



CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS ARTIST TRAINING PROGRAMME

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INTRODUCTION

In March 2007, the Engine Room was commissioned by *Creative Partnerships London West* to undertake a 12-month pilot project to train artists working in schools. The pilot training course for creative professionals/artists would enable them to expand competencies in listening to, developing an understanding of and interacting with children and more broadly the educational community, including teachers, parents and school administrators.

This report is presented in two parts. The first part provides a context for the study and documents the results and implications of the pilot project. The second part is an evaluative report of the pilot project itself and the research processes. An executive summary is included at the beginning of this report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank the valuable contribution of the Creative Partnerships London West and the participating creative professionals for their support and enthusiasm.

The Engine Room extends gratitude to Arts Council England for their support for this project.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A two-day creative professional (artist) pilot training programme was conducted in 2007 at *Wimbledon College of Art, University of the Arts London*. Participants also received a resource pack of readings and policy documents and follow-up interviews and discussions.

There were a total of 53 participants who came from four groups:

1. *Creative Partnership* (CP) artists with high levels of experience working in schools
2. Creative Partnership (CP) artists with moderate levels of experience working in schools
3. Creative Partnership (CP) artists with low levels of experience working in schools but high levels of interest to work in schools
4. Artists from another creative education programme based in schools (*Creativity Matters*) of all three experience levels, to act as a control against CP variables.

This pilot training programme brought together creative professionals, artists, cultural agencies, teachers, education professionals and research practitioners with the objective of developing and pilot testing a course of training that could be delivered economically to artists and creative professionals working in education.

The creative professionals were child-centred in their approaches and gained immense satisfaction and enjoyment from changing the life and creative opportunity of children and young people. The artists spoke passionately about the value of working with children and the positive effect it had on their practice. The three main benefits of Creative Partnerships consistently noted were: improving children's learning and experiences; improving schools, and empowering people.

The creative professionals were highly educated in their art forms, but could benefit from a higher level of development in education related fields. The results of the pilot project strongly support the importance of educational training for creative professionals working in partnership with education. Continuing professional development (CPD) courses for artist should be individualised and provide flexible pathways to learning in terms of both content and method. A combination of online and block module delivery patterns may be the most effective. These courses should provide free or low cost places for creative professionals working in Creative Partnerships and the option of formal accreditation. Whilst it is likely that the majority of artists would attend without any payment, the pilot project stressed that the artists felt valued because they were paid.

Key to the success of a Creative Partnership (CP) programme is a supportive teacher, enthusiastic school head, positive atmosphere in the school and willingness to be flexible and to take risks. Given the vital role teachers play in the success - or otherwise - of a programme it is strongly recommended that consideration be given to the development of training programmes for artists and teachers before the start of a CP in schools and at intervals during its implementation.

The creative professionals working in Creative Partnerships have many connections across the cultural and educational fields. Currently, this is an underutilized aspect and the 'collective cultural capacity' of artists should be more fully utilized in improving both arts and education. It is important that CPD provides opportunities for ongoing networking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to the findings of the research the following recommendations are made in order to address the aims and needs of the sector:

1. Continuing professional development for artists and teachers should be provided before and during Creative Partnership programmes

2. Artists and other creative professionals should undertake a minimum, accredited education training programme before the start of a Creative Partnership programme in schools
3. Advanced accredited 'partnership leadership' courses should be available to artists, teachers and head teachers with significant experience to work in Creative Partnerships or for artists building a career path in education or community contexts
4. Sustainable training programmes could be delivered by combining online and block course delivery modes
5. Continuing professional development (as a form of human resource development) should be supported within the budget of a Creative Partnership programme
6. Opportunities should be provided for Creative Partnership artists to network and exchange their knowledge



PART ONE: CONTEXT AND RESULTS

ABOUT CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Creative Partnerships is the United Kingdom Government's major creative learning programme for England having worked with over 2,400 primary and secondary schools since its inception. The aims of Creative Partnerships include the development of skills; the raising of creative and artistic aspirations and achievements, and the expansion of creative and cultural opportunities for young people now and into the future. Creative Partnerships is also considered to concurrently improve the quality of teaching and learning and strengthen school cultures.

Creative Partnerships operate in a bespoke manner across local authorities, in different schools and within particular classrooms. As a consequence, it is not easy to typify the scope and breadth of each programme. However, in a general sense, Creative Partnerships provides opportunities in the regions of England for primary and secondary schools to develop creativity in learning and to take part in cultural activities. This may include creative professionals working in schools, visits to cultural agencies including museums, galleries, studios and theatres, inset days and teacher professional development and mentoring.

CREATIVITY IN EDUCATION

In classical Greek times, both Plato and Aristotle examined creativity. While differing in their beliefs, they agreed that creativity was directly embedded within artistic creation and that both creativity and art was a basic and significant human activity.

Plato proffered the view that the *Idea of Beauty* transcends the creative work of art, whereas for Aristotle creativity was contained within the creative thing. Plato's theory of "creativity in art" (*Symposium* 206ff.) suggests that "men" (sic) who have experienced the "vision" of beauty (as may exist in art) are "creative souls" and their souls are "pregnant with ideas". In simple terms, Plato believed that being exposed to art may give rise to creativity.

Conversely, Aristotle's artist is a creative maker and through the processes of making **becomes** creative. In Aristotle's conception, the artist is a creator whereas for Plato the artist is less the creator and more the mirror.

Interestingly, these two views of creativity can be seen in Creative Partnerships. For instance, some programmes are more about engaging the child with the arts, while others firmly position the child as maker and creator.

Around 2400 years later, the role of creativity in learning began to feature in educational philosophy again. Franz Cizek (1921) was fascinated by the visual creativity of children. Cizek believed that every child had a natural tendency towards creative and artistic expression. He argued that this natural tendency needed to be fostered through creative and imaginative activities. He favoured giving children unbridled freedom to express their ideas. Teachers adopted roles as facilitators, providing a stimulating environment, adequate and varied art materials, praise for the children's efforts but did not direct or influence children's creative processes.

Marion Richardson (1948) continued the work of Cizek, recommending an approach to art education based on stimulating the children's imagination with "unconventional teaching", "evoking mental images" through questioning and conversation, and the "cultivation of pictorial memory" (Thistlewood, 1998: 140).

Cizek and Richardson's work was fuelled by child psychologists and child development theorists such as Viktor Lowenfeld (1964), John Dewey (1934) and Jean Piaget (1954) who theorised that children progressed through delineated and naturally occurring stages. Arts education became centred on ensuring the children achieved certain developmental stages and focussed on different levels of growth of the child. Lovgren and Karlsson (1998: 96) argued that the role of the teacher in this approach became supervisory so as not to interfere with the creative process described as the "organic growth of the child".

In 1949, Guilford used the word 'creativity' in the title of a presentation to the American Psychological Association about divergent thinking. The subsequent work of Rhodes (1961, as cited in Feldhusen and Goh, 1995) defined creativity as consisting of a process, a product, a person and an environment. Csikszentmihályi (1990) suggested that creativity was less an individual act but more a product of social interaction opportunities and constraints (such as a creative problem), a person, and a field (specialists).

CURRENT CONTEXT

The prominent role of Creative Partnerships in UK education emerges from the research that links the development of creativity with the enhancement of the knowledge society and a nation's future growth and prosperity. It is argued that creative education enhances human capital and that this in turn leads to a growth in national income (see also Romer 1986, 1990). In his *Foreword* to the white paper, Tony Blair expresses the role of government:

And we must promote creative partnerships which help companies: to collaborate for competitive advantage; to promote a long term vision in a world of short term pressures; to benchmark their performance against the best in the world; and to forge alliances with other businesses and with employees.
(http://dti.gov.uk/comp/competitive/wh_int1.htm)

While this comment was specifically addressed to business, emphasis on creativity is apparent in policy related to all levels of education. Changes that emerged from the report of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) also encouraged schools to place creativity more centrally in the curriculum, teaching and learning.¹

A recent Parliamentary Select Committee examined the role of creativity within education. The special report from this committee shows the ongoing commitment to enhanced creativity in schools, stating; "The Government attaches great importance to creativity in the curriculum" p1 (The House of Commons Children, 2008). Theoretically, creativity should be embedded across all subjects and in all levels of education. Curriculum documents and inspection systems encourage creative provisions. Despite the commitment on paper to creative education, it is less clear whether in practice the aspirations of policy are matched by classroom experiences. In particular, it is felt that school leadership teams and governors, local authorities and others may need greater encouragement to value creativity to "support them in making a reality of the creativity agenda" p 2 (The House of Commons Children, Schools and Family Committee, 2008).

Importantly, the report (The House of Commons Children, 2008) suggests that creativity should not be limited only to the arts and that creative practitioners from all fields including the sciences, design and industry should be encouraged to take an active part in developing creativity in schools. This is significant as the majority of Creative Partnership programmes to date have come from the arts and cultural area, and in particular from the visual arts. While the government supports partnerships with creative individuals and organisations, it contends that this is "not the only way in which schools can develop pupils' creativity" p 1 (The House of Commons Children, 2008)

¹ "All our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education", Report of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, 1999 www.qca.org.uk

Embedded both within the imperative for development of school leadership teams and teachers to engage more fully with education based around core principles of creativity, there is the parallel need to develop a pool of creative professionals capable of working in partnership with schools and education. While the committee (The House of Commons Children, Schools and Family Committee, 2008: 6) identified Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as being of vital value, its recommendations were aimed primarily at school leadership, inspectors, teachers and student teachers. Brief reference was made to also providing development for creative personnel. It states, “DCMS will support Creative Partnerships in developing approaches to professional development of personnel from the creative and cultural sectors in collaboration with the education sector and the relevant sector skills councils.”

The lack of CPD - and the limited priority given to creative experiences - means that the impact of Creative Partnerships may be hampered by spasmodic implementation. As Hall and Thompson conclude, “Creativity is seen as being located outside mainstream school structures, in projects rather than in the National Curriculum, and in artists rather than in teachers. The emphasis is on enjoyment and inclusion rather than cultural or social critique, or significant curriculum change processes” (Hall & Thomson, 2007: 328).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS

UNESCO (2005) defines an artist as being, “any person who creates or gives creative expression to, or re-creates works of art, who considers his [sic] artistic creation to be an essential part of his life, who contributes in this way to the development of arts and culture and who is or asks to be recognised as an artist, whether or not he is bound by any relations of employment or association” (see de Cueller, 2005). Recent times have witnessed the blurring of the occupational boundaries between the arts and education sectors. Artists are increasingly well-educated but this education rarely addresses the sorts of skills and knowledges that are required to work in effective partnerships with the education sector.

Concurrently, calls to expand Creative Partnerships to include creative professionals working across a range of disciplines means that there is a need to develop modules of professional development and courses for this emerging group. The demand for such training is likely to be not only ongoing, but also expanding in the future.

Around the world there is a shortfall of creative professionals trained and equipped to work across sectors such as health, education and community. It is estimated that employment in the broader fields of the creative industries is growing at more than 30% per year in most developed economies (NESTA, 2008). Yet, very little is known about the types of programmes needed to prepare artists and creative professionals for this form of practice.

Internationally, a small number of programmes specifically address the professional development needs of creative people working within education. Certainly the largest - and arguably one of the ‘best practice’ models - is the *Kunstenaars&CO* programme based in Amsterdam, but operating across The Netherlands. They maintain that artists require sets of skills and knowledges that extend beyond what they may have learnt in their initial degree programmes. As in the UK, The Netherlands has an extensive programme of arts and cultural agencies working with schools.

Kunstenaars&CO argue that creative professionals need additional skill training to be able to communicate, to maintain a network, to make plans, prepare costing estimates, and to negotiate with schools. Under the authority of the *Ministry of Economic Affairs* and in co-operation with higher education providers, *Kunstenaars&CO* developed a *Higher Vocational Education* qualification for performing artists who also want to deploy their qualities outside the stage. Importantly, *Kunstenaars&CO* operates in conjunction with *WWIK (The Income Provisions for Artists Act)* which pays artists ‘a living wage’ while they undertake professional development and are professionally active as artists.

OBJECTIVES AND MEASURABLE SUCCESS CRITERIA

This leading edge pilot training programme brought together creative professionals, artists, cultural agencies, teachers, education professionals and research practitioners to achieve the **objectives** of:

- Developing and pilot testing a course of training that could be delivered economically to artists and creative professionals working in education
- Providing best practice in the preparation and accreditation of creative professionals and the cultural sector to work within Creative Partnerships in education
- Equipping the creative professionals with evaluation and educational competencies to enhance their engagement with the educational sector
- Promoting greater connections between the education and cultural sector around models of high quality pedagogy in Creative Partnerships
- Enhancing knowledge and best practice in public engagement between the creative and educational sectors that is centred around inclusiveness, multi-age provisions and accessibility
- Exploring certification in line with statutory requirements in terms of preparation of artists and creative professionals to work in education
- Empowering creative professionals to connect with the HEI and school sector and the community
- Building case studies of excellence in constructive engagement in cross-sector learning

These objectives were evaluated against the following measurable success criteria:

- The establishment of a 2-day plus modules training certified course, for creative professionals working within education, community and 3rd contexts
- Targeted recruitment of cultural agencies, creative professionals and artists working within Ealing Borough
- Initial intake of 20-30 participants/creative professionals in the pilot with a minimum 80% successful completions
- The establishment of sustainable funding avenues to continue the artists' training beyond the pilot year
- Quantitative assessment of dissemination impact through *ex-post poll* completing participants in relation to the educational, creative, academic and community sectors combined with qualitative *deliberative juries* to gauge deep impact

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

A two-day training programme was conducted in July 2007 at Wimbledon College of Art, University of the Arts London. The two days were complemented by a resource pack of readings and policy documents and follow-up interviews and discussions. There were a total of 53 participants. These participants came from four groups:

1. *Creative Partnership* (CP) artists with high levels of experience working in schools
2. Creative Partnership (CP) artists with moderate levels of experience working in schools
3. Creative Partnership (CP) artists with low levels of experience working in schools but high levels of interest of working in schools
4. Artists from another creative education programme based in schools (*Creativity Matters*) of all three experience levels, to act as a control against CP variables.

As can be seen from Figure 1, 68% of artists had more than 10 years experience working as professional artists. Conversely, only 34% had 10 years or more experience in education (see Figure 2). This indicates that the participants were generally experienced artists, but less experienced in working within education.

Figure 1: Years of experience working as an artist

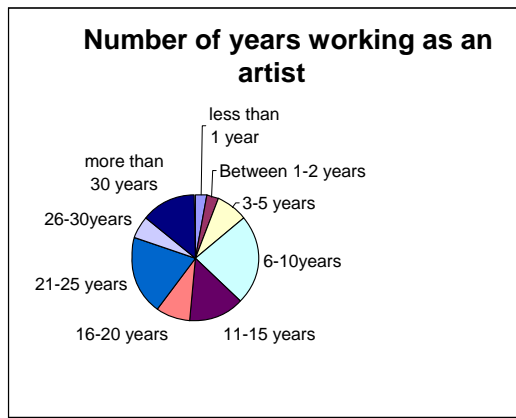
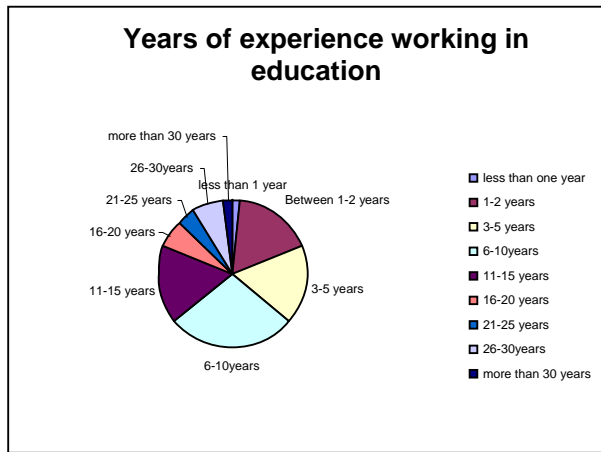


Figure 2: Years of experience working in education



Participants applied to join the course and had to submit an expression of interest to participate. Initially it was intended that selection would be competitive, with applications being selected to fill the available 25 places, but following the strength of applications received, the funders (*Creative Partnerships London West*) decided to support all the applicants to attend. The funders were surprised by both the level of demand and the quality of the applicants. There were slightly more females than male artists that attended (see Figure 3). The majority of participants were under 40 (59%) with around 1/3 of the cohort being under 30 years of age (Figure 4).

Figure 3: Sex distribution

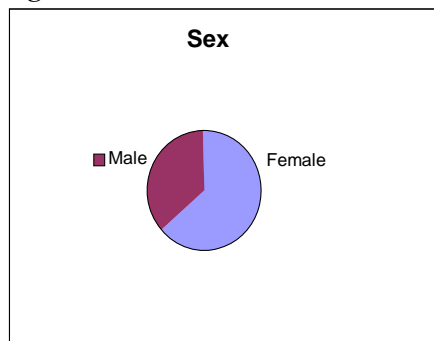
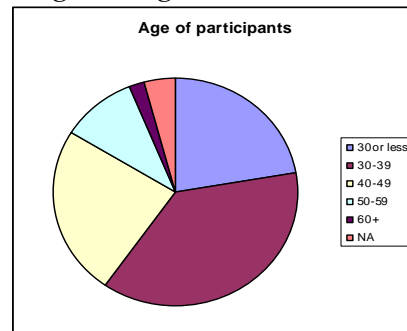
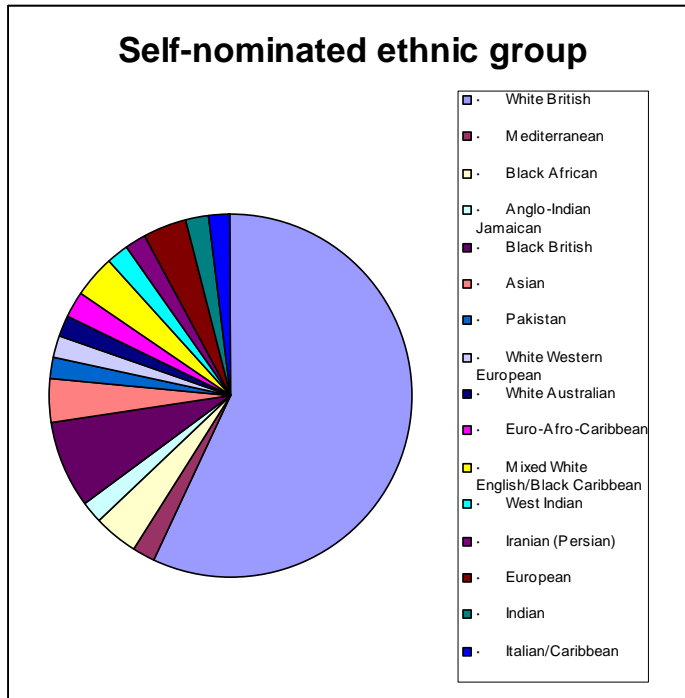


Figure 4: Age distribution



The artists came from diverse ethnic backgrounds (see Figure 5), but none of the artists self-identified as having a disability.

Figure 5: Ethnic group



Over 54% of the artists spent more than half of their working hours per week in arts partnership work. Within this group, 28% spent more than three-quarters of their working week in partnership work, with 10% spending almost all their working hours in partnership work (see Figure 6). Concurrently, despite the presence of a significant number of highly experienced partnership artists, around one quarter of the artists had limited hours per week where they worked in partnership. These were largely from the cohort of artists that was keen to work in partnership but were novices.

A comparison Figure 6 with Figure 7 shows that working in arts partnerships provides significant financial support and income to artists, with 68% of artists receiving more than half of their income or more from working in partnership. This is most evident when you look at the top quartile where it can be seen that while 10% of artists said that the number of **hours they worked** was between 90-100% of their working week, this figure increased to 27% of artists who received 90-100% of their **income** from working in partnership. This implies that while artists may be pursuing other aspects of their practice or profession outside of the partnership work, their income is primarily derived from the partnership projects. This underpins the important role partnership work plays in the financial viability of some artists.

Figure 6: Percentage of the working week (hours) working in arts partnership work

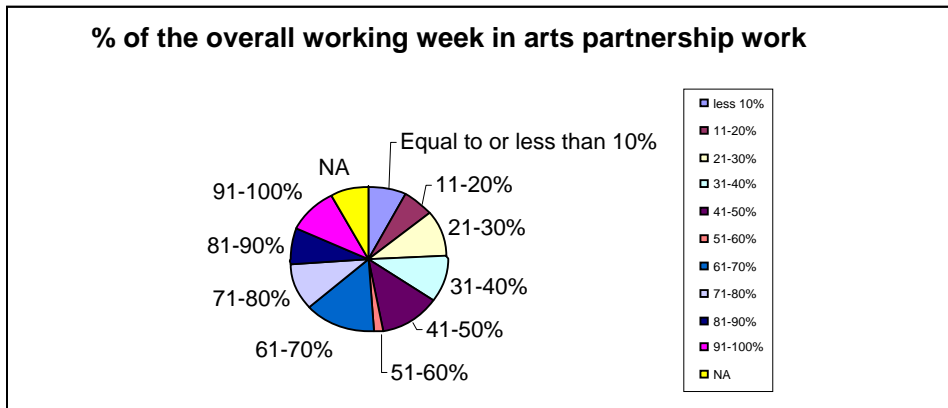
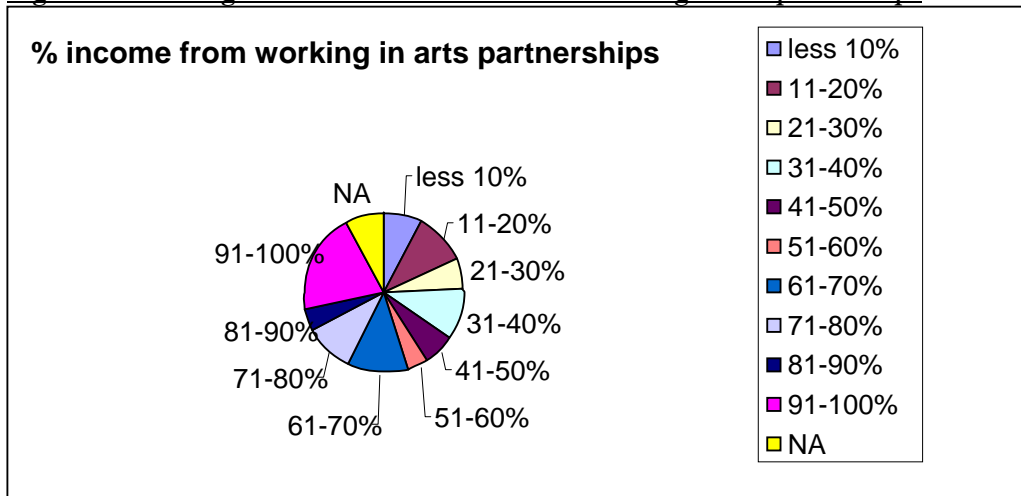


Figure 7: Percentage of total income derived from working in arts partnerships



There were 15 presenters across the two days coming from the academic, cultural, education, industry, policy and schools sectors.

All participants were sent an initial questionnaire and a pack of preliminary materials and course readings. These included general interest articles, research readings, policy material and government papers and documents derived from both the educational and cultural sectors.

The full details of the programme are contained in Appendix One, but in summary, the programme ran over two days, with three panel sessions each day. The panel sessions followed a general structure of three experts presenting for 10 minutes, then interactive and group activities and learning tasks for 30 minutes followed by 20 minutes of discussion, reflection and sharing. The presenters were leading people, from the education and arts and cultural worlds.

The first day covered the themes of ‘Quality partnerships’; ‘Children’s development and voice’; ‘Working in schools and regulations’; and, ‘Planning and resources’. The second day focused on the themes of ‘Communication strategies’; ‘Flexibility and community’; ‘Reflection, assessment and evaluation approaches’, and ‘Research and documentation approaches’.

The course was followed by a course evaluation and post surveying – including surveys, interviews and focus groups.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The analysis was conducted around central themes.

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

LOCATION:

The course was held within lecture, studio and exhibition spaces at Wimbledon College of Art (University of the Arts London). This is a traditionally designed art school, about 30 minutes from central London with good transport links. This appeared to be a good location with 71% of participants rating it as good or very good. Comments said that the site was easy to find and facilities were good. As there were no other sites offered (such as galleries, more central sites or regional sites) it is difficult to determine if participants would have preferred another site. It can however be noted that a university was a popular and convenient location for the days.

TIMING:

The course consisted of two, eight-hour days. The courses started at 9am and finished around 4:30pm. The course included meal and refreshment breaks. While 87% of participants felt this was the correct length of time – citing friendships and networks made as one of the main advantages of the two days – some respondents felt two days was not long enough. Conversely, other artists commented that two days was a good amount of time as they could not be away from their practice for too long, but perhaps these two day sessions could be repeated a few times per year.

CONTENT AND METHOD:

The presenters included a mix of management-level people and bureaucrats with creative practitioners, head teachers and teachers. The selection of presenters was appreciated by the participants, with 91% rating them good or excellent.

While the content of the course was seen to be good by 64% of participants, 36% of respondents did not feel that the content matched their level of development. This finding can be explained through the process of selection of the participants and the qualitative comments. First, the participants were deliberately selected from three different groups – namely; novice creative professionals, intermediate level creative practitioners and experienced creative practitioners. The two-thirds of participants that were either beginners or intermediate level found the content to be of an appropriate level, while the 1/3 of the most experienced level practitioners felt the content was not of a high enough level.

The qualitative comments further revealed that the **nature** of content needed by the groups was also distinctly different. For example, the beginners and intermediate creative professionals were interested in very practical information about building networks, rules and regulations in schools and improving communication. The more experienced practitioners were more interested in theories of children's learning, research methods, assessing learning, models of reflection and evaluation. Moreover, the less experienced practitioners were keen to network with other artists, while the experienced practitioners wanted more academic content and greater involvement of the educational sector. Put succinctly, the professional development of the less experienced practitioners was more centred on their development as creative professionals, whereas the more experienced practitioners wanted more rigorous academic content including philosophy, theory and children's development. These findings accentuate the need to have bespoke training offerings and to consider the experience of the practitioners when designing the aim, method and content of Continued Professional Development (CPD) for creative professionals.

The participants did not enjoy presentations where it was felt that the presenter was 'marketing' their own product, approaches or ideas. Some participants commented that there was too much information in the two days. Some participants wanted more active and small group learning while others found the active learning tasks (such as the games and mind mapping) to be less relevant than more traditional presentational aspects. Others commented that the information was "interesting and varied" and that the unit on reflection and evaluation was "very useful". Case studies of good practice, discussion about learning styles, information, curriculum and teaching and learning environments were all popular areas within the course. These signal that artists are keen to learn more about children's learning and the educational sector. Similarly, the participants found they learnt a great deal from 'testimonial sharing', 'networking' and 'experience sharing'. These aspects are pursued in more detail in the following sections.

CONNECTIONS

It could be argued that one of the most underutilized aspects associated with creative professionals in Creative Partnerships is their 'collective capacity'. Individually each artist has a large sphere of influence within the creative sector yet these individual connections are not utilized sufficiently in the form of collective actions. The professionals altogether have considerable critical mass which - were it to be pooled and mobilised - would give them considerable authority within the economic, social and educational sectors.

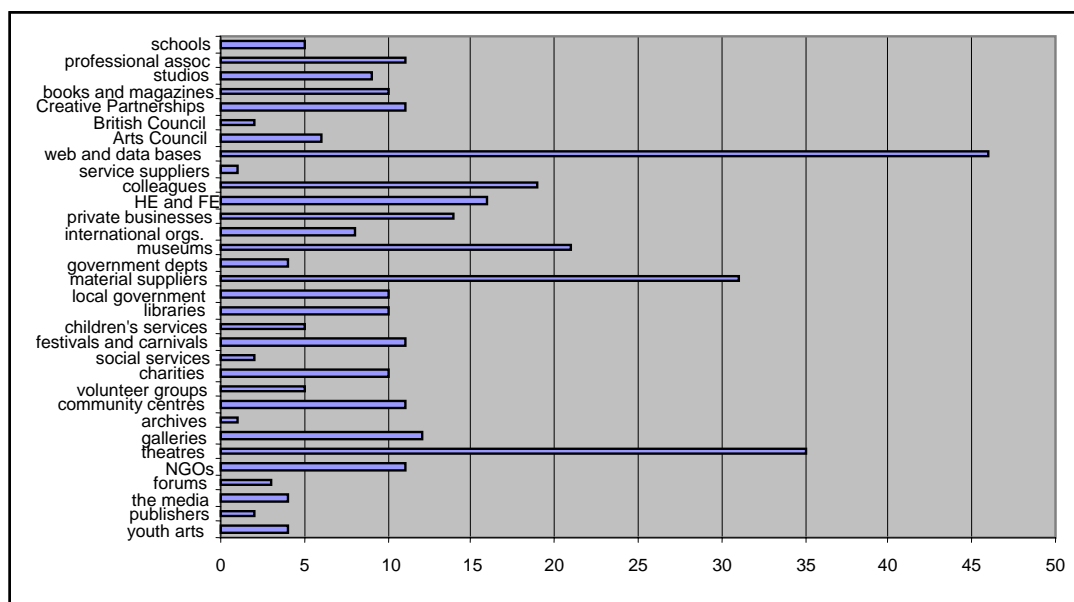
For example, within a sample of 30 artists there was a total of over 450 direct contacts with arts organizations, cultural councils, material suppliers, publishers, web-based networks and professional education and arts services. On average that meant 14.2 discreet contacts per person could be listed in 15 minutes. It could be assumed that the network of contacts is far more extensive.

This resource goes largely untapped within education and within the arts and cultural sector. As shown in Figure 8, there were over 32 separate sectors or sub-sectors that were regularly engaged with. By far the most popular was online sites, which exemplifies the way artists actively engage in online professional learning, information gathering and sharing. The clear preference for making and sustaining online connections could be more fully utilized in the delivery of professional development courses and other learning resources for creative professionals.

Apart for the online resources, the next most widely connected areas were material suppliers, theatres and the museum and gallery sector. Contrary to the espoused idea that creative professionals based in schools may lose connections with their professional networks, it appeared that these connections with the creative and cultural industries among the creative professionals were actively maintained and they brought these associations to the schools in which they were placed.

It appeared that the web and the arts and cultural sector were the most common forms of support while those more formal channels of support, such as Arts Councils, Higher Education providers and professional associations – although significant – were less used by the creative professionals.

Figure 8: Networks among creative practitioners



NETWORKING

For the creative professionals, an extremely important part of any event is the opportunity CPD provides for networking. While it can be argued that this is important for all employers - and certainly for small business and entrepreneurs - for creative professionals networking is vital.

Figure 8 highlights the importance of learning from colleagues. The quantitative and qualitative data emphasise the importance of networking and suggest that it is vital to sustain the more isolated practice that occurs within the schools. For example, 100% of the participants rated the opportunity to network as being important with 68% feeling it was very important. Of the participants in the pilot course, 83% felt in an exit poll that they were likely to maintain contact with the people who attended the course. After 6 months, 48% of the participants had maintained some form of networking established during the course,

though 52% had not (even though 10% of the respondents that had not maintained contact, said they had initially, but not after six months).

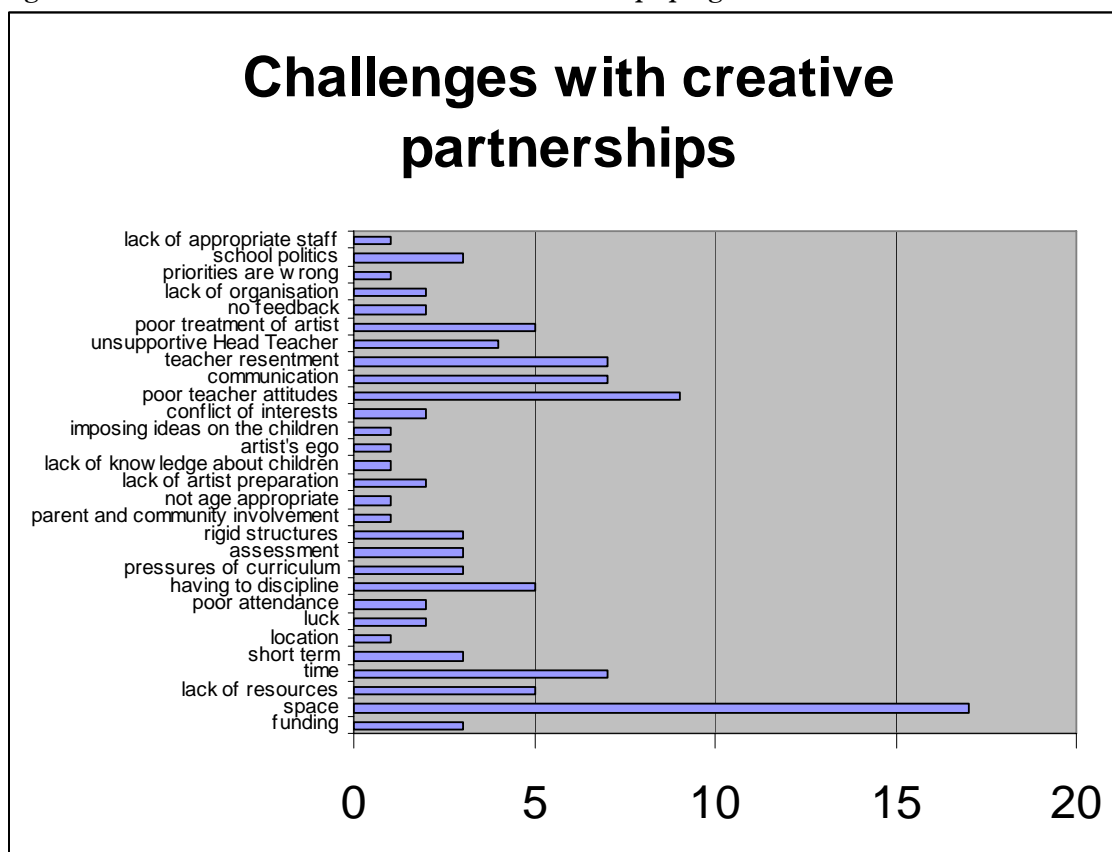
Almost half of the participants (45%) nominated “sharing” as being the aspect of the programme they found most useful. The networking appeared to operate on both a social and pragmatic level. Some participants commented that it was “nice to meet other artists”; “It was good meet other artists working in a similar position” and “to exchange experiences in the break”. Others commented on more focused interactions, such as; “we exchanged details of good websites”, “we shared case studies and information”, and “we focused on reflection and evaluation”.

While not directly related to the issue of networking, a number of the creative professionals also commented that the mere organisation of the training programme (with nice lunches, speakers and payment for the creative professionals) made them feel “valued” and gave them a “profile”.

TEACHERS AND ARTISTS

There was a strong feeling (91%) that **teachers and artists** should attend training courses together. The value of teachers and artists undertaking the course together may also address some of the issues listed in the factors that negatively impacted on the likely success and sustainability of creative partnerships in schools. As is evident in Figure 9, the teachers play a vital role in determining the success - or otherwise - of a programme. Poor teacher attitude, resentment (of the artists) by the teacher, poor communication and an unsupportive head teacher were (apart from the issues of space and time) seen to be the major factors that could lead to problems in a programme.

Figure 9: Reasons for unsuccessful Creative Partnerships programmes



Conversely, as indicated in Figure 10, a supportive teacher and school environment greatly increased the chance of success. A supportive partner teacher; an accommodating head teacher; a welcoming and

supportive school; positive collaboration; flexible attitudes, and sustained engagement were all seen to be major factors that increased the value of a partnership project. Given this, it would appear that providing an effective programme of training for **both artists and teachers** would greatly enhance the quality of Creative Partnerships in schools, making these both more sustainable and more likely to give a positive impact for the investment made. It is strongly recommended that consideration be given to the development of training programmes for artists and teachers before the start of a Creative Partnership programme in schools and at intervals during its implementation.

In qualitative comments, the artists expanded on the challenges of working in schools. One of the major challenges was rigid school structures, as this comment illustrates:

I find it challenging to work within the structures of schools, which are usually quite rigid. There is often a misunderstanding by teachers of my role and aims of the projects that I have worked on. This could be resolved through better communication between all parties before the project begins and the identifying of appropriate staff to work alongside. Sometimes teachers and classroom assistants lack enthusiasm and are reluctant to get involved - often because they are simply covering for a colleague or because they do not understand their role. They often fail to appreciate the value of the project as they see it as a diversion from the curriculum. Sometimes it is difficult to build relationships and understanding with pupils and staff over a limited time-span.

Several of the artists attributed the rigidity noticed to issues related to the curriculum, as exemplified in this comment:

Being heavily curriculum-lead, many educational institutions find it difficult to introduce new creative method in their work and teachers often lack the time to follow and observe my work with their pupils, endangering the sustainability of the work.

Other artists felt it was less about the curriculum and more the restrictions imposed by teaching methods:

[The greatest challenges I face are] the didactic elements of teaching which often encompasses an element of control, often provokes classroom management challenges. In my experience these are more effectively managed by exercising better listening skills.

The artists highlighted the challenges of reconciling the demands and organisation of education with the creative provisions being proposed by the artists. A number of participants reflected upon the challenges of bringing the worlds of arts and culture together with the worlds of education.

Meeting the needs of the organisation as well as those of the school and the children, in terms of evidence of planning, evaluation, delivery and meeting targets can be challenging. Achieving efficient communication, flexibility and co-operation in a three way relationship, often in a context of tight resources, and dealing with over-loaded and stressed teaching and administrative staff. Ensuring that everyone has the same clear and achievable vision and expectations of the project [can help].

Often mentioned by the artists were the pragmatic issues surrounding funding, space and time. Of these three, time was consistently reported as being a major challenge. In particular, it was noted that it was vital to negotiate time and to ensure that the commitment given by the school occurs in practice.

Time [is the biggest challenge] – often this has been allocated in theory but not in practice. I've experienced problems caused by departmental conflict, where one party had insufficient information about the project and was reluctant to allow pupils' full involvement. I've found that every educational project I've worked on has needed a degree of flexibility in its approach as all concerned – and the project itself – develops and grows.

It was felt that the limited time available was in part the result of an over-crowded curriculum and organisational resistance to flexible use of time within the school environment.

The time constraints that pupils and teachers have due to the National Curriculum can be a challenge. Enhancing creative learning can be seen as extra work which time does not allow for.

Schools' resistance to change is a big challenge. The pressures of a crowded curriculum prevent teachers from allocating the necessary time for planning, training, reflecting and developing the partnerships with outside agencies.

One of the greatest challenges is to find a way of making time and space for teachers to be relaxed enough to explore innovation and creative ways of learning. Another big challenge is to communicate flexibly and responsively within the confines of the school environment and the curriculum demands.

In many of the responses, the artists felt they were outsiders to the educational context and had to 'fit' within the quite inflexible structures of the school. They tried to adapt their practice to the school's regimes, but often found this difficult, especially in terms of gaining access to adequate space to conduct the arts partnership project.

From experience there seems to be a lack of adequate space and limited time. [It is a challenge] managing projects long-term so there is a legacy, an on-going impact.

[It is a challenge] diplomatically fitting into the regime, space and politics of each school.

While the physical limitations on space imposed restrictions on the artists' practices in schools, there were also comments related to notions of 'ownership' of space. In particular, there was a disjuncture between an artist's conception of children's behaviour or children's safety within the creative space that tended to differ from the perception of the teachers. For example:

Sometimes it's a challenge to get young people or other participants to engage with the need for discipline in a performing environment. It can also be a great challenge to allow the fears and insecurities of teachers and other authority figures when an artist takes over the leadership of a learning group in a project.

[It is challenging] solving issues relating to health and safety, adapting for working in new environments and establishing mutual expectations and goals.

The final challenge consistently reported was in the adequate funding and resourcing of artist within school. In particular, the artists did not feel that they were underpaid, but rather that there were insufficient, long-term resources to enrich the school system and for the development of the teachers, as is summarised in this list of challenges presented by an artist:

[The greatest challenges are] Funding restrictions (i.e. under funding); Restrictions and rigidity of school structures – timetabling etc – clashes with other subjects; fitting artists needs with school structure – short lessons etc in secondary; practical issues, rooms etc; timescales; teacher's heavy workload; resistance to creative projects; lack of information/awareness by other staff.

While the artists consistently identified key factors that inhibited the success of arts partnerships, they could also isolate factors which increased the likelihood of success. Key to this was a supportive teacher, enthusiastic school head, positive atmosphere in the school and willingness to be flexible and to take risks. It was difficult to ascertain through interview whether these factors had to be pre-existing (i.e. should be in place **before** placing a Creative Partnerships (CP) project into a school or setting) or whether such characteristics can be the **result** of placing a CP programme in a school. The artists interviewed appeared to be divided on this issue, but this is something that could be researched retrospectively by evaluating changes in past CP schools and pre-testing future CP schools on a 'level of support' index that could be developed.

Mutual respect, flexibility and a capacity to take risks seem to be key factors underpinning a successful project in a school:

[A programme will be successful where there is] shared curiosity about the world; Shared interest in understanding how we learn; Willingness to experiment and take risks; and, Unprescribed space to make work – in and outdoors.

[Factors influencing success] Spontaneity and flexibility of key contributors while not deviating from the common goal is healthy; acknowledged responsibility for authority within school; adequate preparation time prior to the project commencing.

The second comment (above) highlights the importance of having time in the project for planning and the establishment of effective channels of communication. The importance of communication and negotiation was raised by a number of artists and this view is exemplified in the following comment:

Success is based on communication, flexibility, co-operation, enthusiasm, and mutual respect. One of the crucial needs for a successful creative partnership is allowing time for planning, discussion and evaluation with all involved partners in order to ensure that the project doesn't become an insular activity without input from the teachers and little relevance to the educational institution. The other important point is that teachers/educational workers are willing and free to shadow and participate in the project, so they experience the work and can take ideas from it, in order to guarantee a minimum degree of sustainability of the work.

Other artists commented that it was qualities within the artists themselves (as opposed to the school or teacher) that resulted in a successful project or not. The following quotes emphasise some of the skills required by creative practitioners:

Resourceful – a good CP should have a large 'tool kit' in order to facilitate practice with children and professionals. One size does not fit all – nor does one approach. Flexibility is the key in working with schools.

Flexibility, charisma, openness passion/enthusiasm for one own art/skills – support from host organisations/staff.

Social skill, time management, confidence in their own practice, opens to different events taking place. Good communication skills in order to achieve a mutual vision and expectation of the project and to realise them successfully.

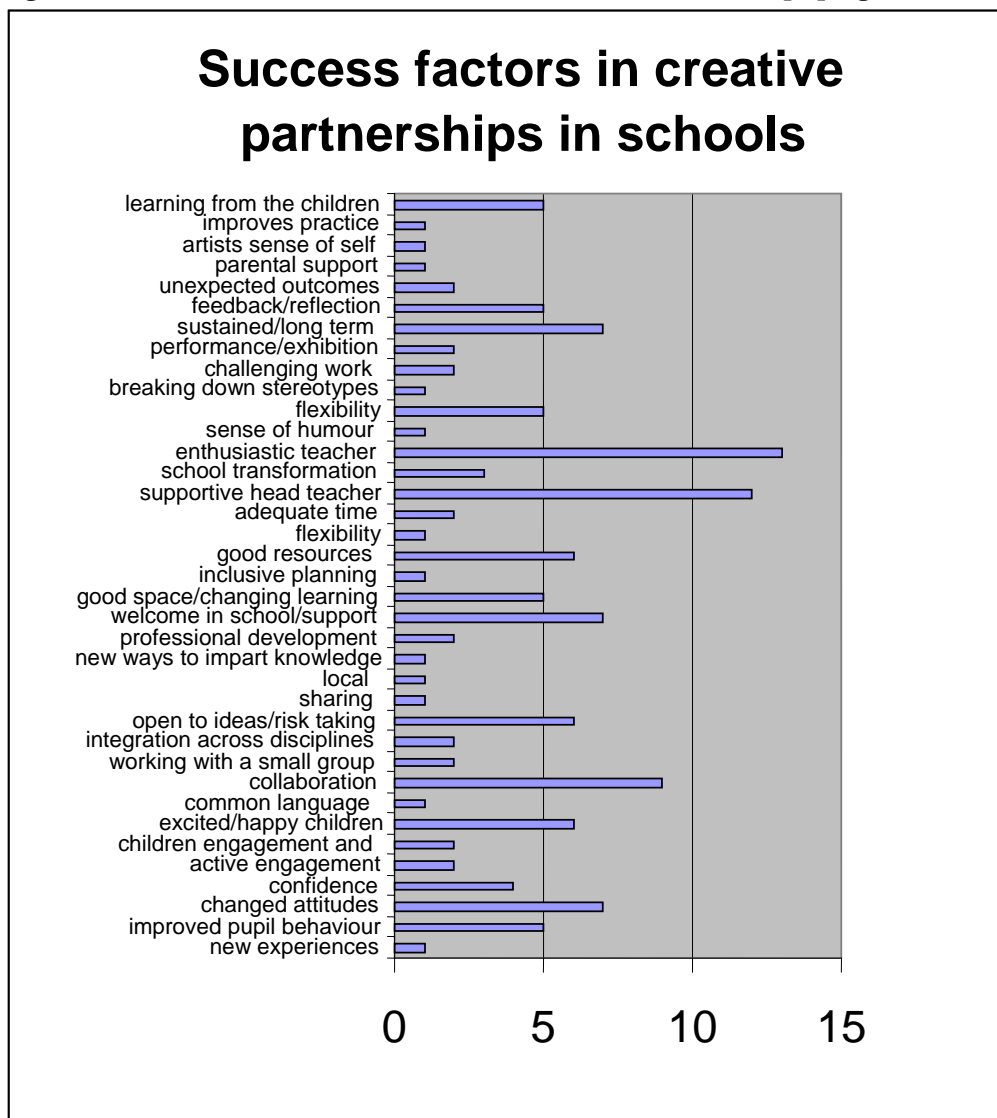
Efficiency and flexibility in working methods. Knowledge of the specific context and working environment, particularly the culture of the setting and any limitations in resources. Sufficient physical and financial resources to run the project successfully and fund labour costs realistically. Personal resources of enthusiasm, tolerance and stamina. Experience of working with children and young people in school and community settings, and of delivering projects involving different disciplines and agencies.

Clear planning, constant process of evaluating and communication between setting and the artist. The impact of a project is often greater if a member of staff with greater responsibility is in some way involved in the decision process (e.g. someone with a managerial role). An agreed designated space or approach to using the space available in the setting is also important.



Key to effective partnerships appears to be clear communication and effective planning. This is reiterated in the overall findings of the surveys (summarised in Figure 10).

Figure 10: Factors that increase the success of a Creative Partnerships programme



WORKING IN ARTS AND EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

As earlier results indicated, creative professionals gain considerable financial reward from working in schools, but that does not appear to be the main motivation for their engagement in Creative Partnerships or other arts based partnerships. There are three main motivations consistently quoted. These are, improving children’s learning and experiences; improving schools, and empowering people.

The creative professionals were very child-centred in their approaches and gained immense satisfaction and enjoyment from changing the life and opportunity of children and young people.

I enjoy working with children. I enjoy facilitating children to express themselves creatively, displaying their work and the promotion of their self-esteem.

I enjoy being part of the process that defines what young people will become later in life. Influencing the direction that young people are taking both from the view point of the Arts and their general education.

Aiding the children in understanding their potential, seeing their confidence increase, resulting in huge developments and them enjoying and being proud of their work and achievements.

Stimulating pupil's imaginations, giving them confidence that their voice and self-expression matter; laughing!

The overall opinion of the artists is effectively summarised in this comment:

I have never worked in any other job that is as rewarding as working in education! When I see how enthusiastic children are about a project and how much they enjoy being involved that is the most rewarding thing on earth. I love working with kids and I especially enjoy building up a relationship with a class, meaning that I enjoy observing the development from the beginning of a project to its end. It is fantastic how the children's understanding for a matter grows and changes and how confident they can become with a project and how proud when they actually present the outcome. I guess, making a difference for the children – that's the best

The artists felt that their involvement in schools led to improvements in both the climate and output of the school community. For example, they considered that their creative input could enhance curriculum and encourage more creativity.

Being able to introduce creative ideas to a curriculum-lead system and giving tools to use in classroom settings and/or future creative projects within the educational establishment.

Opportunity to bring another perspective to curriculum topics. Working with children challenges my contemporary thinking to apply my projects. The chance to develop amongst pupils the ability to create rather than just consume. Helping to add to the scope of a young mind and to offer my experience to their development.

The creative professionals spoke of the manner in which their activities within the schools gave the schools a more outward looking perspective, perhaps making a greater connection between the world of school education and the broader arts, cultural and professional field:

Challenging and supporting schools to think more outwardly. Schools historically have been inward looking.

Expanding the perceptions that young people and educational staff have about music. Enthusing young people about participating in music making. Helping them attain a sense of achievement.

Broadening and enriching the community through educational and intervention is very rewarding. The children's educational achievements and their enthusiasm to learn in a creative way within a wider community make our hard work worthwhile. Teachers gratefulness for the support received in their teaching is encouraging. We were always challenged and enriched by the experiences.

Key to this improvement is the shared learning that occurs between the children, the teachers and the artists. This was often described as 'empowering people' and encouraging people to go beyond their perceived capacities.

Empowering people to do things they thought they couldn't, and work hard harder than they thought they could. Working together towards a united goal and identifying the point when pupils take ownership of a project is always exciting. Discovering new things about myself and my practice.

To see people grow, change, open up and find access to their creativity.

Notions of shared learning were clearly articulated by the artists. The artists showed a high level of understanding of reflective practice and the role of communities of learning

It gives one the opportunity to think outside of one's own practice. To look at work in a different way. To re-assess what is 'Good'. Also it is challenging, fun and emotionally rewarding. Sharing ideas. Exposure to new situations and challenges. Developing the best ways for learning. Observing how others learn. Exchange of skills.

Every project is a two-way learning experience for all involved. Artists have a unique opportunity to inspire young people and learn about themselves or through the eyes of the young people themselves.

Finding creative entry points within education enables a shared learning between me, the students and the teachers. It is rewarding to encourage learning which accesses all modes of learning for all involved.

An increased understanding of creative learning. The chance to develop and implement new strategies of learning. The sharing and swapping of good practice. To learn from learning. To forge and develop new ideas.

Sharing skills with the school staff and pupils. I have learnt as much from them as they have from me. Experiencing a range of cultures by interacting with pupils.

The artists strongly believed that working in partnerships had **changed the people** (including the children) that they were working with:

It has opened some minds to previously unknown possibilities, extending boundaries and limitations.

There's a wide range of changes that can happen during a project: generally they learn to trust, collaborate with each other and start to believe in their creativity, which boosts their self-esteem.

It may create new perspective i.e. new ways to work and see the work. Introduces new materials and resource possibilities. Help them to rethink the use and transformation of their space.

Participants gain greater self-confidence enhance team-building skills and general social interaction, freedom of expression through creativity often 'unlocks' people who have not yet found a medium to share and excel.

I see education as a two-way process and believe that I have learnt from those I have taught. Children especially honestly reflect the success or failure of your approach and methods of teaching.

Children and young people have revealed a general improvement in their attainment during school hours, whilst benefiting from an increase in confidence and communication skills. In addition, some young people have gone to pursue further qualifications in media and film. They have become more confident with the equipment they have used. It has also allowed the children to think about photography in different ways.

QUALIFICATIONS

Participants within the course were given a non-accredited certificate of participation at the end of the two days. Participants were also asked to comment on the value - or otherwise – of receiving accreditation for their learning. The opinion of participants was divided as to whether accreditation was of value. While 64% agreed in part with this suggestion, none of the participants strongly agree. Concurrently, 36% of participants disagree with the idea of accreditation, as one participant noted; “I think experience and practice is far more valuable than training qualifications”. While many artists believed that artists working in schools needed more education, it was also felt that this should be to develop and extend the capabilities of the artist (not necessarily for qualifications).

Prior to the start of the pilot course, over 50% of the artists had a first degree in the arts, with a further 25% having a Masters level – or higher - degree. This means that over 75% of the artists attending the pilot were university graduates in the arts (see Figure 11). While the artists were clearly well qualified **in the arts**, the level of qualification in the education was very different.

Figure 12 shows that the picture was reversed in terms of education qualifications with less than 25% of creative practitioners having a degree related to education, and almost 75% having few or no qualifications. This is not in and of itself a problem as it is clear within the aims of Creative Partnerships that the creative professional brings expertise of their **profession** to the schools, not expertise in education and it is not the intention to ‘turn’ the creative practitioners into teachers. However, the findings do have implications for professional development, where the artists considered it to be important that education topics were adequately covered. This is further evidenced in the artists’ demands that suggest that all the content of professional development (with the exception of marketing and planning skills) could be more closely related to education than to the arts (see Figure 13). Clearly, the

creative professionals are highly educated in their art forms, but could benefit from a higher level of development in education related fields. Similarly as nearly three-quarters of the artists did not have any formal education qualification, some form of certification or diploma level course would be desirable (since education-based work often accounts for more than 50% of both the artists' income and hours per week worked).

Figure 11: Highest level of qualification in the arts

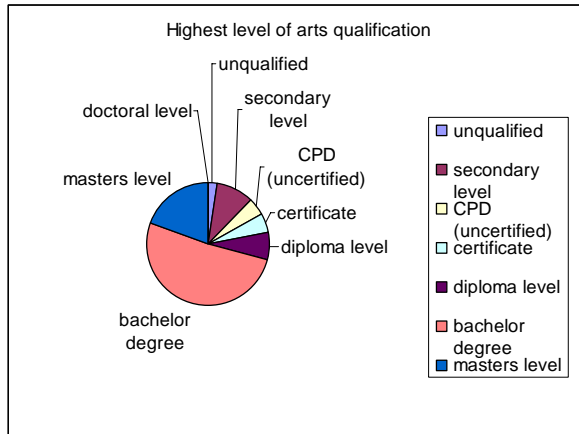
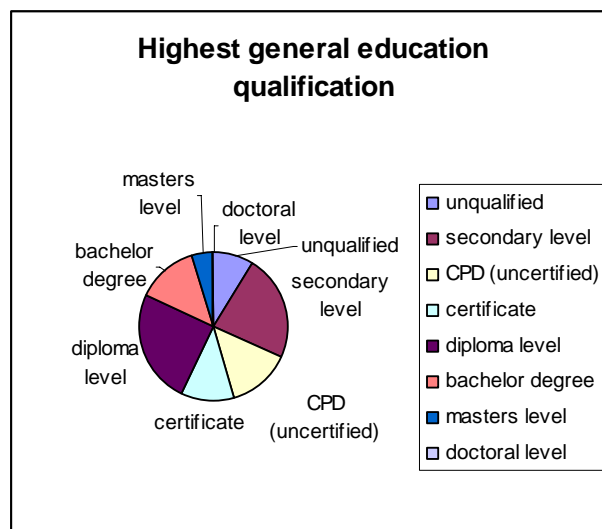


Figure 12: Highest general education qualification



In addition to the formal qualifications, the artists nominated certain personal characteristics that underpin effective arts partnership work. If qualifications for artists working within schools were to be introduced, it is important that the way learning was organised would encourage the development of the more holistic, personal characteristics as suggested by the artists themselves. The artists felt that effective creative practitioners working in education need to have the following attributes:

Approachable, hard-working, well-organised, good manager of time, requisite practical creative skills for the project, ability to problem solve and look outside the box. Sense of humour, flexible people skills, willingness to work/life experiences, creative and original artist with a developed sense of curiosity.

The more experienced and successful practitioners were able to pinpoint their success through some of these personal attributes:

I am a good listener and I am very patient. Working with children requires listening and very often a great deal of patience. I can also identify different qualities in children and help developing them. I am trained in 'out of the box thinking' and I appreciate ideas, even if they are very unorthodox. In my opinion, every idea has qualities and I can give people the feeling that what they have to say is important and even crucial for the development of a project.

I think that my experiences have developed me as a competent community artist. I have a good educational background and I have been privileged to work alongside other highly skilled and experienced practitioners.



TRAINING AND QUALITY

While there was a mixed view within the creative professionals about the value of accreditation, there was a very clear mandate expressed about the value of training and quality assurance for artists. The vast majority (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that the training of artists was vital for quality arts partnership programmes in schools. As one respondent commented; “I think we owe it to the children to have certain skills and awareness and to know how to cope in certain situations.”

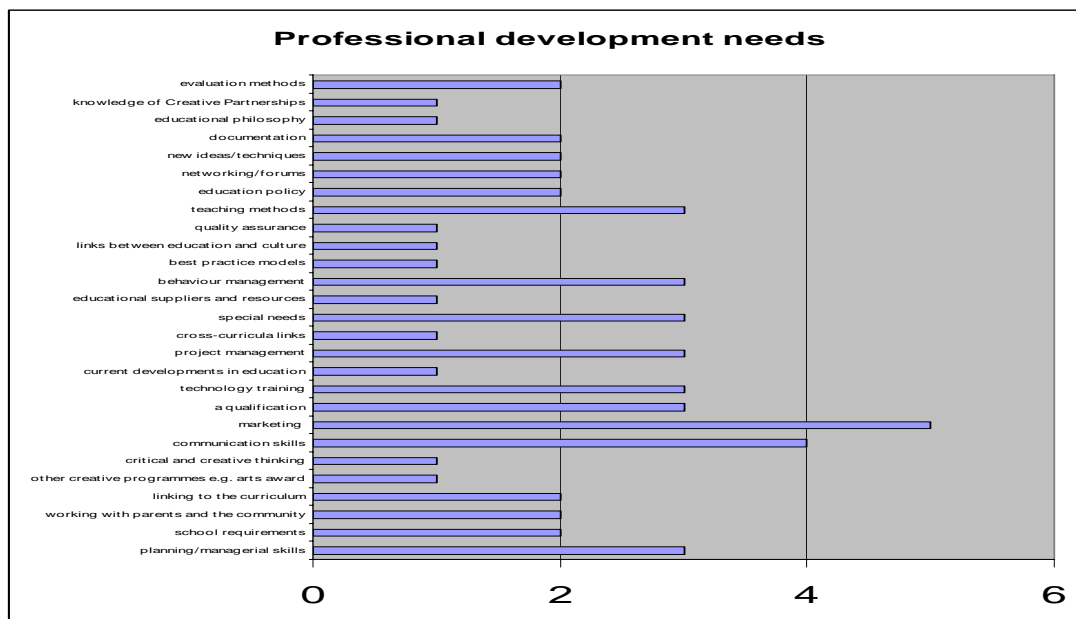
The findings (presented in Figure 13) indicate that the artists were perceptive about the skills they would need to acquire through continued professional development (CPD) to enable them to be successful in schools. While the two highest rating skills that the artists would like to acquire through professional development could be argued to be more closely related to their role as artist (i.e. marketing and management), all other skills in the top 10 nominated were more closely aligned to a more education focused CPD.

For example, Figure 13 shows that the artists were keen to improve their skills in communication and a variety of teaching methods. They wanted to enhance their knowledge of child development issues and receive more training in the skills of classroom and behaviour management techniques.

The creative practitioners expressed a desire for more content and training related to working with children with special needs, including children who speak a language other than English. The qualitative comments also revealed that artists needed practical instruction in some of ‘the basics’ of working in schools such as skills training to use ‘Smart’ boards and other forms of educational technology; knowledge of health and safety procedures, and child protection training.

The number of different areas highlighted in Figure 13 also suggests that the training needs of artists can be quite diverse. The implication for future planning of courses would be that such courses should be quite individualised and provide the creative professionals with flexible pathways to learning that enable the CPs to personalise the skills, content and knowledge they encounter.

Figure 13: Nominated professional development needs



COST AND BENEFIT

There was a clear indication from participants that training courses should be a core part of Creative Partnerships for both artists and teachers.

In the pilot project, artists did not have to pay for the course and were in fact **paid** to attend. The question was therefore, if a training programme was to be sustainable in the longer term, would participants be prepared to attend training even if they were not paid? For 58% of the participants they would attend if they were not paid to. A further 17% said they would **probably** come if the speakers were of high quality - even if they were not paid to come. Only 29% of respondents said they would **not come** unless they were paid to come. While these findings indicate that it is likely that the majority of artists would attend without any payment, in the qualitative comments it was stressed that the artists felt “valued” because they were paid. Another respondent also pointed out that other professions receive CPD as part of their job and are not expected to attend without payment, so “why should artists have to come and not be paid?”

A further question was asked as to whether the artists **would pay** to receive training. Under this scenario, those willing to pay for the course (and concurrently not receive payment to attend) fell to 40%. For the people who would be willing to pay for such training, the average amount that would be paid was £471 for a 12-month, part-time course. It is important to note, that even within the group that would be prepared to pay for a course, they indicated that they would require some form of financial support or incentive to be able to do so.

Other respondents indicated that their willingness to pay would be dependent on the content of the course; the quality of the speakers; and, their degree of active learning. Inline with the qualitative comments that indicate that a willingness to pay might be very dependent upon the quality and scope of any course is also supported by the relatively large number (29%) of undecided respondents on the question of a course with a fee. Of the 31% of respondents that said they would **not** pay, the predominant view was that their main role/employment was as an artist **not** as someone who worked in schools, so they would not pay for training.

This view is summarised in this comment from an artist; I would not be keen to pay. I don’t do a lot of work in schools and I am selective about what I apply for – which I may or may not get. My practice is

about my own work. I am unique and unconstrained by convention.” Another respondent’s comments were even stronger when asked if he would undertake a fee-based training course if it was required to be registered to work in schools; “Nothing <would make me do it>. I would change my job.”

Interestingly, though – whether through choice or opportunity, 45.5% of the course participants indicated that they were doing more work since completing the pilot training programme. Only 18% of participants were doing less work. On average, the creative professionals that participated in the course were doing 23.3 hours per month as artists in schools. This equates to roughly 3.5 days per month, or just under a day per week. This figures suggests (as the artists themselves indicated) that partnership work forms only a small part of their overall working week, so this factor is also likely to impact on the willingness of artists to pay for Creative Partnership training. While this is the overall average picture, the range of hours was large with four participants not spending any time in a month on partnership work and one participant spending 12 days per month (three days per week) working in schools. This difference is also reflective of the varying experience noted in earlier sections. Importantly, 75% of participants said they **would like** to be doing more work in schools, and 20% said they would like to continue the same amount of work. Only 5% said they would like to work less in schools.

IMPACT ON PRACTICE

While it could be argued, that the enthusiasm to do more work in schools is for financial reasons, this does not seem to be the case. The artists spoke passionately about the value of working with children and the positive effect it had on their practice. The recent debate about the utilitarian value of the arts (i.e. arts being ‘used’ by education) was not born out by the comments of the artists. The artists listed a range of benefits to their practice including:

- “Made me use a wider variety of materials”
- “Made me question the nature of my practice”
- “I am interested in issues of delivery”
- “Informs all areas”
- “Looking at processes”
- “Broadening the landscape of my practice within extended communities”
- “Taught me a lot about working collaboratively and patience”
- “Improved my own skills in writing and drama”
- “I now have to consider spatial and other limitations”
- “It has fine tuned my practice”
- “It has changed my optimism of right and wrong”
- “Made me more flexible in my practice – more aware of process and approach – more aware of why the arts are valuable”
- “Now working on reflective practice”
- “Broadened my practice”

A number of impact studies have been undertaken that track the effect of Creative Partnerships on children’s learning and the school environment, but comparatively few studies have explored in any depth

the effect on the CP artists' practices. There appears to be a very substantial effect and this is largely overlooked when measuring the impact of the programmes, especially in regard to the overall development of cultural, creative and social capital. The following more detailed comments show the artistic value of participation in creative collaborations between artists and the education sector:

It has opened my mind to a greater scope of possibilities, extending boundaries and limitations. I clarified the direction of my practice after one – amazingly perceptive – pupil drew my attention to recurring theme I hadn't noticed in my work. A case of not seeing the wood for the trees...

Inspired me to go back to 'drawing'. Caused me to review certain ways of working that for some time I had considered 'outside' my practice.

Began to consider making work with greater physicality.

I now look for more opportunities to work in partnership and where this is not possible I have found I have the confidence to independently use other art forms, for instance after working with a visual artist in Brighton. I found myself developing workshops with a large visual element.

It is really interesting to note and get a sense of the difference in working alone and collaborative activity and to see connections and disconnections in thought processes. I have been inspired to use many of the practical print techniques we have developed for use in workshops - . Working in education has given me confidence to work much faster – (Not so much agonising) and my personal work has become much more expressive and direct. I find the special quality of the visual imagery created by young children and adults with learning disability very inspiring.

I guess the main influence I've had from working in education has been in the area of simple effective education. Artists communicate with symbols. Understanding which symbols read well with young people has certainly had an effect on my selective process when I create my own work.

I have to be more flexible in my working methods, more curious and more able to draw on the advice and experience of others as a resource. I am gaining from witnessing and encouraging the creativity of children, and learning to be looser and more adventurous in my own work. I am becoming more aware of self-imposed limitations and fears which have been acquired over the years. I am more willing to take risks and explore.

Fashion can be a very selfish industry and working in education has really shown me how to give something back to society.

As I said, I learn a lot from the way the children think about problems and about how they approach solutions. In many cases children's ideas are so much more 'refreshing' than the ones of adults. Working with children is like getting a second, totally different opinion on something. I also find it very impressive how much understanding children can bring into certain issues. They are very analytical and I feel that they see more than most of us adults do. Working with children is like getting a second, totally different opinion on something. I also find it very impressive how much understanding children can bring into certain issues. They are very analytical and feel that they see more than most of us adults do. Working with children has changed my own practice in so far as that I always come back to a 'playful' approach to my projects that try to 're-enact' the way how children see the world.

Whilst working at the Lyric in partnership with other artists and teacher the experience allowed me to learn new skills in facilitation, in particular how to approach working with different groups.

My practice has certainly become more open to change and I enjoy working across various mediums allowing for experimentation and the process of making to play a larger role. Working with other artists such as musicians and puppeteers has also influenced and inspired the way I work and the range of pieces I have produced.

It has been recently said that the work of artists should not be seen to be made utilitarian by working within education. By contrast, artists seem to gain enhanced income and enhanced practice by engaging in the arts. None of the artists in the pilot research indicated that working in an educational environment had been a negative influence on their practice as an artist.

In fact, 89% of artists reported a positive influence on their practice from participating in partnership programmes. In qualitative comments, though, the artists indicated that it was the children themselves that made the greatest influence on their practice – not the training, teachers, school, policy or systems. This is evident in this comment; "It is the children that makes the difference not the schools- there is too much

bureaucracy”. There was also direct benefit noted from the interaction with children, as this comment suggests: “[working in Creative Partnerships] has boosted my confidence – the children’s enthusiasm has made me less precious in my approach”.

Specifically in relation to the pilot course, there was once again a clear difference of opinion between experienced and lesser experienced artists as to the continued learning from the course. As stated previously, the more experienced artists tended to find the content too basic and so there were fewer **different** practices that emerged as a result of the course (25% of artists felt they did not do things differently as a result of the pilot). Concurrently, though, the less experienced artists felt they gained a great deal from the two days with 54.5% of artists noting positive changes in their practice, including:

- “Treating children differently”
- “Giving difficult children more responsibility not less”
- “Being more aware of needing to be formal in registering, planning and evaluating”
- “Being more gentle”
- “Equipping and informing me to do a better job”
- “Improving reflective practice”
- “Applied skills and information”

In the creative practitioners’ undergraduate or other formal education, only 18.5% of the pilot artists had received any educational training or training in working in community partnerships. Of the people that did receive some training, this was through a work placement programme as students (not as part of formal instruction within the course). These findings indicate the urgent need for more educational training for artists, especially those choosing to work in educational partnerships.

Despite the lack of formal training in educational or community practice in preservice education, artists actively participate in a range of other lifelong learning opportunities. Within the cohort of artists participating in the pilot programme, there was a considerable depth of courses and learning opportunities undertaken, including:

- Certificate in adult learning
- Stand-up comedy class
- Diploma in playground design
- English as a foreign language classes
- Introduction to art therapy course
- Drama short course
- Residential training workshops
- Creative Partnerships’ courses
- Refugee arts initiative

The artists also have undertaken formal qualifications at all levels of study, including:

- MA in Creative Practice and the Narrative Environment
- NVQ training and development in reflection and self-assessment
- Graduate certificate in facilitation

INTO THE FUTURE

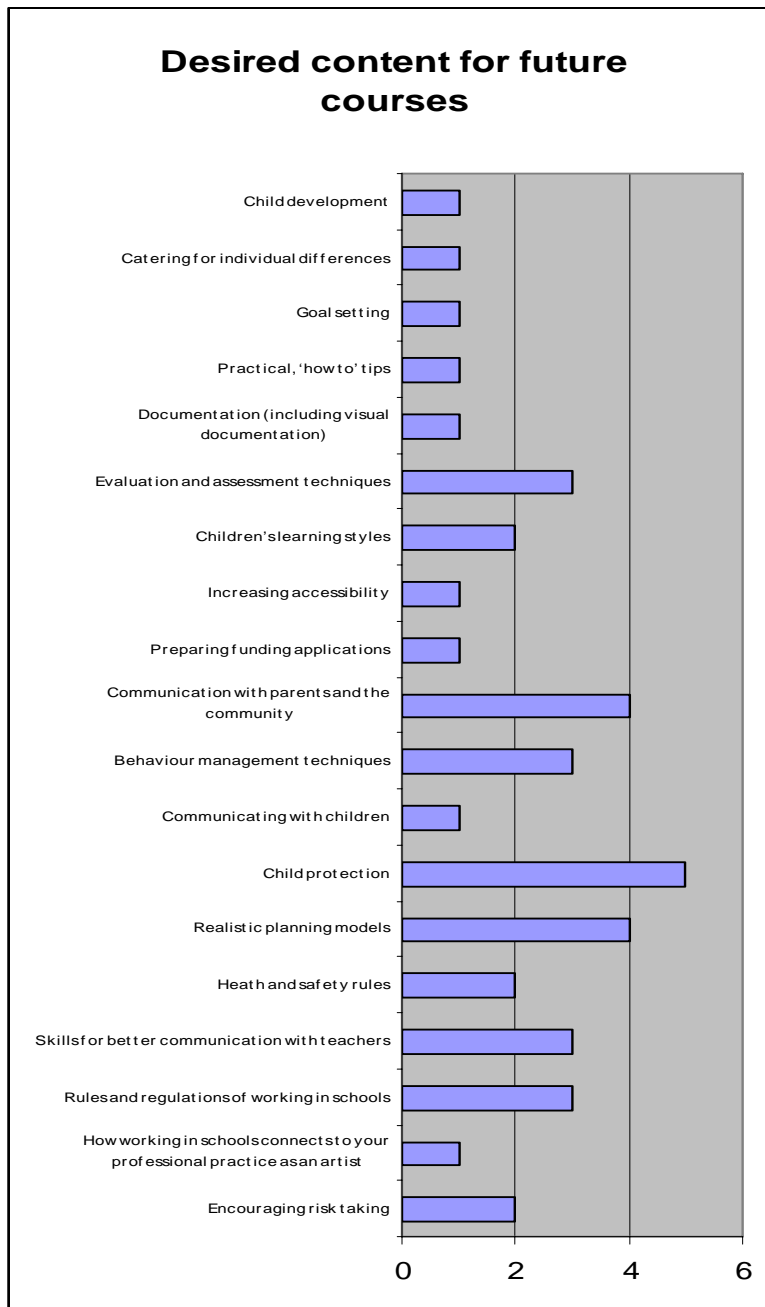
Participants in the pilot project were asked to suggest the key elements that should be included in future training programmes.

Rules and regulations of schools, communication techniques and planning models were highly rated as being areas that required greater focus. Also important were issues of pupil management, behaviour management, child development and catering for individual differences.

It is interesting to note that all but one of the content areas suggested were more related to education than with the arts or cultural sector. This tends to indicate an underlying need for more educational

understanding prior to working in schools, but this needs to be tempered against the commonly expressed opinion that creative professionals working in schools should be quality artists and not ‘turned into teachers’. Table 4 highlights the main areas that artists suggested **should** be included in future courses:

Table 4: Focus areas for future courses



In terms of the methods of instruction, the following suggestions were made:

- “For the participants to work in groups on a big task to be completed over the course”
- “A web blog for ongoing communication”

- “Q and As with experienced practitioners and teachers”
- “Sharing sessions”
- “Mentoring”

Overall, there was a clear need to make courses that were bespoke to the different levels of expertise in the group. Comments made by the more experienced practitioners suggest:

- “The level of content needed to be raised”
- “More depth was needed on the psychology of children”
- “More time was needed for peer interactions”
- “Too much content for the available time”

One respondent had an innovative suggestion to deal with the differing levels of experience in the group:

“I would include “streaming” people on the day according to level of experience but keep the networking aspect so that everyone could come together to share ideas and experiences”.

Conversely, lesser experienced artists found the day very relevant, as some of the following comments suggest:

- “This course was great as it gave me sense of ‘being an artist’ – very important.”
- “The course was excellent but I would have liked more time for reflection.”
- “Really enjoyed the course, but more time for sharing in small groups and more practical would be good.”
- “Very positive experience and a good opportunity to share experiences and anxieties”
- “Very relevant to my level of experience.”
- “Well balanced”
- “Thank you to the Engine Room for the innovative course and the fact that I got paid to attend”

The distinction between the comments of the lesser and more experienced artists, points to the need to develop separate - or at least streamed - courses to cater for the quite different needs of creative practitioners at different levels of experience. This needs to be considered in the future design of courses.

The comment was also made by some of the novice artists, that while they had attended the pilot course, it had not directly led to working with Creative Partnerships, as this comment bemoans:

I would have liked a follow-up to this funded course. I would have liked to have been given the opportunity to take part in a Creative Partnerships project. I wondered why I was funded to attend this course if there was not follow-up? This is not a complaint but a genuine question.

An interesting final observation was that 69% of the pilot artists were happy to participate in follow-up focus groups (even though they would not be paid) and were keen to be active in the planning and development of future courses. This indicates a strong level of professional commitment to training and development.

CONCLUSIONS

The results indicate that training is an important part of the development of Creative Partnerships. Ideally, this training should include both artists and teachers and be offered in flexible delivery modes. The content and method of these courses should be adapted to accommodate the differing demands of lesser and more experienced colleagues.

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