

London Cultural Education Challenge, 2015-2018

Between 2015 and 2018, A New Direction's London Cultural Education Challenge supported new creative programmes aiming to:

- Constructing sustainable, innovative partnerships for the delivery of cultural education across London
- Providing better cultural education outcomes for young people (0-25) in London
- Generating new sources of funding to improve cultural education opportunity

A New Direction ran two processes inviting applications for investment; one in 2015 and one in 2016/2017. Both were two stage processes with partnerships asked to submit expressions of interest and then shortlisted programmes submitting more involved second stage plans. We worked closely throughout with our Challenge Group and Young Challenge Group.

Our Challenge Group comprised: Paul Reeve, Paul Roberts, Martyn Evans, Keeley Williams, Finbarr Whooley, Anita Kerwin-Nye (who chaired the group), and Adam Jeanes who attended on behalf of Arts Council England. Our Young Challenge Group involved 13 young people aged 16-25.

The Challenge and Young Challenge Groups discussed and advised AND on proposals and investments, and representatives took part in interviews with applicants.

Investments

In the 2015 investment round, A New Direction committed investment totalling £691, 285 for seven programmes:

Cultivate, £85,000
Creative Youth, £128,600
Music for Change, £50,000
Creative Schools, £170,000
Creative Croydon, £50,000
Getting Ready Dance, £67,685
#CultureMakers. £140,000

You can find more on these programmes at: <https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/what-we-do/cultural-education-challenge/the-initiatives>

You can read reflections from Anita Kerwin-Nye on the applications we received in 2015 here: <https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/blog/cultural-education-challenge-first-insights-from-our-chair>.

Including data on the expressions of interest:
<https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/asset/2000/view>

In 2016/2017 we made five further investments totalling £132,014. Two additional grants were offered to existing partners, and three to new partners.

Cultivate, £30,000
Creative Croydon, £25,000
Bellingham Partnership, £27,000
ICA x Peabody x Kingston, £25,000
Our Hayes, Our Heritage, £25,014

We invested a further £50,000 in two additional programmes through 2017:

Project Oracle, Arts Cohort, £25,000
A vision for 2026: Hackney – the child-friendly city, £25,000

This brings the total committed across the life of the programme to £873,299. £26,701 will be carried forward to 2018-2019 for investment in the next phase of Challenge London.

After the second investment round, Anita reflected on lessons coming through the process in a second blog: <https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/blog/10-rules-for-being-a-better-funder>

Partnership investment

Across the programme partners have already evidenced parallel investment from a range of partners totalling over £900,000.

The table below shows the proportion of match investment to date contributed by different types of investment partner.

Type of investor	% of Match
Trusts and Charitable Foundations	19.4%
Housing Association partners	15.0%
Local Authorities	14.4%
Developers/Regeneration partners	14.2%
Cultural partners and schools contributions	13.1%
Local development trusts	12.9%
Sport England	7.4%
Higher Education	3.6%

Connecting partners

A New Direction arranged termly meetings for partners receiving investment through the Challenge, programmed with a mixture of presentations and group discussion. AND shared our research in areas connecting with the London Cultural Education Challenge themes, and invited partners to present about and discuss aspects of their work. Areas of focus included: our research *Cultural (Re)Generation: Building Creative Places*, evaluation and measuring impact and consortia and partnership working.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Dawn Langley led a process of Action Research embedded across the London Cultural Education Challenge from 2015-2018, with annual reflection points to review and address suggestions, and reports submitted each April.

Lead partners fed-back on progress, successes and challenges to AND quarterly via an online form. Partners were asked to write more extensive evaluations annually drawing on outcomes, evidence for these, and next steps.

A member of the AND team was allocated 'lead contact' for each programme receiving investment, and kept in touch with the programme delivery.

Reach and partnerships

Monitoring information so far indicates that over 10,000 young people have been involved in the work across the life of the programme. Activity ranges from in and out of school creative workshops across art-forms, to consultation on local plans, to projects enabling connection with the creative industries and progression into employment. Over 200 organisational partners have been involved.

Lead partners in the programmes have been:

Arts and cultural organisations
Youth organisations
A local development organisation (Westway Trust)
Local authorities
A further education college
An architecture firm

Contributing partner organisations include:

Arts/cultural organisations	Museums and archives
Local authorities	Youth/children's centres
Community centres	Libraries
Primary, secondary and special schools	Nurseries
Music hubs	An NHS Trust
Youth groups	Commercial Businesses
Housing trusts	Higher education organisations
Property developers	

Outcomes

A fuller evaluation of the London Cultural Education Challenge will be undertaken in the summer after summative findings from our action research process and programme evaluations are received. We've included here some ideas emerging around our three programme aims.

Constructing sustainable, innovative partnerships for the delivery of cultural education across London

“It feels like with all the challenges we are facing as organisations, as schools, as young people, one of the ways to find solutions is to work together more closely. I am very proud that we have gone on the journey.”

- Creative Schools

Partners have worked with a wide range of organisations across-sectors and the variety of organisations who have connected with this work only goes to show the complexity of the network of people involved with cultural learning.

Finding common ground from the start in shared ambitions and priorities has come through as essential, and partners have discussed the time needed for this, even before application stage.

Partners have spoken of the value they have found in constructing a localised evidence base or needs analysis with priorities to which the group can respond and return, and ensuring strong memoranda of understanding or terms of reference.

Generating new sources of funding to improve cultural education opportunity

“I’m proud of how so many diverse organisations have come together and have started to work and think collectively.”

- Bellingham Partnership

Over the past three years we have found commonality in ambitions with partners within and outside of the arts and creative sectors. Areas of cross-over include in community development, skills acquisition and progression to work and celebrating places with and through arts and culture. The type of organisations who have been involved are listed earlier in this document.

Although not included in the figures above, notable too is in-kind support offered by a wide-range of strategic and delivery partners. This includes considerable staff time to supporting new strategic conversations, space, facilities.

Providing better cultural education outcomes for young people (0-25) in London

“Our first point was getting young people in a room to tell us what they want and what they would like, and using that as a springboard to go on and respond to.”

- Creative Croydon

The work of all the programmes was informed by young people, and strong learning emerged about involving young voices in all aspects of programming.

Strong evaluation frameworks – including examples rooted in national evaluations and in conjunction with universities - enabled strong evidence to emerge.

Serendipity has been important across the Challenge. Within the work we saw valuable new connections, ideas or opportunities arising from a chance meeting at an event or sharing a cup of tea. These offered new directions and unexpected outcomes within the programmes.