

A woman with curly hair is singing into a microphone on a stage. The scene is lit with red and blue lights, creating a dramatic atmosphere. The woman is wearing a black sleeveless top and a necklace with large beads. The background is dark with some blurred lights.

Bradford Producing Hub Final Evaluation Report

September 2023

Written by Jael Williams, Ruth Melville
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Credits

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About this report

Funded by Arts Council England, Bradford Producing Hub (BPH) 'aims to make sure Bradford is a creative city where lots of amazing live performance is happening all the time.'¹ This report is a summary of the evaluation findings across its four years of delivery.

This evaluation was commissioned in 2020 to cover the remaining period of the programme and was developed from a Story of Change approach, which explores the difference a programme makes, and what works in achieving this difference. RMR Ltd took an embedded and partnership approach, providing formative feedback and supporting reflective sessions.

This report is not the full story of Bradford Producing Hub or a detailed narrative and analysis of individual projects – these can be found elsewhere in the many pieces of work which BPH has produced over the four years. It is an attempt to take a step back and analyse the difference that BPH has made against its aims, and which approaches have worked. It draws on the experiences and feedback from participating artists, partners and core team.

The report contains the following sections:

- **Summary** provides an overview of this report and its findings.
- **Section 1** introduces the project and setting and sets out the key delivery and outputs.
- **Section 2** explores the difference it made to the artists and creatives of the Bradford District.
- **Section 3** explore BPH's impact on the cultural ecosystem of Bradford District.
- **Section 4** discusses how the BPH model evolved, learned and how it shared its learning.
- **Section 5** concludes and shares recommendations for the future.

There are Appendices covering additional detailed information and the methodology.

¹ <https://bdproducinghub.co.uk/the-project/>



Summary

This is a summary of the final evaluation report for Bradford Producing Hub (BPH) and covers its four years of delivery.

The evaluation was commissioned in 2020 to cover the remaining period of the programme and was developed using a Story of Change approach.

About Bradford Producing Hub

Bradford Producing Hub is a pilot project, four years in duration and funded by Arts Council England. It had a total investment of £2m in cash. Its objective is to ensure that Bradford becomes a creative city with Live Art performance 'happening all the time'².

The original BPH Consortium partners were Theatre in the Mill (part of University of Bradford - the lead partner), Common Wealth, Kala Sangam, Displace Yourself Theatre, 154 Collective and Mind the Gap. By Year 4, the Consortium included three independent Bradford artists, Theatre in the Mill (lead), Kala Sangam and Displace Yourself Theatre.

The decision was taken to set up BPH to feel and act like an independent entity, but it was hosted and supported extensively in terms of administration by the University of Bradford.

This phase of ACE funding is now complete but the journey for BPH continues. It has set up as a company and is transitioning away from the University of Bradford so it has true independence.

² <https://bdproducinghub.co.uk/the-project/>

Key developments

Joint Cultural Needs Assessment: An early sector needs analysis led to a 'Joint Cultural Needs Assessment' which set the foundations for the BPH programme as well as offering a baseline for the wider sector. The JCNA highlighted a disjointed sector with few networking opportunities; people lacked awareness of what was going on and didn't know how to start or develop their careers.

The Consortium: These organisations and individuals have offered significant in-kind support, commitment and resource including time, capacity and space, to BPH, amounting to £232,425: 60% of the overall contribution. Membership of the Consortium has focused on representation.

Creativity Council: The BPH 'Creativity Council' is an innovative model established with the aim of representing Bradford's communities and forming a devolved community decision making panel for BPH funding. The Creativity Council was given complete decision-making power for the main creative commissioning programme 'Make Work'. We see significant impact on the careers and lives of individual members of the Creativity Council as well as on the sector itself.

Creative Instigators: A key structural element of Bradford Producing Hub has been the 'Creative Instigators', a team of freelance artists at the heart of all decision making, design, planning and delivery. They

have been working on the ground as the connectors, coaches, mentors and producers, constantly hearing needs, meeting artists and creatives, signposting people, providing career advice, fundraising support and ad hoc one to one advice, whilst maintaining their own artistic careers.

BPH is one of the most outstanding things I have ever seen happening in a district. It is agile, well led and active.

Richard Shaw, 2025 Bid Director

What happened?



£478k+ of grants given out to artists



4,498 hours of training through events

Who made it happen?



488 freelancers and micro organisations



24 Creativity Council members



50k hours of creatives' work



656 hours of the Creativity Council

Who did it reach?



Artists applied for and won an extra **£1.8m+** through **136** fundraising support sessions



Over **5,700** artists



74% live or work in Bradford



26,073 people reached through public events



The difference it made to artists

Artists and creatives of Bradford District are the heart of the project. We explored who BPH has reached and the differences made to their practice, ambition and progression.

We find that BPH creatives:

- **Come from all backgrounds** – across the socio-economic spectrum and with good representation of disabled and neurodivergent artists. They are still slightly less likely to come from a global majority background, though this has increased over time.
- **Face barriers to work:** Over half say they have some kind of barrier to work (caring, health issues etc.). 6% have specific financial obstacles and nearly half have a caring responsibility.
- **Overwhelmingly like the BPH offer** and feels it fits their need. 87% said their needs were always met by BPH.
- **Feel increased ambition:** 74% are inspired to meet new goals and 66% empowered to push boundaries.
- **Feel their careers are supported by BPH:** 73% feel they have increased opportunities and 54% feel more connected to creatives in Bradford.
- **Feel nurtured and supported by BPH** through the team's bespoke and one-to-one approach, and the opportunity to build on skills year-on-year.

The difference it made to place

We investigated the strategic impact of BPH's programme over four years, including the progress made towards goals set out in the Joint Cultural Needs Assessment carried out in 2019-20.

We find that BPH has:

- **Been a key player in the transformation of how Bradford District does culture** – it is more valued, and the cultural ecosystem is stronger, more confident and connected.
- **Modelled and developed a more collaborative culture** across the district's ecosystem.
- **Inspired others through new inclusive and distributed approaches to leadership**, dismantling hierarchical structures and valuing the expertise and experience of others.
- **Shifted the value given to the freelance workforce**, encouraging those commissioned to maintain their own practice and focus on quality.
- **Played a key role in encouraging increased investment into the ecosystem**, for example through support for new NPO applications to Arts Council England.
- **Supported the development and use of a strong evidence base** and reflective practice, so that the sector is more aware of needs and opportunities.

The difference it made to learning

We consider the models and processes developed by Bradford Producing Hub as it has evolved. This includes how the BPH team learned, operated and was governed – identifying what approaches have been crucial to success. Additionally, we review where learning has been disseminated and what can be shared more widely in the future.

We find that:

- **Being a pilot programme freed BPH up to trial new ways of working** and build on their lived experience of the sector.
- **Questioning traditional ways of doing things works.** Taking risks, and challenging hierarchies and bad practice, are hallmarks of the BPH approach.
- **The team has developed a ‘test and learn’ model** – a reflective approach which builds on what works and iterates to overcome challenges to continually innovate.
- **The ethos of BPH and the way it works are as important to the success as the individual programmes it runs.** Values that drive transparency, empathy, caring and needs-led approaches filter down into every aspect of delivery.
- **BPH has been particularly effective in ensuring that ambition, quality and inclusivity** remain at the heart of the work.
- **BPH has openly and actively shared learning** more widely with the sector through events, conferences and networking.

The aims and ethos of the Producing Hub concept – along with the built-in commitment to challenging the status quo of the sector which started at the bid stage and then was championed within the Consortium – afforded the opportunity for the team to develop, test and refine new approaches.

Often external funding is linked to defined outputs. However, the pilot nature of this programme has supported the team to experiment with engagement and delivery models, partnership building and ways of measuring the impact of the programme on the sector as a whole as well as on individuals.

There remain some barriers (including pressure from funders) which influence this flexibility and which if removed would really allow creative risk taking to flourish.

During the test and learn process, there is evidence of significant development of new approaches to:

- Equality, diversity and inclusivity
- Producing
- Fundraising
- Marketing skills development
- Mid-career development

All with a focus on ‘quality’.

Conclusions

A radical success

It is clear that Bradford Producing Hub is a remarkable project. It is ground-breaking in the sense that it has done things never done before.

Looking back at the Story of Change developed and reviewed in 2021 we see that BPH has reached its short-term ambitions and made huge inroads towards long term strategic change. It is widely recognised, in and beyond the district, as one of the key drivers of the change and growth in Bradford. This is something that every city would benefit from.

It has made a significant difference to Bradford's arts ecosystem, both at the strategic and individual levels. Involvement in every strategic group and initiative developed in the sector over the last four years has meant that the BPH focus on freelancers and the needs of the district's creatives are to the fore in thinking.

As a result of this BPH has been able to model and share its aim of shifting where power sits and who has a voice in the sector, acting as a positive role model for changing how leadership and collaboration are done.

At an individual level, BPH has made a huge difference to hundreds of creatives – particularly freelancers – and to the people and organisations they work with. It has done this by supporting progression routes and talent development at all stages of career and life – building their confidence, capacities, skills and ambition, and investing in making new work.

It has also supported creatives to build networks and develop a strong voice within decision-making, both internally and within the ecosystem as a whole.

But this is just the start of the journey. Our evaluation shows that the sector still needs BPH's support to progress to a position where it is thriving, diverse, resilient, fully embedded in long-term local policies and agendas, and attracting sustained investment.

Approaches for success

The power of this organisation is in its culture, ethos, values and principles for working with creative practitioners and changing an entrenched system, not just in the programmes it delivers.

There are three key components to success:

1. **Knowing:** The team of freelancers are embedded and expert in their own communities and artforms. They know the sector, its needs, its strengths and the opportunities. They invest in deep reflective and evaluative work designed for organisational growth and learning.
2. **Caring:** The team cares about the sector, about audiences, about quality art and experiences and about living in Bradford. They continue to challenge complacency and bad practice, to dismantle hierarchies and embed equality, diversity and inclusion.
3. **Radical:** The team is agile, curious, prepared to take risks and challenge poor practice – committed to positive transformation.

Recommendations

As fits a reflective learning organisation, BPH has implemented most of the recommendations from previous years.

As this phase of the programme ends, we direct our recommendations not just to BPH itself, but also to the Bradford District sector. We recognise the need for wider investment and a strategic approach to deliver longer term, sustainable change.

Through the partnership with Bradford 2025 and other funding opportunities, BPH can directly continue the work undertaken to date. Doing this further strengthens and develops the sector, while shifting where decisions are made. It thus ensures Bradford has the ambitious, distinct, high quality and recognised arts sector it deserves.

There are areas of concern looking at the next phase of BPH. Two success factors are firstly, the commitment to reflection and learning from data, and secondly, the close connection with the voice of the sector. These are supported by a strong evaluation partnership and the Creativity Council - neither of which currently have funding to continue.

BPH listen to artists and their experience and are a vital lifeline in the arts...

BPH artists, via annual survey

Recommendations for Bradford Producing Hub

In order to ensure that the success so far continues, BPH should:

- **Retain the staffing approach**, managing turnover, recruiting thoughtfully, building up skills and delivering them back into the sector. Consider longer term part-time freelance placement opportunities.
- **Continuing the commitment to wellbeing** – acknowledging the multiple challenges faced by the arts sector in Bradford and the weight of responsibility and commitment for the team.
- **Continue to reach into wider arts networks and communities** in Bradford to understand the barriers preventing them from engaging.
- **Continue the test and learn approach** – explicitly taking risks, adapting and honing delivery to meet what will be increasingly rapidly changing needs around 2025.
- **Share further what works**. Continue the process of dissemination via conferences, discussions and workshops. Also think about other ways of sharing, such as short reports and pull-out learning from the evaluation report and other sources.
- Think hard about navigating between the demands and needs to **continue to support producers and creatives at all levels**, and the specific need to build up skills and experience among producers ready to work at a national level. This isn't simply an immediate need for 2025 delivery, but is also key for a balanced ecosystem which doesn't continue to lose talent.

- **Provide a supported legacy for the Creativity Council**, now a key part of the ecosystem, including continued development and coordination. Roll out this model beyond Bradford. Weave this into the narrative of the sectors' achievements over the last few years.
- **Recognise the importance of time and support for reflection** and learning within the programme, in particular the use of data and feedback, and regular challenge and reflect sessions. Look to the partnership with Bradford 2025 which has its own evaluation team to see how this can replace the support the existing evaluation partnership offers.
- **Roll out the commitment to robust evaluation and impact measurement.** Explore the opportunity of using Social Return on Investment to gain a greater understanding of the wider value of the work of BPH to the whole district. Bradford 2025 evaluation plans offer an opportunity to develop this.

... BPH has supported me and I hope to continue connecting with the things they do in the future. BPH provides valuable training and support for creatives to develop and network.

BPH artist, via annual survey

Recommendations for Bradford Cultural Sector

The BPH programme has catalysed a long journey to reconnect, revitalise, stabilise and develop talent within the sector. The work done so far has made clear how much there still needs to be done to build a thriving self-sustaining ecosystem.

To build on this work BPH should work with the wider sector, particularly through the Creative Place Partnership as an overseeing body to:

- **Maintain the voice and perspective of freelancers and creatives** at every stage of their careers in longer term planning, continuing to challenge assumptions of where power should sit. Consider whether the Creativity Council is a model which might work for the whole sector.
- **Promote the importance of the ways of working in building a thriving ecosystem** – feeding in the principles of considering inclusivity, wellbeing, and new models of leadership into strategies and organisational development programmes.
- **Commission a full review of the Joint Cultural Needs Assessment** in partnership with key bodies from other sectors and Bradford 2025 – this can provide the intelligence for action planning around the 2025 legacy.



ORIGINAL

Eat the Beat

1. Introduction

In this section we provide background on the socio-economic context of Bradford, how Bradford Producing Hub (BPH) works and the overall programme content and discuss our approach to evaluation.

1.1. About Bradford

1.1.1. Population

Data about the population of Bradford comes predominantly from the latest Census.³ Bradford District is the fifth largest metropolitan authority in England for population, with over 546,400 people. The population has a diverse mix of ethnicities, with a large South Asian community (28%). The population of Bradford is younger than average, with a median age of 36.7 years compared to 40 for England.

1.1.2. Economy and employment

There are high levels of deprivation in Bradford. More residents are economically inactive – not in employment or seeking work – than the average for Yorkshire and the Humber and England, and this figure has increased in the last ten years. A third of families are experiencing poverty.

³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E08000032/>

⁴ <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/health-and-life-expectancy/>

⁵ <https://www.cultureisourplan.co.uk/>

1.1.3. Health and welfare

Bradford residents are more at risk than average for the UK in certain health and welfare indicators. Life expectancy in the most deprived areas of Bradford is 10 years less than average for England.⁴ Residents of Bradford District are slightly more likely to be disabled (19.0%) than the average for both Yorkshire and the Humber (18.9%) and England (17.7%).

1.1.4. Arts and cultural ecology and engagement

12 million people visit Bradford each year, 54% of which visit for cultural reasons, which creates 14,000 jobs with an economic impact of £696 million.⁵ Of this sector, 40% are freelance, higher than the average for England of 33%.⁶

Bradford being UK City of Culture in 2025 will provide increased artistic and cultural production, showcase Bradford's cultural offer on a regional, national, and international level and raise Bradford's profile. As part of Bradford 2025, a £3m funding pot has been created to support local groups and organisations to fund works to

⁶ The BPH team believe this figure could be even higher when consideration of artists having multiple jobs / income streams is considered and due to people assigning 'employed status' depending on mixed income avenues – see our notes below on the artists and creatives who responded to the BPH survey.

buildings in Bradford to increase availability of cultural venues ahead of City of Culture.⁷

Levels of arts engagement captured with traditional methods, such as Audience Spectrum analysis, report fairly low levels of arts engagement in Bradford. However, 88% of residents say they engage with arts and culture often or occasionally and that they value it highly.⁸ This suggests traditional measures may not accurately capture the thriving cultural scene in Bradford.

1.2. About BPH

Bradford Producing Hub is a pilot project of four years in duration and funded by Arts Council England. Its objective is to ensure that Bradford becomes a creative city with Live Art performance 'happening all the time'.⁹

The project began with a call-out from Arts Council England (ACE) who wanted to test what they called 'Performing Arts Producing Hubs'. Expressions of Interest were invited that would test ambitious place-based approaches to building a vibrant and diverse local performing arts ecology. ACE funded two Producing Hubs in Bradford and Derby, each receiving £1.5m. The proposals presented in each location were very different and created huge opportunities for learning and sharing. ACE was interested in projects that were led by consortia, would use a demand and evidence led approach, would involve co-creation and collaborative work and support artistic risk taking. The original BPH Consortium partners were Theatre in the Mill (part of University of Bradford - the lead

partner), Common Wealth, Kala Sangam, Displace Yourself Theatre, 154 Collective and Mind the Gap - all small organisations, none of whom had the capacity to run the Producing Hub themselves. The decision was taken to set up BPH to feel and act like an independent entity. It has been hosted by University of Bradford but will become fully independent in November 2023.

The generosity of these six small companies coming together to make something amazing happen for Bradford cannot be understated. Their commitment and determination made all this possible, and it wasn't an easy ride.

Lisa Mallaghan, Director BPH

By Year 4, the Consortium included three independent Bradford artists, Theatre in the Mill (lead) and Kala Sangam.

Early on the Arts Council requested a sector needs analysis leading to a 'Joint Cultural Needs Assessment' which set the grounding for the BPH programme as well as offering a baseline for the wider sector. This was delivered through a six-month artist-led process that focused on listening to people and place as well as researching policy and practice. The JCNA highlighted a disjointed sector with few if any networks or networking opportunities; people lacked awareness of what was going on and didn't know how to start or develop their careers.

The BPH 'Creativity Council' was established with the aim of representing Bradford's communities and forming a community

⁷ <https://bradford2025.co.uk/2023/06/08/cultural-capital-fund/>

⁸ Indigo Ltd (2021) Creative Choice: An Audience Engagement Framework.

⁹ <https://bdproducinghub.co.uk/the-project/>

decision making panel for BPH funding. The Creativity Council was given complete decision-making power for the main creative commissioning programme 'Make Work', through which they distributed over £211,000 in grants from £3,000 - £18,000.

They were also a sounding board for the whole BPH programme, identifying gaps, constantly challenging the team, sitting on recruitment panels, and taking part in decision making for a further £70,000 of grants delivered in partnership with Bradford Council, New Queers on the Block, Transform Festival and more.

The Creativity Council has been an innovative model and successful demonstration of the power of devolved decision making. We see significant impact on the careers and lives of individual members of the Creativity Council as well as on the sector itself. This is discussed further in the [Case Study](#) below. This model is a key part of the legacy of BPH within and beyond Bradford.

A key structural element of Bradford Producing Hub has been the 'Creative Instigators', a team of freelance artists at the heart of all decision making, design, planning and delivery. They have been working on the ground as the connectors, coaches, mentors and producers, constantly hearing needs, meeting artists and creatives, signposting people, providing career advice, fundraising support and ad hoc one to one advice, whilst maintaining their own artistic careers.



This phase of ACE funding is now complete, but the journey for BPH continues. It has set up as a company and is transitioning the project out of the University of Bradford, so it has true independence. The organisation and team remain deeply committed to being needs-led and supporting Bradford’s cultural sector to continue to grow until such time as it is no longer needed.

1.3. BPH in numbers

BPH has gone from strength to strength in the last four years in terms of reach, engagement, funding, content and career development.

The overall project budget was £2 million in cash, with 75% coming from Arts Council England and the remainder coming from Bradford Council, who are centring culture in the strategic development plans for Bradford, and Trust and Foundation partners including Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Cause 4, ESF Groundworks and Jerwood Arts. Additional support has come from Sponsorship and Business.

In kind support of over £383,000 was also provided, largely from Consortium partners, particularly the University of Bradford.



- 30% of the funding has gone straight to artists and creatives as grants, training bursaries and access costs.
- 39% of the funding has been used to employ freelance Creative Instigators, delivery partners, producers, fundraisers and consultants for the sector, and to provide wrap around support for people receiving grants.
- 31% of the funding has been used for core delivery costs, including the core team of 3 PAYE employees, overhead costs, marketing costs, resources to deliver the programme (room hire, equipment, catering etc.).

1.4. Story and structure of the programme

The Bradford Producing Hub programme is made up of eight strands of work. In this section we explain these and highlight key elements within them. A more detailed description of each offer can be found in Appendix 3.

Over the four years of delivery, BPH has developed its programme to reflect need across the sector, and in response to local and global concerns including Covid-19, the Black Lives Matter movement, the climate challenge and the cost of living crisis. The programme this year shows the development of work progression, mid-career artists and organisational development, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Care (including health and wellbeing and climate focused work). BPH has invested significantly in being 'unashamedly focused' on breaking down barriers to support equality, widen diversity and be inclusive.

1. Needs assessment

The first strand aims to understand the needs the project should address and to support the creation of more Live Art in Bradford. The key element in this is the Creativity Council.

2. Talent development

The talent development strand of work delivers structured and responsive training and development for all artists at any point of their career. It supports the creation of more Live Art inside and outside of the city. This strand provides working group sessions, online 'expert' discussions, one to one support, training courses, residencies and funding opportunities such as Spare Bob seed funding for individual development of up to £500.

3. Reaching people

This strand ensures that work is relevant, reaches audiences and shares ways to improve how audiences engage with Live Arts. Over the four years of the project this has included Live Art events and performances, informal socials, and supporting existing or developing new networks for global majority artists, musicians and emerging producers.

4. New work

The New Work strand provides research and development funding, commissions and creative support to enable more Live Art *in* Bradford and *by* Bradford artists and creatives. Make Work, R&D, and Testing and Delivery funding has been between £3,000 and £18,000, plus a final 'Big Commission' of £40,000.

5. Transforming Spaces

Funding of up to £2500 to help people and organisations in Bradford to develop new spaces that will support the live arts sector. Projects can include expansion or creation of new spaces, purchase of resources, feasibility studies and business planning processes.

6. Shared resources

This is a selection of practical resources available on the BPH website including videos and documentation relevant to funding and research. In addition, BPH developed Bradford Performance Places website, a searchable database of Bradford's venues and spaces, and the Guide to Outdoor Arts.

7. Management and delivery

Ensuring the programme is well managed and supported, while creating new routes into the arts sector, including the Consortium, PAYE systems and a freelance team structure.

8. Evaluation, learning and legacy

Evaluating and sharing the successes and failures of the project, proving need, and having a constant eye to the future.



ZAIBUNNISA
Maryam Wahid

8 April to 1 July 2023

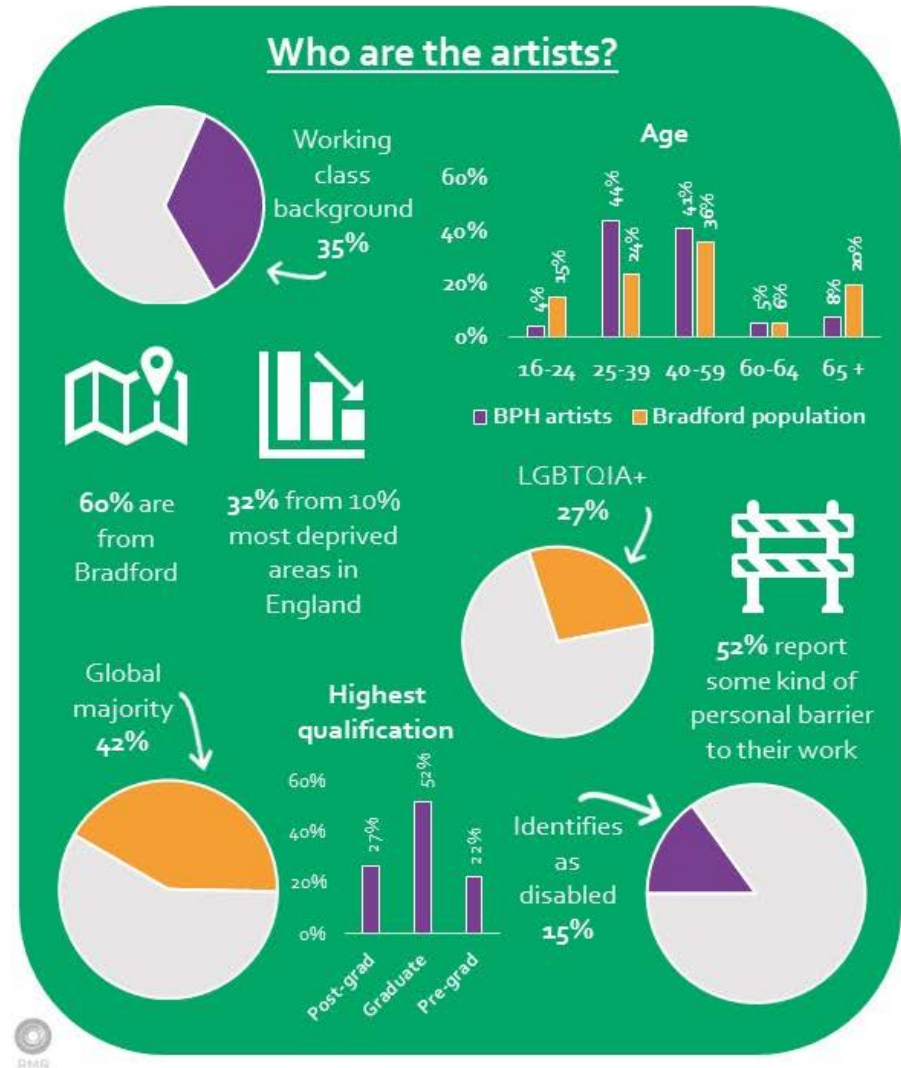


2. The difference it made to artists

The artists and creatives of Bradford District are the heart of the project. In this section we explore who BPH has reached, and the difference made to practice, ambition and progression. As well as their perspectives on BPH as an organisation, and their needs and challenges within the sector.

We find that BPH artists and creatives:

- Come from all backgrounds: with good representation of disabled and neurodivergent artists and across the socio-economic spectrum.
- Face barriers to work: Nearly half have a caring responsibility and over half say they have some barrier including caring, health issues and 6% have financial barriers to work.
- Overwhelmingly welcome and like the BPH offer and feel it fits their need: 87% said their needs were always met by BPH.
- Feel increased ambition: 74% are inspired to meet new goals and 66% empowered to push boundaries.
- Feel BPH has supported their careers: 73% feel they have increased opportunities and 54% feel more connected to artists and creatives in Bradford.
- Feel nurtured and supported by BPH: with the staff team bespoke and one to one approach, and the opportunity to build on skills year on year being key.



2.1. Reach

This section combines data from four annual surveys, with a total of 309 responses. The survey in Year 4 included wider Bradford creative sector artists, creatives and producers (45 responses) as well as those who had engaged with BPH. Therefore, the total number of sets of artists' data analysed for this section is 264, but a comparison with the full data set and with Bradford population¹⁰ is included where relevant.

Additional understanding of demographics comes from an open 'ethnographic' question allowing full self-report of demographic information, with 1,208 total responses. The actual response rates of each chart are displayed in the titles.

2.1.1. Who BPH reaches

The infographic collates the key information from the annual surveys about artists and producers who have engaged with BPH over the length of the programme.

Artists and producers who engage with BPH are slightly more likely (74%) to be White than the Bradford population (61%), and much less likely to be Asian or Asian British (12%) than the Bradford population (32%). Figure 1 shows a breakdown of ethnicity.

I have raved to everyone about how much BPH has supported me and I hope to continue connecting with the things they do in the future. BPH provides valuable training and support for creatives to develop and network.

BPH artist, via annual survey

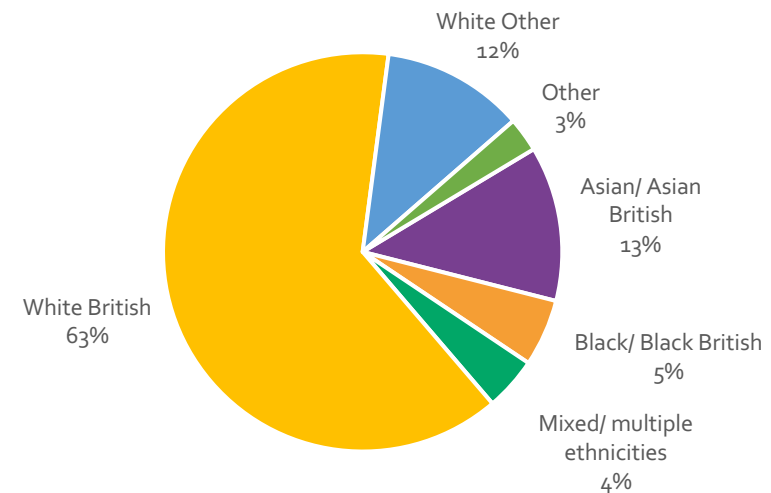


Figure 1: Average ethnicity of artists and producers who have engaged with BPH in the last 3 years. Base= 260.

¹⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/Eo8000032/>

2.1.2. Demographic comparisons

Here we compare the average proportions of key demographics across the programme.¹¹

The data here comes from the entirely open ethnographic question asking people to self-report as many characteristics as they felt comfortable sharing.¹²

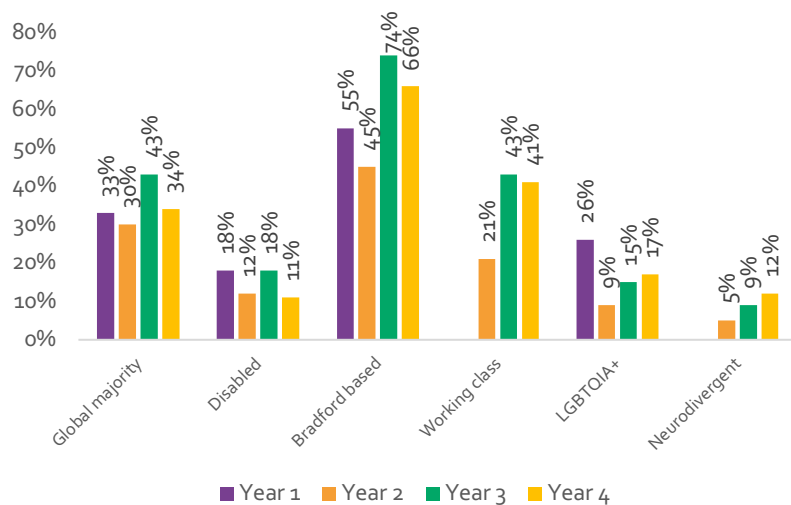


Figure 2: Ethnographic comparisons over the four years of BPH. Base = 1,209.

The proportion of artists, creatives and producers who identify as disabled, global majority and LGBTQIA+ fluctuates over the programme, with an average of 15% identifying as disabled, 35% as

¹¹ Due to the wording of questions in previous years, a comparison for Year 1 of those who identify as neurodivergent or working class was not possible.

global majority and 17% as LGBTQIA+ over the four years. BPH are reaching increasing numbers of artists and producers who come from working class backgrounds, or who identify as neurodivergent, as well as greater numbers from Bradford itself.

Error! Reference source not found. compares how artists and producers define their gender identities across the four years. On average, the majority (69%) identify as female, a third (29%) as male and 3% as non-binary. Artists and producers who identify as non-binary has been increased over the last two years to 5%.

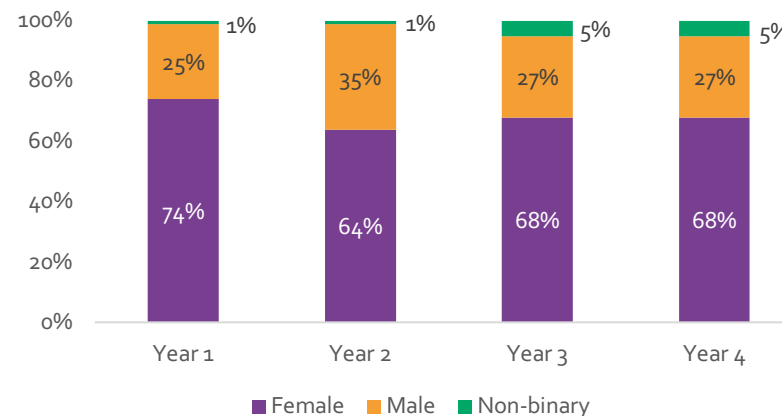


Figure 3: Gender identity of BPH artists and producers over the four years. Base = 1,209.

¹² Caution should be taken when interpreting the demographic figures from this question, as results are potentially biased due to people underreporting characteristics they see as the 'norm', e.g. less likely to say they are not disabled.

2.1.3. Indices of Multiple Deprivation

Here we explore the Indices of Multiple Deprivation¹³ of BPH artists and creatives across the programme from analysis of their postcodes.

Group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
BPH artists	32%	16%	18%	5%	7%	9%	4%	4%	2%	4%
Bradford population	36%	14%	15%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%	3%	4%

Table 1: Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) analysis from postcodes provided by artists who engaged with BPH over the last four years. Base = 1,542.

Group 1 represents the 10% most deprived areas of England, and group 10 represents the 10% which are least deprived. The proportion of artists in each group is compared with proportions found in the Bradford population in general.

We find that **levels of IMD are similar** between the artists who have engaged with Bradford Producing Hub over the last four years and the average for the population of Bradford. **32% of artists are from the 10% most deprived areas** of England. This means that BPH are reaching a representative sample of Bradford with their programme.

Certain strands, however, have much higher rates of those living in the 50% most deprived areas of England than the average for the

¹³ Indices of deprivation are an official way of measuring levels of deprivation in local authorities in England. They rank local authorities using a number of metrics such as employment, income, health deprivation and crime. For more on

population (74%), such as training (91%), Spare Bob (93%) and 1 to 1 mentoring (91%).

2.1.4. Caring responsibilities

Half of artists (49%) who engaged with BPH over the last four years have had some form of caring responsibility. Figure 4 shows the types of these.

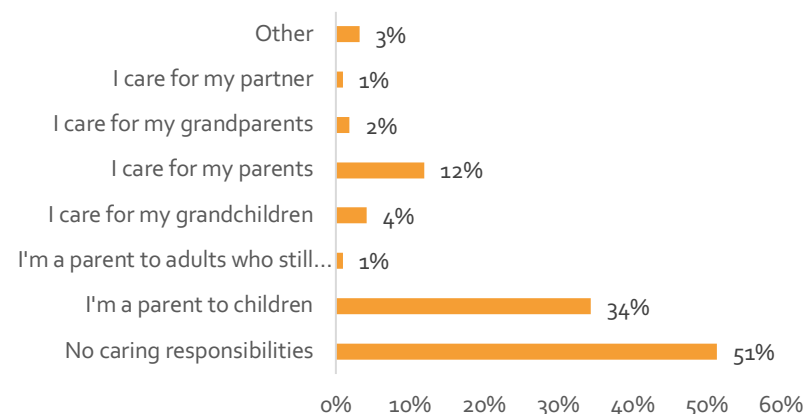


Figure 4: Caring responsibilities of artists over the last four years. Base = 218.

A third of artists have children, and 12% care for their parents. Other responses include caring for other family members such as an adult sibling and an aunt. No one reported being a foster carer.

Indices of Deprivation please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

2.1.5. Creative discipline and practice

In Year 4, artists and creatives completing the annual survey were asked to report their creative discipline. The results are shown in Figure 6. A third include visual art in their work, with arts and crafts, theatre and writing and editing also popular disciplines.

Additionally, artists in Year 4 reported their style of creative practice, shown in Figure 5.

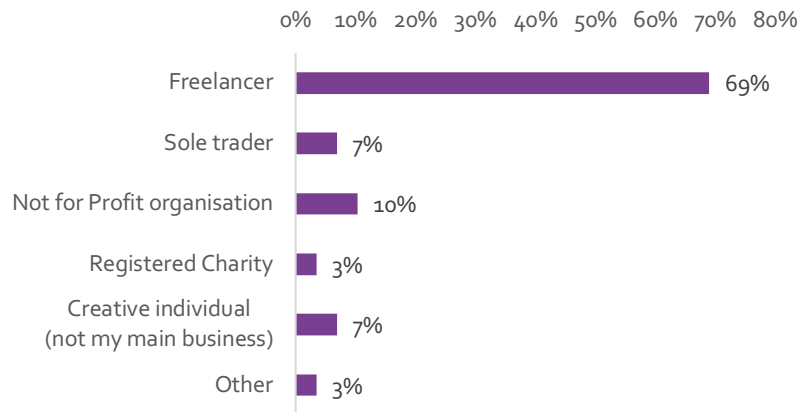


Figure 5: Creative practice style of artists in Year 4. Base = 29.

Artists in Year 4 are mostly freelancers (69%), with 10% representing not for profit organisations and 7% working as sole traders. A further 7% define themselves as creative individuals, signifying that their artistic work is not their main form of income.

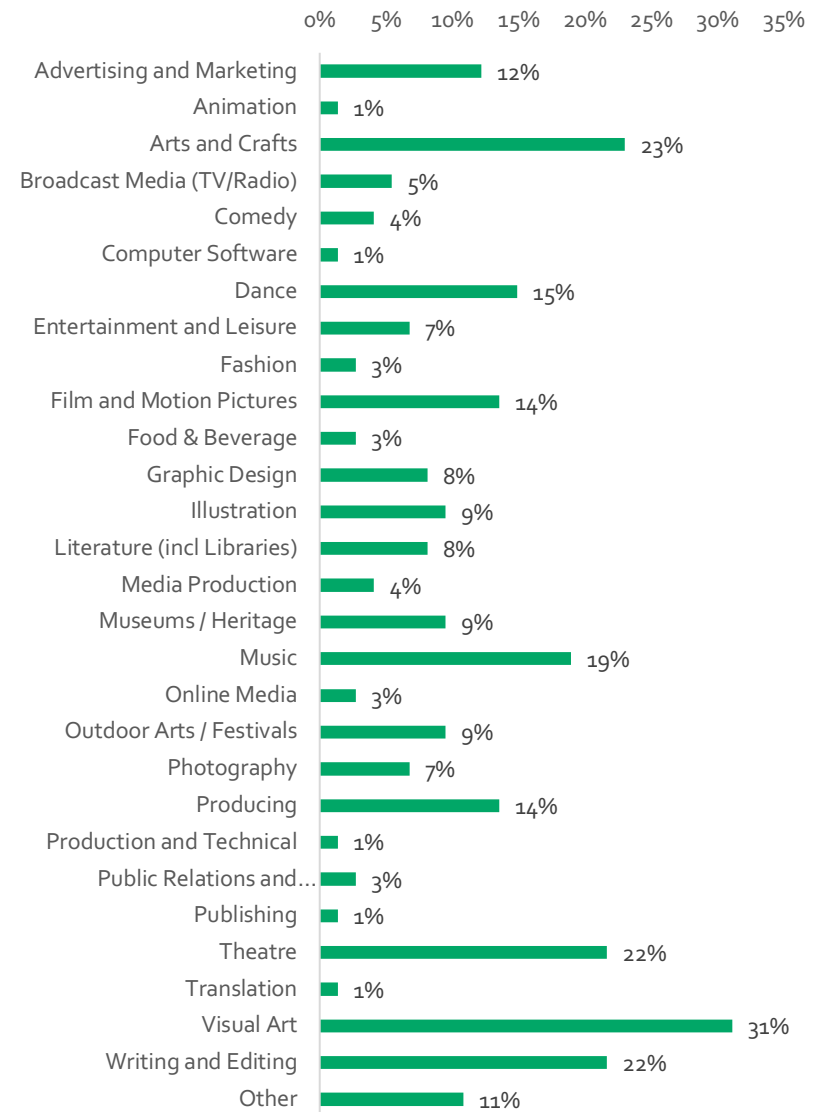


Figure 6: Creative discipline of BPH artists in Year 4. Base = 74.

2.2. Challenges for artists in Bradford

2.2.1. Personal barriers to work

Artists and producers report a number of personal barriers that affect their ability to carry out their artistic work. More than half (52%) report at least one. Figure 7 shows a breakdown of the barriers.

Nearly a quarter feel their mental health is a barrier to their work, and a fifth have caring responsibilities that prevent them from working as they would like to, although this is substantially lower than those who report having a caring responsibility in general. This means that for some artists, their caring responsibility does not affect their ability to work. 6% mention finances affecting their creative work, such as requiring full time employment elsewhere to support themselves that reduces time available for their artistic careers. This category is highest (15%) in Year 4, which may be reflective of the ongoing cost of living crisis.

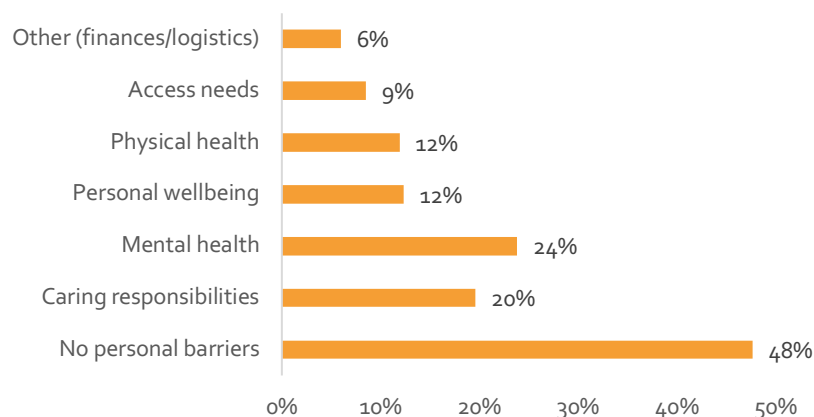


Figure 7: Personal barriers reported by artists and producers. Base = 264.

2.2.2. Accessing resources and services

The annual survey was sent to artists and creatives across Bradford district, not just those who had already engaged with BPH. They were asked if they had been involved with BPH or had heard of them.

As shown previously, the number of artists engaging with BPH has grown over the years. Figure 8 shows that there are still a significant number of artists who have heard of BPH but are yet to engage. There is likely some correlation with opening up discussions with the visual arts sector, where engagement has previously been low. Further work could be done with the wider arts networks in Bradford to explore if there are barriers preventing them from engaging to further increase BPH's reach. Promisingly, very few artists surveyed had not heard of BPH (4%), which may indicate good brand recognition in Bradford, although as this survey was circulated mainly via BPH channels, further analysis with a wider pool of respondents is needed to confirm this finding.

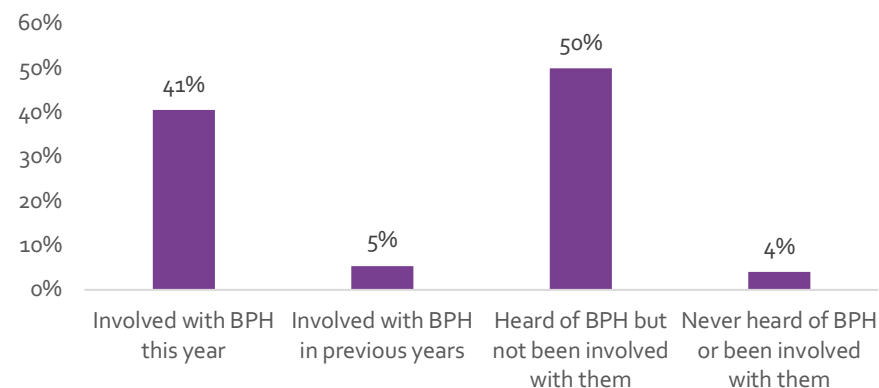


Figure 8: Whether artists of Bradford district have heard of and/or worked with BPH before, captured in Year 4. Base = 74.

2.2.3. Impact of the last four years

Many artists feel the last four years have had a significant impact on their creative practice. From the Covid-19 pandemic to the cost-of-living crisis, there are several factors which have impacted artists' ability to work.

Some are struggling to juggle their creative practice alongside carrying out non-arts paid work to support themselves:

Busy demand with paid work has meant less opportunity to be creative or spend time concentrating on creative practice.

BPH artist, via annual survey

However, there are positive signs of recovery from a few difficult years. Some artists report an increase in creative work, or a change in work style to become freelance:

A change of direction continues, and I gained more freelance work as a producer. The business is going from strength to strength.

It's been a challenge to say the least but becoming freelance has been a positive step and the support from BPH has been excellent.

BPH artists, via annual survey

2.3. The impacts

The key outcomes for artists and creatives in Bradford are reviewed in this section. This includes the development of skill, confidence and talent, and journeys of progression, career development and increasing voice and influence.

2.3.1. Skills and confidence

One marker of increased confidence is how people who engage with BPH are more forthcoming in referring to themselves as artists. Almost 70% define themselves as an artist in Year 4, 20% higher than the average over the four years. Far more people are also describing themselves as leaders, showing growing confidence in themselves.

[I valued] learning how to effectively manage myself as a freelancer and developing sturdy boundaries from being so in demand as we grow.

Creative Instigator

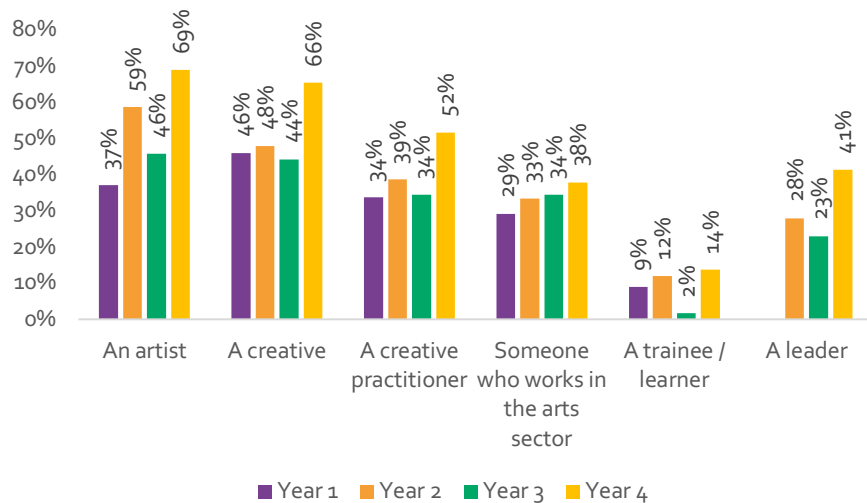


Figure 9: How artists describe themselves across the four years. Base = 254.

Artists also feel they are developing their skillsets and creative practice.

I just want to thank BPH for everything they have done for me last/this year. It has really enabled me to develop my practice, produce new work and meet wonderful people.

BPH artist, via annual survey

2.3.2. Progression, opportunity, employment

Artists who engage with Bradford Producing Hub are benefitting hugely from the opportunities for progression and work that BPH are helping to offer them. Artists mention that they would not otherwise have access to opportunities like this without the help of BPH, and the positive knock-on effect these opportunities have on their careers:

The opportunities to go and see theatre I couldn't normally afford to, as well as the networking events, have been paramount to my career so far. I also really loved the 'R and D' day as it's really helped shape my own work and cement my idea. This then gave me confidence to pitch.

BPH artist, via annual survey

48% of artists reported receiving funding at some point in the last four years in the annual survey.

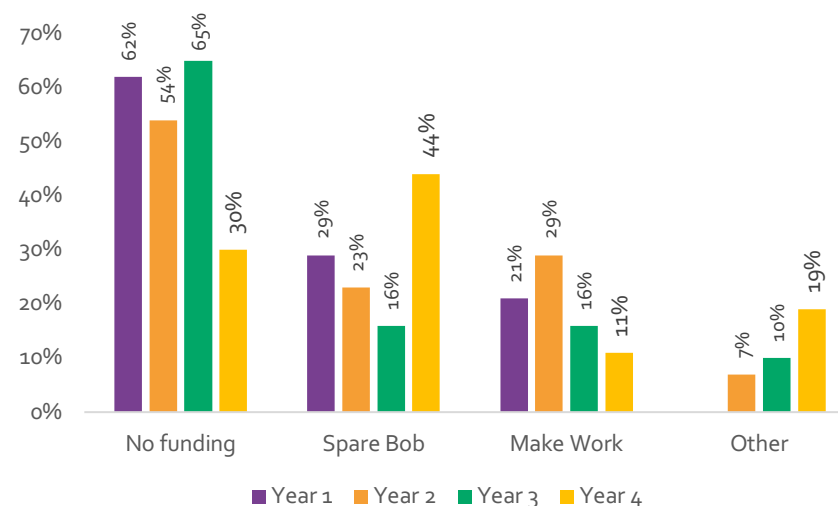
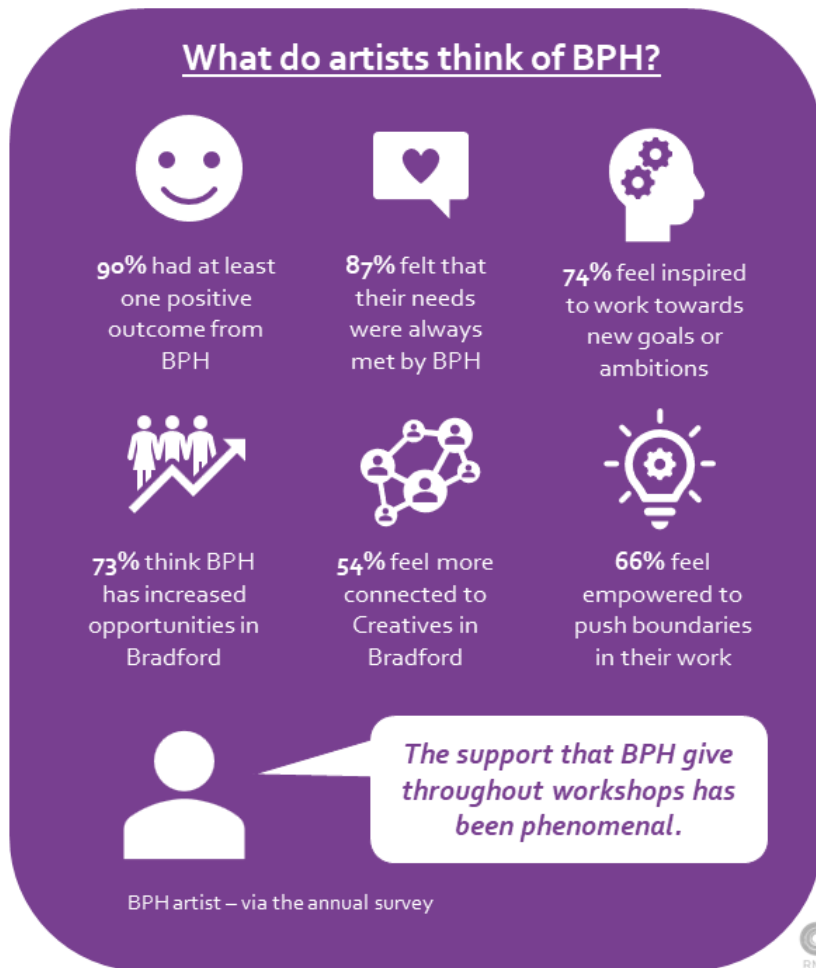


Figure 10: Funding uptake by artists in the annual survey across the four years. Base = 262.

Far more artists accessed funding in Year 4 compared with the average for the four years. Of note, more people applied for Spare Bob funding in Year 4 than in previous years, as well as other funding streams such as Transforming Spaces.

2.4. Artists' experiences of BPH



2.4.1. What did they attend and what did they think?

74% of BPH artists and creatives surveyed said they got involved in at least one BPH workshop, event, social or training programme over the last four years. They rate the events 4.6 out of 5 on average.

All come with a contagious and inspirational amount of energy, passion and quality.

They work tirelessly to create opportunities.

BPH artists, via annual survey

Figure 11 shows that around half of artists went to workshops, and/or attended training programmes, with a quarter attending socials and a fifth going to events.

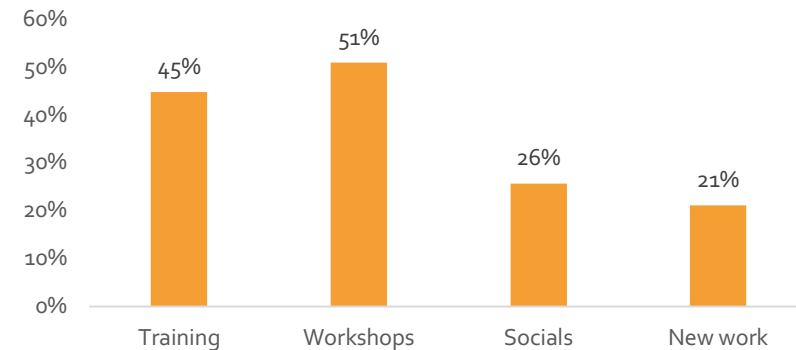


Figure 11: Average attendance at BPH events over the four years by artists responding to the annual survey. Base = 194.

Training includes work in the 'Talent Development' strand, such as Extracurricular and Mentoring; workshops include Play Days and

Front Room Poetry workshops; socials include Creative Socials and Let's Have a Brew; and new work includes the 'Make Work' events.

2.4.2. How has working with BPH changed artists?

Artists felt supported and nurtured by BPH. When asked if BPH had provided any accommodations to those who identified as D/deaf, disabled, neurodivergent or as having a long-term health condition, those who had asked for accommodations felt BPH gave them the help and support they needed:

The team has been superb in supporting me and treating me as a person and not as a name on paper.

BPH artist, via annual survey

Others commented that they had not asked for accommodations but felt sure BPH would have provided them if they had asked, showing the trust and respect they feel for the BPH team.

Many feel listened to and valued by BPH:

BPH listen to artists and their experience and are a vital lifeline in the arts ...[they] are ethical in their practices.

Yes, I felt really held by both Empowered programmes, with people who really understand the experiences I'm going through.

BPH artists, via annual survey

All artists and creatives who completed the annual survey were asked to rate how much they agreed with a range of outcome statements. Results are shown in Figure 12.

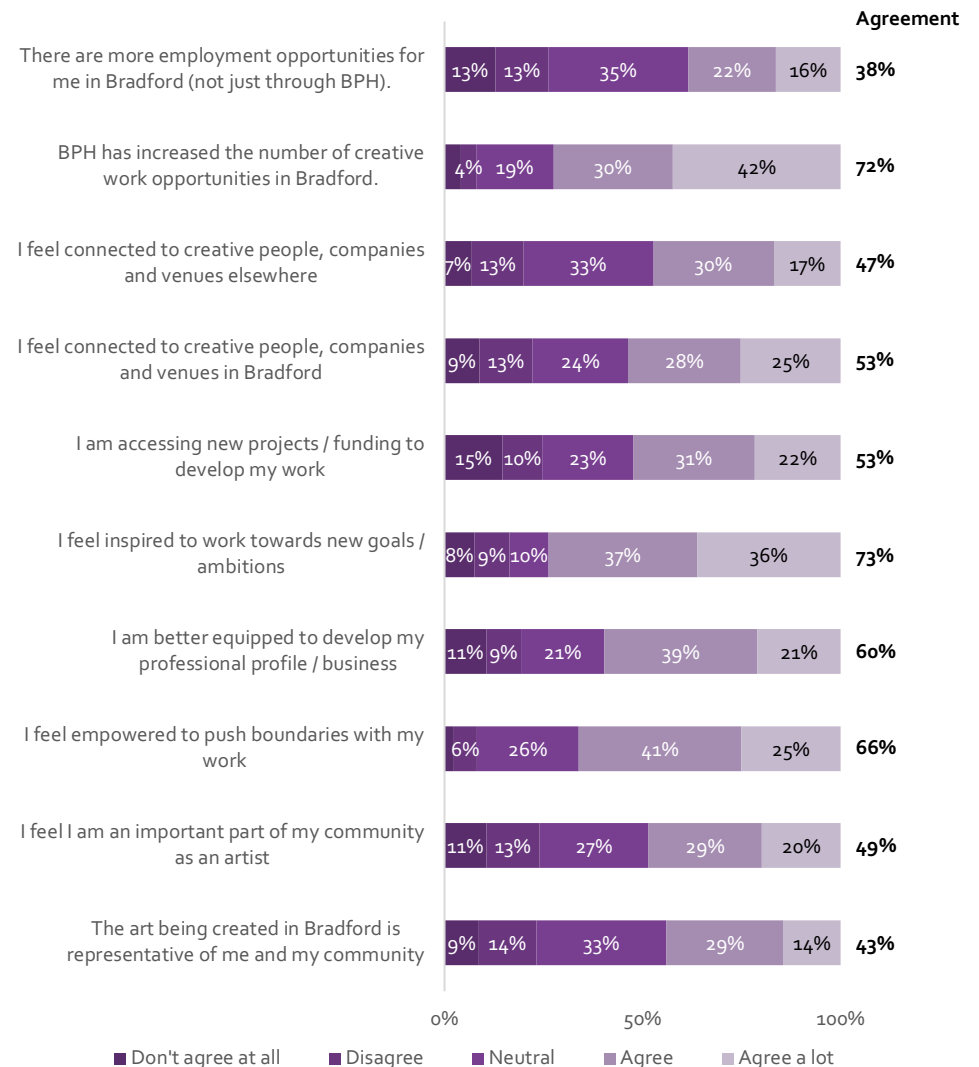


Figure 12: Outcomes for artists over the four years. Base = 170-261 due to differing questions in Year 1.

90% of artists had **at least one positive outcome**, and 60% had at least one very positive outcome.

Three quarters of artists feel inspired to work on new goals and ambitions having worked with BPH and feel that BPH has increased the number of creative opportunities in Bradford, which is almost twice as many as think there are more opportunities in Bradford in general. This shows the **real impact BPH has had over the span of the programme in increasing opportunities for artists in Bradford.**

[On if BPH has increased opportunity in Bradford] It must have done - through promoting all backgrounds, abilities, art forms, geographical areas and local resources.

BPH artist, via annual survey

Two thirds of artists feel empowered to push boundaries, or better equipped to develop their profile or business, and over half feel better connected to other artists and creatives in Bradford and are accessing new funding or projects to develop their work.

I am taking away an entire framework for co-creating an hour long show in a day - a quiver full of exercises to generate ideas and the audacity to try this myself.

Play Days participant



Case study: Kauser Mukhtar, Khooghi

How has BPH created progression routes for artists and arts organisations leading to transformational change?

Funding: £10,000 Make Work Round 1: Your Idea Your Way

The 'Your Idea Your Way' strand of funding supported those great ideas that had been waiting for the right opportunity; the ideas that don't fit in other funding opportunities because maybe they are too radical, too unusual or don't meet the restrictive match funding expectations. The ideas that have bubbled away and need someone to believe in them to make them happen.

Kauser Mukhtar's autobiographical family friendly show, set within a beautiful toy theatre stage, used puppetry, music, and song to explore heritage, culture and identity by visualising Khooghi, a song about a red collared dove from a 160-year-old Kashmiri Sufi folk tale, Saif ul Muloq (The Journey of Love). Kauser wanted to particularly target south Asian family audiences and re-worked this song to perform to new generations and new audiences in a new format. This was the first time Khooghi was performed by a female artist in the UK and for Kauser was a new direction in her career.

Kauser has an academic scientific background and has had no formal arts training or performance experience although she has always enjoyed Punjabi Sufi poetry and written and sung in an informal way since being a teenager. She applied for the Make Work funding, committed to transmitting her culture and heritage to her children, who do not speak fluent Punjabi. Lockdown proved to be a positive experience, giving her respite from her hectic schedule to focus on developing Khooghi.

Spent the hour
laughing, crying +
enjoying one of my
favourite artists.

Thank you for sharing
and reminding us of the
beauty of culture +
heritage.

Audience feedback

Khooghi attracted an intergenerational and multicultural audience. The feedback from audiences was very positive and many had an emotional response. There was evidence of increased appetite for more that represents the culture, heritage and identity of the Azad Kashmiri/ Pakistani community of Bradford, which despite its size and being present in Bradford since the 1950's, does not have a clear cultural presence or identity in Bradford or West Yorkshire.

The story telling was beautiful. My little girl was captivated! I enjoyed all the different sets and puppets.

Audience feedback

Kauser's experience has transformed her career aspirations, sparking the emergence of a new artist on the Bradford scene who can produce work that is particularly resonant with local communities. Kauser is now working in the arts for South Asian Arts UK and is continuing to develop new creative projects. She notes that this transformation would not have happened without the support and trust of BPH. She points out the value of the bespoke and needs-based support in enabling non-traditional practitioners to enter the arts and reach into underrepresented communities.

The funding has allowed me to create my first play, giving me confidence about my artistic ideas and that culture and heritage has to be renewed, retold, reshaped, re-presented to be kept alive.

Kauser Mukhtar



Case study: Lloyd Thompson, Tranquil Productions and CEO Tech Styles International

How has BPH created progression routes for artists and arts organisations leading to transformational change?

Tranquil Productions began in 2004 and is led by its founder Lloyd Thompson. Lloyd began dancing at his local church in 2000 and what started as a hobby quickly became one of his main passions in life.

After only two years of breakin' (breakdancing) Lloyd began performing and teaching others this art form at a local, national, and now international level. Lloyd had a vision of seeing a major development in Bradford with breakin' being part of the driving force for a better Bradford and for it to become one of the best cities for breakin' in the world. Looking back from its early days, Lloyd says Tranquil Productions development has been extensive. It has been an independent business since 2004 and through this business another amazing community organisation was formed in 2018, which focuses on developing hip hop artistry and is called Tech Styles International. This organisation became an NPO this year and benefited through support from BPH's NPO development programme.

During lockdown, Lloyd became involved with BPH and received a Spare Bob grant to do some research and training in delivering Live Stream sessions. Young Tranquil Productions members subsequently successfully applied for Spare Bob funding to perform at a breakin' event in France, an opportunity that would not have happened without the funding. Lloyd says,

Usually I write the grant applications but one of the great things was that some of the younger dancers saw the grant independently and applied... great experience for them.



The most significant support since then has been through the BPH Transforming Spaces Fund and in attending the Sustain development programme. The former helped Tech Styles to find and renovate a much-needed space. The latter enabled some reflective space for Lloyd to think about long term plans and hear from other experienced artists. From this he gained a real sense of progress and direction and says he is likely to reach out to the other participants in the future.

Lloyd is clear that without BPH things would be different: there would be less opportunity, less support, less accessible funding and less connectivity in the sector – and that this is driven by the ethos of Lisa, the Director.

It's great to have Lisa here in Bradford, she is a really positive person to have in the sector...she will do her best to point people in the right direction... she's realistic about life and about how funding works... [it's] much easier for more artists to apply for funding now without going through unnecessary hoops.

Lloyd Thompson



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3. The difference it made to place

In this section we look at the strategic impact of the Bradford Producing Hub programme over four years, including the progress made towards goals set out in the Joint Cultural Needs Assessment carried out in 2019-20. We take a deep dive into the development of support for the music sector to demonstrate how this model is now being employed to support the visual arts sector.

We find that BPH has:

- Been a key player in the transformation of how Bradford District does culture, where it is more valued, and that the cultural ecosystem is stronger and more confident and connected.
- Modelled and developed a more collaborative culture across the district's ecosystem.
- Modelled and inspired new inclusive approaches to leadership.
- Played a key role in supporting an increased investment into the district ecosystem.
- Supported the development and use of a strong evidence base so that the sector is more aware of needs and opportunities.

3.1. A more connected sector

Over the past four years there has been a radical shift in Bradford district's cultural ecosystem. This has come from the top with a new approach to investment and partnership, and from below with more artists and creatives having the confidence, ambition and

investment to make work in the district which resonates locally and nationally.

The shift in approach from the top came from a recognition of the gaps in the district's ecosystem, including a lack of a strategic approach to change, a lack of networks and of the voices of artists and creatives, and a lack of investment and thus infrastructure and support for the sector.

BPH's inception was part of a fundamental decision at senior level in the district to place culture at the heart of development. This included the setting up of the Cultural Place Partnership, the gaining of substantial investment through BPH and The Leap Creative People and Places programme and the decision to bid for major events – including the successful bid for UK City of Culture 2025, the setting up of the Cultural Voice Forum as a voice for the sector and a commitment to a strategic cross partner approach which was summed up in the cultural strategy 'Culture is Our Plan 2021-31'.

This shift in commitment and strategic district-wide approach created what Ben Rothera, BPH Creative Producer, called 'a perfect storm for the arts to develop'.

Four years on from the start of BPH, it is useful to reflect on those gaps and how the district is working to overcome them. The list below compiles answers from the artists and creatives and from strategic interviewees around key ways in which the district's ecosystem has changed over the past four years, including the winning of the UK City of Culture 2025 award in 2022 and the establishment of an effective leadership given by the Cultural

Voice Forum. It is important to note that BPH was seen as a major or essential catalyst in all of these.

Stronger sector

- The arts and cultural sector is more confident and more collaborative. It has a voice and the ability to influence strategic decisions.
- There has been a growth in skills and an identification of locally based producers able to make work for the district and attract in (or back) significant talent.
- There is more national investment in culture and the arts, with inward investment totalling an estimated £61M since 2018.
- Change in perceptions and confidence.
- There is a change in the district's profile nationally and regionally and an improved perception of its capabilities.
- There is an increase in confidence within the district around what individuals, and the place, has to offer.

Shift in how culture is valued

- Culture is more visible – people talk about going to see things when they didn't before; they also see its importance to them.
- There is a genuine commitment across the district to a bottom-up development of the sector, not just working with 'the usual suspects.'

- There is a wider understanding of culture as an opportunity area among other sectors (across local authority, education, health, private and community sectors) although further work needs to be done to fully 'hardwire' culture as a core opportunity area through the Council and out into the district as a whole.
- Culture is clearly a core investment area for Bradford Council who have invested around £5.8m across arts and culture since 2018.

Bradford Producing Hub is recognised as utterly integral to everything done, particularly within developing the offer for UK City of Culture.

BPH has been transformational for Bradford's ecology... as Cultural Voice Forum Chair, one constant you hear from the cultural sector is the value of BPH... without BPH, would there have been the local workforce ready to take delivery of BD25 forward... its skills, awareness, networks?

Alex Croft, Kala Sangam and former Chair of Cultural Voice Forum¹⁴

They also identified areas where more needs to shift. These include:

Investment in infrastructure and spaces to make and show work.

Work and infrastructure to shift patterns of participation and ensure investment reaches everyone in the district.

Ensuring that pathways exist for freelance and employment of artists and creatives at every stage of their careers, from starting

¹⁴ Alex is also a founding and current member of the Consortium

out to supporting retention and local work for the district's international level artists / creatives.

Infrastructure for delivering on a major scale: hotel base, major arena spaces, cross ticketing and comprehensive listing and larger capital ambitions.

Challenges for the future

The longer-term aim is that Bradford District has a cultural ecosystem which is robust and thriving enough to be able to drive change and deliver the vision from Culture is Our Plan. To achieve and support this, there are various challenges arising which include:

- Managing expectations for what BD25 will do – it won't fix all problems or reach all people.
- Planning for what comes after Bradford 2025? How can we keep the momentum going?
- The need to continue to build ambition and expectation that 'arts and culture is what we'll do'.

We need to scale the way we think about and do culture, from it being seen as only for a few people to something ubiquitous and world class ... and get everyone wanting to come here.

Susan Hinchcliffe, Leader, Bradford Council

- The need to continue to shift where the power and perceived power lies – Council's role as facilitative, not deliverer or controller of decisions.
- Retaining people – how can those attracted by, enthused or catapulted by BD25 be kept involved?

- How to keep the positive elements which came from Bradford being left behind – the 'edge' and 'anti-establishment' feel that the district's culture is strong in. Bradford culture's difference and thus interest will lie in a focus on celebrating who we are and where we are – which means the need for the establishment to value that edginess and let the sector lead. The sector needs to be ready to step up and take that opportunity – not feel they need to ask permission.
- Deal with the 'reality check' which BPH's work provided on the scale of need within the sector, as it exposed the skills and opportunity deficit. How can the investment needed to support that development over the longer term be maintained?

3.2. Modelling and changing practices and leadership

BPH is one of the most outstanding things I have ever seen happening in a district. It is agile, well led and active.

Richard Shaw, 2025 Bid Director

From the start, Bradford Producing Hub was specifically set up with the aim of fundamentally shifting the cultural ecosystem of Bradford to increase diversity, particularly among leadership, and to enhance the voice of freelance artists and creatives with the power structures of the city and district.

BPH was always designed to be a key pillar within the change agenda discussed above; however, it has in many ways gone further and been the engine and agent for ensuring that what change happens ripples out through the sector, putting in the foundations of a more sustained shift.

From the beginning, BPH operated at the top level within the district ecosystems. This is demonstrated by Lisa's membership of and regular attendance at the Creative Place Partnership, her involvement and support of the Bradford 2025 City of Culture bid, her support and link in with the establishment of the Cultural Voice Partnership and a range of other initiatives over the four years. In every strategic conversation we have, Lisa and BPH are recognised as key catalysts for change and as supporters of collaboration, and particularly as advocates of the freelancer voice in the district.

Key areas of influence and change identified include collaboration, inclusion, development of new models of voice, and particularly leadership.

3.2.1. Collaboration

BPH is seen as an extremely collaborative partner by everyone we interviewed. This is a positive asset, as it has enabled partnerships to form where previously the opportunity might not have been seen. More importantly it acts as a positive example of the value of collaboration, creating a virtuous circle of actions.

Without explicit criticism of others, this theme of BPH showing through positive example the value of changing how collaboration and competition is seen has come up in every interview. All partners now assume that they will collaborate with BPH in the next phase and that this will be welcomed and supported.

The sector, particularly the small to medium sized organisations, see benefit from this collaborative approach, working well together, supporting each other and collectively recognising their knowledge. This has resulted in a much more confident, stronger shared voice.

This sense of collaboration is shared by creative freelancers: 93% of artists who engaged with BPH in the last four years told us they had

increased partnerships, either directly because of working with BPH or indirectly because of their increased practice and skillset.

The most popular examples of partners are Bradford based institutions such as Bradford Council, Theatre in the Mill, Kala Sangam, The Leap and Bradford 2025, as well as many individual artists, creative businesses and community organisations across the district.

Creatives feel that BPH is the driver for this through bringing people together, leading to increased partnership working and collaboration. Artists relish the opportunities to network at events such as the Creative Socials.

There has been a collaborative approach to partnership building across the city.

BPH artist, via annual survey

3.2.2 New model leadership

She's the type of leader I'd want to be.

Richard Dunbar, Co-Chair, Cultural Voice Forum

The 'multiplying' leadership approach adopted by Lisa as Bradford Producing Hub Director is widely noticed and valued within the sector, by those looking in and those looking for inspiration.

Multiplying leadership¹⁵ is defined as an:

...Open, collaborative style of working with others which tends to decentralise and flatten authority, bringing many more voices into leadership and decision-making than typical hierarchical structures.

Mark Robinson, *Thinking Practice*, in 'Multiplying Leadership in Creative Communities' 2020

This is raised repeatedly as a reason for the success of BPH and seems to permeate the delivery style of the project – offering inspiration for partners and freelancers who are looking to develop themselves as leaders in a sector, where positive role models for an effective non-hierarchical leadership style can be rare.

This approach is successful within the project itself, with staff able to lead, trial and develop approaches in areas where they have strengths and experience – meaning that BPH offers a programme truly developed by people with a number of different viewpoints, including that of people of colour when developing the diversity and inclusion areas and freelancers from sectors where Lisa has no experience herself (for example, Visual Arts). The results of this are clear from the level of positive feedback about how effective and relevant the offer is.

¹⁵ Mark Robinson (2020) *Multiplying Leadership in Creative Communities* - https://www.culturehive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/0750-CPP_Multiplying-Leadership_FINAL.pdf. This report is not a place to analyse approaches but for information, Richard Dunbar used the term distributed leadership – see

The value of the 'multiplying' leadership approach can also be seen in the retention of input of talented staff, meaning their input is valued and can be part of planning a way for them to continue to input even when they get further and wider opportunities. In this way, some of the most talented producers in Bradford have continued to contribute to the programme – or been attracted into the programme – while continuing their freelance careers.

The final and most important impact is around changes in the wider sector. Traditional forms of leadership are excluding and tend to reproduce the existing leadership.¹⁶ The potential leaders of the future are seeing how Lisa works and seeing how leadership can be done differently – this is down to her presence and visibility.

It has not been possible to quantify the difference made, and it is likely to take a long time for that difference to feed through, but qualitative feedback shows us a significant difference in people's views on what leadership can mean and whether they might choose to become a leader within an organisation.

This has led to a shift in how people involved talk about developing leadership in Bradford:

https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/distributed_leadership.pdf

¹⁶ See Mark Robinson (2020) *Multiplying Leadership in Creative Communities* - https://www.culturehive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/0750-CPP_Multiplying-Leadership_FINAL.pdf. For discussions on the challenges with leadership in the arts.

It helped me to recalibrate what being an artist and leader can be... [now] ... the priority is to think about what the nurturing process is to develop and create new leaders in Bradford.

Global majority young person taking leadership role within Bradford

Longer term, along with specific and focused work on developing support for global majority, disabled and LGBTQIA+ artists and creatives, this will form part of a shift in the shape and composition of the sector.

3.3. Shifting the value given to freelancer voice

Above all else, the role and value of the freelancer has been at the heart of how BPH approaches everything.

If an area is identified where freelancers say they need support quickly it appears ... Lisa is seen as an independent champion for the freelance sector ... [and there is a] sense of ownership by the sector.

Alex Croft, Kala Sangam and former Co-Chair of Cultural Voice¹⁷

Freelancers are the core of the staff team, with a model of employing them as freelancers to enable recruitment and retention of some of the most skilled producers in the district, plus enabling them to maintain their knowledge and feel of the needs of freelancers.

This decision to enable them to keep their individual practice – along with the multiplying leadership model discussed above – has been key in retaining them, but also in maintaining the quality and relevance of the programme offered and how agile it is to adapt to need.

Freelancers are also at the heart of decision making within the Creativity Council and now the Consortium. The Creativity Council is made up of freelance artists and creatives who make decisions about where and how funding is given out.

This model of devolved decision making to the peers of those who receive the money is a challenge to some assumptions about how this will be treated and received. The pilot nature of the programme allowed this 'risk' to be taken and it is widely seen as a success, with the level of care that the Creativity Council take in their decisions recognised and valued, and the feedback even from those who receive a negative result being very positive.

This has resulted in a shift in how freelancers are seen and valued. As a result of this, Bradford Council is looking at how they can adapt their decision-making process around grants, and it provides a challenge and good practice model to all partners in shifting power.

The Consortium was originally set up to include a freelancer collective as well as some artist-led organisations. As discussed below, for various reasons this changed; however, from early 2023 the Consortium make up has been at least half freelance artists and creatives, putting that voice firmly into the driving seat. The decision for the new company Board of Directors to start with 75%

¹⁷ Alex is also a member of the Consortium

freelance artists / is another marker of the value given to freelancers in an organisation which inevitably will mainly serve this important part of the ecosystem.

This shift in power internally has had several outcomes:

- The offer of BPH is universally felt to be appropriate, flexible, and supportive to the sector, intervening exactly where needed to make the biggest difference.
- BPH has a model of delivery which echoes the freelance, rather than organisational clichéd style – agile, intense, individual need focused – which is widely seen as one of its core strengths.
- Showing results, within a model of explicitly shifting power to areas of the ecosystem which have traditionally not had a voice, produces a strong case for change, which has already influenced the Council to consider how they can best adopt this.

The result of this, along with the increased voice within the sector that has arisen from the formation and strong work of the Cultural Voice Forum, is that values have really shifted within the district and made it 'the norm' to include this wider group into decision-making processes.

3.4. A more sustainable arts ecosystem

Over this phase of BPH there has been a notable shift in the markers for longer term sustainability in the ecosystem. Along with skills, commitment and leadership this also needs to include the financial investment needed for space, organisation, skills and

networks development and to make work. There has been a shift in the amount of funding from national funding, including that from Arts Council England into the district. Estimates from the JCNA review (see below) give inward investment into Bradford District's arts and cultural sector as around £61m since 2018. While not the only reason for this shift, BPH played an important role in the sector securing additional funding.

Initially during the first wave of Covid-19, BPH remained open and continued to offer grants, including designing the Spare Bob programme initially as a pandemic response, a move which proved vital in helping Bradford's live art sector to be more ready than any other area in the country to re-open when safe to do so.

BPH provided support for creatives applying for the Covid Recovery Fund grants – which were a major reason for the survival of the sector. For the 2023-26 round, they ran an NPO development programme, supporting six organisations to apply to NPO for the first time of whom two were successful.

Quantifying the value of support and leverage, Anna Franks concludes that more than £1.8 million additional funding was brought into the city due to support given by BPH.¹⁸

There are still many areas of need in terms of investment to ensure longer term sustainability; creatives in the annual survey regularly mention pay inequality and say that artists need higher wages to support their freelance viability.

Larger pots of funding would be better, as it isn't always viable as a freelance artist to apply to lots of small pots... this will

¹⁸ Then and Now JCNA Review, Anna Franks, 2023

reduce the inequalities in the sector, ensure artists are being paid fairly for their time with the rising cost of living and create higher quality work as a result.

BPH artist, via annual survey

3.5. A sector more aware of its needs

3.5.1. Valuing and championing data for a needs-led approach

One of the things that every cultural ecosystem needs to thrive is an understanding of need and opportunity. BPH has taken the lead in terms of research and needs assessment within Bradford, leading the pilot of a [Joint Cultural Needs Assessment](#) (JCNA) in 2019-20 and supporting the research undertaken to make the case for the UK City of Culture bid. Furthermore, BPH has made a point of being a needs-led organisation – ensuring investment in research and taking the time to know the sector and act on this.

Through their approach to flexibility and learning – taking an almost action research approach to how they use the ‘pilot’ nature of the programme¹⁹ – BPH has also identified a range of further needs of the sector, including the level and scale of need in terms of support, development, and investment.

However, there is still more work to do to understand the whole range of needs across the sector which will need a joined-up approach at district level to bring in expertise and resources from wider sectors.

This leadership around assessing needs and taking a needs-led approach was again demonstrated in 2023 with the review of the JCNA and the development of the Bradford Data Review (2023, forthcoming) which compiles the data available from the bidding process, 2021 Census and other sources into an accessible guide for the sector.

3.5.2. Joint Cultural Needs Assessment (JCNA)

The JCNA was a new model of assessment about how culture can inform placemaking in practice across a city. With place-based cultural development being identified as an important element of ACE’s approach in their new Let’s Create strategy from 2020, ACE asked BPH to test and deliver a JCNA for the Bradford District area.

The idea was to create a baseline for the cultural sector to see where and how culture fitted into the wider place ecology. In practice, there were a lot of challenges with applying the full JCNA model as the sector was not joined up enough to enable some of the stages to be delivered.

However, for BPH it was pivotal as it informed the pathway for its programme. The team at BPH analysed, discussed and reviewed all of the data in the JCNA and used its independent assessment of the current situation alongside the challenges and opportunities it outlined across the district to shape its programme.

This means everything BPH has delivered has been needs-led – informed by active listening and consultation and informed by data about the district, something not missed by the sector itself.

¹⁹ See section 4 below

... People say to me, you know, I didn't even realise this was a need until I saw the Bradford Producing Hub with delivery based on this - and I went online, and I realised that it's the thing that I've been missing my whole career.

Alex Croft, Kala Sangam and former Co-Chair of Cultural Voice

The aim was to use the JCNA as a baseline for the evaluation of BPH and for the district as a whole. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic meant that much of the data, and particularly the assessment of need, became dated. BPH used their ongoing links and communication to adapt their work and retain the data and needs-led approach, but even by the time of the first evaluation report it was clear that simple 'comparison' with JCNA was not an appropriate approach.

In 2023 BPH commissioned a review of the JCNA from Anna Franks (who led the original work), looking at what has changed in the sector and considering the value of the JCNA. This work shows the strong value of the JCNA as a catalyst and a starting point for thinking and a needs-led design; however, it concludes, along with the authors of this report, that JCNA review and update needs to continue at a district and strategic level to ensure it aligns with other initiatives, particularly Bradford 2025 with its ambitious evaluation plans.

As a result, it is strongly recommended that the JCNA analysis be revisited but commissioned by the Cultural Place Partnership, in partnership with Bradford 2025 research and evaluation.

3.5.3. Bradford Data Review

In 2022 BPH worked in partnership with RMR Ltd to commission Dr David Lee to compile the key data and research developed for the Bradford 2025 bid in a form that could be available and accessible to creatives.

This was extended to include wider data, particularly that from the 2021 Census, with considerable work undertaken to share what usually would be seen as impenetrable reports in an accessible form. The aim was to support the sector to be more aware of need, and able to take a data driven approach to developing projects, bidding for funding and sharing their learning.

The work will include a workshop to support creatives to use and engage with the data, increasing data literacy in the sector and further development in partnership with Bradford 2025 to ensure that the work remains easy to access and hopefully kept up to date.

3.5.4. What next?

Although it has been beneficial for BPH to undertake these pieces of research for their own work, in order that it can be properly resourced and used, it is essential that in future this is co-ordinated and led at a more district wide level.

Case study: Supporting the music sector in Bradford

How has BPH built trust, connection, and cohesion in the music sector in Bradford?

The starting point

Sinead Cambell became Bradford's Music Instigator, a role funded by Bradford Council in response to needs identified by Bradford Producing Hub, in 2022. The music sector in Bradford was young and still developing, and lacked the infrastructure that many cities have.

In her first year, Sinead conducted a needs analysis of the sector and made connections with musicians, groups, venues, charities, and local companies. The Bradford Music Steering Group was set up in partnership with Bradford Council and Launchpad.

Sinead developed the Steering Group – and later became the Chair – established better relationships with the Council and local education providers, and helped set up performances, events and nights. This was the start of the journey, and as one survey respondent said, 'the first step on the ladder of development for the sector'.

Already at this point there was evidence of new work coming in for people in the sector, new performance opportunities, new relationships developing and new skills and confidence for musicians, plus more musicians accessing wider support (including funding from BPH), as well as new funding coming into the sector and better engagement with the Black community.



What has happened this year?

New and more developed relationships

Music Steering Group - this has gone from strength to strength and been described by Bradford Council as 'thriving'. Sinead used her 2022 Culture Cubed evaluation training from RMR to make sure meetings were focused, purposeful and organised and to ensure everyone had their say. At the end, clear actions and responsibilities were set.

These meetings helped develop live music and talent development in the sector. The role of Chair will now be offered to another member as Sinead's role becomes more strategic.

New performance opportunities, new work generated for people

October Music Month – Sinead worked with Bradford Business Improvement District, Bradford at Night and Bradford Council to help gain funding for this event, arrange a co-ordinator post and help facilitate the organisations working together. The event will be back next year, after Sinead supported the application process to gain extra funding.

New skills and confidence, leverage of new funding

Bradford Young Promoters – Sinead shared her analysis of the music sector with partner Launchpad. This highlighted that there was a lack of young promoters in the city. Launchpad are a Leeds-based, but Yorkshire-wide, organisation which supports professionals who are building a career in the music sector. Off the back of Sinead's research, they put in a successful Youth Music²⁰ funding application and gained £30,000 for a project called Bradford Young Promoters. Ten young people putting on their own music and sound events were able to 'try their first one without the risk of potentially losing money' (Sinead), receiving the financial support along with mentoring and guidance on how to do this professionally.

²⁰ See <https://youthmusic.org.uk/>

They actually have a conduit to have their voice heard... more people [are] coming to meetings and conferences and engaging to hear their voice heard directly.

Great Escape festival conference – Sinead attended this in Brighton with a group of people from Bradford and says, 'for me, it's one of the best conferences for music in the UK' and the people visiting were 'inspired; they got to network, they got to feel like we're there representing Bradford and feel excited about that and proud'.

More musicians accessing wider support

Training, mentoring, one to one sessions – musicians are continuing to access more training and mentoring for business skills, more practical skills such as production training, marketing skills and so on. Sinead offers one to one sessions which are now held at fixed, regular times to help make them more manageable to run, and when a musician needs more input than she can offer they are referred on to mentoring where up to sixteen hours is available for them.

Sinead's role as a practitioner

Bradford Music Lead – as Music Instigator, Sinead has supported musicians and organisations, but this year the work has become more strategic. To reflect this, she is now titled 'Bradford Music Lead'.

Health and wellbeing – last year it was already clear that the work was intense for someone in a two day a week role. Sinead found that the exponential growth of the work was taking its toll on her health and wellbeing. With that in mind, she has been supported to build her own resilience by developing her abilities to set boundaries, organise her work and manage her time, for example by moving one to one sessions and conversations into regular time slots as described. She also took part in a 'Women in music' leadership retreat which 'helped me with my boundaries and transition into better time management for myself and looking after myself, also being around peers that 'get it'.'



Women in music

New partnerships and new learning – Sinead hoped to partner with a company to produce a residency for women in music. Agreement was made to provide this for women, half of whom would come from Bradford.

However, it became clear that the company was not after all able to accommodate a mixed cohort of people from various backgrounds and levels of experience, and ultimately, the planned retreats did not take place as arranged. Instead, Sinead used the funding to provide monthly drop-ins for women in music, three nights for freelancers to put on music events, and a Bradford based 'development day' for women in music – this was 'quality over quantity' with high quality advice and line-up but a smaller group of attendees.

Outcomes and experience

- **Professionalism** – new promoters gained experience in working to a high standard of professionalism; they 'were all in professional venues, booking artists, doing it all properly' – so that those quality skills can be transferrable both in Bradford and elsewhere. The same is true of skills developed through one to ones and drop-in sessions also.
- **Interconnectedness** – Sinead says that networking has been key, and people are 'engaging with us more, coming along to things, putting themselves forward for things...people [are] linking up with each other, or using each other for certain roles, playing in each other's bands.' This is helping take the next step on the ladder.
- **Good working steering group** – this has been established and has flourished, and it is ready to bring together the next few years.
- **Linking into the ecosystem** – in terms of Bradford 2025 and other groups like Cultural Voice. Musicians are now more aware of the need to connect into the wider sector rather than just the music scene.



- **Confidence, skills and knowledge** – people are taking the training and using it; from knowledge and skills from mentor sessions, for example, giving business skills, production training. Compared to last year, there is more impact and development happening.
- **Aiming higher and shifting mindsets** – Sinead notes that aspirations are rising, and mindsets are beginning to shift. 'There are individuals now who are inspired, aiming for quality, aiming for better – that is such a good thing because until you start to get those people that are aiming for that and want that, you're not going to get that!'
- **Women in music** – conversations about equality in the music sector have been happening, and are part of this mindset shift. The training days for women in music have helped address a low starting point in Bradford.
- **Progress over time** - as an ambitious person, Sinead would love to see all this in place right away but knows that these things take time for a 'young sector without core infrastructure in place' – longer term impacts could take five or six years to take full effect.

Learnings

- **Make sure people are on the same page** – 'I recognise that organisations that appear to the outside eye may not necessarily be as organised as you'd expect them to be. This then effects planning and relationships when working in partnership... [or] if I've got any concerns in the future, I will bring it up right away' – don't ignore red flags and ask what you need to ask.
- **Trust yourself** – sometimes, you are the best person to arrange exactly what is needed - for example, a Women in Music training day.



- **Connection is everything** – start with relationships and respect – ‘networking has been key’.
- **Step up** – make sure people know they must put themselves forward too. ‘I’m always about, yes, we want to create opportunities, but you also need to create for yourself [and] meet us halfway...you can bring a horse to water, but you can’t make it drink!’

The future

This is an exciting time for Bradford.

I feel like we're in a place where we might be able to start to see those things for the future and get people thinking in a more professional way.

Bradford is still a young music sector and still lacks infrastructure elements like large NPOs for example, but is now more integrated, and people are better placed than ever to step up and engage with the opportunities that lie just ahead.

...This whole next six, seven years is a time, if you want it, to develop and be an offer in Bradford. We’re crazy if we don’t utilise this. When else have we ever had this? Never!

Sinead Campbell, Bradford Music Lead



4. The difference it made to learning

In this section we look inwards at the models and processes developed by Bradford Producing Hub as it has evolved. We explore how the BPH team learned and how it operated and was governed, identifying what approaches have been crucial to success. We look at where learning has been disseminated and what can be shared more widely in the future.

We find that:

- Being a pilot programme freed BPH up to trial new ways of working and build on their lived experience of the sector.
- Taking risks to move away from traditional ways of operating, and challenging hierarchies and bad practice are hallmarks of the BPH approach.
- The team has developed a 'test and learn' model - a reflective approach which builds on what works and iterates to overcome challenges to continually innovate.
- The ethos of BPH and the way it works are as important to the success as the individual programmes it runs. Values that drive transparency, empathy, caring and needs-led approaches filter down into every aspect of delivery.
- BPH has been particularly effective in ensuring that ambition, quality, and inclusivity remain at the heart of the work.
- BPH has openly and actively shared learning more widely with the sector through events, conferences and networking.

The aims and ethos of the Producing Hub concept, along with the built in commitment to challenging the status quo of the sector which came at bid stage and then was championed within the Consortium afforded the opportunity for the team to develop, test and refine new approaches. Often external funding is linked to defined outputs, but the pilot nature of this programme has supported the team to experiment with engagement and delivery models, partnership building and ways of measuring the impact of the programme on the sector and on individuals. There remain some barriers (including pressure from funders) which influence the flexibility that would really allow creative risk taking to flourish.

During the test and learn process, there is evidence of significant change in the development of new approaches to equality, diversity and inclusivity, producing, fundraising, and marketing skills development and mid-career development, and a focus on 'quality'.

4.1. Evolving a programme to fit need – the test and learn models

Taking as a starting point an action research commitment to value and learn from failure, the team understand that sometimes things don't work and need to be completely changed and other times just need to be adapted to address particular challenges.

We worked with the team to talk them through their embedded processes and draw them out to be able to share the model. In this analysis, it is important to note that although the team worked specifically with us to analyse and create these models, they do the test and learn process constantly and it has become an embedded skill – they have unconscious competence. This section simply draws out and makes explicit the way Bradford Producing Hub operates.

Each project was delivered using a collaborative and reflective test and learn approach that involves:

- Generating ideas to address an identified challenge.
- Testing the ideas.
- Analysing the results and reflecting on learning.

Across the programme, we see three results emerging from a commitment to the test and learning process: adaptation, innovation, and continuation — or in other words, innovating a new solution to the challenge, adapting the existing model, or continuing with the model as it is.

This process has led to a constantly evolving programme, responsive and relevant for the whole live arts sector in Bradford.

A select number of examples have been explored in detail to represent these different approaches. In each case we start with the challenge in the sector, the initial ideas and solutions followed by the rationale for and reflective process leading to change:

Test and Learn Model

Bradford Producing Hub

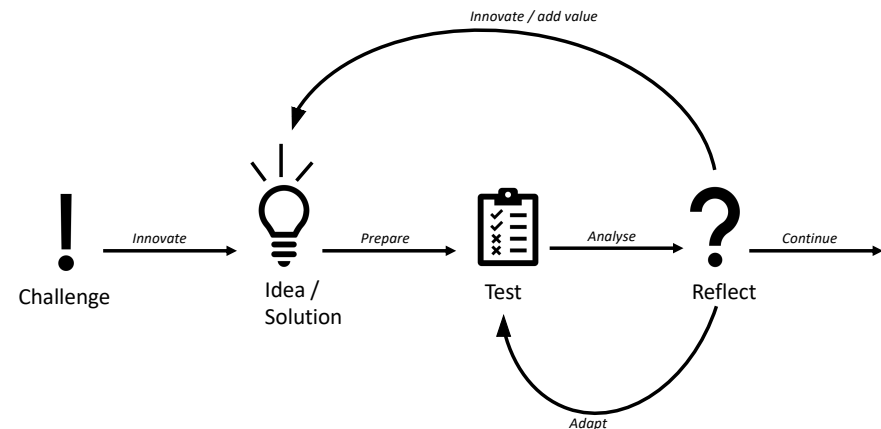


Figure 13: BPH Test and Learn Model

Case Study: Supporting mid-career artists

The challenge

Very little support or development opportunities, locally or nationally, for mid-career (age or stage) practitioners. The JCNA research highlighted this problem early and noted the lack of turnover at leadership level in Bradford. During the first year of delivery the BPH team heard from people who were hitting glass ceilings, getting stuck or pigeonholed and who felt unable to progress within the sector.

This effect is heightened by the financial challenges of lower pay for mid-career work in Bradford, and a lack of infrastructure in the sector. Many of these artists are still freelance and fees do not reflect their level of experience and skills. The perception is that there are only two routes at mid-career stage, either setting up a company or getting a leadership role in an existing NPO, both with their own challenges.

Solution 1: Sustain

The BPH team went through a long reflective process of design and redesign to create two bespoke models to address the multiple needs observed. The Sustain programme was not fully developed until the end of Year 2, giving time to design something that would make sense for participants with varying needs. The recruitment of the right practitioner was key to this. Sustain was a five-month intensive dramaturgic support programme delivered through group and individual support and led by Dramaturg and development

specialist Lou Cope (more details can be found in the [Sustain Case Study below](#)).

As a result of collective reflection on the successes and challenges of the first cohort a second cohort was recruited, and fundraising is happening to continue the programme in 2024 onwards.

Solution 2: NPO development programme

This programme was focused on developing more NPOs in Bradford, strengthening the sector and opening up more opportunities. Early consultation showed that there were lots of organisations keen to apply but it became clear that they weren't ready for the transition or that the reality of being an NPO might be overwhelming.

The programme was first delivered in November 2021 with plenty of time for reflection and an opportunity to meet existing NPOs to get to groups with a 'warts and all' understanding of what it means to be an NPO. This was a particularly useful aspect of the programme, held in a closed space with an unusual level of honesty.

Each NPO applicant was awarded £750 for specific elements of business support and six out of eight participants submitted applications in January 2022.

Two organisations made the decision not to apply in recognition of the skills they still needed to develop to be successful. This was seen by both organisations as a positive decision, and they were offered post programme organisational development advice.

Of the six applicants, two were successful. The other four were offered £1200 from the Expanding Horizons fund towards their own development journey.

Work through the Bradford 2025 programme will include Board and Leadership development to address a lack of these skills. Sustain and NPO development participants are being supported beyond the programme through core support, signposting, advice, and seed funding to support next steps, with the hope that these people will be ready to develop big, bold and ambitious work in the future.



Test and Learn Model – Mid Career Artist Support

Bradford Producing Hub

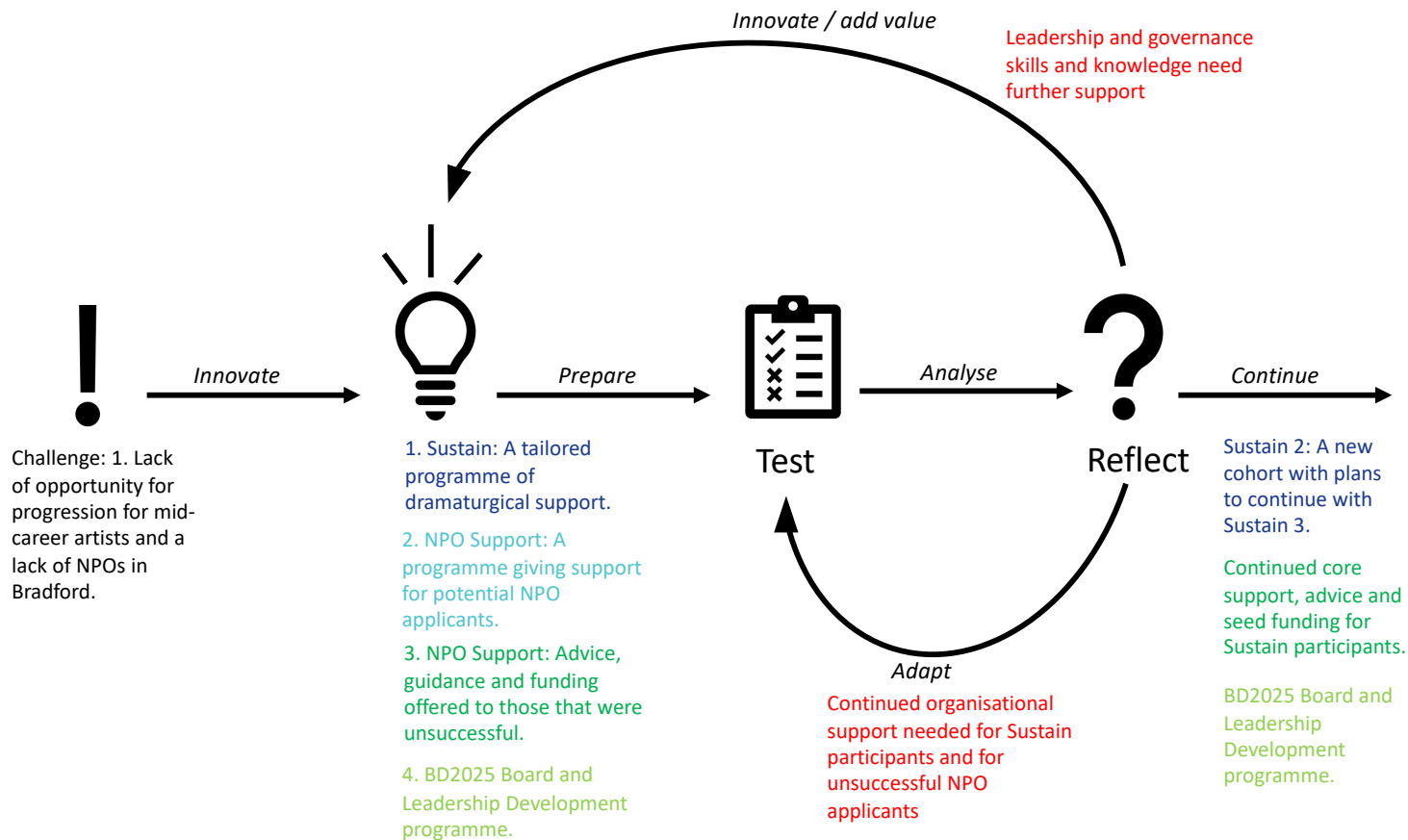


Figure 14: The evolution of mid-career artist support

Case Study: Embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion

The challenge

The JCNA provided very revealing data about the presence of significant barriers for people with protected characteristics but most strongly evidence of racism, gatekeeping and poor practice generating a lack of diversity in the sector and at leadership levels.

After the first round of Make Work in Year 1, although there was a diversity of work developed, there were no projects led by Black/African Caribbean artists and wider internal reviews showed a lack of diversity on the team and Consortium. This very clear evidence gave a clear rationale for an 'unashamed' approach to inclusivity within the Bradford Producing Hub programme and recruitment.

Solution 1: Culture 101

Initially, the Culture 101 programme, led by Madiha Ansari, an artist and producer, began with a trial day to support global majority female artists in Bradford. This led to a successful application to European Social Fund, submitted by Common Wealth for Madiha to run a full Culture 101 programme online with 15 global majority women.

The sessions were welcomed, and feedback suggest that all the participants had an amazing experience with many going on to find their own funding for creative work. BPH also supported Madiha through additional training and advice to progress her own skills and knowledge. For Madiha, the learning journey has been extensive, and she now has her own registered company; however,

despite its success the Culture 101 programme was not repeated due to lack of funding and capacity to support and develop the programme.

Solution 2: Black Artists Network

Working with local artist Tanya Vital was an important part of the solution, first funding her to lead the Black Artist Network in Bradford. Despite initial interest, participation and development, the group quickly dwindled partly due to lack of funding and capacity, although the network still exists as an information sharing group on WhatsApp.

Solution 3: Make Work 2

The second approach was to focus Make Work 2 funding on disabled and Black/African Caribbean led projects. The George Floyd and Black Lives Matter movements served to intensify the need for this targeted work, and Difference Consciousness training for the team and the Consortium laid good foundations.

The broader reach of Make Work 2 applications led to noticeably wider audiences (concrete evidence of diversity is not available), similar to those seen for Kauser Mukhtar's performances of Khooghi.

Being unashamedly focused on supporting particular groups is working well.

Lisa Mallaghan, Director BPH

Make Work 2 also funded musician Josh Depass to work on a new production, 'Tale of 2 Estates'. Despite 'ticking all the boxes' Josh was unsuccessful twice in applications for ACE funding, further demonstrating the unfairness of the process. As a result, the team shifted the parameters of the Make Work funding to allow him to develop a brilliant piece of work. This ad hoc support and adaptation to ever evolving needs is what makes BPH unique and has allowed diversity to become embedded.

The focus on cultural diversity is key... a number of our learning disabled participants have been recipients of funding or support via BPH... and I've seen the progression

Julia Skelton, Mind The Gap

The team are realising that the need for additional support for marginalised artists is much greater than anticipated, meaning flexible support and funding must be built into future programmes.

Solution 4: Empowered and series of care

The BPH team learned a lot through the delivery of both solutions above and planned a completely new approach to developing their equality, diversity, and inclusion work. A new Creative Instigator, Nicole Joseph, was recruited because of her clear sense of the

challenges and her desire to develop the programme for marginalised groups, which was called Empowered.

The Empowered Programme participants were recruited in Year 3. The programme was framed as empowering already skilled people rather than training. Its unique selling point was to provide additional wellbeing support whilst surfacing hidden voices, raising profiles and creating a support network.

15 people from global majority backgrounds took part in discussions, go and sees, and events with some emotional and profound impacts, whilst exposing significant challenges yet to be solved, detailed in the [Case Study below](#).

Most of the participants have seen this as the beginning of a long journey and are now fully engaged with wider BPH work. They were a key part of the Make the Change event that happened in September 2023, creating a response to 'What does change mean to you?'

Solution 5: LGBTQIA+ support

At the same time, Bradford Producing Hub partnered with New Queers on the Block (NQOTB) to fund four national LGBTQIA+ artists to develop their work. The ambition was that representation at a high-profile level would boost the community. Of the four artists selected, only two visited Bradford and only one did any work in the area, leading to low return on the investment and little impact locally. The Creativity Council demanded that BPH address this by investing and delivering more work for the LGBTQIA+ community in Y4. NQOTB responded positively to the challenging feedback about the lack of local impact and partnered with BPH to run an open commission specifically for Bradford LGBTQIA+ artists

- through an open process they awarded £3k to Out Out: a Drag King event which is now going from strength to strength. NQOTB are continuing to work in partnership with Bradford artists in their next phase.

Conversations locally with LGBTQIA+ individuals and partners, and recommendations from a Council-led research report and the Empowered first cohort, all led to ringfenced funding for the development of a new Empowered cohort for LGBTQIA+ artists.

The team quickly recruited a Creative Instigator with experience working with LGBTQIA+ communities, and 15 artists received ongoing support through the next phase of the Empowered Artists programme, and the LGBTQIA+ Artists network was established, meeting monthly, along with a series of Go and Sees to leading LGBTQIA+ work.

The future

There are now plans for a third Empowered cohort for Disabled Artists in partnership with Mind the Gap.

Lisa (Director) and Ben (Creative Producer) reflect on the EDI work being delivered:

Our work is about the voices of the artists and how we empower them; we're challenging the idea that marginalised people have to tell you what to do to make things better – it's not about putting the weight on them... but raising expectations and voices.

The commitment for 2024 and beyond is to grow the Empowered network of about 45 artists and accelerate their transition to wider BPH and Bradford development opportunities.

Test and Learn Model – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Bradford Producing Hub

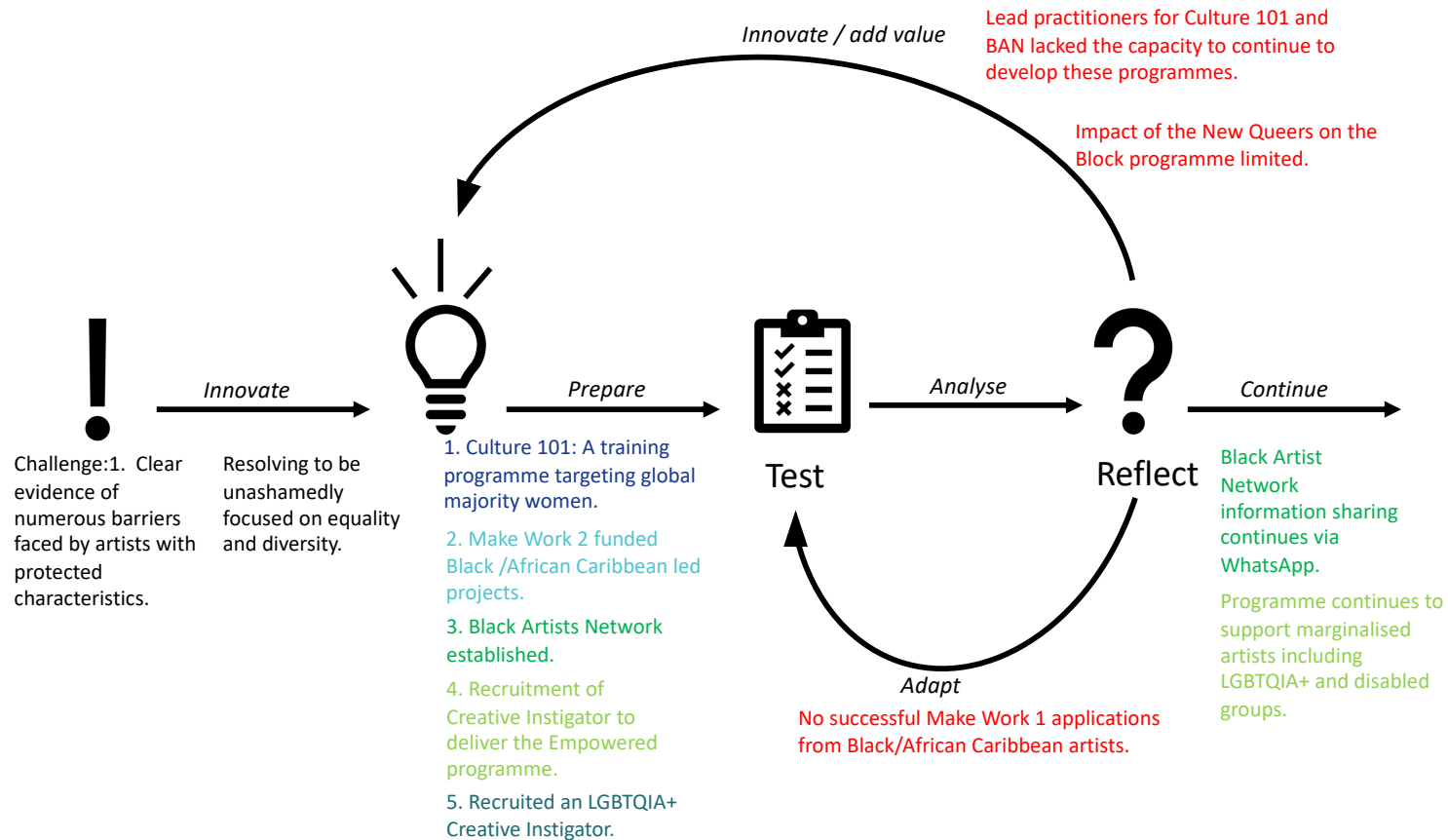


Figure 15: The evolution of focused equality, diversity, and inclusion work

Case Study: Promoting fundraising and investment

The challenge

The JCNA and early discussions with a professional fundraiser highlighted the need for fundraising support in the sector. Historically Bradford has had a low success rate for Grants for Arts funding and wasn't bringing in significant income from Trusts and Foundations. Specialist fundraising support is in low supply and is expensive and in Year 1 Covid-19 was affecting the funding landscape, with some funders completely closing and others offering new support opportunities.

Solution 1 – Core team support

Early on a suite of support was developed to upskill the sector to do this work for themselves through:

1. Bespoke advice and mentoring from the BPH team to help people understand the system better and write better bids.
2. Accessing BPH training programmes to support development.
3. Offering letters of support to accompany bids.

Reflections from the team identified the difference between knowing how to get money for your own work and knowing how to support others to get money for their work.

Solution 2 – Paid Producer support

As Covid-19 struck people were feeling the effect of lack of funding even more sharply and livelihoods were at risk. A flurry of Covid-19 emergency and recovery funds into the sector provided opportunity

but the foundational skills in the sector weren't good enough to create successful applications. As an immediate response BPH provided a Producer to directly support applications to Covid-19 emergency funding and as a result some people got their first ACE grants. Bloomin Buds Theatre received a grant; Liberty Arts received a research grant for STEM Theatre in a Box as a result of this support, which consequently stimulated the long-term growth of the company, and Punjabi Roots, who were about to fold, got their first Cultural Recovery Fund along with individual support to develop their organisation.

Providing advice and letters of support and match funding applications through Spare Bob funding worked well in generating income. But it was evident that there was varied success in embedding fundraising skills in the sector long term. The Council continued to report poorly written bids, with unrealistic aims, ambitions, budgets and activity and a lack of robust accountability or infrastructure.

Solution 3 – Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy workshops

In 2021, the team approached Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy to deliver a peer support networking programme of six workshops with different facilitators for each offering a range of content (local Trusts and Foundations, Business sponsorship, Crowdfunding, Collaborative approach to Fundraising, What next?). People valued these experiences, but the end of project evaluation revealed that

there was still a significant lack of fundamental knowledge and basic skills.

Solution 4 – Fundraising working groups

At the end of 2021 a new solution was trialled - Fundraising working groups. The aim was to support funding-specific groups (for example, Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, PRS Foundation, Awards for All, City Council project grants etc.) for people who have a ready project and need collaborative help with their application.

These working groups were supported by expert fundraisers providing help structuring bids and networking at the same time. It was clear that people were not even at this stage as very few people came to the sessions and only one bid was submitted as a result.

During the sessions it became obvious that some people had an idea and not a project, and some realised that they weren't able to answer basic questions, a realisation about gaps in their knowledge. As such it was a useful learning process but not successful and not a good investment of funds longer term.

So we realised we needed to go right back to basics – e.g. [you] can't apply to that trust if you're not a charity.

Ben Rothera, BPH Creative Producer

Solutions 5, 6, 7 – Homework clubs, National Arts Fundraising School, Direct fundraising interventions

The team took some time to decide what the core issues were and what was needed following staff losses and a pause in activity. In Year 3 several interventions were trialled and at the same time the Cultural Voice Forum developed a new strategy growing their role in sector development in Bradford and published further research showing the need for more fundraising and marketing support.

1. Fundraising homework clubs – less formal get togethers to support idea sharing and project planning. CVF took the lead running the clubs but after a loss of key delivery staff these were not well planned, run or attended.
2. Capacity building through three paid places at the National Arts Fundraising School. The aim was for participants to be better able to support and upskill the wider sector. Generally, the three participants built their understanding about different types of fundraising and the reality of the fundraising landscape, including working with Friends, Trusts, and Foundations, and developed their own skills and focus.
3. Direct fundraising interventions. In response to the need for better bid writing in the sector, additional funding was ringfenced for a producer to work with artists on projects that otherwise wouldn't succeed. Projects were signposted from the team where there was a good idea but lack of a project plan or the foundations to take it forward to a funding bid. Two projects succeeded in securing funding – Theatre with Legs and Vince Virr. But for others, again the foundations needed further

work and so the three days support were used for basic project development.

During that period, Bradford 2025 won the City of Culture bid and launched a seed commissioning process. Again, this revealed poor bids, lack of project development skills and knowledge and 30% of grantees missing the reporting deadline. Successful applicants received £2.5k to develop their work.

Solution 8 – Paid Producer support

The learning through this process has all taken longer than expected and the team have gone right back to basic project development and core skills support. Currently three days support from a producer is offered for project development that is purposeful rather than responsive to the funding.

Longer term, it is obvious that this area needs more investment and there is further reflection to be done here. Artists are required to be everything — good fundraisers, good evaluators, good marketeers etc, and, of course, good artists. The team have recognised the need to teach people the rules, to help them understand the ecosystem but also to value bringing in external support when needed.

It is worth noting that despite the many challenges artists face in fundraising, BPH's training programmes, feedback on bids and letters of support have led to the sector successfully raising over £1.7m of additional funding over the past 3-years.

This is before they even think about writing a bid. Draft project plan, budget, timeline for fundraising to be in a position to fundraise.

Ben Rothera, BPH Creative Producer

Test and Learn Model – Fundraising and investment

Bradford Producing Hub

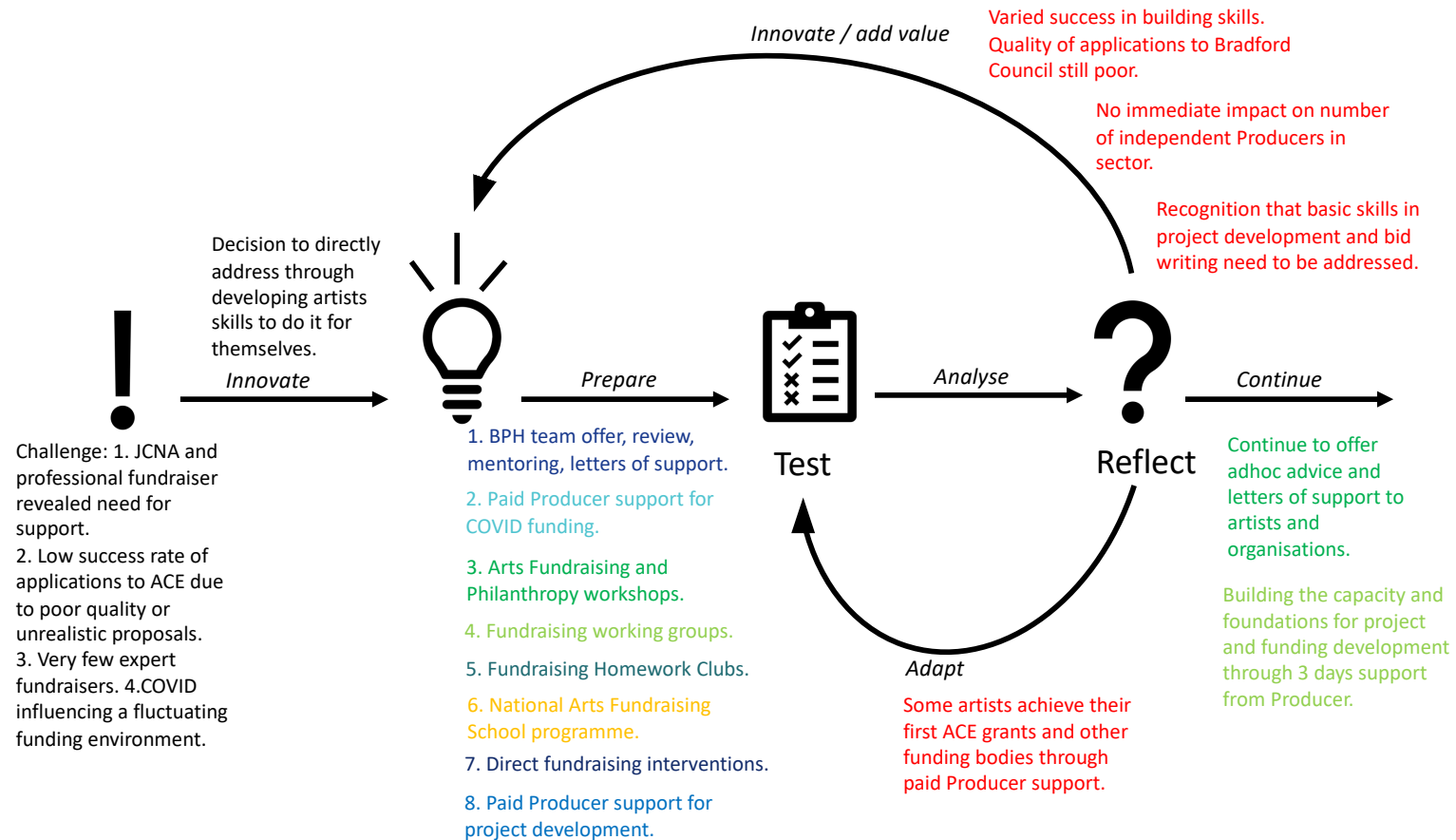


Figure 16: The evolution of fundraising support

Case Study: Developing a pool of skilled producers

The challenge

There is a recognised lack of producers in Bradford in particular those who can work with freelance artists. With very few accessible national training programmes and no development pipeline there is a general mysticism about what a 'producer' is, a lack of producer skills overall and a barrier to creative ambition and artists reaching their full potential.

Feedback from the Arts Council showed that the overall quality of applications from Bradford artists was poor.

And later in 2020 Hull Independent Producers Initiative generated research reinforcing the crucial need for but under-valuing of producers.

Producers are needed ... they are the catalyst, gears and drivers for creative growth and a key part of infrastructure.

Lisa Mallaghan, Director BPH

Solution 1 Get it Done - New Producers

In 2019 Bradford Producing Hub designed a bespoke programme, targeting self-producing artists but avoiding using the word 'emerging' to encourage people to self-identify as an early career 'producer'. The programme was delivered over 19 months and 24 sessions by working practitioners who could draw from their own lived working experiences and who had different areas of expertise, for example, tour booking. The Covid-19 pandemic moved the

whole programme online initially, which presented several challenges, not least that the programme was designed to be practical with opportunities to apply learning together. Online delivery also presented barriers to build a self-supporting network as planned.

The programme recruited a diverse group of participants, signposted by the BPH team with the offer of a £50 bursary and childcare support to widen access. A partnership with Leeds 2023 generated a wider group of participants supporting the growth of the ecosystem.

Outcomes for participants include a wider knowledge of the arts ecology and what's possible in Bradford, and people were inspired to take their learning and careers further. Some went on to produce new work and some joined other BPH development programmes.

On reflection, the team recognised the value of using case studies and role models to inspire participants and aimed to build improvements into future programmes, including increasing the pace of sessions, reducing time between them to reduce drop out and addressing the evident lack of marketing skills.

The training appeared to increase the percentage of self-producing artists rather than those who could produce other artists. Deeper team reflection focused on the different levels of skills and responsibility needed when producing someone else's work and a desire to address this in the next phase.

Solution 2: Yorkshire Producing Collective

Seed funding was offered to the Yorkshire Producing Collective in response to the challenge with the hope that they might respond in a more radical way to the challenge. Yorkshire Producing Collective is a network of independent producers from across the region committed to supporting skills, ideas and contact sharing. The Collective was born out of the Get it Done programme, and a 3-way online producer knowledge exchange programme between BPH, Leeds 23 and Absolutely Cultured in Hull. A small group of producers from the training cohort decided to set up the YPC and successfully applied to ACE for funding, with match provided by BPH and Absolutely Cultured. Early delivery included a series of themed workshops with specialist speakers.

Solution 3: LVL/UP Bradford

Building on the learning from the New Producers programme, a bespoke version of LVL/UP was designed as a partnership programme with LVL/UP Arts. This bespoke version combined their (previously separate) Producer and Arts Management training programmes and was again made possible through partnership with Leeds 2023, reaching a cohort of Bradford and Leeds aspiring producers.

The recruitment and application process was sharpened and more competitive, leading to greater commitment and higher quality applications with a clear vision and mission.

The programme was delivered by the producers of Fleabag giving graduates of the programme access to a high-profile national network and high-status course. It was delivered online again due to the 2022 Covid-19 lockdowns but was more intensive, taking place

over five weeks in the evening and generating closer relationships between participants, who have since become a self-organised group.

Participants hugely enjoyed their experience and said that their levels of confidence had increased hugely. They felt validated by becoming a 'graduate' of such a high-profile programme and work was produced as a result of sharing opportunities on WhatsApp.

This programme is being continued with a third cohort due to its success, with some adaptations including being more Bradford focused, working with early career practitioners and non-theatre artforms.

Solution 4: PROPEL

The urgency to generate a bigger pool of skilled producers increased with the successful City of Culture bid in 2022. Bradford 2025 will offer significant opportunities but will be beyond the reach of many local artists and producers without the confidence, skills and lived experience of working at scale.

The PROPEL programme is designed to help people move up a level, develop and produce scaled up high quality work and feel confident to have a place at the table in 2025. This programme is supported by Jerwood Developing Artists Fund.

During 2023 4 producers have been placed in 50-day intensive learning placements with Deer Shed Festival, Transform Festival, Harrogate International Festivals and Sheffield Theatres. A further 8 placements will take place in 2024.

Across all the solutions delivered, 47 Producers have been trained and supported to date.

Test and Learn Model – New Producers

Bradford Producing Hub

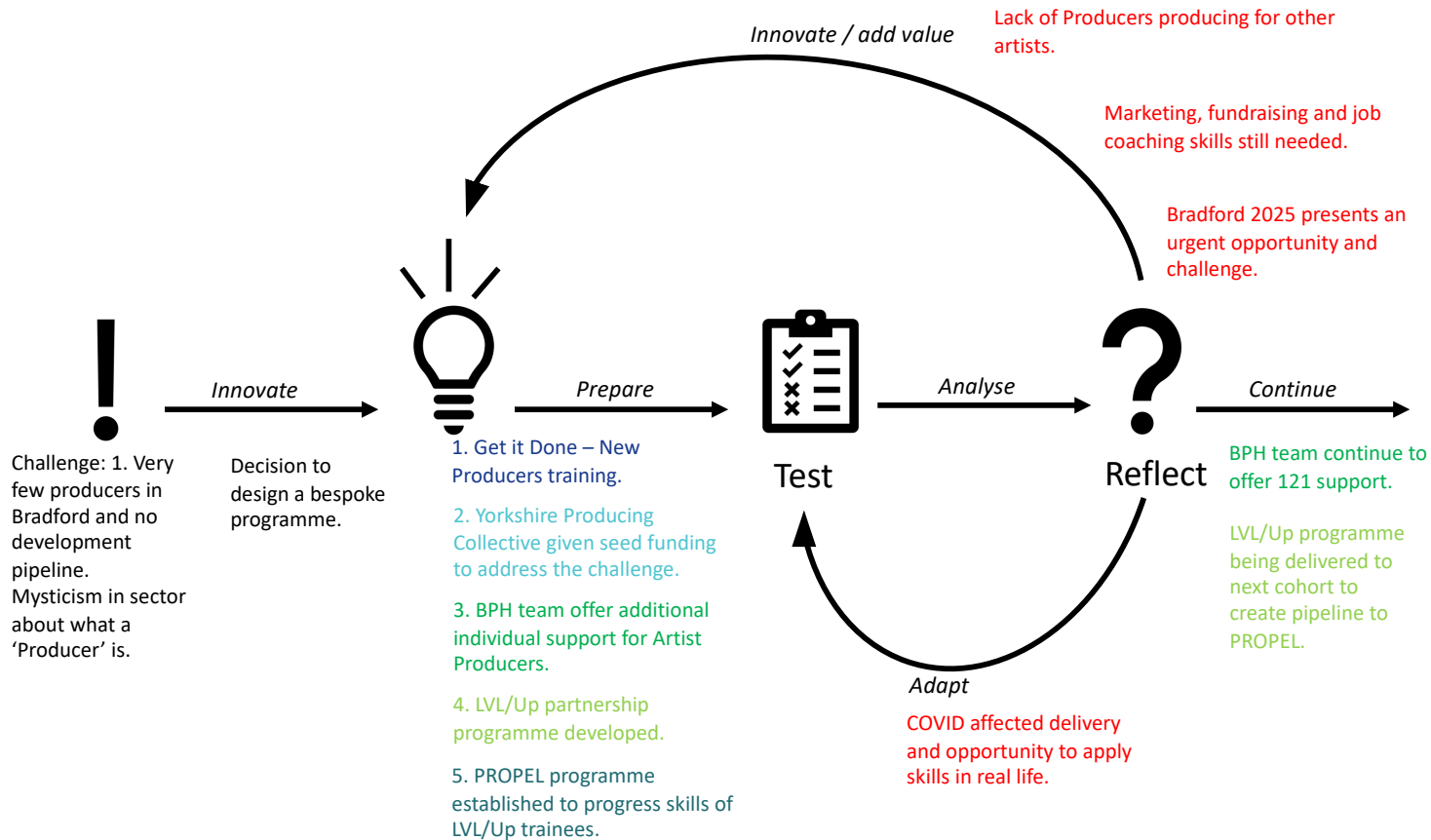


Figure 17: The evolution of producer support

Case Study: Focusing on creativity and quality

Challenges

Bradford Producing Hub was established on the premise that more support for live art was needed in the area. There was not enough commissioning of, or funding for, new work in Bradford and where there were opportunities, these were not driven by artist ideas. Work was being developed by the 'usual suspects' leading to a lack of diversity, and although the DIY culture was strong, there were low success rates for ACE funding applications.

Solutions 1 and 2 – Make Work and the Creativity Council

BPH embedded accessible funding application processes early in its first year. Applications were without restrictive criteria or word counts, supported by simple information sessions, and focused on an ideas-led rather than experience-led approach. The Creativity Council (audience and practitioner led) was developed as a decision-making body for BPH funding distribution, with Make Work Round 1 being the first funding pot. BPH wraparound support was tailored to each individual project and delivered online during the Covid-19 pandemic.

As well as evaluation of the outcomes, the BPH team took extensive time and effort to unpick the successes and challenges of this first round of funding to adapt the next phase. Some of the immediate challenges to ideas led funding were:

- The quality of outputs and performances produced was varied, a result of working in a 'Bradford bubble' without enough exposure to and understanding of high-quality work.
- Artists were lacking effective marketing and evaluation skills and despite having access to 'the performing artists workbook' and training delivered by Lisa Baxter online, BPH observed that this wasn't being embedded in people's work.
- BPH received a diverse range of applications and funded a diverse range of artists, however there were still gaps - no black or disabled artists were successful in round 1.

Solution 3: Make Work round 2

The offer for the second cohort was adapted to respond to these challenges and included focused strands for black and disabled artists as well as supporting wider networking, specialist introductory sessions, specialist one to one marketing and producer support, and advice on access and inclusion and production management.

This support resulted in stronger communications and marketing but there were challenges for the Creativity Council in making decisions with the additional focused strands for marginalised artists. Feedback and evaluation at the end of Make Work 2 continued to show a lack of marketing, audience development and evaluation skills, crucial skills for long term success.

The Creativity Council were choosing work relevant to audiences in Bradford, in some cases drawing large audiences without the need

for much individual promotion, but would this work sell in the same way elsewhere without it?

Solution 4: Make Work round 3

Responding to this challenge, Make Work round 3 was launched in 2022 with three larger grants of £18k. The quality of applications and was disappointing and marketing skills were missing, reinforcing a concern about complacency in the sector. Influencing factors may also have been increased opportunities to apply for City Council and Arts Council grants. Opportunities through Bradford 2025 have now replaced the need for future Make Work rounds.

The Big Commission, a £60k commission for the final year, delivered in partnership with Bradford Council and BD: Festival attracted a different group of applicants and was awarded to Balbir Singh, a Bradford born artist largely operating outside of Bradford.

Solution 5: Promote

The team developed the Promote programme to directly develop marketing and promotion skills in the sector. 10 micro companies

benefitted from an intensive programme including an 8-session training programme in audience development, marketing, and copywriting, as well as grants to develop new promotional photography and film, and improved websites.

Solution 6: Creative Quality

In response to issues of quality, the Being Great Storytellers programme was developed late in 2022. The programme consisted of three sessions: Getting to grips with dramaturgy; Thinking big and being ambitious; Making it work. In addition, BPH worked with Lyn Gardner to deliver a discussion on Critiquing, and set up the 'Culture Club', a series of 6 digital 'Go and Sees' followed by in-person discussions on critiquing, led by Nick Ahad. Further work is needed to help others recognise that they need this support – those who had been expected to apply didn't.

Test and Learn Model – Creativity and Quality

Bradford Producing Hub

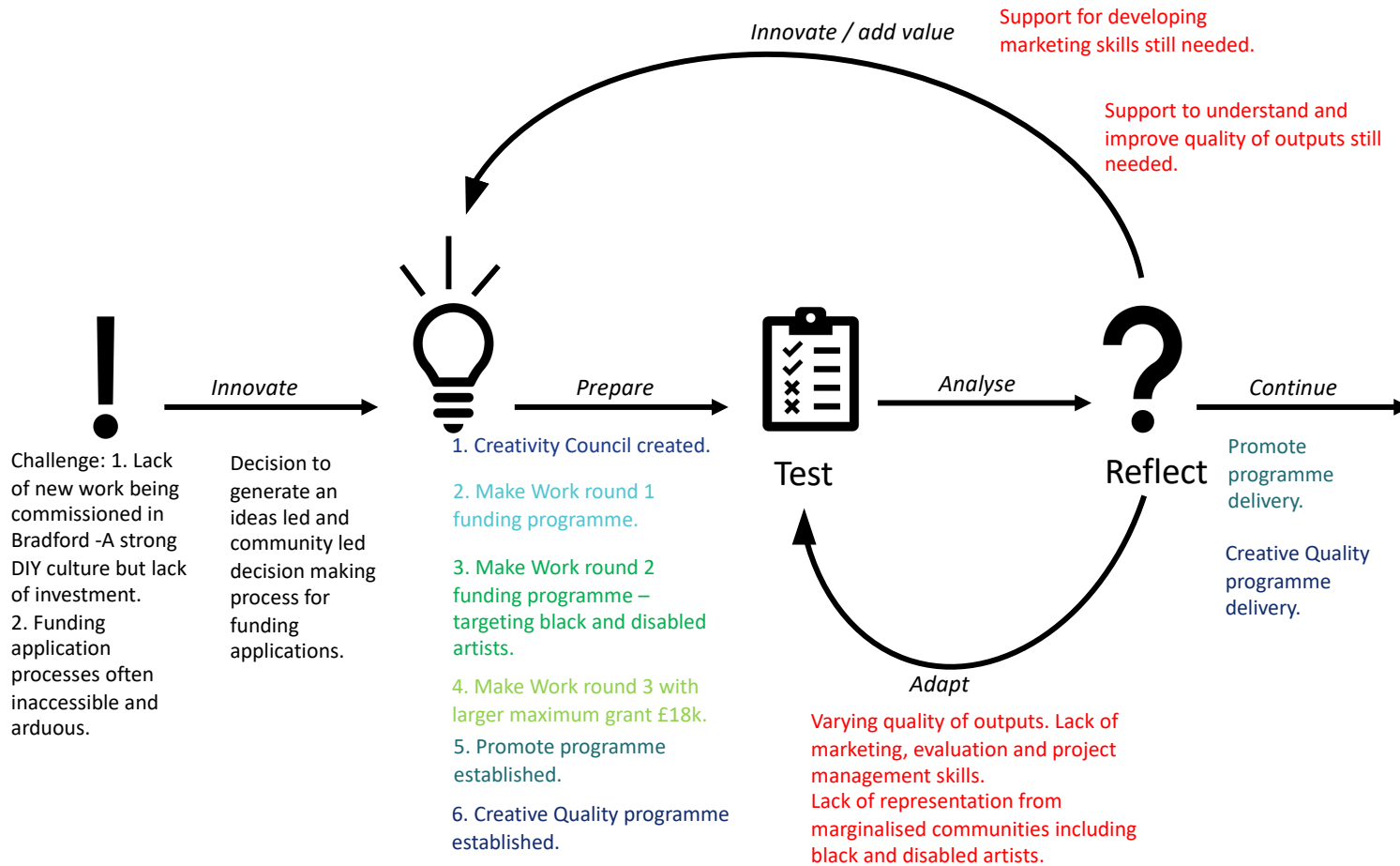


Figure 18: The evolution of Creative Quality

4.2. What works and what are the enduring challenges

Bradford Producing Hub has demonstrated its values and principles well over the past four years. These principles are enshrined in the culture and ethos of the team and have been crucial to success:

Values

- Empathy
- Caring for wellbeing
- Bravery
- Transparency
- Supportiveness / generosity
- Access
- Inclusivity

Principles

- Encouraging risk and innovation.
- Creative rigour and striving for better.
- Straightforward and easy processes.
- Championing stories not in cultural mainstream.
- Positive about collaboration.

We see frequent reference from participants and wider stakeholders to the way the team embodies these values and principles and how they have informed needs-led programming.

We've spent 4 years offering things but still having to say no to people, but we are still universally liked because we don't just reject people.

Creative Instigator

In reflections with the team, we find that being participative, dynamic, radical, and social, reducing red tape and maximising opportunity and believing that creative potential is everywhere and in everyone are most important in driving their work forwards.

Even in its final year of this phase, the programme is still innovating. The most successful aspects of the programme this year include:

- New programmes and wider audiences:
 - Empowered and LGBTQIA+ programmes targeting particular groups.
 - Programmes responding to global challenges such as health and wellbeing, and the climate challenge through the Series of Care programme which sends strong and clear messages through strong marketing.
 - The Creative Quality programme developed to address some of the issues that endure within the 'Bradford Bubble'.
 - Development of support for wider arts sectors including specifically visual arts and music sectors. New support for the visual arts sector is following the same trajectory as

that of the Music Instigators work, where there has been exponential growth in requests for support.

- Awarding the Big Commission to Balbir Singh, seeing a successful Bradford born and raised artist return to deliver a high-quality piece of work.
- Support for those not getting their NPO funding.
- Educational work - introducing young people to the sector.
- Recruitment of Champions and additional team members.
- Establishing of a new and stronger consortium built on the learning of the past few years.
- Feeling confident to challenge a major funder with needs-based evidence.
- Becoming an independent organisation. This was a lot of work but has given the organisation new freedoms.
- New investment from other funders including Jerwood Foundation and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

There are enduring challenges, as would be expected with such exponential growth in one sector in one area. Reviewing reports from the previous years and the reflections of the team shows that the same tensions that were distilled in the Year 3 report in 2022 are the most frequently mentioned relate to the capacity, skills and patience needed to be such a responsive and adaptive organisation:

- Managing momentum, pace and rigour within a complex programme and ecosystem whilst promoting the health and wellbeing of the team.

- Providing continued support whilst encouraging artists to take responsibility for their own development.
- Challenging and stretching artists whilst maintaining high quality creative work.
- Supporting artists to focus on quality and relevance, rather than one or the other, to bring in audiences.
- Encouraging ideas-led decision making whilst ensuring that funded projects are feasible.
- Generating accessible opportunities for BPH artists through the Bradford 2025 programme whilst upskilling the sector to be ready to take these opportunities.
- Keeping high expectations for external delivery partners whilst recognising that most do not work in the same way as BPH.
- Keeping a focus on positivity within the work of the Creativity Council as there is currently no funding identified for their support and coordination longer term.

Major infrastructure gaps such as the persisting lack of Artist Producers and of venues in Bradford for live performance must continue to be addressed across the sector.

Growth is great but can be exhausting.

Creative Instigator

4.3. Sharing the learning

There has been plenty of opportunity to share learning, models and skills with the wider arts and cultural sector across the UK.

- Sharing models, practice, and ideas outside Bradford with:
 - Absolutely Cultured, Hull; The Lowry, Salford; Forest Tribe Theatre, Cheshire; SWAP'ra, Leeds; Good Chance, London; Derby Theatre, Tangled Feet.
- Evolving partnerships to develop and share practice including:
 - Transform, Leeds; Leeds 2023; New Queers on the Block, Marlborough Productions; Tileyard North, Bradford Live, Leeds Cultural Institute, Equity Partnership.
- Speaking at regional or national events:
 - Catalysts for Culture: Why your city needs a Producing Hub – in July 2023, attended by 80 people from across the UK: arts professionals, funders and people who care about place-based sector development.

I really benefited from seeing a set of inspirational individuals from a huge range of companies, organisations and initiatives working together, passionately, towards a shared set of goals.

Conference audience member

- Make the Change: an event celebrating and empowering marginalised artists – in September 2023, attended by 60 people from across the North and wider UK locations: artists and creatives, and people who care about allyship, intersectionality and solidarity.

This event has made me realise I am not alone in wanting to make positive progressive change. This event has opened me up to reach out and find people – so we can make the change.

Event audience member



Figure 19: UK map showing audience locations.

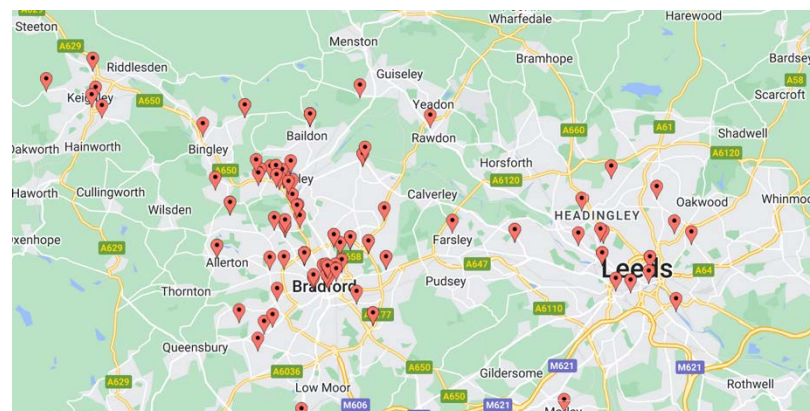


Figure 20: Close up showing audience locations in Bradford.

4.4. Supporting a learning organisation

The team, the leadership, the culture, and ethos of the organisation are key to its success. Research across the four years of delivery show these are the critical success factors for the programme.

4.4.1. The team

I have really benefitted personally and professionally from having a close working relationship with the team. They are always so welcoming; it feels like a family ... everyone is always at the end of a phone or email. Lisa always takes time out to listen and talk to me and put me in touch with people.

BPH artist, via interview

The particular make up, management, and support of the staff team is utterly essential in producing the outcomes which BPH has achieved. There is not a single piece of feedback received over the course of our evaluation which doesn't directly or indirectly reference how 'right' the team are. This is down to commitment shown to the values and principles of BPH – which are shown to the staff as well as to the creatives with whom they work.

Core values and principles which work are:

- Team culture of care, development, and support.
- Team mutual respect, trust and support, team confidence.

- Personal growth, learning and stability with structured freelance work.
- Flexibility of the Instigator role takes into account other freelance workloads.
- Rapidly increasing delivery whilst still delivering with great care.

Part of the sector

The team are made up of skilled experienced people – with special effort made to enable them to join and stay involved when other opportunities arise. In this way Bradford Producing Hub has been able to retain the creativity and strong local expertise and connections of Ben Rothera as Creative Producer, a key thinker and designer within the programme, without him having to abandon his freelance career. Likewise, Kirsty Taylor was supported to do a placement with Leeds 2023, then have a sabbatical for producing her acclaimed play: *Cashy C's*²¹, while retaining her connection to BPH.

In both cases, as well as others, through flexibility and imaginative solutions BPH has retained the top level of Bradford talent but also ensured that their programmes are being designed and delivered by people who know what freelance life is like, as far from the 'ivory tower' approach that some arts organisations can slip into as could be imagined.

²¹ See <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/arts-and-culture/theatre-and-stage/five-star-review-for-bradford-poet-kirsty-taylors-debut-play-cashy-cs-the-musical-3870845>

directorial role seemed to pick up the baton from the beginning, running things smoothly while dealing with an amazingly complex project in a time of global crisis and fast sector change.

The clarity of approach and commitment to going beyond basic achievement of the outcomes listed, into actively seeking at every point to achieve the fundamental aims of shifting everything about how Bradford supports Live Art development, and particularly developing the freelance producers of the district is incredible.

Alongside the vision shown and commitment to fully achieving the goals, Lisa has shown a real commitment to the people she works with, putting their wellbeing to the fore at every point, whether they be the team, artists on the BPH programmes or people in the wider sector. Treading the tightrope of being a very visible figurehead, advocating for the sector and being completely available to anyone wanting to take the first step of developing their work is tricky to achieve.

This does prove a challenge - the competence and commitment from the Director is hugely important in the success of the project. There is a risk that this almost presents as being 'all about Lisa', meaning that other programmes would see this as an insurmountable block to them using the learning. It is possible that doing it the first time, in these circumstances, did need someone with this particular mix of energy, experience and commitment, but by modelling and trialling this – using the test and learn approach within project design and leadership – it is now possible to list the critical factors for success. This includes how you recruit and support the team for the project, as well as the contents of the project itself.

4.4.2. Governance structures and approaches

Structure of BPH

Structurally, Bradford Producing Hub is a project of the University of Bradford who took the lead organisation role for the first phase of the project. It offered a

...platform to get going fast and make things to happen: to support cashflow and remove some of the potential barriers to starting up.

Eleanor Clyde-Evans. University of Bradford

This had the enormous advantage of the project being able to benefit from operating within an established organisation with robust operating models and effective governance arrangements, which enabled immediate delivery. In addition, the University's in-kind contribution ranged by offering financial management, staff development and recruitment support, fundraising expertise and finally line management of the PAYE team.

It also removed BPH from discussions and pressures around seeking funding for survival of the parent organisation – which would inevitably have been the case if it had sat in any of the local arts organisations for whom BPH would have been a major part of their income and delivery. It also offered a 'neutral' base for the project with respect to the arts sector as sitting within an educational institution, although it was within Theatre in the Mill which is part of the arts offer.

Notwithstanding the benefits detailed above regarding the project operating within an established and effective organisational

structure, there were some challenges as well primarily around how to run an agile and responsive project within a large establishment, and the implications this had for staff hiring, administrative systems and finance. There were also some challenges around how and where BPH could 'sit' within the wider university structure and decision-making systems, particularly in how it related to Theatre in the Mill's own systems and advisory groups. This set of issues made it hard to resolve governance challenges when they arose, and the University supported BPH in looking at alternative models for the second phase.

Extensive review of options, along with real reflection and discussion among the Consortium, led to the decision to become a standalone organisation with a Board of Directors.

Apart from practicalities of structure and administration, there are two key reasons why this is a good approach for BPH:

- The need for more, strong organisations within the cultural sector of Bradford able to lever in funding for the sector and to offer career progression opportunities for the leaders of the future.
- The value that BPH gained over the last four years from being seen as 'neutral' and a fair player, supporting everyone within the sector.

Retaining and enhancing independence supports both of these.

Consortium and governance

The sector has embraced and supported BPH in a really meaningful way, providing free development, workshop and performance space to artists and creatives, embracing opportunities for creative

workshops with communities, hosting training and development sessions, considerable combined marketing and promotion, network development and more.

Strategic partners like CBMDC and BD25 have given considerable time and support to the programme: advocating for the success of BPH, responding in times of crisis, supporting fundraising and demonstrating true partnership working.

But most significantly, thanks must be given to the BPH Consortium, who demonstrated and put into practice the generosity at the heart of BPH: pulling together to support the development of arts in Bradford

Alongside the University of Bradford, the Consortium was made up of the other bidding organisations, initially a mix of medium to small arts organisations, including artist-led organisations and collectives. These organisations and individuals have offered significant commitment and resource including time, capacity, and space, to BPH. They have a strong commitment to the values and principles of BPH, in particular the artists' needs-led element and the need to challenge the assumptions and power dynamics of the Bradford sector. Few if any of them had worked on a project of this scale before, or in a Consortium which at the time was an experimental approach with many challenges identified elsewhere.

The Consortium provided a huge part of the support to the programme, combined, the Consortium provided 60% of the in-kind support over the four years - to a value of £232,425: 60% of

the overall in kind contribution of £383,328, and nearly 10% of the total investment in the programme (cash and in-kind).²³

This was well over the original predicted input from the Consortium (£146,375 in kind included in the bid), and this increase of 37% demonstrates the additional time and commitment needed from the Consortium to support a project of this scale.

Consortium Partners with venues (with particular thanks to Kala Sangam) provided a huge number of days in-kind for meetings, workshops, development and performance, and those without venues provided valuable support, advice and guidance to the BPH team and to the sector.

BPH put in place a financial contribution to Consortium partners of £5k pa, which went to all partners for the first 2-years (in part to help everyone survive the Covid crisis). For the final 2-years only freelance individuals and non-NPO organisations received the contribution, and all NPO support was provided in-kind.

There were challenges including:

- The power imbalance between smaller and larger organisations which was inherent in scale, and experience of committee working and reflected in how much time people had to commit to the consortium and thus their relative influence.

²³ As for any major project with multiple partners and huge amounts of goodwill, this is inevitably a conservative estimate of what it has been possible to track,

- Issues in terms of potential for conflicts of interest – inevitable in a sector the size of Bradford’s if the Consortium was to contain local creatives.
- Levels of understanding of the role of the Consortium as check and balance and oversight, rather than designing and being involved in day-to-day decisions.

There was also a realisation that the representation of the Consortium although positive in terms of size of organisation, was seriously lacking global majority voices and during a time of challenge around representation, in a city like Bradford, this was a huge gap.

Following a series of challenges which resulted in several of the members of the Consortium stepping back due to work pressure or concerns linked to the issues above, the Consortium ended up containing no freelancers and no people from the global majority.

The BPH principles of lived experience obviously meant that this needed to be addressed, and a review identified steps and support to ensure that new members could be recruited into a supported environment – addressing the power imbalance.

They also identified a need for external facilitation to ensure that all voices were equally heard and the roles of Consortium versus lead organisation (legal responsibility) and director (delivery responsibility) were clear.

the team know that there is considerable additional support that hasn’t been able to be counted.

Jenny Williams, an extremely experienced facilitator of complex spaces, was recruited as Independent Chair to:

...ensure that power is shared, be that in the power to speak or share expertise, so that the combined skills of the new Consortium could better support BPH.

Jenny Williams²⁴, BPH Independent Chair

An open recruitment approach, targeting freelancers from the global majority with interest in and experience of Bradford, resulted in a strong field with three people selected, with different artform, place and background experiences.

While Liz Mytton brings years of experience in management as well as her artform specialism, interestingly the Consortium also chose two younger relatively inexperienced freelancers as well – Urussa Malik and Kamal Kaan. Neither had been on or worked with a Consortium / Board before, but Jenny noted that they immediately stepped in and brought value:

[the new members were] really quick to transition into the role and take their space in the process. One nominated himself as Vice Chair for the new Board, pointing out confidently the need for freelancers and people with his experience and background to be seen in leadership positions.

Jenny Williams, BPH Independent Chair

Urussa is also a strong voice and recognises her learning in the process:

I had been on the Creativity Council and gained a lot, so there was a bit of giving back, but also taking that next step – and the money helped! I have been surprised how hands off we are, how separated from the work which BPH does, but it is important that my voice and experience are heard, and it fits with my career trajectory.

Urussa Malik, BPH Consortium and Board member

The three new Consortium members, plus Alex Croft, the one remaining original Consortium member, have become the initial Directors of the new BPH organisation. This means that while the learning and benefits of longer-term memory are preserved – in Alex and in Lisa as Director – within the development of the new model, there is also challenge, space for new ideas and particularly the view and voice of the sector.

Although the model has at times been challenging, the Consortium members have been a huge asset to the programme, and learning should be taken on board in designing future Consortium-led projects to enable these benefits to be felt elsewhere, in particular that projects of this kind need far more support than originally predicted; they lean heavily on partners who have venues; their demands can be a significant challenge for smaller organisations and freelancers.

²⁴ Jenny Williams - <https://www.takethespace.com/about>

4.4.3. The Creativity Council.

The Creativity Council is an absolutely integral part of BPH's approach and delivery, shifting power over decision-making to the peers of those who will apply, the mix of freelance creatives, artists and arts enthusiasts who are the bedrock of the cultural ecosystem.

It has from the start been a lively and effective group, initially working through Covid-19 and forming relationships which have been supportive and challenging. They have been supported by BPH to understand their role, but also to stretch and challenge where needed. The BPH staff team have consistently shown that they value the views and input of the Creativity Council, and use them as a sounding board, but also request challenge and change accordingly.

The strength of the Creativity Council lies in its belief in the principles of BPH, and its flexibility. It has managed to adapt to a number of challenges, for example, thinking about how to commission to ensure diversity of artists, without explicitly using quotas.

As discussed above, after realising that no projects led by Black/African Caribbean artists had been commissioned in the first round of Make Work, the Creativity Council joined in the discussion on how to address this and became part of the 'unashamed' approach to inclusivity within the BPH programme and recruitment.

They reflected that although at first it was daunting to think how to specifically focus on Black and global majority, and disabled artists within commissioning – without having a quota or feeling like it was tokenism, they in fact found it not to be a problem, as they

simply included thinking on this, awareness, and an explicit attempt to have the difficult and open conversations within their process. This resulted in the commissioning of some excellent work.

There are inevitably always challenges in setting up bodies of this sort, and one potential issue came, ironically, from the strength of the group. As they began to gain a voice, they also wanted to stretch themselves and learn, so worked with BPH to do their own project which was an excellent group experience. However this does have potential to move them from being a representative body to being an artist group with static membership – which would then have some conflicts of interest in decision making around funding etc.

Support to keep those different 'hats' clear, plus to ensure some sort of turnover and new people being brought on board has helped overcome this.

We think new voices and ideas coming in, and clarity on roles is important, but we would caution against too strong a move to 'elected' or other models for the Creativity Council for two reasons:

1. There is already a representative voice for artists in the district in Cultural Voice Forum which elects their Co-Chairs – there is no need to replicate this level of representation (and potentially muddy the waters)
2. The strength of the Creativity Council seems to have come in the fact they are there to work – they are paid to work (a small stipend), and they 'do', rather than just represent and speak for/with. They are a working group, and may well include those who have more time, more energy and also less existing status than a strictly representative group would result in. This makes them more useful as speaking as the less experienced voices of

the sector – and so those who BPH and other arts organisations really needs to understand and engage with.

As the Creativity Council should consider, it would be worth them relooking at (and ensuring they publicise) their membership and recruitment approach, how they work to ensure there isn't bias or 'groupthink' – which they do through a thorough process of discussion, internal critique and thoughtful response – and how conflicts of interest are handled. They should also review their relationship to the Cultural Voice Forum which would potentially be a good partner or 'home' for the Creativity Council.

Unfortunately, the Creativity Council is the area of work which BPH doesn't currently have funding for under their partnership with Bradford 2025. This is a real loss to the project as it has been an integral part of how they maintain connections to the sector and test and discuss new ideas.

Further information is provided on the Creativity Council within the Case Study below.



Case study: Empowered and Series of Care

How did BPH address equality, diversity and inclusion?

About the project

The Empowered programme for marginalised artists (Black and global majority and LGBTQIA+) and the Series of Care programme for holistic wellbeing and resilience tools (covering sustainability, resisting burnout, and knowing your rights and worth).

The Empowered three-day training programmes provided opportunities to process experiences, convene solidarity, explore identity in a productive way and inspire artists to become leaders.

Outcomes and experience

These programmes have had an extensive impact on participants so far. People valued the spread of location, practice and culture diversity of participants recruited. The programmes have been insightful but presented lead practitioners with a hefty weight of responsibility and the risk of burnout.

1. Artists are more likely to see themselves as a **human rather than a commodity** within the arts system.
2. Participants felt the programmes **deconstructed and demystified** the process of freelancing and supported them in understanding and **navigating the sector** better.

I will gladly shout from the rooftop, to be signed up for more of these.

Empowered participant

3. They felt they had developed **healthier perceptions and practice** whilst being challenged for existing bad practices whilst in a safe and supportive environment.
4. Participants found the sessions **therapeutic, validating, empowering and connecting** and many expressed a desire for more in the future.

I feel proud of how I acted in these sessions and how I've grown from being a part of this programme. I'm sure that everyone else has said something similar to this; we were all gleaming with hope and joy at the end of each day. I cannot wait to see what the next steps might be for this group!

Empowered participant

5. The experience was emotional and draining for many, a freedom to talk openly about things and solidarity with others experiencing the same challenges.
6. People felt heard, although in a room full of people used to being ignored, overlooked and undervalued, some voices were more dominant than others.
7. Participants valued efforts for inclusivity including bursaries offered.

Thank you for making a bursary and access needs costs available - it was essential for me.

Empowered participant

The sector's response to the series of care programmes has been mainly positive. There have been particularly positive responses to the 'burn out' sessions, demonstrating how BPH is responding to contemporary and deep-seated needs that seem to be more evident since the Covid-19 pandemic.

I felt valued and listened to, a great atmosphere was set in place where we all checked in with each other, and shared how we were feeling.

Empowered participant

Many participants have continued to engage heavily with BPH following their initial participation in the Empowered programmes for Black and GM and LGBTQIA+ artists and the Series of Care workshops. Most recently the programme has partnered with specialist inclusivity and accessibility organisations including Mind the Gap. That partnership has seen a series of workshops being delivered around access riders, inclusive practice and creative accessible spaces and there will be an Empowered programme for deaf, disabled and neurodiverse artists in October 2023.

18 of 30 artists across both Black and global majority and LGBTQIA+ programmes have now been offered £400 commissions as part of the Make the Change element of the programme. This commission is allowing artists to make art expressing what change means to them or to use the commission for training. This has allowed the artists to feel a stronger connection to the arts in Bradford and allowed them to continue exploring and strengthening their relationship with their identity and to gain confidence in navigating the industry.

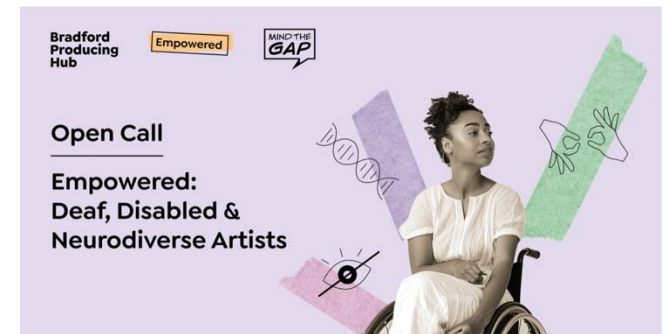
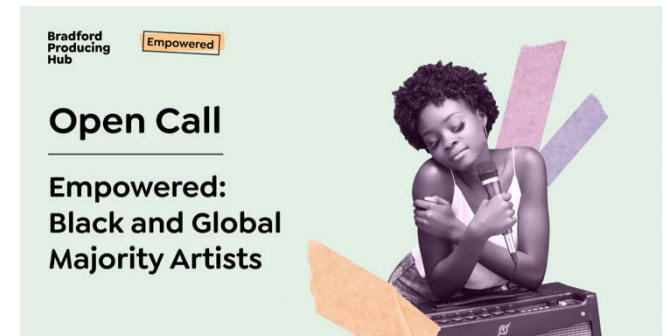
The learnings

The impact on the programme lead herself has been significant. She is a more confident leader and project manager reflecting on the skills she has developed in delivering a carefully curated experience for people experiencing significant and long-term barriers and challenges.

It has allowed me to see that art and activism can be gentle and care-centred, spiritual and holistic and community-focused in a range of ways. It has made me realise the level of responsibility in working with people, especially following the pandemic. The needs and the levels of change nationally and locally have been profound.

Creative Instigator

Delivering this programme has been difficult and at times draining, with the weight of responsibility on the shoulders of facilitators.



... The projects are very much encountering new territories in terms of acknowledging and finding ways to deal with systemic oppression and bad practices... the responsibility of participants' well-being while delivering this kind of work, that opens up emotional and sensitive issues, has felt quite strong and it has made me recognise the value of wellbeing support and trained therapeutic practitioners supporting this work...

Creative Instigator

Another challenge is simply describing and marketing this kind of niche work. It does not usually have a strong mainstream platform for our arts audiences and marketing partners to support in generating nuanced assets around.

Conclusion

The autumn Make the Change event sets platformed some of the artists involved in the programme to date requiring much bravery on their part. Further developments on the event and commissioned works as part of the project will be digitally archived, which will allow further evaluation and exploration.



**Bradford
Producing
Hub**

Empowered

MAKE THE CHANGE

**Thursday 14 September
3.30pm - Late
Mind the Gap**



Case study: Sustain

How did BPH support mid-career artists?

About the project

Sustain is a five-month programme first delivered during 2022 and aimed at supporting mid-career artists and small organisations (those working in the creative industry for 10 years or more) to move forward and address the specific challenges they are facing. This programme was developed in response to an identified need and a lack of tailored support for mid-career artists. Experienced artists and companies need specific expertise, time and space to reflect, explore and test new or different approaches in a supported way.

What has happened?

Participants work alongside a group of peers to help break down barriers, glass ceilings and limitations to growth, and are supported to take the next steps in their careers. The programme is led by Dramaturg and development specialist Lou Cope and in year 1 of the programme included one-to-one meetings online, group sessions, self-directed learning and development time and a group away day and dinner. The content of these sessions is co-created with the participating group. The groups were kept deliberately small: six people took part, representing three micro-organisations and three freelance artists / sole traders.

Cohort 1 participants came from a range of backgrounds and artforms and although self-identifying as mid-career practitioners were all at varying stages of individual and organisational development, some with significant experience of the sector and some changing sectors or direction, but all having a clear vision without a route map to get there.



At this stage in their careers there is nothing else out there. These people are successful ... they are vulnerable and may be alone in leadership. [They are] all very motivated by social care and a passionate quest, but this comes at a cost...when people don't prioritise their own care and development.

Lou Cope, Sustain Lead

Outcomes and experience

There are examples of transformational thinking and identity building for all the participants and evidence of significant progress organisationally and individually. We see concrete examples of infrastructure development, for example, new funding applications and new websites, and some less concrete relating to career progression and clarity of vision.

Participants in the evaluation identified nine main outcomes for themselves as practitioners and for their organisations, in order of importance to the group:

1. A clearer **focus and direction** – with a route map of how to get to where they want to be.
2. **Making space and time** for development – on a regular basis, individually and with others.
3. A clearer **identity** – as a professional artist with unique skills, knowledge and experience.
4. **Career or organisational development** – all participants progressed on their journeys; at least two are working towards CIC status and have committed to supporting each other in this process.
5. Better **decision-making skills** – to deal with challenges, to say 'no' and to make progress towards a vision.
6. Improved **self-confidence** – being more positive and assertive when talking or writing about themselves or their organisations.

Thinking what the hell am I and what do I do and where do I fit?

Sustain 1 participant

7. **Feeling valued** as a professional artist – being proud about having something important, and worth funding, to offer society.

I just quit a project two weeks in and I think that's a direct result of this ... before I would have just kept going. I wasn't enjoying it and [Sustain] gave me that back up to ask, 'Why am I doing this? Who is it benefitting? Is it worth it?...'

Sustain participant

8. An improved sense of community (of practice) - feeling more connected into the Bradford arts scene. Some participants were already well established in Bradford, but others felt they were new or hadn't been part of the Bradford 'scene' for a long time.
9. Improved professional connections - at least one participant has already commissioned new work with another participant, and one has continued a coaching relationship with Lou.

The learnings

Recruit the right people

Lou's skills in bringing a diverse group of practitioners together, holding and creating a safe space for discussion and offering dedicated one to one time were referenced repeatedly. Her experience, authenticity, flexibility and care supported participants to feel well held.

Participants also welcomed Lou's ability to cut to the real issues at hand, empathetically challenging people whilst building their confidence to make their own decisions about next steps and flexing around individual needs and capacity. These comments validate the thoughtful process used by BPH for recruiting the right people for each individual programme - an investment of time and money really worth making.

She made us see the value of our work...

Sustain participant

Find space for self and group reflection

The intensity of the programme and the necessary commitment to self-reflection and self-development has led to longer-term commitments to find space and time, although longitudinal research would be needed to measure the extent to which this has continued.

Being able to find and prioritise time for personal and professional development in a busy role is tricky. As responsibility and workload increases, priorities lie with the day-to-day management and delivery of the business, and often as a mid or later career practitioner there aren't the right development opportunities available. Early in the programme one participant laughed that they might be able to find 'ten minutes per month to reflect.'

Consider accessibility

Freelance participants welcomed the bursaries offered to encourage participation, although the bureaucracy and process of invoices has been challenging. This is one of the defining features of accessibility for freelancers and likely brought people to the programme who would not otherwise have participated.

Build the right application process

As with other programmes, BPH have subsequently worked with Sustain 1 participants to help select the next Sustain 2 participants. This ensures that the right people, likely to benefit most from the programme, are recruited.

For Lou, the experience is rich and developmental, enabling better understanding of the changing needs and enduring challenges within the sector, and feeling privileged to meet and support each person.

Create hybrid learning opportunities

Zoom was exhausting for some, and the majority would have valued more in-person meet ups. However, reflective of our wider BPH research, at least one person felt that without Zoom participation may not have been as consistent. The challenge is to continue with a hybrid offer whilst ensuring in-person meet ups happen often enough to support group cohesion.

... I'm grateful to Sustain for introducing me to Lou. Her experience in the arts makes her special for this.

She brings lots of different models together with nuance and personalisation of these models to the individual.

Sustain participant

Be aware of exposing vulnerabilities

This is a programme that can be personally and professionally exposing. The group felt this level of vulnerability was worthwhile when they were held in a 'safe space' but felt uncomfortable when others entered that space. This has implications for others, including the BPH team, joining the group at the end of sessions for socials or discussions. This must be a consideration for Sustain 2.

I felt like my career was like a big allotment, totally beyond me and I know I should focus on the veg and rewild the gardens. It's a very productive allotment but too much for me to juggle.... And this [yellow flowers] is me now. I ...have re-emerged to open up as one flower overall, with the resources to focus. I am well and blooming.

Sustain participant

Group legacies depend on group dynamics

There have clearly been long term impacts on individuals but the early programme objective of building a self-sustaining peer support group has not been achieved. The range of differences in this group meant that without Lou they didn't naturally gel, further reinforced by the absence of early in person meetings. There were early attempts at meeting up as a group which haven't been sustained because people felt they didn't need it. This is seen as a positive outcome.

Participants are still connected on WhatsApp and know that they have a virtual support network if needed, giving some 'existence value'. In addition, there is evidence that they are collaborating at a one-to-one level for advice and for joint work.

Lou asks the right questions; she is like a shaman. She sees through into your soul whether you want her to or not.

She has a laser like approach...getting to the root of things.

Sustain participant

Conclusion

This programme is a smart investment in the sector – re-vitalising people at this stage in their career often only requires what Lou terms a ‘top up’ of support that can result in profound longer-term impacts. Despite external challenges and busy lives, the participants in this programme have shown significant progress towards a newly articulated creative vision.

For most they have the confidence, tools and route map to progress and are better positioned to advocate for themselves and the valuable difference they make in the world. They also have the ability to see where they need continued support and where to get that. Although they are not meeting as a cohesive group they feel better connected to a wider arts ecosystem in Bradford and the opportunities that that provides.

I feel a lot more connected to the creative sector now and what I’m doing professionally compared to 5 years ago... I’m feeling like I now belong and have my wings.

Sustain participant

Case study: Creativity Council

How did BPH create, support and develop a decision-making body representative of the sector?

The journey

The Creativity Council is a group of people with different backgrounds and experiences with a minimum membership of 15 people, who are on annual contracts for their support work.²⁵

The Creativity Council's remit has been to:

- Imagine how live performance and creativity can make Bradford a better place to live and work.
- Create new ideas and talk about how these could work.
- Help the project think about all the different communities in Bradford and what they want and need.
- Talk about how things are going, what we should be doing more of and what we should do differently.
- Review applications for training and funding and help select what the project should support.



If you want diverse representative and meaningful arts in the city, then give the power to the people...

Creativity Council member

²⁵ For more information on the Creativity Council see - <https://bdproducinghub.co.uk/creativity-council/>

Overall, the Creativity Council has engaged 25 people to date with a range of experiences, skills and knowledge, giving advice and guidance. They developed an innovative needs- and ideas-led approach to funding decisions for BPH programmes. This worked very well to support ground-breaking new work through Make Work and other BPH funding streams.

As part of their development the Creativity Council delivered their own creative project in 2022, Creative Constellations, encouraging creative challenge and leadership skills and an opportunity for members to take part in producer training and co-mentoring support.

The current cohort is 15 people: 60% global majority, 40% white, 27% LGBTQIA+, 14% disabled.

This is about real power ... I thought it was just a sounding board, I am on a lot of these and that's how you are used. This is different. In two years, I've learnt so much; it's really helped me understand that there's a need for thinking about money, how to work with people of all ages, backgrounds and artforms, how to have a constructive disagreement in a sensitive way – it helped me recalibrate what being an artist can be.

Creativity Council member

Impacts

Individual members of the Creativity Council have been on a developmental journey. They feel empowered and are more confident in their own value to the arts sector whether they come from an arts background or not. They have developed new skills, particularly democratic decision making, consensus building and leadership skills, including having difficult conversations and advocacy. They express a better understanding of and joy in the breadth and depth of the arts and cultural offer in Bradford. They are better connected, and all feel they are ready for much more.

It feels like something special is happening in Bradford and I think the Creativity Council has the real power to uplift and support Live Arts and artists. I'm privileged to play a small role in it.

Creativity Council member

Although not measured directly, their impact on the arts ecosystem is tangible in terms of the projects and individuals that have been funded to develop and create new work in Bradford. This is a group of people who have been invested in and trusted, and who are now ideally positioned to take a leading role in the sector going forwards.

The success of their work has also inspired other organisations to trust decision making to members of the sector and they are being considered as a model by Bradford Council.

Strengths

Its strength lies in the variety of experiences and background that people have, both in the arts and non-arts sectors. Each brings their own expertise to the table and is committed to working collaboratively to reach consensus in their decision making. This is a role taken very seriously by Creativity Council members, who quickly realised the importance of this role for individual artists and the arts and cultural ecosystem in Bradford.

Challenges

There are several challenges. Membership is voluntary, with only a small stipend to cover expenses and although people are very committed, they also have other home and work commitments that must be prioritised. People have given it energy when they can, but commitment and participation is variable, leaving the Creativity Council vulnerable to its high ambitions.

Perhaps a more pressing concern is for the legacy of the Creativity Council moving into the next few years. Members have expressed their worries about lack of funding for a coordinator role.

After Make Work Round 3, the BPH team identified that it was no longer necessary for BPH to use its funds to commission work – the developments of Bradford Council’s regular grant giving, The Leap, BD25 and others meant that BPH could better use its resources elsewhere. This led to some difficult decision making around the Creativity Council and their role in the future company, as the devolved decision making for Grants was the most significant part of their role.



An external consultant was brought in to work with the Creativity Council and they carried out a series of explorations about potential models and futures for the group – whether they would establish as a separate independent body, whether other funders in Bradford would utilise the group for their decision making, what other futures and models they may have. Through this process, the Creativity Council decided to remain as an informal group and refocus their purpose on the promotion and critiquing of the Bradford arts sector – using their time and their platform to share and talk about the work being made here, raising profiles of our artists, but also acting as a critical friend and feedback channel to the sector. BPH arranged for members to receive training in critiquing with established arts critic and radio presenter Nick Ahad, and the group have begun seeing and writing about work.

It is yet to be seen whether the Creativity Council can continue without a paid coordinator. Not having the funds to continue the Creativity Council as a core supported element of BPH is undoubtedly a loss to the structure. This will need to be continually reviewed as BPH develops into its next stage, to ensure that community-led decision making and critical reflection remains a core part of BPH's model.

Concern for capacity of the Creativity Council - there's confidence in the plan but no coordinator role going forwards.

Creativity Council member



5. Conclusions and recommendations

In this final section we sum up our evaluation of BPH, identifying what it has meant for the Bradford District cultural ecosystem overall, outlining what approaches worked and listing recommendations and opportunities for development in the future, for BPH and for the wider Bradford cultural sector.

5.1. A radical success

Bradford Producing Hub is a remarkable project. It is ground-breaking in the sense that it has done things never done before. Looking back at the Story of Change developed and reviewed in 2021 we see that BPH has reached its short-term ambitions and made huge inroads towards long term strategic change. It is widely recognised, in and beyond the district, as one of the key drivers of the change and growth in Bradford and is something that every city would benefit from.

It has made a significant difference to Bradford's arts ecosystem, both at the strategic and individual levels. Involvement in every strategic group and initiative developed in the sector over the last four years has meant that the BPH focus on freelancers and the needs of the district's artists and creatives are to the fore in thinking. As a result of this BPH has been able to model and share its aim of shifting where power sits and who has a voice in the sector, acting as a positive role model for changing how leadership and collaboration are done.

At an individual level, BPH has made a huge difference to hundreds of artists and creatives, particularly freelancers, and to the people and organisations they work with, supporting progression routes

and talent development at all stages of career and life, building their confidence, capacities, skills and ambition and investing in making new work. It has also supported creatives to build networks and develop a strong and shared voice within decision making, both internally and within the whole ecosystem.

But this is just the start of the journey, and our evaluation shows that the sector still needs BPH support to progress to a position where it is thriving, diverse, resilient and fully embedded in long term local policies and agendas and attracting sustained investment.

5.2. Approaches for success

The power of this organisation is in its culture, ethos, values and principles for working with creative practitioners and changing an entrenched system, not just in the programmes it delivers.

There are three key components to success:

Knowing – the team of freelancers are embedded and expert in their own communities and artforms. They know the sector, its needs, its strengths and the opportunities. They invest in deep reflective and evaluative work designed for organisational growth and learning.

Caring – the team cares about the sector, about audiences, about quality art and experiences and about living in Bradford. They continue to challenge complacency and bad practice, to dismantle hierarchies and embed equality, diversity and inclusion.

Radical – the team is agile, curious, prepared to take risks and challenge poor practice, committed to positive transformation.

5.3. Recommendations

As fits a reflective learning organisation, BPH has implemented most of the recommendations from previous years²⁶. As this phase of the programme ends, we direct our recommendations not just to BPH itself, but also to the Bradford District sector, recognising the need for wider investment and a strategic approach to deliver longer term, sustainable change.

Through the partnership with Bradford 2025 and other funding opportunities BPH can directly continue a lot of the work undertaken to date, further strengthening, and developing the sector, while working to shift where decisions are made to ensure Bradford has the ambitious, distinct, high quality and recognised arts sector it deserves.

There are two main areas of concern looking at the next phase of BPH. Two of the success factors are the commitment to reflection and learning from data, and close connection with the voice of the sector. These are supported by a strong evaluation partnership, and the existence and commitment of the Creativity Council, neither of which currently have funding to continue.

²⁶ For a review of previous year's recommendations – implemented and pending see Appendix 5 below.

Recommendations for Bradford Producing Hub

To ensure that the success so far continues, BPH should:

- Invest in and support the development of arts infrastructure and capital developments, to create more permanent 'homes' for the sector and more arts spaces for audiences - reducing the reliance on meanwhile use space that is not fit for purpose.
- Retain the staffing approach, managing turnover, recruiting thoughtfully, building up skills and delivering them back into the sector. Consider longer term part time freelance placement opportunities.
- Continuing the commitment to wellbeing – acknowledging the multiple challenges faced by the arts sector in Bradford and the weight of responsibility and commitment for the team.
- Continue to reach into wider arts networks and communities in Bradford to understand the barriers preventing them from engaging.
- Continue the test and learn approach, explicitly taking risks, adapting and honing delivery to meet what will be increasingly rapidly changing needs around 2025.
- Share further what works, continuing the process of dissemination via conferences, discussions and workshops, but also thinking about other ways of sharing such as short reports and extracts and learning from this report and other sources.

- Think hard about navigating between the demands and needs to continue to support producers and artists / creatives at all levels, and the specific need to build up skills and experience among producers ready to work at a national level. This isn't simply an immediate need for 2025 delivery but is also key for a balanced ecosystem which doesn't continue to lose talent.
- Provide a supported legacy for the Creativity Council, now a key part of the ecosystem, including continued development and coordination and the roll out of this model beyond Bradford. Weaving this into the narrative of the sectors' achievements over the last few years.
- Recognise the importance of time and support for reflection and learning within the programme, in particular the use of data and feedback, and regular challenge and reflect sessions. Look to the partnership with Bradford 2025 which has its own evaluation team to see how this can replace the support the existing evaluation partnership offers.
- Continue and roll out the commitment to robust evaluation and impact measurement. Explore the opportunity of using Social Return on Investment to gain a greater understanding of the wider value of the work of BPH to the whole district. Bradford 2025 evaluation plans offer an opportunity to develop this.

Recommendations for Bradford Cultural Sector

The BPH programme has catalysed a long journey to reconnect, revitalise, stabilise and develop talent within the sector. The work done so far has made clear how much there still needs to be done to build a thriving self-sustaining ecosystem.

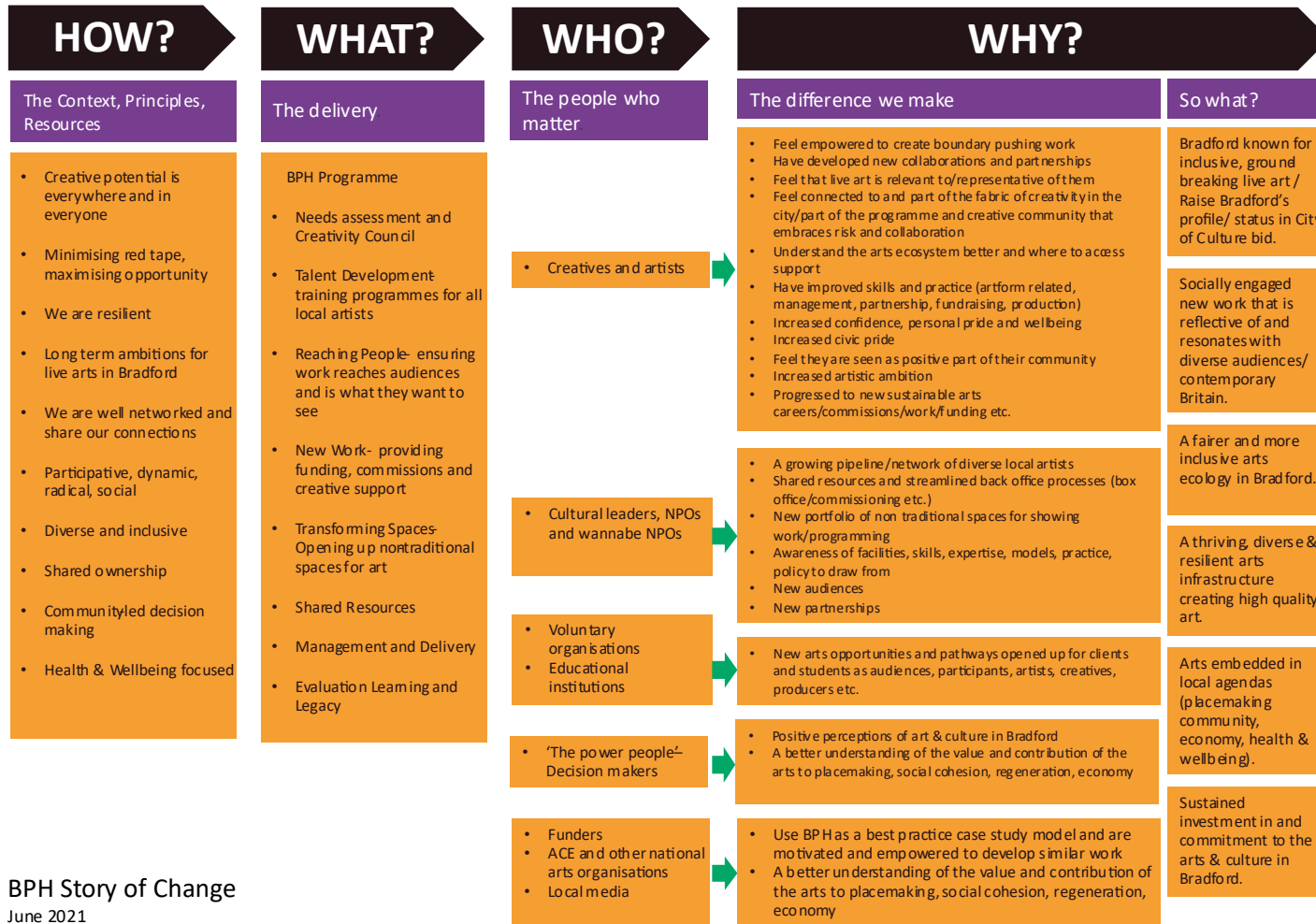
To build on this work BPH should work with the wider sector, particularly through the Creative Place Partnership as an overseeing body to:

- Maintain the voice and perspective of freelancers and creatives at every stage of their careers in longer term planning, continuing to challenge assumptions of where power should sit. Consider whether the Creativity Council is a model which might work for the whole sector.
- Promote the importance of the ways of working in building a thriving ecosystem – feeding in the principles of considering inclusivity, wellbeing and new models of leadership into strategies and organisational development programmes.
- Commission a full review of the Joint Cultural Needs Assessment in partnership with key bodies from other sectors and Bradford 2025 so that this can provide the intelligence for action planning 2025 legacy.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Bradford Producing Hub Story of Change



BPH Story of Change
June 2021

Appendix 2: Brief methodology and data sources

Here we outline our methodology. This report is based on work carried out by Ruth Melville Research Ltd (RMR) and the Bradford Producing Hub team using an evaluation approach developed by Ruth Melville with BPH. Our evaluation framework draws on the monitoring and reflection data, as well as strategic interviews and focus groups.

Data collection was carried out by RMR and BPH. Analysis of postcodes was carried out on behalf of RMR for Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Full analysis and reporting was carried out by the RMR team.

As this is the final report, it spans the last four years. The table below shows the main data that has been drawn on for this report:

Data gathering included:

Data Source	Description	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) postcode analysis	Data analysis by RMR team of valid postcodes collected by BPH team	40	186	724	592	1542
Annual survey	Annual BPH survey sent out via email to creative practitioners and artists who engage with BPH. Year 4 included wider sector Bradford-based artists and creatives	90	82	63	74	309
Ethnographic data	Analysis of open self-reported demographic data from artists and producers at events	90	270	300	548	1,208
Project and participant information	People and programmes tracker, attendance and audience summary, postcode and diversity info, feedback tracker (quotes through social media and email)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Interviews	Interviews with key stakeholders identified by BPH team	-	14	8	16	38
Team reflections, workshops and training	Reflection logs and meetings to explore outcomes achieved, critical success factors and challenges, team workshops and Culture Cubed training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix 3: Programme summary

1. Needs assessment

- Gathering and understanding the needs that BPH should address, to support the creation of more Live Art in Bradford.
- Creativity Council, a group of 15 people with a range of experiences, skills and knowledge. They have been instrumental in giving advice, guidance and support to the BPH team and reviewing grant applications.

2. Talent development

Providing a structured and responsive strand of training and development opportunities for all artists and creatives at any point of their career that will support the creation of more Live Art in, and coming out of, Bradford.

- Extracurricular, a series of online discussion including: Touring and the Pandemic Impact, Self-Assessment Income Tax Return, Art of Finance, How to Build a Tour Pack, Getting Gigs and Growing your Audience, Introduction to Rural Touring and What even is an R&D week?
- Fundraising Working Group Sessions: Practical sessions to support fundraising application writing for PRS Foundation, National Lottery Awards for All, The National Lottery Heritage Fund and ACE Project Grants.
- DYCP session and one-to-one sessions with Hannah Bentley: Information session on applications for developing your creative practice (ACE funding programme) and one-to-one advice sessions for artists wanting to apply to ACE.
- Get it Done: New Producer Training: Supporting more people who want to be producers to start their career and people already producing to keep developing.
- LVL/UP: A bespoke Producing and Management Training opportunity for aspiring producers.
- Optimists: Training for early career producers, in collaboration with Derby CAN.
- Get it Done: Production Management Training and Production Management in the Creative Process Training: Understanding how to bring together lighting, sound, staging, special effects, event management and creative vision to make things happen.
- Spare Bob: £500 micro-grants programme for artists and creatives.
- Mentoring: A programme pairing organisations or individuals with mentors and experts to help support development and growth.

- Culture 101: A development programme for global majority women in Bradford.
- NPO Development Programme: A series of conversations, grants and support for organisations developing to NPO status.
- Culture Cubed: A series of online Evaluation training sessions.
- Sustain: Development programme for mid-career creatives.
- Expanding Horizons Fund: Funding to provide Organisational Development support for artists and small companies.
- Fundraising Support Programme: Bid writing support for artists and creatives.
- Go and See Programme: Trips to support people to see work, meet other creatives and be inspired.
- Empowered and Series of Care Programme: A series of projects, workshops and events focused on artist and ally empowerment, training and development.
- Bradford Young Promoters: Support for 10 young promoters to put on music events in Bradford, in partnership with Launchpad.
- Knowledge Exchange Café: Group sessions for artists to work on marketing and fundraising projects with support from experts, in partnership with Cultural Voice Forum.
- Freelancers Line Management: Programme of support pairing freelancers with 'line managers'.
- Women+ in Music Programme: A series of gigs, monthly drop-in gatherings and development days for women and marginalised genders in Music.
- Young People Inspiration Sessions: Visits to schools with talks from people working in the arts.
- BD:Festival Kit: Training programme for developing festivals in Bradford, run in partnership with City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
- Sightlines Festival Collaboration: Online events and workshops in collaboration with Sightlines, an online festival exploring the conversation around performance and wellbeing.
- PROPEL: Programme to support sector placements, with placement host partners including Sheffield Theatres, Deer Shed Festival, Harrogate International Festivals and Transform.

3. Reaching people

Ensuring that work is relevant and reaches audiences. Improving the ways audiences find out about and engage in live arts.

- Black Artists Network
- Creative Care Network: A network for artists and creatives who deliver wellbeing activity and opportunities.
- Music Network
- Yorkshire Producer Collective: Bringing together new and emerging producers from across Yorkshire for training and development.
- Front Room Poetry On't Road: A series of in-person poetry events with headliners and an open mic, and poetry workshops, led by lisa luxx, Suhaiymah Manzoor Khan and Casey Bailey.
- Let's have a Brew: Meeting for artists to connect and chat about opportunities in Bradford.
- Plays Days: A series of workshops for artists led by Tyrrell Jones and Jan Blake, Cultural Comedy Tours and Ella Tighe, Frantic Assembly and Beccy Durham, Told by an Idiot, Jennifer Jackson, Box of Tricks Theatre, Common Wealth Theatre, Stacy Makishi.
- Creative Socials: Event for local creatives to meet other artists and hear about new or potential opportunities within the arts and cultural sector.
- LGBTQIA+ Creatives Gathering: Monthly drop-in gatherings for LGBTQIA+ artists.
- October is Music Month: A month long celebration of live music.
- Creative Quality Programme: Development programme in reflective practice and reviewing performance, with sessions run by Lyn Gardner, Dawn Walton OBE, Suzanne Bell, Daniel Bye and a monthly 'Culture Club' run by Nick Ahad.
- Promote: Raise your profile with audiences: A marketing development programme for artists, creatives and small companies working in performance and live arts.

4. New work

Providing Research & Development funding, Commissions and creative support to enable more and better Live Art in Bradford and by Bradford artists.

- Make Work 2020: 4 strands:
 - Playing Out: A Compendium of Mythical Beasts, Hidden Winter and The Bull and the Moon
 - Your Idea, Your Way: Khooghi and Full English
 - Test it R&D: Destination Bradford and Intercultured
 - Just R&D it: A Love Story on Leeds Road and Thyme Café
- Make Work 2021: 3 strands:
 - Your Idea, Your Way: Tale of 2 Estates, Dancing with Colours and AJAYU Transitorio
 - Test it R&D: Santa Must Die! And Fishing Net Soul
 - Just R&D it: Love in a Northern Town and Bradford Psychogeographical Synthesiser
- Make Work 2022: 3 strands:
 - Your Idea, Your Way: Pick n Mix, F*ck What Other People Think (Working Title), Bradford 12
 - Test it, R&D: A Sense of Place and Moments with my Father
 - Just R&D it: RIDE! and Bradford Women's Evening Cricket League
- Transform Co-Commission: The Sound Grief Project
- The Big Commission (in partnership with City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council): Cricket Green

5. Transforming Spaces fund

BPH has a small amount of funding available each year to help people and organisations in Bradford to develop new spaces that will support the live arts sector, including: FUSE Arts Space, Mezzanine Arts Depot, 26 Piccadilly, Kala Sangam, Keighley Creative, Common Space, Craven Arts, MAPA, The Place, West Indian Community Centre, Rockwell Centre, Thornbury Centre, and more.

6. Shared resources

A selection of practical resources available on the BPH website, including the Outdoor Arts Guide, People with Power and Purses, a series of videos from Extracurricular and documentation on everything from Health and Safety to Budget Management to working outdoors, applying for funding, and research. Bradford Performance Places website, a searchable database of Bradford's venues and spaces.

7. Management and delivery

Ensuring the programme is well managed and supported, while creating new routes into the arts sector.

8. Evaluation, learning and legacy

Evaluating and sharing the successes and failures of the project, proving need, and having a constant eye to the future. Including Catalysts For Culture conference and Make the Change event. Development of an Artists Charter for Bradford.

Appendix 4: Recommendations review

Reviewing the recommendations detailed in the last two years' reports shows that the majority have been addressed.

Recommendations already addressed:

- Strengthening the identity and role of BPH within Bradford.
- Developing more diverse partnerships including with the Education sector.
- Developing the Creativity Council although its longer-term viability remains unstable.
- Better programme and team management, freeing up the Director for more strategic work.
- Extending reach to wider audiences and new artforms.
- Focusing on inclusivity, flexibility and accessibility of programmes and events.
- Building progression routes for individuals and organisations.
- Stronger communication and marketing approach.
- Programmes for both emerging leaders and mid-career artists.
- Balancing independence with overdependence, focusing on progression in business and leadership skills.
- Embedding effective evaluation across the team and programme
- Shared, inclusive and open approach to strategic planning.

Those that still need to be continued, reviewed and developed

- Work to demonstrate impact and visibility in Keighley, continuing some of the work developed there already including: Bradford Pools as part of the JCNA / needs analysis; Make Work performances across the town; increasing music gigs and busking; support for Keighley Creative and visual artists in Keighley; collaboration with Jam on Top music studio.
- Develop an alumni model for programmes like Make Work, where previous successful project leads can support new applicants.
- Continue to reach into and hear from the most marginalised and unheard communities, those who have not yet heard of or engaged with BPH.