

Inclusion in the Arts of Working Class Communities: Tackling exclusion and promoting equality:

Background:

The Barbican is one of the world's leading arts centres, internationally renowned for excellence and innovation. Our audiences enjoy world-class music, theatre, dance, film and visual arts. We seek out the most exciting new talent and take risks with emerging artists. In collaboration with our strategic partner, Guildhall School of Music & Drama ('Guildhall'), our Creative Learning programmes offer projects for over 48,000 people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities each year

We provide opportunities for people of all ages to engage with the performing and visual arts. Our activities are designed to have a positive, lasting impact on everyone - a world class arts and learning experience. These range from the inspirational, such as the Big Barbican Adventure and the Big Barbican Workshop, to more sustained projects such as Barbican Box and DrumWorks, which enable young people to develop their potential as human beings, as well as creators and performers.

We work with schools and communities across East London to inspire, influence and create opportunity in some of the UK's most deprived boroughs. In partnership with the Guildhall School we are developing dynamic approaches to research and evaluation in order to establish new learning theories and practice. Creative Learning also offers professional development opportunities for artists and teachers that enable them to acquire new skills as leaders and collaborators across a range of socially engaged settings.

One of our key funders is the Arts Council of England, their research shows that people have low frequency of cultural attendance (defined as no more than one cultural attendance in the last 12 months) due to a variety of reasons, such as lack of time, poor health, cost, or lack of interest. Some groups are less likely to engage than others, particularly:

- people with little or no formal education
- people in a lower socio-economic position (for example people in routine or manual occupations)
- people from Black and minority ethnic groups
- people in poor health and/or with a limiting long term illness or disability
- people on low incomes
- people who live in social housing

We have sought to devise activities which ensure more people in east London, especially the least engaged, have the opportunity to experience, be inspired by and take part in the arts. As an organisation we focus on the boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Islington, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and the City of London. Each of these boroughs faces different issues and challenges but as some of the most deprived boroughs in the UK they have in common high economic and social deprivation and low arts engagement.

Strategy:

Our strategy has focussed on four key areas, all underpinned by robust monitoring and evaluation:

- programming inspirational access events offsite in our target boroughs;
- providing opportunities to participate, learn and develop skills through the arts;
- audience development;
- building local partnerships that inform and facilitate these goals.

We are recognised as one of the few major cultural organisations to be really testing our role in our local community, particularly as a facilitator of the creative expression of others, not just for professional artists. Partners have told us that the Barbican brand offers a kite mark of quality that helps validate events and curate the highest quality offer for the community. We now want to place more emphasis on legacy and sustainability.

Programme:

Our programme is based on three key stages of engagement:

- **INSPIRATION:** giving more people the chance to experience the arts (sometimes for the first time), with the aim that they will be inspired to take up further opportunities to enjoy or participate in the arts.
- **ASPIRATION:** encouraging people to become regular arts attenders, to progress their interest in the arts and to develop their relationship with Barbican/Guildhall, by participating in projects that enable them to develop their talent and create their own arts.
- **ENTREPRENEURIAL:** providing support for emerging artists and opportunities for people to develop their careers (including apprenticeships and work placements), enabling people to progress as independent artists or as members of the arts and wider workforce.

In our role as arts leader we are committed to engaging the broadest possible audience, and to approaching this in innovative and creative ways.

- Increase the number of people from our target boroughs who are engaged in the Barbican's activities in order to increase the number and range of people experiencing the arts;
- Encourage people to build a longer, more sustained relationship with us and to trial different types of activities, underpinned by a clear audience development strategy; and
- Build a sense of belonging amongst our audiences.

For these purposes our target audiences from east London are:

- Diverse new audiences and the least engaged;
- Children and young people and their schools, families and communities;
- The community of emerging and established artists.

Community Engagement:

Effective community liaison has been key to reaching those who would not typically attend.

Summary of Ambassador programme:

The now popular 'street team' model was originally developed by urban record labels in America, who found an affordable and highly effective bridge to their target audience that did not require the traditional outlets found in print, radio, television mediums and elusive large scale record distribution deals. Since then, Ambassador programmes have been used internationally across the creative industries as way of generating 'word of mouth', listening to audience feedback and as future audiences overcome barriers to the arts as well as selling tickets. Other famous examples of Ambassador programmes include, *We Are The People* - a diverse group of people between the ages of 18 and 30 who campaigned tirelessly across America to get Senator Barack Obama elected President of the United States.

The Street Team casual template has proven itself very effective as it is adaptable and participants can take part for short periods of time depending on their own commitments. It's a fantastic way to introduce a new audience and workforce and bring the centre in line with **Race Equality Workforce Declaration**. Meeting on regular basis and supported by Special Projects, the existing core are extremely loyal to the centre and a great 'word of mouth' asset.

Barbican Ambassadors help shape an appropriate next step offers from a range of tried and tested audience development initiatives, to find and adapt the best models for us.

Digital infrastructure:

Good digital content is the lifeblood of our CRM and social media programmes, enabling a deeper engagement with our programme and aiding our broader audience development strategy. It is used particularly to connect with young people. We frequently broadcast through social media to increase access and reach.

East London and City Cultural partnership:

With the support of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, we have established the East London & City Culture Partnership (ELCCP), a new partnership with the Guildhall School, A New Direction (An Arts Council Bridging Organisation) and six music education hubs in east London. This partnership is developing plans to give every young person in east London the chance to experience the best musical and cultural education, focussing on entitlement, progression of creative and technical skills and ensuring the arts and education workforce have the skills and tools to provide the best possible experience to young people.

Together we are developing a comprehensive needs analysis of young people in east London. Our strategic plan for meeting these needs maps the existing cultural offer and identifies gaps, seeking to broker and curate offers, in partnership, to address need across formal and informal learning. It also seeks to widen engagement by integrating our broader family and community offer.

Activity:

Relevant Activities:

Barbican Beginners

The 'Barbican Beginners' strategy will give potential audiences an introduction to the Barbican, demystifying our programme and presenting the Barbican in a less formal way. The Barbican Young Membership programme will offer a significant number of tickets across art forms priced at £5, £10 and £15. Members will receive regular communications about ticket offers, open rehearsals, Barbican and other events and the Young Arts Academy. Our partners, the Audiences Agency tell us Visual Arts, in particular suffers from lack of engagement with young people. We are therefore negotiating a free access offer to under 18s, to all of our visual arts programmes, which will be promoted through a new young people's visual arts group, which will be launched in Waltham Forest (an outer London Borough) in collaboration with the Walthamstow based William Morris Gallery and the Waltham Forest Hub.

Dialogue

Dialogue is an annual event which celebrates the talent, creativity and diversity of the people of East London and the next generation of artists. Facilitated by the Guildhall School and Barbican's joint Creative Learning division, this annual event sees Creative Learning Artists and undergraduate and post graduate students work in a variety of community settings, leading projects that culminate in a dynamic programme of talks, workshops and performances.

Workshops and rehearsals to create pieces for performance responding to different themes are delivered across East London with over 20 community groups. In 2014, Dialogue sold out as a headliner event taking place in the state of the art, brand new Milton Court Concert Hall and involved participants from Mencap, Fellows Court Community Centre, Randal Cremer primary School, The Arbour womens project and St Mungos as well as Creative Learning

ensembles Barbican Young Poets, (Im)Possibilities and Future Band. The audience was as diverse as the participants with most friends and family audience members experiencing the Barbican and Guildhall for the first time.

Open School East

Open School East is a new model of arts education, where post graduate level 'associates' undertake a 1 year programme, which includes studio space and is free of charge. Associates get 2 days learning opportunities which include skills sharing. Open School East is an outward facing school, which seeks to actively engage with its local community (currently an extensive estate in east London) and associates are mentored (including via the local community) to develop meaningful work with local people. This is a relatively new programme, but so far has engaged meaningfully with its local community through projects including a community garden, an intergenerational radio station, a programme for single parents, dance and movement programmes with older people etc We have observed the communities local to the school are experiencing a true sense of shared ownership in the school and the building it inhabits, where the school is reaching large number of people who have low frequency of attendance at cultural events.

Schools Work

Working with schools is an incredibly important way of accessing young people who aren't accessing the arts and in turn their friends and families.

1. Big Barbican Workshop

Big Barbican Workshop is a cross-arts workshop for primary, secondary and college groups (Key stage 2 – 5) looking to experience all art forms on offer at the Barbican. Pupils explore art, drama, movement, music, animation and spoken word, working with high quality artist leaders. The workshop culminates in a presentation of work created by the young people. Each school receives a short film of their experience.

We will target this model at schools we have not previously connected with in our partner boroughs, working with the ELCCP and schools networks to identify schools with low cultural engagement. Our goal is to introduce pupils/schools to the Barbican and our artforms and start a relationship. After the workshop, we will signpost schools (and pupils' families and communities) to events and pathways for creative and social development provided by us or partners.

2. Schools Multiplier Models

We provide extended models of schools interaction through these models which are designed to work in primary schools, secondary schools and FE colleges. Each model teaches pupils creative and soft skills (confidence, inter personal skills etc). Models include teacher CPD, workshops, mentoring from world class experts, 'sharings' at the Barbican and friends and family tickets to events.

3. Teacher's Network

In partnership with the ELCCP, we will develop substantive relationships with schools over the next three years, including SEN schools. Teachers will offered CPD, including our weekend training programme on devised theatre as part of Barbican Box (consistently rated excellent in evaluation by teachers) and bespoke training developed in consultation with teachers and the ELCCP. We will invite teachers to bespoke networking events at Barbican/partner venues. Teachers will help to shape our programme so that it is appropriate to their needs.

Young Arts Academy

Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning have developed creative groups for young people to develop artistic and life skills through intensive collaboration, creative exploration and

performance. Currently 500 young people aged 8 – 18 take part each year. Projects include Drum Works), Young Poets, Filmmakers and Programmers and creative music ensembles.

To reach more young people in our target boroughs (especially those least likely to identify this kind of opportunity for themselves) we are now taking a more joined up approach, with more targeted approaches to recruitment. We are proposing a Young Arts Academy (YAA) which will focus and develop our progression projects into one coherent cross-arts offer for 14-18 year olds. All members of our creative groups will be able to take part, benefiting from central training and opportunities.

Through YAA we will:

- Increase the number of young people who take part in the groups working with partners to target young people who are currently least engaged;
- Develop a new visual arts group (described above);
- Develop the programme to offer centralised, bespoke training in participatory practice, including cross-arts laboratories, masterclasses and talks from industry professionals;
- Support members through a digital network, providing regular news and offers and links to other programmes (e.g. Young People's Membership).
- Connect the YAA with our community programming, including joint programmes with community groups and participation in our annual community festival Dialogue
- Provide enterprise and employability training with partnership organisations, such as the Prince's Trust
- We will register as an Arts Award Centre

Co-curation with young people is key to our approach; we will consult with the YAA on all aspects of activity

We will also facilitate alternative routes into employment through different entry points such as Barbican Ambassadors, Barbican Customer Experience Hosts and apprentices.

LAB - The Barbican as a laboratory for experimentation, creation and innovation:

We are investing in the artists of the future, developing the talent of young people and offering space, time and resources to emerging artists to innovate. Our Lab programme provides a progression route and CPD for emerging, mid-career and established artists to offer a more coherent programme of opportunities for artists.

We collaborate with partner venues in east London to provide offsite opportunities e.g. through HE and hospital partners. The outcomes from Labs will feed into an annual platform, Curious, which profiles experimental and new cross-art form activity.

Participants will benefit from mentoring support including shared observations of their practice within the Lab week and at a follow-up session. There will be a temporary shared working space at the Barbican to facilitate connection between peers with clinic sessions in enterprise, digital, professional and company development. There will be a series of themed Connecting Conversations on social engagement e.g. 'Intergenerational work', 'Art and Mental Health'.

Ideas fund and creative enterprise:

As part of our commitment to empowering communities and emerging artists, we are creating an 'Ideas Fund' to help artists and community groups in east London in their first steps towards creative enterprise, developing talent and building capacity. The Fund will also build resilience for the Barbican's programme, developing our partners to continue successful projects. It will support artists in our LAB programme, who may need further access to resources.

This will be supported by mentoring from Barbican and Guildhall staff e.g. from the arts, learning and Enterprise teams, and input from partners e.g. enterprise partners Capital Enterprise and Cause4. Proposals will be reviewed by Barbican staff, with input from partners.

All applicants will be offered advice and where possible ongoing support, through our enterprise partners.

Our objectives are to:

- Continue to provide high quality, exciting arts and learning experiences for children and young people, drawing on our world-class arts;
- Create transferrable models that can be sustained with achievable impact, legacy and exit strategies and shared as best and next practice (locally, nationally and internationally);
- Offer progression opportunities (as audiences, artistically and into the arts and wider workforce);
- Develop initiatives to raise the visibility of projects;
- Offer platforms for performance;
- Establish the environment to create a cross-arts community of young artists - the next generation - developing skills of some participants to a level where they can progress further, e.g. through the new Barbican Guildhall undergraduate course in Performance & Collaboration (launching September 2015) or routes provided by partners.

An example of a working partnership:

Following extensive partnership working inspired through Derry City of Culture 2013, the following proposals, currently in development for 2015 – 16, might be of interest as an example of partnership working engaging working class communities with the arts. For this example, we would use the term working class communities to refer to 'people/communities in areas of deprivation and need'

The following are currently key partners:

- Wall to Wall Music
- Culture Tech
- Other Voices / Outer Voices
- Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning

At its heart the themes that resonate through all of this work are Distinctiveness, Diversity, Creativity and Inclusiveness at a time when many young people are experiencing unprecedented social, cultural and economic change, it's about letting young people imagine something better - 'Who Owns The Future'?

We propose the programme will include the following:

- Skills exchange and partnership-building between all partners
- Work with key groups of young people, initially focusing on the At Sixes and Sevens Group (based in Derry), who have been working with Wall2Wall Music, Verbal Arts Centre and Barbican Guildhall
- Development of collaborative working with Other Voices on
 - (a) Development of Outer Voices programme in Derry and in London
 - (b) Create and enhance links and joint working across the north and the south of Ireland.
 - (c) Provision of platforms for young ensembles and artists in Derry, Dingle, London and on line/ through broadcast
 - (d) Develop outward facing national/international 'nodes' of a 'Young Arts Academy', which links young people in Ireland and London and provides hard and soft skills training and pathways into creative industries and other employment contributing to the growth of these sectors in NI

- (e) Continue to strengthen the connections already established between London, Derry and Dingle
- Development of further collaborative working with CultureTech Festival on (a) CultureTech London (b) Schools technology education (Hackathons in Derry and London Schools) (c) Big Video Challenge Platform as part of Young Arts Academy

The partnership is currently working at development stages and is assessing income streams and fund raising strategies. We would be pleased to talk further with the committee regarding these plans.