions to others, to non-institutions?”
- Quite a bit of debate around “what counts as work/ freelance/sole trader business model and a recognition that there are good examples of day

- rates, and simple sums for working out freelance rates across all arts sectors (eg ITC, a-n) which are not being upheld. It's not PC for ACE to support base rate of pay - whereas it was 15 years ago in Year of the Artist. Also when £150 was given as a base rate – imagine if that was actually index linked, where would we be? This situation needs to change. We need to find a shine light on good examples of artists being paid liveable rate (eg Dot-to-Dot) and how they are managing this to make this work – what other changes to business structures, governance etc?
- No good to continue to lay the blame on low paid artists struggling to make a living, berating them for taking £100 a day (or less or whatever!) – Where is the leadership that challenges that position? Where are the CEOs and Directors and Boards who are advocating for core principle of paying artists, and when cuts come scaling back without compromising that, who understand that the need to continue is not the core aim but the art is? (Actually where are they – we want to see and shine a light on them!). Who does salary review for top level pay in public funding bodies and can they be made to look across the whole spectrum? Eg £275 a day equates to a £25k a year based on well documented evidence of how a full time freelance works their business. (figures approx – ask Rob the convener for actual figures!)
 - Can we do an exercise that looks at the distribution of public funding regionally 20, 15, 10, 5 years ago, and now, and project this into the future, to see how the pie-chart has shrunk and changed.
 - What are the issues around artists making choices to live/work outside dominant capitalist economic drive, e.g. how that fits into maintaining or being able to offer change solutions to the mainstream. Also maintain integrity of why doing work whilst becoming successful.
 - Positive example eg Peter Tatchell – his major impact on gay rights whilst his lifestyle remains simple/frugal.
 - Brief conversation about different types of bureaucratic models for public funding in different countries eg Germany / Canada. What will future funding bodies look like?
 - Can we look at a radical shift that ensures a minimum of 51% i.e. a majority share of public funding going to the artists. This still leaves 49% for everything else. Could argue for a bigger shift, but what might happen if artists were the majority voice/stakeholder?
 - Brief conversation about alternative business models for disused or underused public spaces (and private) either for free arts use (eg Sunderland minster giving whole space for art exhibition on peace) or other uses that can be income generators or make better use of space (eg hydroponics systems for feeding urban populations as seen in New Bridge exhibition map by Mikey Tomkins)
 - Can individuals/ small orgs work together to stop being fearful of pointing out and asking these questions of transparency and fair wages to ACE etc?

- We need groups who want to change – there are activist and artists groups starting (Paying artists, Artist Unions, Pilot Theatre) – need to build from these.
- Institutions and funders are actually vulnerable and worried for their jobs, as the money gets tighter institutions get frailer. It's a good time for a radical shift.
- Need to find examples of good relationships between artist/institutions/funders to use as inspirations for future operational models. Eg non-hierarchical collectivities and cooperative models (eg Stove Network in Dumfriesshires being given money to allocate for the county)
- Finally, thinking about agenda led. Grants for the Arts used to be the place for artists to get funding for projects they chose; now even these are top down agenda led. Artists need space to say "I don't care about DCMS agenda, I just want to do this amazing experimental project" and get support. We need to make sure the point of art – which is NOT to fit into molds, is supported to shape shift and take on whatever shape or non-shape it wishes!

Issue: All we are saying- Artists for Peace

Convener(s): Barrie West

Participants:

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

All we are saying

Artists for peace- call out for global peace which becomes tangible in September with a series of exhibitions in the UK and Europe. Artists, musicians, writers, performers, photographers. Specific hubs in the UK, organising its own call out for peace using artists and creatives in their own particular area.

By September, there should be a hub in Germany and Holland and maybe Japan. They are responsible for the direction it takes for world peace and takes the credit for providing the exhibition or shout out for what is happening there.

Raising awareness- Newcastle blanket for world peace.

Not political, non-religious, non-regional or nationalistic.

Culture as a legacy, there is such a desire for peace.

Its organic, it changes from day to day.

Non-profit, non-commercial, it's just about asking for peace.

FB- All we're saying

Issue: Art / Science Collaboration

Convener(s): Jessica Johnson (Notes by Kirsty – sorry if they're squiffy – there were lots!)

Participants: Kirsty McCarrison / Christopher Winter / Stephen Wipes / Barrie West / Jessica Johnson / Connie Lewis-Ward / Alison Listev

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Why are some science museums not integrating arts awards etc? They probably are but not making the most of it.

Welcome Trust – do things round the country and have meetings to discuss ideas.

Things are going on around the NE that crosses the boundaries such as Lumiere etc.

Late Shows – onus is on the organisation and institution so not actually expensive to organise overall.

Art residencies and Science residencies – often voluntary but can get work from these.

Pots of funding for arts and science fusion. How do we prove that art is actually good for things such as mental health etc – investigating through science.

Edinburgh and Northumbria uni doing film and music activities with dementia patients – great project. Also referenced BBC article – demit patients and photography trip around the Lake District.

The Papermakers Project.

Scientists don't always value artists in some circumstances. Shouldn't allow this to knock the confidence of artists. Need to work together.

Lots of scientists actually see their work as an art form.

Similarity between contemporary art and science – 'I don't understand it – it's not for me.'

How to engage them?

Engage through personal stories, fashion etc – things that people can relate to.

Artist groups in Tees Valley – manufacturing in Germany – getting people to make things and engage with the process.

Museum of art and science in Bradford – but not much else.

FUN PALACES!

General lack of festivals around the country and we need a legacy from all the work that is being done. E.g. tours around the country to ensure legacy after exhibitions etc.

Needs to be more joined up things between product design, arts and science – festivals are a great way to do this.

Problems in schools – those that struggle with maths and science, often ask ‘why does it do that?’ but are not given the correct answers – are actually ‘lied’ to at different levels to allegedly make it more understandable but this often switches off some kids interest and is ultimately not helpful – WHY? Is FUNDAMENTAL.

Artists are good as to why and how. Also need to consider routes of access.

Should be networks – everything linked up so we’re not always starting again.

Would be great to see installations with science in unexpected spaces - libraries / art galleries and not look out of place.

Science behind everything – level of accessibility now through technology – opens up the sciences. Need to be benefits to tech companies – showcase their tech through art and artists.

Need case studies of sci-art to see what works and what doesn’t.

Could work with Wellcome – well funded.

In terms of funding – research is next best place to look for artists – working with academics etc.

Paid opportunities come out of collaborations with researchers etc.

It is universities who would look to funding artists – to champion their work etc.

Need an intermediate body to make art-sci a bigger – more solid ‘movement’. Some projects but Welcome only overarching group in this area and they are primarily human biology related.

Academic landscape may have changed due to REF and impact – looking perhaps to artists to help engage with the public.

Idea: perhaps Russell group universities would with art council to champion link between research and artists. Get welcome involved too due to their experience.

Big biology centre being built in Darlington because of proximity to unis doing the right research to link in. Trying to get artists to show it's not a place full of scary germs etc.

Artists need support – working in unfamiliar scientific settings.

Nulls the debate if artists are used to ‘calm’ the public – make things easier to understand. Should artists remain impartial? Debates need to continue in science – should artists be ‘used’ in this way? How does that work?

‘Mad scientist’ and ‘mad artist’ – sometimes the divide between data driven and emotion driven too wide?

Equal Arts – music been shown to be the most effective tool for dementia.

Arts council have previously written documents about health with the hope of influencing science etc. but seems to have had little effect.

Can some research be monetized in some way to benefit artists too?

Gaining scientists interest is harder than artists or the public!

Irene Brown – Gallery of Wonder – touring.

As a science academic I wanted to engage the public about research rather than do the research so now act as a ‘distiller’ of information between the academic and the public. Need to work with the academics and help them see the process between their work and public understanding. Museums and heritage great intermediary. Need key academic messages to work with.

Need website to put all these projects together.

Arts play a massive part in disrupting science.

Does government see it as a worthwhile thing to get behind?

Event in Newcastle about hallucinations – worked with people in neurology.

People working with data have created their own kind of artform through the use of infographics – books such as Information are Beautiful – incredible – almost informal learning.

The most important thing you need to be a scientist is a good imagination – something Einstein said.

Tesla – a poet! Visualized things – was crossing art and science boundaries and was used as somebodies arts award hero!

Beatrix Potter – used a microscope to create detailed accurate drawings of plants and animals.

Art and science have been working together for such a long time.

Excellent examples for case studies and funding.

Artists need to be financially sustainable.

Disseminate work through things such as product design.

Collaborations – create artwork that can be wearable or upscale to create contemporary art.

Better than relying on funding.

YOU set the agenda rather than adhering to those of a body.

Networks also to facilitate equipment sharing etc that artists may find useful plus mentoring and training etc.

Need festivals to bring together artists and scientists.

Maybe create a kind of dating service for them to find each other!?

Issue: Arts, Poverty, Wages

Convener(s): Angela

Participants:

Richard, Tracey, Corrine, Frances, Suna, Yasmin, Jill, Tom

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Artists as Voice for/of/with community

Poverty of Aspiration?

Cultural Poverty?

People need and deserve more (and should be encouraged to aspire to) more than just food on the table and a roof over their head- ART (Beauty, Truth, Intelligence) IS IMPORTANT!!!!

“I don’t mind working hard; it’s who I’m working for” Gillian Welch (folk song)

How do you quantify value of art?? As artists we are asked to work within a business model that is not built for us! How do we build a new one?!

Value is often ‘soft’ (i.e. artists/participants may have fun (!), have their aspirations raised and their horizons expanded) rather than ‘hard’ (basically money!!) Therefore difficult/impossible to quantify!

Do artists have a sense of experiential value which can be different than others in society (less materialistic?) But we still have to eat!

Do the people who hold the purse strings control the vision of beauty in society at large?

Why as artists do we have to justify our art practice? Other disciplines (business, science) don’t – takes us back to the idea of value discussed above.

Damaging stereotypes of artists in society – flakey, ‘weird’, unreliable, non-business minded etc.

In Germany, they have government funded artists (one of our group knows one!). They have 6 months paid positions (with accommodation); the artist then has to commit to stay in the area for a specified length of time so the community will

benefit from what they are doing. This scheme recognises and supports the value of artists in society!

Local NPO institutions (Sage, Baltic) that have a national and international profile, should take more responsibility for supporting LOCAL artists – they have a powerful voice with the Arts Council England, and should be advocating for US! There is a disparity in the Arts Council Funding between London and the rest of the UK.

How do we challenge the funding model so its works for us? (Local artists and arts organisations)

Title

Making us the most International Region of the UK

Convenor

Peter Stark

Attendance

Colin Robson, Alison Lister, Ros Rigby (part), Richard Glynn, Hannah Campion, Helen Green, Zoe Anderson, Tracey ??

Notes

PS Introduced

- For reasons of history, geography, climate and.....????, the NE is probably the least culturally diverse in England and - though it is changing - it may be doing so more slowly and from a lower base than other regions.
- This sad for us culturally as we miss out on the richness that greater diversity can bring
- It has been socially helpful that we have not had the speed and scale of diverse immigration that has triggered strong reaction in some other regions/urban areas with long standing working class communities
- In terms of future cultural reputation and funding such comparative lack of cultural diversity will be a disadvantage
- My proposal is that we build on substantial existing practice and networks and invest in the biggest international exchange programme in the country for individuals and small groups (i.e. I was not envisaging a programme that would support the largest scale of international touring in the performing arts)

Discussion

- Problem is that funding for such 'artist led' international exploration has dried up as G4A scoring is based on delivery on 'in region' community benefit. This pushes graduates towards community based work where income can be found. Not a bad thing but not an adequate overall policy.
- An international exchange strategy based on longer stays and repeat visits can deliver three things: Knowledge of other places and peoples by the visitors, a real community benefit to the visited, A better knowledge of our own place and people when understood through the eyes and ears of an 'other' visitor and the culture/history they come from. We travel to look, listen and learn.
- It would be reasonable to expect that anyone being supported to go could be required to have researched their destination in advance (including drawing on the experience of others in the NE who knew the area to be visited) and to seek to develop longer term connection via exchange through the visit.
- The group reviewed the various factors that had contributed to the lack of diversity in the region and the ways in which this was changing. We noted that where the region had or was growing a reputation for being 'special', international HE recruitment seemed to become more diverse. There was concern at national/local HE recruitment becoming affected by cost.
- Without complacency, the group judged on balance that there continued to be a reality in the assertion that the Region gave visitors/strangers an unusual warmth of welcome. Did this come from a certainty of cultural location 'in place'?
- This international presence within HE was a substantial medium to long term investment in the international future of the region.
- There was concern from some that the sense of national 'excitement' about what was happening in the Region had diminished.
- PS asked what £500,000 for International exchanges (R&D not production) do over three years? The money was there if Lottery was devolved.
- If younger artists/cultural activists didn't get themselves 'briefed' and active, things would not change or would change much more slowly.

Issue: Deep and diverse, not deep or diverse

Convener(s): Colin Robson

Participants:

Elvie Thompson

Alison Lister

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

- Why are deep and diverse considered separate?
- Are we better at talking than listening? How can we listen to make our engagement more deep and diverse?
- How should we change our language? Find a common ground
- Can artists and other types of cultural practitioners learn from each other? Will communicating across cultural practices help us learn how to communicate with people 'outside'?
- How do we define what is culture and what is not?
- Are the boundaries different for each individual?
- The depth of an engagement is built on the equality of the partners. How do we bring equality to all the conversations/ engagements we have?
- Having deep engagements often means being selective- how can you bring depth to a wide/ diverse audience?
- Finding shared ground with audiences/ participants- not predetermine what people want
- Good communication is vital and it needs to be two way
- We need cultural translators
- Need to find the right question and environment to start the conversations that will lead to deep and diverse

Issue: education and Skills support for the Cultural sector in the North East

Convener(s): Suzanne Mcfarlane

Participants: Suzanne Mcfarlane, Deni Chambers, Kate Hepplewhite, Graham Stouph, Creative People and Places (East Durham Create)

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Discussion around the demand for arts and culture and education and skills is a little chicken and egg, the demand for the other is created through strength of the other

Education has a link to respect, recognizing skills and developing trust
For some young people, there is a stigma with the term 'the arts'

Part of the solution should be about asking young people what they want and need or expect – steering groups

Education and skills training needs to be contextualized to careers and opportunities in the specific sector, rather than just selling a course – long term benefit over short term.

It is possible that the possibilities an arts qualification offers is understated or undervalued, particularly within the school system where arts are being squeezed, forgetting the wider benefits and skills development that the arts bring.

Arts in education can bring the words off the page for young people, but are commonly available as enrichment opposed to core curriculum.

(Arts in Partnership, Newcastle College – aimed at exposing and engaging school age children with the arts.)

Sports is a funded priority in primary education – linked to the health and wellbeing of yps, but the arts and culture can have similar impact in many areas including mental wellbeing, communication, interpersonal skills, cultural exchange and diversity.

For those in arts and cultural education there is the balance between development of core skills alongside entrepreneurial development, creative enterprise, skills in collaborative practice, grants and funding, networks and knowledge. There is the question about how these are both fitted into the programme.

Belief that those who have a desire to be creative will find away.

In the current climate, there is a need to be responsive in education – what will the jobs be in the future? How will individuals upskill to meet the changes? Plan for continuous upskilling.

Skills and education on offer needs to be flexible to allow accessibility and to support the time commitments of work and training.

For some, ongoing upskilling may be less formal than qualifications, some through networks and discussions and conferences and space to come together.

Some recognition of the potential risk to skills e.g embroidery through the changing funding priorities of the government through SFA / EFA. Qualifications disappearing which had facilitated learning e.g. CG / Impact of funding changes on the ability to plan learning for the longer term as some changes are rolled out in limited timescales. Changing priorities for SFA Adult learning funding. Sector needs to be prioritized re. Quall aims, rather than removing funding

Balance of retaining traditional skills balanced with technology development – use of equipment and teaching of core skills.

Threat to organizations through lack of funding.

Reduced economic need – loss of skills

Some patterns of interest linked to TV and media e.g. Sewing Bee, Upcycling.

Parallel of skills and expertise across specialisms recognized by those within the arts. E.g. skills in animation are as important as those in embroidery.

Appreciation of what has come before, and what may come next!

Issue: Extending opportunities to rural communities

Convener(s): Yvonne Conchie

Participants:

Sally Dixon

Jane Gibson

Mark Shilcock

Colin Robson

Victoria MacLeod

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Issues:

For this region, the definitions of exclusion and diversity need to include the rural; geography, distance, travel time public transport, cost; mobile and internet coverage; and nodes where people can gather.

Rural areas are declining because families and young people leave to access opportunities and services

Solutions

Heavily funded orgs and NPOs need to take work out

ACE need to make it a condition of funding to look at local definitions of diversity and meet the needs of audiences who are currently excluded (geography)

NECP could have a role in lobbying ACE/ HLF and other funders about what diversity means in the NE and to adjust Creative Case in response.

How to support people who want to make a difference in their own communities to go ahead and do it?

Networks

Dispersed cultural opportunities is a methodology for social and economic sustainability

Encouraging inward migration to rural areas, of families, because of the access to a high quality of life – including cultural and natural heritage. – economic value in this.

Examples – Juice Festival is an excellent example of youth-led practice but needs to work much harder to reach out beyond urban Tyneside.

Three Run parkour event at Hexham Abbey Music Festival broadened audiences and inspired kids and across the age groups
Needed to have more of a legacy – where next? How to build on the thirst and appetite? How to create opportunities to 'have a go'?

Cumbria MPM example – taking programming out into communities

Kendal Calling/ Unity Festival in Leazes Park

Issue: Freelancers / independents making culture happen

Convener(s): Nicola Bell

Participants: Frances, Tim Lozinski, Ross Wilkinson, Lucy Carolan, Gavin, Shereen, Hayley, Joe

One person from a museum service, seven freelancers: film makers, illustrator, photographer, digital designer, artists, evaluator

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Freelancers provide extra skills, capacity etc to organizations and form an important part of the cultural landscape

Freelancers and organizations should collaborate together, as well as freelancers collaborating together – not to be in competition. We can offer more if we are working together.

Organisations and freelancers are both in the same economic boat and should collaborate to mutual benefit

Freelancers said it was sometimes difficult to make contact with the right person in an organization.

Museums sometimes find it difficult to find the right freelancer for the job.

Suggestion of a fair or similar event to bring organizations and freelancers together to find out who does what, and opportunities to work together.

Suggestion of a network for culture freelancers.

Request for list of people who have attended today, to be circulated to everyone so we know who has been here today and contact them if necessary.

Discussion about where to find opportunities / advertise skills – Arts Jobs, Museum Association's Suppliers Directory for example. What about a regional directory of freelancers?

Issue: Heritage Outside – real World Culture

Convener(s): Yvonne Conchie

Participants: Yvonne Conchie, Corrine Kilvington, Tim Crump, Howard Fawcett

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Heritage and Culture has a bigger AUDIENCE outside museums and Galleries, than inside

There are more heritage and culture OUTSIDE museums and galleries than inside

The North East region has roots in the bones of the landscape – the geology shapes the land use – shapes the industries and hence the culture.

Historic industries in the region were very place specific – they couldn't have happened in any other place. Modern investment is in industries that are less place specific – what does that mean for our culture?

Working outside conventional spaces is inspiring for practitioners and makes art and heritage more accessible - taking performances to new audiences in spaces where they feel comfortable

There is pride in shipbuilding, mining, Nissan, working heritage of the region – these buildings, old and modern, shape our skylines. The Pit heads of St Hilda's in South Shields are as much ours as the Sage and the Baltic

How is this “environmental heritage” recognized and invested in by arts organizations?

Reimagining shared spaces – be it the Pennine Way, Holy Island, Ouseburn, wherever – these outdoor spaces are defined by heritage (the external architecture, the natural heritage, the way people used them today and in the past)

Art can interpret Environmental data in sensory and engaging ways for audiences in unconventional spaces

Sharing it lifts perceptions of a place – relevance to modern culture, creating new memories and patina for a place

Heritage is a tool to bring back pride and innovation to communities in their own spaces – encouraging a belief that people can be innovators themselves & countering the historic feeling of wounded pride and disregard given to the NE

Explore and develop people's own connections with heritage. Balancing the everyday heritage with the extra-ordinary experience. Working all year and showing off your work at the Agricultural shows/mardi gras

Essentially – valuing the evolving patina of heritage and culture that exists outside the walls of institutions

Issue: How can technology can help tell stories?

Convener(s): Christopher Winter

Participants:

Christopher Winter
Heather Walkington
Jamie Buttnick
Rozz

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Technology can be used to not only tell, but enhance stories. One example of this is a piece in the Southbank Center, which had an audio plays which drew you into the story of the pictures.

A major way that technology could help with is how do we keep people interested in a project or place when it is not accessible anymore (such as a restoration project).

Because technology is more common to younger audiences, it may be useful to get young people (such as school children) involved with the design of the technology that can be used to explore the history of a time or place.

Common technologies can be incorporated in ways that may not be immediately apparent. An example of this is using cameras to create a stop motion timeline of an exhibition creation. Using technology like this can be a cheap way of showing behind the scenes of a production or piece.

Animation is another relatively cheap technology that can be used to show stories and also 'hide' the identity of those that do not wish to be identified.

A question that arose from the discussion is; should we try and invest in the newest technology or not because it could just be a fad? (Like 3DTV was in its early days).

In any case, heritage and the arts should look to technology events and at least explore the new technology. A good reason for this is to enable people to show their own stories, building upon the heritage.

Funders can sometimes change the story of a project but is it the same for technology or are we a little more flexible than we think in that regard? Obviously this question comes with another which is; what is feasible in terms of cost?

Augmented reality is a relatively new technology. So it is worth bearing in mind, why are museums and the planning 10 years down the line because any new technology could help better tell the story.

New technology will be cross platform in order for it to survive as a useable medium (an example of this is video game technology which can be deployed to many devices rather cheaply).

Issue: How can we engage with people who think 'Culture is not for them?'

Convener(s): Erika Sykes

Participants: 3 people from Dance City, 1 person from Darlington Civic Theatre, 1 from a community arts club, one from Sunderland Council, 1 from Beamish Museum and a few others who didn't say

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

The first thing we discussed was people's understanding/preconceptions of the word 'Culture'. The word culture has embodied in it an elitism that can exclude people. Is culture only arts based? Is going to the football or playing darts down the pub 'culture' – or are the arts 'culture' and going to the pub a 'socio/cultural' activity. We discussed whether it was possible to break down the barriers associated with the word. Do we as a group know what the word culture means in c4c?

We then talked about the fact that people involved in cultural activity in their community, may not follow that interest forward by joining a 'club' or organization that would support and encourage their interest. Eg. A group of girls who have made a dance group on their street, wouldn't necessarily know how to or feel able to go to an establishment like Dance City. A person painting in their bedroom wouldn't necessarily visit Baltic. An interest in something doesn't automatically mean you feel you would be welcome to join the 'club' – where people know much more than you and are more 'worthy'

We talked about the importance of cultural and educational organizations understanding and communicating with 'grassroots cultural organizations and activities. We need to promote that all people can take part and all people's contributions are valuable. It doesn't help that schools continue to call anything cultural in an educational setting 'soft'. Why should maths be hard and drama soft? Even when children have the opportunity and the confidence to engage in cultural activity it can be 'knocked out of them' by an educational system that doesn't value it.

We discussed about the word 'value'. How does the culture you are raised in affect the way you are able to value culture as a part of your life? If your family,

friends and school speak about cultural activities as pointless, lacking in value and worthless how can you push against that tide if you have a genuine interest? Once of the group members from Dance City spoke about a boy from Blyth who had won a national dance competition run by the BBC. As well as press etc – it will be importance to communicate this possibility to communities like Blyth where there may be other people who need to see that this is possible. Yes people like you can get involved, can be successful, and can enjoy it.

A group member spoke about trying to reach disabled people who engage in cultural activity, but can't get to or feel unable to go to cultural events and organizations. She mentioned the possible use of a social media platform to share. These contributors then have a visibility that is accessible to other people who may want to get involved and to the cultural organizations that can support them.

We also talked about the tone of cultural organizations communications. One of the members talked about 'Maurice Hargreaves McIntyre' who suggested that as well as segmenting our database of people – we need to consider in more detail how we communicate with these difference sections. With some sections you need to be more specific about everything that will happen if someone participates – to alleviate any worries/concerns they may have. What are the likely outcomes if they participate, who will be there, what will they do. Where you reach them will be different, how you speak – tone of voice- needs to be different. Branding has historically suggested that a company speaks in 'its' tone of voice rather than a company in a tone of voice suitable for the person(s) they are communications with.

One member mentioned the NGCV – and the member of the group from the community centre said – what's that. This flagged up the fact that although the big cultural venues support each other and share practice – are they then filtering this through to smaller venues/organizations who are perhaps more in tune with/closer to grass roots activities.

We then had a conversation about funding. All levels of supported cultural activity needs funding. Even voluntary help needs paid coordination. Councils continue to see their budgets for cultural spend cut. The lady from Sunderland Council said that they have said that in three years from now there will only be funds available for social care. However she mentioned that activities were being funded by other organizations like the HLF and 'Cultural Spring'. We discussed about how government interventions like 'Creative Partnerships' had been cut. So how can we engage hard-to-reach communities and people if there is no money and no one to value what they are doing?

The next thing we discussed what the idea of people being 'scared of what's behind the door' of cultural organizations – also the impact and importance of where cultural activities are held/staged. How can we make people who think

culture's not for them feel comfortable and valued? How can we make establishments more openly accessible. Can we design spaces and venues that are more open and inviting to all? How do we start that conversation as buildings are being built or developed- who puts that on the agenda?

We then looked at the cost of visiting some places like Hall One in the Sage and the theatre. People who are uncertain of what they will see/ get from the experience and who have limited money are likely to be reticent to spend. How can they know what their money will get them?

Lastly we talked about social media, networking etc and all cultural organizations big and small getting the opportunity to talk about their successes and ways in which they can use these to support those who have the barriers discussed above.

Issue:

How do we engage teenagers in heritage, arts and culture?

Convener(s):

Ross

Participants:

Helen, Brenda, Hana, Ross, Heather, Nicole, Victoria, Jen, Graham and Deni

'This is Creative Enterprise'

'Embroiderers Guild'

'Space to Create'

'Arts in Partnership'

'Career Knowledge'

'Durham University Museum and Heritage Collections'

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

An Example of a positive project engaging teenagers:

- Apply teenagers to programs and projects. For example, 'This is Creative Enterprise' work with 700 teenagers across North Tyneside and Newcastle in various projects. Individual funding and involve young people through assemblies, teacher training days to engage teenagers. Hugely successful. Give the teenagers complete ownership of the sessions. The teenagers even evaluate their projects for the end of the year.

What are the barriers to working with teenagers?

- Initially getting into the schools and past the school secretary.
- Convincing parent's arts and heritage have a place in their child's career.
- The National Curriculum slashing the arts.
- What is arts? Do young people realise that they are within a cultural sector when upon a school trip?
- How do we engage mobility or Special Educational Needs (SEN) teenagers?
- Can we be brave enough to give teenagers ownership?

How do we combat these barriers?

- Talk to teachers and form partnerships and more importantly TALK TO TEENAGERS!! What do they want from a project?
- Get teenagers who wouldn't normally engage to become ambassadors for a project, giving them responsibilities and targeting those who have no interest in 'arts' but maybe in technology around the organisation of events/projects.
- Teenagers need to be given full ownership to feel engaged.
- Go to where teenagers go (youth clubs/groups, societies and organisations outside of school), not just secondary schools.
- To engage teenagers away from the 'that will be fun' idea.
- As Arts Award Gold links to UCAS points, conduct projects along those lines to

- engage an academic pursuit within teenagers. This gives your project gravitas.
- Employability skills demonstrated through projects encouraging independence, creative problem solving, good communication and confidence.
 - Effective leadership roles are crucial to encourage teenagers to engage. Including careers assemblies and showing teenagers what is out there.
 - Get the teenagers to be the evaluators, organisers and allow ownership of the projects. Allow the teenagers to come up with the ideas themselves if the project allows. This helps towards CV construction.
 - Be brave and allow teenage work-placements in alternative careers so they can see and understand what is out there and what they need to aim for those careers in terms of GCSE's and A-Levels.
 - We are the facilitator providing guidance; they are the organiser and management of ideas.
 - We need to be inclusive for everybody. SEN, access, mental illness and mobility are all factors we must consider to give equal and fair opportunities to all users and engagers regardless of age, origin, ethnicity, faith or socio-economic background.

Hopefully with these changes we can begin to successfully engage with more teenagers. From our discussion there were many examples from private enterprise models, to colleges focusing on arts and to bridge organisations that have already successfully engaged with teenagers and young people. If we all take their experiences and advice (above) we can hopefully engage a higher number of teenagers and young people across the sector.

Issue: How do we make the most of what we have?

Convener(s): Colin Robson

Participants:

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

As a region, what have we got culturally that we can look to make the most of?
What defines our culture as a region?

What makes us distinctive from other regions?

Issue: How do we persuade the people who come to study to stay?

Convener(s): Gareth

Participants: Suzanne Mcfarlane, Gareth, Tim

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Students come to the NE to study, absorb the culture, and then go away. Sectors have large hubs across the country e.g. For TV and media, they are London and Manchester.

Discussion around how the barriers are less in the current digital world that location should be a barrier to engagement.

If something is of a national or global relevance, then location of those 'working' in it should not be a barrier – the NE is a great place to live, where individuals can work out of.

Potential issues with salaries in the NE compared to elsewhere mean that individuals have to move away to gain career credits in order to gain high level roles in the NE which allow a better living standard.

Political Influence impacts on where funding / exposure is prioritised, not necessarily proportionally to the population in an area.

Establishing strong networks within sectors can aid the promotion of a skill in an area and the region as being a player in that specialism - hence allowing for the profile to increase, drawing in interest and money.

From an educational establishment viewpoint there needs to be support to alumni – possibly through access to resources and human resource.

Providing a stepping stone into the sector e.g. Newcastle College Space to Create, access to facilities offer.

Providing ongoing support to graduates, possibly through a 'Year 4' offer, as it is not necessarily about finding employment, but creating an opportunity for

graduates to continue to develop into roles/ establish the necessary reputation / links etc.

Creating a bed for seedling ideas / supply funding and commissions

Discussion around a two way model, of pulling together graduates and sector demand together – skills match to commissions.

Funding opportunities for model - Social enterprise, bursary model,
Establishment affiliation and reciprocal arrangements

Marketing and Promotion of region – drip feed of images and stories etc.

NE has a strong heritage 'face'

Critical mass – Political influence – flexibility of web and digital technology

Issue: Improving commissioning of arts

Convener(s): Jamie Buttrick

Participants: Jamie Buttrick Zoe Anderson Dawn Williams Anna Peppersall
Joseph Sneider

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Learning language of commissioners
Lack of knowledge amongst commissioners
Lack of knowledge how comm cycle works
Risk adverse commissioners

Do we need the evidence? Need for arts to maintain integrity of project!
Who to approach?
Emphasis on individuals so may move back to square 1!
How do individual artists engage with commissioners? Need a map of who to go to.
Case studies of what works as best [practice/good examples for all sides of cycle
Role of brokers to match artists and commissioners – for art and within comm
Role for artists or brokers in planning

Different format for application – equality and diversity
Community vs fine vs public vs high art

Will take time to generate outcomes, commissioners need to be focused
Can't forget external environment and pressures commissioners may be under

Maybe think about why we want to be commissioned and be honest if it's truly meeting wider agenda needs that commissioners are often focusing on.

If individual artist recognise it may be just to develop practice so might need to go and do it yourself however if it's for wider social benefits be open in approach with starting at audience/target group/outcomes then think about how what you do meets this

Issue: Improving Health and Well Being Through Museums, Heritage and the Arts

Convener(s): Kirsty McCarrison and Rosalind Normandale

Participants:

Elsie Roland

Jamie Buttrick

Heather Walkington

Jane Gibson

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations: Two main areas emerged - funding and barriers to access and inclusion

We agreed that we have not, in general, made a robust enough advocacy case or rigorously analysed the evidence we have collated (which has been criticised as being anecdotal or too nebulous).

We recommended that we need to know our funder, and to act as more effective advocates.

We identified and discussed the barriers to engagement, recognising, in one contributor's memorable phrase, that people need to have a safe space to go to "cuddle a cup of coffee for four hours" - perhaps our venues can provide a kind of sanctuary. Of course we can offer so much more, but we need to connect with those who are hardest to reach. Suggestions included being on GP surgery radars in order to make links with individuals, as well as established community groups.

We recognised the value of the contributions of volunteers, of their being provided with support and training to undertake vital roles within our outreach programmes.

Issue: Is a region just geographical?

Convener(s): Susan Jones

Participants: Sheila Peace; Chloe Stott; Tracey Tofield; Rose Di Masuo; Chris Yeats

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:
Does the North East have an identity that distinguishes it from other regions?
One important feature of the NE is that artists talk to each other. There is a sense of community and inclusivity absent in say the cut-throat London art scene.

Artists in the NE are extremely generous of their time and generally mutually supportive. There is a sense of a greater openness and transparency; a feeling of equality, an absence of hierarchy and cliques than often marks other cultural scenes.

For the future of the region the sector needs to develop its existing strengths: flexibility, responsiveness and willingness to collaborate, to share. The art infrastructure of the region needs to be more responsive and be able to be repurposed for the changing needs of the creative community.

The NE region has the strength of identity to continue to grow as a creative community and to learn from its history as being at the forefront of social and political change to be the catalyst of a creative renaissance that extends its reach nationally and internationally.

Issue: Making more space for artistic innovation and development

Convener(s): Stephen Wiper

Participants: Richard Glynn, Lucy Carolan, Howard Fawcett, Suzanne McFarlane

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations: We discussed -

- * Need to celebrate innovation in the North East, e.g. expand upon Sunderland's Festival of Innovation. The cultural sector very much involved in developing ideas and making things - NE has a longstanding record of innovation.
- * There is a need to promote support services/back office employment/self-employment opportunities in the arts alongside the role of the artist - to give higher profile to these roles
- * Local authority and university support for incubator units/creative industry workspace can help to brand a place as innovative, there needs to be a sharing of learning re how such spaces are best developed
- * Networks are important - there are increasing time pressures so networking tends to be more irregular but probably more business focused and output driven - so we need to keep supporting networks
- * There was some debate around how people best access networking opportunities, become aware of what networks there are in the North East - good examples like BALTIC 39 cited in discussion
- * Union learning resources have an interest in promoting learning, keen to work in partnership with other bodies, they reflected on the willingness of arts organisations, HE and local authority to get involved
- * A former British Council programme wherein artists residencies were supported in multiple business settings was discussed as a good model of expanding networks to involve businesses, could inform NECP aspirations to develop a 100 residencies in the NE.

* Need to work together to knock down or challenge barriers to learning, idea of raising awareness of specialist facilities which FE/HE/businesses might make available to artists to develop their practice through a on mutually beneficial agreement discussed

* Need to ensure learning opportunities offered both to entrants to workforce/self employment and also to those needing retraining and upskilling

Issue: Media Coverage

Convener(s): Dawn Bothwell (CIRCA Projects, The Northern charter)

Participants: Rose di Mascio, Carol Pyrah, Alison Lister, Joy Broadshaw, Sheelagh Peace, Peter Stark

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

There is a real and urgent need for a 'one stop' online and printed platform for exhibitions, arts activities events, artists' profiles in the region.

There is a need to participate in the current political discussion around the renegotiation of regional territories. The northern powerhouse of Manchester, the current government playing Teesside, Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham against each other. The 'region' needs to decide what and where it is to then be able to say what it is doing culturally. In turn it then needs to work on a strategy to devolve culture to the region, so that it can articulate its value.

The northeast then needs to be able to speak for itself. It needs to develop its own critical voice, which relates then to national and international press successfully.

It needs to be able to allow for a 'non-competitive' development of different types of art for different people (younger, older, from different geographic areas). If all are able speak for themselves but be seen together they will grow a successful arts ecology without different audiences and practitioners feeling excluded.

Issue: More opportunities for integrated arts

Convener(s): Pauline

Participants:

Lucy

Ros

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Access and inclusion

Perception/misperceptions

Meet needs of disabled artists and community

Voicing untold histories

Issue: New Approaches to Leadership

Convener(s): Rob Laycock

Participants: Susan Jones, Chloe Stott, Alex Anslow & more

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

- This subject relates to earlier discussion of relationship between artists and organizations
- There is a focus on funding rather than artistic vision – organizations are put under a lot of financial pressure: where is the next chunk of money going to come from?
- Role of board – should be to uphold vision mission but often comes back to finance – links to private sector behavior which is evident in growing need to have accountants, lawyers etc. on board over artists
- There is a variance in all governing bodies
- Does leadership come with a certain set of conditions? Or is leadership bestowed?
- Institutions are just a construct, yes they can serve a purpose but the moment someone decides to pull all funding/decide that charities no longer matter then they simply won't exist
- Are we all responsible for leading? Some argue that it belongs to the board but there is a sense that everyone should be taking action
- There are dominant models of leadership – private sector with the hire and fire mentality, if you're not in an organization then you're not in the know
- Whilst there is leadership there is also anti-leadership – where leadership is given where it is not wanted, causes people to take a lateral view
- Rob has set up a 'Leaders Network for Social Change' – this is for everyone, not just chief executives and people with status, it is attracting people with different definitions of leadership
- What might young leaders look like? Who do young people identify as a leader and how does that differ?
- Young people are taught that they have to learn the ropes (of leadership) that someone else has defined
- Juice Festival – extremely interesting model, allows young people to programme, definitely one to keep an eye on
- Schools act as a mirror for culture – if a head teacher does not get results then they will be fired, if they do get results they will get a pay rise

- Arts do need a figurehead – someone who is admired, has talent and creativeness. Also takes layers of people to make change
- There has been a shift from arts champions to arts leaders – seen in programmes like Clore Leadership
- Clore Programme is limited – only takes on 1 arts fellow per year, North East places were funded by Northern Rock which no longer exists, however it does broaden horizons for the individuals and is very much tailored to them.
- Arts Council: another mafia?
- How do we identify people with leadership skills? Do we need Clore Programmes to measure this?
- Another way of leading is facilitative leadership – the leader listens to what is being said but more importantly to what is not being said – allows the conversation to happen
- Is leadership role-modelling? A role model is someone you respect, assign value to, inspired by
- Art isn't separate from politics nor should it try to be
- Leaders can have bad days too – they may not always have the answer but they are the key decision maker
- Where is leadership emerging?
- Companies/organizations have to have a set structure to receive funding – necessitates having a leader, any other format is seen as dubious
- Events like Open Space encourage new ways of thinking – demonstrates how leading can be done differently

Issue: A north East Music Scene?

Convener(s): Mark Shilcock

Participants:

Christopher Winter

Hana Knotek

Brenda Graham

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

How do we link each music genre?

In some genres, there is too much competition between artist/venues.

Lack of grass roots connections – are we too inward looking?

Benefits of working together – more opportunities to ‘share’ audiences. Introduce new audiences to different artists/genres

North East Music festival? – linking what is already happening under one banner.

Shared promotion = bigger audiences for all

Big and small organisations to promote different genre.

Culture of spring – a network that works bringing everyone together.

Larger venues (inc sage) very formal

Needs to take place where people are already – across communities

Joining in other events and linking together under one banner is a small step that could be made

Could funding be found to co-ordinate/be the catalyst?

How can we know who/what is already out there?

Consett Music festival – (last week end) grass roots (1 person’s idea/passion) now a 3 day community festival. It can be done.

How do we find the small groups/organisations and link them?

Issue: Art / Science Collaboration

Convener(s): Jessica Johnson (Notes by Kirsty – sorry if they're squiffy – there were lots!)

Participants: Kirsty McCarrison / Christopher Winter / Stephen Wipes / Barrie West / Jessica Johnson / Corinne Lewis-Ward / Alison Listev

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

- Science festival in the North East, along the same lines as The Late Shows. Corinne Lewis-Ward made a connection with Bill Griffiths to discuss this further. Connecting science, art, design, engineering, manufacturing and technology would be the long-term aim of this sort of activity.
- Current commission going on within Newcastle Universities Medical School. Carried out by artist Corinne Lewis-Ward. Supported via the welcome Trust. <https://corinnelewisart.wordpress.com>
- Corinne Lewis-Ward has also produced corporate gifts for Newcastle University using their archived scientific imagery. <https://corinnelewisart.wordpress.com>
- Jessica Johnson's main question was how can she get into sciart collaborative projects. Suggestions of mentoring and volunteering within the arts and sciences could be routes to success. Sciart festival would give young people like Jessica an opportunity to engage with people who are looking for volunteers and collaborators.
- Debate and support for artist working within science should be provided. There are many ethical and legal issues surrounding research and innovation, and it is important that artists are aware of this and define the part they play within any commission opportunity or collaborative relationship.
- Identifying funders such as welcome. Welcome is carrying out a nationwide campaign to engage with creatives, arts organisations, scientists and educators to identify effective ways of engaging with the hard to reach groups. They have funding to carry out projects, but mainly deal with human biology. Identifying funders/companies that are interested in the combined fields of science, art, design, engineering, manufacturing and technology would also benefit cross sector engagement.
- Identifying sciart collaborations that are already going on, and providing a platform for them through a sciart festival makes sense. Irene Brown's Gallery of Wonder, a touring example of engaging the public with art, museum, heritage and science i.e. <http://www.chroniclive.co.uk/whats-on/arts-culture-news/gallery-wonder-tour-agricultural-shows-9271907> . Enchanted Parks installations that use science and engineering i.e. The

Wave Machine by Travelling Light Circus
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Travelling-Light-Circus/195861627113156>

- There was some discussion about Equal Arts and technology that is being developed to help people with dementia. Again a very interesting area for further investigation, and potential funding for collaborative work.

General minutes from our group.

Why are some science museums not integrating arts awards etc? They probably are but not making the most of it.

Welcome Trust – do things round the country and have meetings to discuss ideas.

Things are going on around the NE that cross the boundaries such as Lumiere etc.

Late Shows – onus is on the organisation and institution so not actually expensive to organise overall.

Art residencies and Science residencies – often voluntary but can get work from these.

Pots of funding for arts and science fusion. How do we prove that art is actually good for things such as mental health etc – investigating through science.

Edinburgh and Northumbria uni doing film and music activities with dementia patients – great project. Also referenced BBC article – dementia patients and photography trip around the Lake District.

The Papermakers Project.

Scientists don't always value artists in some circumstances. Shouldn't allow this to knock the confidence of an artist. Need to work together.

Lots of scientists actually see their work as an art form.

Similarity between contemporary art and science – 'I don't understand it – it's not for me.'

How to engage them?

Engage through personal stories, fashion etc – things that people can relate to.

Artist groups in Tees Valley – manufacturing in Germany – getting people to make things and engage with the process.

Museum of art and science in Bradford – but not much else.

FUN PALACES!

General lack of festivals around the country and we need a legacy from all the work that is being done. E.g. tours around the country to ensure legacy after exhibitions etc.

Needs to be more joined up things between product design, arts and science – festivals are a great way to do this.

Problems in schools – those that struggle with maths and science, often ask ‘why does it do that?’ but are not given the correct answers – are actually ‘lied’ to at different levels to allegedly make it more understandable but this often switches off some kids interest and is ultimately not helpful – WHY? Is FUNDAMENTAL.

Artists are good as to why and how. Also need to consider routes of access.

Should be networks – everything linked up so we’re not always starting again.

Would be great to see installations with science in unexpected spaces - libraries / art galleries and not look out of place.

Science behind everything – level of accessibility now through technology – opens up the sciences. Need to be benefits to tech companies – showcase their tech through art and artists.

Need case studies of sci-art to see what works and what doesn’t.

Could work with Wellcome – well funded.

In terms of funding – research is next best place to look for artists – working with academics etc.

Paid opportunities come out of collaborations with researchers etc.

It is universities who would look to funding artists – to champion their work etc.

Need an intermediate body to make art-sci a bigger – more solid ‘movement’. Some projects but Wellcome only overarching group in this area and they are primarily human biology related.

Academic landscape may have changed due to REF and impact – looking perhaps to artists to help engage with the public.

Idea: perhaps Russell group universities would with art council to champion link between research and artists. Get Wellcome involved too due to their experience.

Big biology centre being built in Darlington because of proximity to unis doing the right research to link in. Trying to get artists to show it's not a place full of scary germs etc.

Artists need support – working in unfamiliar scientific settings.

Nuts the debate if artists are used to 'calm' the public – make things easier to understand. Should artists remain impartial? Debates need to continue in science – should artists be 'used' in this way? How does that work?

'mad scientist' and 'mad artist' – sometimes the divide between data driven and emotion driven too wide?

Equal Arts – music been shown to be the most effective tool for dementia.

Arts council have previously written documents about helath with the hope of influencing science etc. but seems to have had little effect.

Can some research be monetised in some way to benefit artists too?

Gaining scientists interest is harder than artists or the public!

Irene Brown – Gallery of Wonder – touring.

As a science academic I wanted to engage the public about research rather than do the research so now act as a 'distiller' of information between the academic and the public. Need to work with the academics and help them see the process between their work and public understanding. Museums and heritage great intermediary. Need key academic messages to work with.

Need website to put all these projects together.

Arts play a massive part in disrupting science.

Do governments see it as a worthwhile thing to get behind?

Event in Newcastle about hallucinations – worked with people in neurology.

People working with data have created their own kind of artform through the use of infographics – books such as Information is Beautiful – incredible – almost informal learning.

The most important thing you need to be a scientist is a good imagination – something Einstein said.

Tesla – a poet! Visualised things – was crossing art and science boundaries and was used as somebody's arts award hero!

Beatrix Potter – used a microscope to create detailed accurate drawings of plants and animals.

Art and science have been working together for such a long time.

Excellent examples for case studies and funding.

Artists need to be financially sustainable.

Disseminate work through things such as product design.

Collaborations – create artwork that can be wearable or upscale to create contemporary art.

Better than relying on funding.

YOU set the agenda rather than adhering to those of a body.

Networks also to facilitate equipment sharing etc that artists may find useful plus mentoring and training etc.

Need festivals to bring together artists and scientists.

Maybe create a kind of dating service for them to find each other!?

Issue: students and the city: future conversations

Convener(s): a butterfly session which emerged

Participants: Kay Hepplewhite, Andrew Rothwell, Dawn Williams

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations: The role of students in the city of NewcastleGateshead, how they can integrate and participate in the cultural life beyond the experience of their programme. Group members work in education and arts development. Plans and actions for collaborations were discussed including greater involvement in some venues and locations, possible programming role.

Issue: The Rise in the need for Extreme volunteering

Convener(s): Yvonne conchie

Participants:

Yvonne Conchie

Nicola Bell

Embroiderers Guild Regional Chair

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Currently there are a large number of volunteers - retired/ retiring, well off, well housed - the baby boomers.

There is an increasing trend to transfer (heritage & Cultural) assets and services to community ownership - via Community Asset Transfers and the Big Society

What happens when these Baby Boomer volunteers are not able to donate (as much of) their time any more? The upcoming generation will be retiring later, are smaller in number and are likely to have more debt.

Who is going to manage these assets and services when the volunteer supply dries up?

Arts and cultural organisations are being encouraged to hand over content development to volunteers. Are the results less targeted, less appropriate, less well targeted?

Is the quality of outputs lower or just different when the majority of work is done by volunteers

Why do people volunteer - how do we guard against volunteer fatigue and over commitment? Ref the Poppy seller in Bristol

Funding organisations require volunteer input, members of volunteer organisations are required to donate their time to secure funding - this is often extreme. Is it too much to ask?

Should we rely so heavily on volunteers - is that sustainable long term?

Issue: The role of social media to engage young people in arts and culture.

Convener(s): Graham Stouph

Participants: Hayley scott, Deni Chambers, Graham stouph

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Get the balance right when targeting audience

Be careful with Selfish feeds

Use specific events aimed at young people

Teenage competitions

Use current media subjects/topics to help drive interest

Trending #'s daily

Daily/weekly diary entries

Issue: Revealing the story of People and Place

Convener(s): Tim Crump

Participants: Tim Crump, Jane Gibson

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

As heritage professionals we are very comfortable with 'reading places' other people are less comfortable with this and need people's voices to put them directly into the story of the place.

We discussed examples of where this had worked such as Hexham Abbey and Middlesbrough and the importance of keeping voices authentic to their location.

Issue: What is the role of NPOs/ MPMs/ MEHs?

Convener(s): Jane Gray

Participants: Jenny Young, Elvie Thompson, Chris from Vane, Stephen Wiper, Ros from Sage Gateshead

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

- Consensus that they DO have a role in mentoring/ supporting smaller organisations and artists (NPO's were part of the discussion)
- Will depend on size/ scale as they vary hugely
- It's about attitude/ will/ ethos and values of the organisation
- There is a responsibility to develop collaborations
- There needs to be more transparency about what the roles/ commitments are – e.g. do Looked After Children teams know that their MEH's have a responsibility around delivering music for looked after young people?
- There is a huge discrepancy around what the perception and reality of what NPO's offer/ what their role is or should be
- Just because an org has excellence in, say professional dance, doesn't always mean that their delivery with and for young people is excellent, but it may be a goal 5 – NPOs can learn from smaller grassroots organisations too, many of whom delivery excellent practice
- Bottom up as well as top down learning/ sharing
- There has been/ is a focus of policy around buildings - is there now a sea of change? i.e artists and participants being key
- Grassroots need to be profiled and held as exemplar where that is the case
- There is a role for the Bridge organisation within this
- There are simple things larger NPOs can do to support smaller e.g. Baltic having a map of other galleries in the city in the entrance way/ linking/ signposting
- NPOs have opportunity to pool resources and share e.g. high profile artists exhibiting – running masterclasses/ being made aware of other orgs
- NPOs could have a role in hosting and bringing networks together, in a way that ACE used to when it was able to e.g. artists/ educators etc
- Definitely have a role in demonstrating best practice re artists fees and paying fair and sustainable fees. Comments that have seen some appalling rates offered from NPOs who should be the beacon of what is acceptable. Otherwise, they are part of problem of keeping artists in poverty/ feeding the myth that the arts are free

- NPOs have responsibility around support for artists – not just around artform development and training, but e.g. working with very vulnerable groups – needs to be built into budgets and embedded into practice
- NPOs/ MPMs/ MEHs to collectively commit to mentoring/ support/ fees
- Opportunity for them to lead in joining up e.g. training across city/ region with partners around e.g. mental health/ anorexia/ sexual abuse or exploitation

Issue: What needs to be in place to protect the health and well being of artists working with people in vulnerable situations

Convener(s): Dawn Williams

Participants: Jenny Young, Jane Gray, Ros Normandale, Kay Hepplewhite

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

- Statutory Services being cut – going to get worse over next 5 years
- Need of participants is going to increase
- Partnership work with Local Authorities demands we work with people in vulnerable situations
- Need for a robust safeguarding policy and supporting training , maybe get advice from Local Authority
- For training needs we could look at industry model – Glaxo Smith Kleine.... Individual training programmes. You cant a piece of work on x if you haven't done y training. Red flag occurs if training has not been completed What would this look like in a cultural org? Can this happen in smaller organisations? What about individual practitioners? What are implications for students
- Supervision model is insisted on when working with NHS partners..... Practitioners feel very well supported and safe. Could this be extended to other projects? It has budgetary implications – could supervision be included as part of budget setting cycle? Written into funding bids? Provided by NHS partners?
- What would group supervision look like?
- What are the skills we are trying to develop? Empathy, being attuned to physical and environmental context - Improvising
- Is there a need to develop training for artists around working with vulnerable people using creative arts? Some grassroots orgs doing great informal work / good practice. We should recognize this and use.

Issue: Why Should anyone else care?

Convener(s): Hannah Champion

Participants: Johnathan blackie, anna siddall, anna pepperall , carol pyrah, Nikki Locke, jenny young , Tom Spence ,Jane Shaw, Su Jones Hannah Champion , Emily Hope

Summary of discussion, conclusions and/or recommendations:

Twitter and Facebook:

- HAVE #ARTCHAMPIONS on twitter and Facebook

Everyone is an art champion – write passionately about other peoples work and ideas and their events / exhibitions /

SHARE SHARE SHARE give generously

HAVE AN EQUIV TO BIRD WATCH (BBC?)

- #ARTSNAPSHOT – post images of EVERYDAY CULTURE / ART
- Everyone at the event to follow everyone else on Twitter - #FOLLOW ALL