

# Partnership Investment Plan 2018-22 – updated Dec 2019

This Partnership Investment Plan outlines A New Direction's approach to securing Partnership Investment between 2018 and 2022.

## Background

Between 2018 and 2022, A New Direction will invest a quarter of our Arts Council Bridge grant in Partnership Investment. This investment will focus on establishing a strong, sustainable infrastructure to support children and young people's creative development; enabling the success of London's Cultural Education Partnerships; catalysing responses to Arts Council England's Cultural Education Challenge; and securing long-term outcomes for children and young people.

Building on the activity of the London Cultural Education Challenge (our Partnership Investment programme between 2015 and 2018) we launched a new Partnership Investment programme in March 2018, named Challenge London. Challenge London consolidates powerful aspects of the previous programme's structure and adapts other areas to incorporate learning both from evaluation and our understanding of the evolving context in London. We have particularly consolidated the local, needs-led focus of the London Cultural Education Challenge, and across 2018-2022 aims to co-invest with strategic partners whose ambitions overlap with our own.

We continue to work with two central groups of advisors: The Challenge Group; senior representatives drawn from across sectors, who work with us to agree investment programmes through an open application process; and a parallel Young Challenge Group.

## A note about our updated plan

A New Direction's Partnership Investment plan was first published in June 2018, sharing our principles for the period and detailing plans for the first investment round which took place in the 2018-2019 financial year. This refreshed plan, written in December 2019, retains and updates information about the programme's framework and offers more detailed plans for the second half of the period, 2020-2022.

## Our focus on Local Cultural Education Partnerships

Following Arts Council's expectations, Partnership Investment through Challenge London will support the strategic development of Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs) as a priority focus. This may include resource for capacity to enable LCEP progress, evaluation, or to secure the sustainability of LCEP work and achievements. Investment outside of this scope will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances. Our ambition is that LCEP areas will continue to grow and thrive and we consider Partnership Investment to be central to this success.

Partnership Investment will not be used to facilitate programme delivery, it is not an alternative to project grants and the Arts Council will not support the approval of applications where this is the case. Our ambition is that Partnership Investment will support local areas to create new financial sustainability for cultural education. Therefore, at least 100% match funding must be sourced from alternative non-arts income. This cannot include Lottery funding or support in kind. We will support LCEP partners to develop their cultural education offer locally and will be able to advise on how Partnership Investment can support their strategic development and future sustainability.

We anticipate the following from Partnership Investment activities in London between 2018 and 2022:

- New creative opportunities for over 4,000 young people. New activity will target evidenced need and range from participation in newly developed workshops and activities across a range of art forms including digital content, to opportunities to devise and develop original work<sup>i</sup>
- Commitment from 11 boroughs to support an increase in schools attaining Artsmark. Boroughs will apply for Partnership Investment to develop cultural education, including support for Artsmark (see Strand 1 below). We will identify individual targets based on current Artsmark levels, all of which will be greater than 20%<sup>ii</sup>
- 100% of Partnership Investment programmes which involve direct delivery with young people will have embedded Arts Award in their delivery
- Relationships with up to fifteen new strategic investment partners<sup>iii</sup>
- To consolidate relationships with up to eleven local authorities<sup>iv</sup>

In line with our ambition to share our learning beyond London and broaden and deepen our working across the country, particularly with Bridge colleagues, we will work to have six cross-area or national programme proposals in place between 2018-2022. Because these grants will need to be agreed by a broad range of national partners, they will not go through an open-application process or be subject to the same time scales as the other Challenge London proposals (outlined in more detail below), and will in effect be solicited.

**In common with the other Bridges we will:**

- Ring fence some of our Challenge London allocation for use as part of the national network. We anticipate this will be a maximum of £100,000
- Commit to working together (with the Bridges) as part of an energetic, responsive and opportunity-driven national network
- Arising from this network, pursue Partnership Investment opportunities in sets of smaller groups and clusters based on our individual interests, connections and overlapping local needs (e.g. groups of 3-4 bridge organisations). While, of course, ensuring that the wider network is always aware of both the detail and big picture, and can amplify, comment, connect and enhance as appropriate.

## Challenge London

In the lead up to the launch of Challenge London in March 2018, the A New Direction team identified six themes we believe can help or hinder young people's capacity to develop their creativity and shape culture in London. These themes sit at the heart of the Challenge London programme and applicants are asked to respond to the picture they suggest within their proposals, considering factors that might be particularly important for young people in the area in which they're working. The six themes are: Wellbeing, New London, Pressures on Institutions, Influence and Power, Fairness and Preparing for Work.

These build on six themes that were central to the previous London Cultural Education Challenge programme, through which we found significant common ground with co-investors and cultural and education partners. We hope this refreshed central premise, which broadens out to include aspects of health and wellbeing for example, will allow us to deepen existing co-investment relationships, as well as opening-up new partnership opportunities through the 2018-2022 period.

Challenge London aims to support:

- **Partnerships:** constructing sustainable, innovative partnerships to support young people's creativity and cultural engagement
- **Outcomes:** enabling strong cultural and creative outcomes for young people (0-25) in London
- **Investment:** generating new investment for culture and creativity

## Investment process

As of December 2019, A New Direction has agreed £870,000 of investments across two strands of Challenge London. These investments are against a commitment of over £1million in match funding.

### Strand 1:

#### ***Decisions made in July 2018 committed £315,000 in five partnerships***

Strand 1 invited applications specifically from existing Cultural Education Partnerships and other existing strategic working groups. Applicants have committed to supporting an uplift in schools working towards achieving Artsmark. In assessing bids, we looked for senior local authority buy-in, involvement of a range of local partners with a common and defined purpose and children, and young people's views and concerns at the programme's heart. A logic model approach presented assumptions, anticipated outcomes and resourcing.

### Strand 2:

#### ***Decisions made in March 2019 committed £479,875 in six partnerships***

Strand 2 invested in newly formed consortia looking to develop a Local Cultural Education Partnership, alongside exceptional investment opportunities. A New Direction solicited applications for this strand. A longer timeframe from launch to full applications allowed partnerships to consolidate governance and vision to reduce risk within programme timelines.

One further investment of £75,000 was made against the Strand 1 guidance, following the Strand 2 timeline.

A third investment process will take place between January and June 2020 as follows:

**Challenge London 2020**  
**Funds available: £266,000**

In 2020 we will make additional funds available to support emerging or newly established LCEPs working in London. Investment will be open to places that are new to Challenge London, as well as those whose investment comes to an end before December 2020 providing they have received less than £75,000 to date. We will again look for senior local authority buy-in, secured parallel investment from partners, and a clear plan to ensure long-term outcomes for children and young people. Applications will again be solicited by A New Direction.

**Timeline:**

Applications open: January 2020

Applications close: April 2020

Decisions: May 2020

In recognition of the considerable time and commitment the early stages of establishing a partnership requires, we will build in a set-up across the first two months of all new grants agreed, with activity beginning after this point. The focus of this period will be decided in consultation with each partnership. It will include developing a theory of change if this is not already in place, establishing evaluation processes and partnership governance, shaping a more detailed activity plan and recruiting for additional capacity where needed.

**Considerations**

- Our [Place Strategy](#) (completed in spring 2018), including contextual information about London's demographic and growth landscape, will inform investment decisions
- Applicants will be asked to highlight how their programmes respond to and embed quality in new work established. This might include using the Quality Principles as a framework in the development of new provision, or as a reflective tool with delivery partners

**The Challenge Group**

Challenge London's central advisory group first met in spring 2018. Over the year to March 2019 the group met regularly, supporting A New Direction to make good investment decisions in the first phase of Challenge London. In parallel, the Young Challenge group (aged 16-25) met monthly. As well as inputting into Challenge London decisions, the Young Challenge group have been part of wider A New Direction events and discussions linking with the themes and ideas at the heart of Challenge London.

For the Challenge London investment process in 2020, we will work remotely with members of the Challenge Group, and in person with the Young Challenge Group, to again ask for input into the investments we make.

## Learning

A culture of ongoing reflection, evaluation and impact assessment will underpin all Challenge London work.

We will continue to offer peer learning opportunities for Challenge London programme leads alongside managers from other Local Cultural Education Partnerships not currently receiving investment from Challenge London, and to encourage reflective practice within partnerships.

A monitoring process will track project development and learning gathered across the programme and feed into our online communications in blogs, resources, toolkits and other materials sharing our developing understanding of this work. Our evaluation approach will draw out the story of the Challenge and iteratively contribute to programme developments.

---

<sup>i</sup> A New Direction will monitor this ambition across the life of the programme and aim to break down participation in more detail in our reporting in 2022. Given the varied and strategic nature of programmes in which we are investing through Challenge London young people's involvement will vary from programme to programme. Young people might be involved as decision-makers or advisers and producers, as well as in new creative work which might be a 'one-off activity' or a longer-term process.

<sup>ii</sup> This updates the original ambition (published in June 2018) for four local authorities to commit support for Artsmark in this way, reflecting the significant interest from local authorities in Challenge London to date.

<sup>iii</sup> This figure updates the ambition published in 2018 to work with eight new investment partners, reflecting a higher number of investments than originally anticipated being made through Challenge London in 2018-2019.

<sup>iv</sup> This figure updates the original ambition (published in 2018) of partnership work with four local authorities to reflect significant buy-in from London local authorities in the first two years of the Challenge London programme.