

The cover features a bold, abstract design with a diagonal split. The top-left portion is blue, and the bottom-right portion is magenta. A wide, bright green diagonal band runs from the top-right towards the bottom-left, creating a large triangular shape in the center. The text is white and positioned in the blue and magenta areas.

NCACE
www.ncace.ac.uk

ANNUAL
REPORT
2020/21

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The National Centre for Academic and Cultural Exchange (NCACE) is a four-year programme which started in October 2020. Led by The Culture Capital Exchange (TCCE) and funded by Research England, our regional partners are Bath Spa University, Birmingham City University, Manchester Metropolitan University and Northumbria University.

NCACE's mission is to facilitate and support capacity for knowledge exchange (KE) between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the arts and culture sectors across the country, with a particular focus on evidencing and showcasing the social, cultural and environmental impacts of such activities. This, our first Annual Report, provides an overview of our work during the first year, our collaborations and the lessons learnt.

Our launch event in February 2021, *Knowledge Exchange: The Power of Collaborative Action*, was attended by nearly 500 people, among them academics and other university staff from across the UK, professionals and creatives from the arts and culture sector, and funders and policymakers.

To date, more than 1,200 people have come together in a dozen events covering our key workstreams. These have included a leadership workshop (with Clore Leadership), and the establishment of Knowledge Impacts Network (KIN) activities. We also started plans for our Ideas Pools, micro-commissions and Support Sets. Our Evidence Cafe has been providing a much-needed forum for KE professionals and researchers alike. Our first policy workshop, *Collaborations in Placemaking*, brought together some 200 people, many of whom are engaged in developing partnerships based on research, creativity, place-shaping and making.

In terms of research, we commissioned a substantial literature review, *Knowledge Exchange, HEIs and the Arts and Culture Sector* by Dr Sarah Sigal. We published a report on the Research Excellence Framework (REF) focusing on the cultural impacts of academic research, and commissioned a further action research report on the skills and capacity required for KE undertaken by Dr Kayla Rose. We have yet more reports in the pipeline, to be published before the end of 2021, including one on what Knowledge Exchange Framework narratives can tell us about relations with the arts, and two generated from the results of a survey conducted last March (in association with ArtsProfessional).

Executive Summary

We set out to develop a community of writing through our blogs and we're thrilled to have had so many contributions on topics ranging from student KE, to the role of universities in culture-led place-making, to citizens as the true innovators of knowledge. Looking to the future, we are developing an evaluation approach for NCACE, something which has given us much-needed space for review and reflection, so important in our inaugural year.

We've been very fortunate in working with generous people and organisations sharing hopes, insights, energy and inspiration. Our regional partners at Bath Spa University, Birmingham City University, Manchester Metropolitan University and Northumbria University have been a source of the most wonderful support. They have brought to us knowledge, dynamism, energy, inspiration, care and responsiveness. Our colleagues at Research England have shown us deep support and friendship, helping us to find our feet, gain confidence and grow. And our Sounding Board and Collaborations Champions Network have provided much good counsel, both individually and collectively.

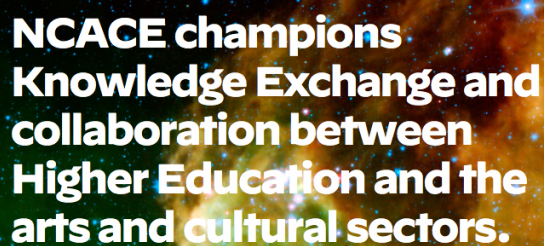
We couldn't have done this without our brilliant team: Emily Hopkins, Rachel Lasebikan, Federica Rossi, Thanasis Spyriadis and Noshin Sultan. To all of them and all those mentioned above, our thanks and gratitude.



*Evelyn Wilson and Suzie Leighton
(Co-Directors, NCACE)*

November 2021

NCACE OVERVIEW



**NCACE champions
Knowledge Exchange and
collaboration between
Higher Education and the
arts and cultural sectors.**

The National Centre for Academic and Cultural Exchange (NCACE) was publicly launched in February 2021. It is supported by Research England and led by The Culture Capital Exchange (TCCE), working with regional partners: Bath Spa University, Birmingham City University, Manchester Metropolitan University and Northumbria University.

The key purpose of NCACE is to facilitate and support capacity for Knowledge Exchange (KE) between Higher Education and the arts and cultural sector across the UK, with a particular focus on evidencing and showcasing the social, cultural, environmental, as well as economic impacts of such activities.

In delivery of our mission, we developed five areas of work:

1. Brokerage, Collaboration Support and Networking
2. Skills and Capacity Development
3. Evidencing and Impact Development

4. Showcasing and Communications
5. Evaluation

NCACE is also working across a range of relevant themes including Place-making and Levelling Up, Environment and Climate Emergency, Health and Wellbeing, and Technology for Social Good.

With the aim of realising and communicating the potential of Knowledge Exchange between HE and the arts and culture sector, NCACE activities are open to all HEIs in the UK and to those working in the arts and cultural sector. At the heart of our values is a keen commitment to supporting inclusivity, difference and diversity.

NCACE AREAS OF WORK

1. Brokerage, Collaboration Support and Networking
2. Skills and Capacity Development
3. Evidencing and Impact Development
4. Showcasing and Communications
5. Evaluation

1. BROKERAGE, COLLABORATION SUPPORT AND NETWORKING

Our work on networking and brokerage is designed to overcome some of the long standing and pervasive barriers to building productive and mutually beneficial collaborations.

We know from deep experience of working in KE and Public Engagement, as well as from NCACE's research, that there is often a fundamental lack of awareness on both sides regarding respective operating environments, funding structures, motivations, priorities and even language.

Our research has also shown that, although the language around KE has progressed from talking about "Technology Transfer", many of the internal policies, processes and priorities remain unchanged. This can create friction with the far more relational approach to collaboration typical of the arts and cultural sector.

Opportunities for KE and collaboration tend to be tightly focused on specific funding awards or policy initiatives, with few opportunities for creative conversations, values led discussion or co-producing processes and methods. As a result, collaborations are not as resilient or impactful as they could be.

Working with Regional Partners, we have showcased examples of excellent and impactful KE from around the country. We have been able to offer opportunities for blue skies discussion, regional network building and the space to consider the impact of the pandemic on current and future collaborations.

Brokerage, Collaboration Support and Networking

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Alongside the ongoing series of ‘*What we’re doing and how to get involved*’ events, co-led by our regional hub partners, we have also been running regular workshops to encourage wider involvement. Our ‘*What If..?*’ sessions were aimed at challenge-led ideas generation sparked by the different professional backgrounds of the participants. They posed questions with a local and regional focus but that also speak to national challenges. And they have enabled a deep dive into the current realities and future potential of collaboration between the arts and cultural sector and universities.

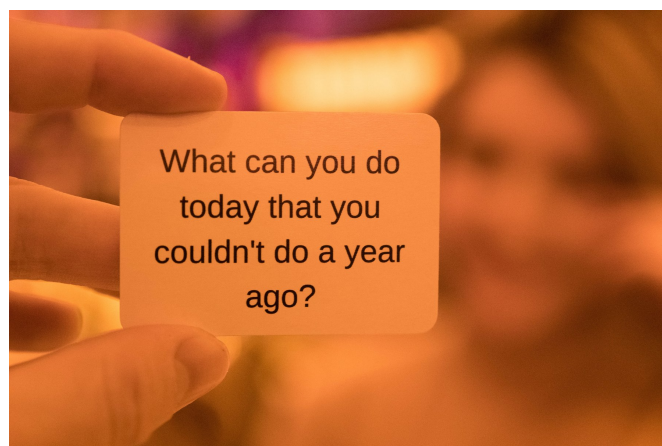
‘What we’re doing and how to get involved’ workshops - 9 March | 13 April | 8 June 2021

These workshops were developed in response to a significant demand to find out more following the public launch of NCACE. We developed them to give an overview of our key areas of work, and for people to hear about upcoming activities and have an opportunity to meet the NCACE team and discuss future involvement.

They were designed primarily for people in HE and the arts and culture sector. Over the initial three workshops, some 130 researchers, KE professionals, other HE personnel, artists/practitioners and those working in the cultural sector attended. Added value came from the breakout groups which provided us with vital information about the needs and challenges of both sectors. The workshops are now an ongoing

source of sectoral intelligence and feedback into the development of our future activities.

“What If..?” Conversations - July 2021



The first conversation in July 2021 – *What If..? We Really Understood Knowledge Exchange?*

– was co-designed by Regional Partner Northumbria University and Creative FUSE North East (CFNE) to build on their consortium's insights and expertise. Getting under the skin of a wider KE discourse, we explored the language of KE, knowledge typologies, and the generation of an evidence base to present KE in action. Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, Teesside and Northumbria Universities took part and set a call to action to share the evidence base on a national scale to support strong HEI and Creative Industry collaborations.

Later in 2021 Birmingham City University and STEAMhouse hosted *What If..? What Next For Our Post Lockdown Collaborations?*

They engaged/re-engaged with local and regional arts and cultural organisations to explore, in the context of Covid, how to collaborate on future activities and initiatives around place-making and communities.

Brokerage, Collaboration Support and Networking

Discussions centred on the re-making of relationships, sustainable ecologies, raising awareness, brokering future collaborations, leveraging funding opportunities and partnerships to address strategic priorities. Time and again issues were raised around local and regional challenges for place-based community engagement, community renewal, local economies and building resilience. The conversations also mapped out themes of particular importance in the West Midlands to feed into NCACE's strategic future planning.

Creative
FUSE
North East



WORKSHOP

WHAT IF...
We really understood
Knowledge Exchange?

2. SKILLS AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

NCACE's work on the development of skills and capacity for excellent knowledge exchange between higher education and the arts has been a key focus for the year.

Research undertaken before NCACE was established identified a need for developing leadership skills for excellent KE. Both KE professionals and researchers specialising in exchange with the art and culture sector flagged up the lack of opportunities for networking, peer to peer learning and professional development. They also highlighted an absence of frameworks to evaluate and evidence this work.

Some spoke of their resilience suffering from operating in a challenging environment which affected their professional capacity as well as their levels of confidence and wellbeing. Arts sector professionals in particular cited the need for confidence building, skills training and practical knowledge and know-how in this area. In response, we commissioned *a rapid evidence and literature review from Dr Kayla Rose* from NCACE Regional Partner, Bath Spa University, to inform our planning.

Dr Rose's findings suggest that best practice is in the health and voluntary sectors, with examples more difficult to locate in the arts and cultural sector. However, as co-design and collaboration are second nature to the arts and cultural sector, HE could usefully learn from it how to develop skills that create more mutually effective and resilient partnerships. Overall, the review demonstrated the gap in skills and capacity-building in this area.

Skills and Capacity Development

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Our activities this year have explored different ways of bringing people together – events, workshops, networks and learning sets – with a focus on showcasing excellent KE leadership and on providing opportunities to develop leadership skills.

Our *Knowledge Impacts Network (KIN)* has provided a supportive peer-to-peer space to build professional networks and solve issues of common concern. Furthermore, we have established KIN Support Sets to provide small peer-to-peer coaching. The level of demand for these opportunities has further demonstrated a hitherto unmet need.

NCACE Launch Event - 4 February 2021

The NCACE launch event in February 2021 - *Knowledge Conversations: The Power of Collaborative Action* - was attended by almost 500 people from academia and the arts and culture sectors. Its primary purpose was to raise awareness of the centre and to invite people with an interest in the potential and impacts of knowledge exchange between HE and the arts and cultural sector to join us to find out how to get involved.

Inspiring keynote addresses were delivered by David Sweeney (Executive Chair, Research England), Professor Trevor McMillan (Vice Chancellor, Keele University and Research England Knowledge Exchange Champion), Professor Bambo Soyinka (Professor of Story, Bath Spa University and founder of Paper

Nations) and Rosy Greenlees OBE, (Executive Director, Crafts Council).

These were followed by a panel discussion on knowledge exchange and flows between HE and the arts and cultural sector with Alistair Hudson (Director of the Whitworth and Manchester Art Gallery), Dr Heather Robson (Head of Northumbria School of Design, Northumbria University), Claire Malcolm (Founding Chief Executive, New Writing North) and Dr Nicola Abraham (Lecturer, Applied Theatre Practices, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama).

Knowledge Impacts Network (KIN)



The NCACE Knowledge Impacts Network (KIN) is a peer-to-peer network for Knowledge Exchange engaged researchers and HE professionals working with the arts and cultural sector. It offers interactive and informal opportunities to hear how colleagues are approaching challenges, swap industry intelligence, share knowledge, experience and successes, and build and enhance professional support networks.

The *KIN Launch: Building Cultures of Online Collaboration and Experimentation* was in

Skills and Capacity Development

March 2021. Among those taking part were Sean Michael Morris (University of Colorado/Digital Pedagogy Lab), Maureen Salmon (Freshwater Consultancy) and Sarah Ellis (Royal Shakespeare Company).

Like everyone across the UK, the network had no choice but to innovate with online engagement during periods of lockdown. While there were advantages to virtual Knowledge Exchange and collaboration, the absence of physical, geographical and financial barriers also brought challenges. Our first KIN event explored how we could replicate the spark and playful possibilities of human interaction in a digital environment to build online cultures and communities.

We held an interactive *Co-Designing KIN* session in June 2021 with facilitated discussions aimed at shaping and informing the future of the *Knowledge Impacts Network*. This was hosted by partners Birmingham City University (BCU) and their STEAMHouse team Clayton Shaw and Mark Brill, with Dr Kayla Rose (Paper Nations/Bath Spa University).

The session provided space to reflect on and consider development needs and support as well as an opportunity to meet other people involved in similar endeavours. Case studies were presented by Dr Karen Patel (BCU), Julia Bennett (Crafts Council), Dharmesh Rajput (BCU), Piali Ray (Sampad) and Jan Adamic (BCU).

The *KIN Support Sets* were launched in September 2021 as a response to discussions and feedback from our June KIN meeting which highlighted the need for more opportunities and platforms for creative discussion and problem-solving. These smaller sets, a mixture of researchers and cultural sector people, addressed the need for peer-to-peer networking for professional development, personal growth and resilience. Our first set - a taster session - was facilitated by Guildhall Coaching Associates from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. We envisage future Support Sets will become self-supporting.

NCACE Leadership Workshop - April 2021

What did you draw on?



The final activity in our Skills and Capacity Development workstream was the *NCACE Leadership Workshop* held in April 2021. It was delivered in collaboration with the Clore Leadership Programme, offering two facilitated sessions as well as opportunities for discussion and networking. The first session on *Leading From Within* focused on influencing internally within an organisation, holding space and challenging perceptions of value.

Skills and Capacity Development

The second session on **Leading Outwards** concentrated on developing professional networks, influencing and creating partnerships with impact.

With an opening reflection by Professor Carole-Anne Upton (Middlesex University), it was facilitated by David Bryan MBA FRSA, Gaylene Gould and Kate Atkinson (Clare Leadership) alongside NCACE Co-Director Suzie Leighton.

3. EVIDENCING AND IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

The evidencing and impact development work at NCACE was set up in response to the lack of understanding and recognition of the impacts of knowledge exchange between Higher Education and the arts and cultural sector. These impacts go beyond both sectors, often feeding into the wider social, cultural and policy landscape.

Although KE has become a more dynamic field recently, more needs to be done to support a better understanding of what works, how and why. The work undertaken by NCACE has begun to communicate this more widely and strategically with a host of cross-sector stakeholders.

We have begun the development of our *NCACE Evidence Hub* with a cluster of activities including: a substantial survey, in association with Arts Professional entitled **Collaborating with Higher Education** designed to capture the views of arts and culture sector professionals and practitioners; a major literature review on Knowledge Exchange between academic and the arts; and various reports on REF, KEF and the afore-mentioned survey. As well as our research activities, we have developed the **Evidence Café** brand, held our first **Policy Workshop** and commenced work on our **Evidence Repository**, a public resource containing all sorts of materials relating to KE with the arts and cultural sector. Together, this work is designed to address the need for more and better evidence and analysis on the extent, nature, drivers and broader impacts of KE collaborations.

Evidencing and Impact Development

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Our activities this year focussed on laying the foundations for our work over the coming years of the centre's life. We started by commissioning a Literature Review on Knowledge Exchange with the arts and culture sector and by simultaneously addressing the lack of accounts from the arts and culture sector perspective by instigating a survey with Arts Professional. We have also been busy shaping NCACE's Evidence Hub which includes our primary research, policy workshops, our Evidence Repository and our online *Evidence Café*, which we created to provide a much-needed space to address emerging evidence and research in the field of cultural knowledge exchange which NCACE is growing as a core part of our work.

Collaborating with Higher Education survey

Earlier this year we co-designed a survey with ArtsProfessional entitled *Collaborating with Higher Education* which ran for a period of three weeks during March and to which we had over 500 respondents. The purpose of the survey was to gather information about the nature of collaborations between the arts and culture sector and higher education and to provide a space for the arts to give a summary of their collaborations, how they had come about, their role in the projects, how they were funded and what worked well and less so and the overall values and benefits of the work. We produced a snapshot of the findings and are in the throes of completing two reports. One outlines the overall findings in more detail and the other focuses on place-based aspects of the work.

Collaborations in Placemaking - June 2021



Our first policy workshop focused on one of NCACE's four key themes, placemaking and levelling out, or up. *Collaborations in Placemaking: Shining a Light on the Contribution of Higher Education and Cultural Partnerships* was held in June 2021. Its main purpose was to create a space for conversations, information-sharing and evidence building around place-based cultural strategies and collaborations. We also explored the role that local, regional and national policy and funding initiatives play in their development.

The workshop convened almost 200 people with an interest in placemaking, levelling up/out and the role that cultural knowledge exchange collaborations are currently playing - or have the potential to play - in addressing the challenges of post-pandemic recovery nationwide.

Three key issues emerged:

1. The growing role of place-based partnerships between stakeholders - HE, the arts and cultural sector, local authorities, community organisations and the private sector;

Evidencing and Impact Development

2. The need to showcase different models and explore how they have evolved;
3. To better understand what is needed to support future successful developments.

Our contributors included Dr. Nazneen Ahmed (So:Write Stories), Dr. Rowan Bailey (University of Huddersfield) and Kath Wynne-Hague (Kirklees Council), Joe Barratt (The Teenage Market and Institute of Place Management), Val Birchall (Coventry City Council), Dr. Carola Boehm (Staffordshire University), Emily Field (DCMS), David Furmage (Creative and Cultural Lead, Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP), Ian Hunter (Littoral Arts), Jason Jones-Hall (Pioneering Places), Graeme Thompson (University of Sunderland), Jennie Shorley (Manchester Metropolitan University), Prof. Bambo Soyinka (Bath Spa University), and David Sweeney (Executive Chair, Research England).

NCACE Evidence Café - 16 March | 11 May | 15 July 2021

As part of our work on the development of an **Evidence Hub**, we established the **Evidence Café** as an online space to bring together people from both HE and the arts and cultural sectors who are interested in or working on themes of collaboration and who would like to contribute their knowledge and experience to the evolution of the Hub. This is a space for presentations, evidence and information sharing, story-telling, as well as a community of sharing and takeovers. Each session has a loose theme.

At the Evidence Café Launch Event in March 2021, we discussed evidence on relations between HE and the arts as gathered from REF 2014 data and the KEF 2021 exercise. This included presentations from Dr. Federica Rossi (NCACE Co-Investigator, Evidence and Impacts) and Dr Hamish McAlpine (Research England).



The *NCACE Evidence Café 2* session in May 2021 looked at evidence of collaborations with a place-making focus. This involved two speakers: Dr. Victoria Barker (Coventry University), who presented on the Social Higher Education Depot alongside her wider place-based cultural ecosystem research in the Midlands; and Dr. Rowan Bailey (University of Huddersfield), who discussed her role in the Temporary Contemporary initiative.

NCACE Evidence Café 3, in July 2021, highlighted two pieces of research: the *NCACE Literature Review* by Dr. Sarah Sigal and the *NCACE: Collaborations with Higher Education* report by Evelyn Wilson, Dr. Federica Rossi and Emily Hopkins. The **NCACE Evidence Repository** was also introduced at this session along with ways stakeholders could contribute.

Evidencing and Impact Development

EVIDENCE REPOSITORY

The NCACE *Evidence Repository* is an online resource evidencing the scale, extent, nature, drivers, and broader impacts of KE and collaborations between HE and the arts and culture sectors. It will house various materials including interviews with KE professionals; literature reviews; impacts and case studies drawn from HE and the arts; academic papers; reports; blogs; toolkits; videos/vlogs; and other resources relating to the field as appropriate.

During our first year, we have amassed much academic and non-academic literature on cultural knowledge exchange, which is organised thematically into the following categories:

- General Knowledge Exchange
- Culture related Knowledge Exchange
- Culture related Knowledge Exchange and Covid-19
- Toolkits and Skills for Knowledge Exchange
- Placemaking and Levelling Out
- Health and Wellbeing
- Technologies for Social Good
- Environment and Climate Emergency

Each year we will be uploading case studies showcasing models of good practice and as well as interviews with key stakeholders. The evidence and impact team will create templates for the case studies and interviews, as well as a system to store information on case study examples and potential interviewees.

ncace.ac.uk/evidence-hub/

NCACE REPORTS

NCACE Reports is a body of primary research conducted in 2021. Research will continue over the next three years to develop the centre's robust evidence base for knowledge exchange between HEIs and the arts and culture sector. Publications include:

NCACE Literature Review

The NCACE literature review, *Knowledge Exchange, HEIs and the Arts and Culture Sector: A systematic review of literature in the field*, by Dr. Sarah Sigal is an overarching piece of research with a full bibliography which is available on the Evidence Hub webpage. It explored existing evidence available on collaborations between Higher Education and the arts and culture sector. Key themes include:

1. The nature of knowledge exchange and cultural collaborations,
2. Defining and describing KE,
3. Nature of Documentation, and
4. Impact

REF 2014 Report

This report, *How does academic research generate arts and culture related impact? A thematic analysis of Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 impact case studies*, by Dr. Federica Rossi, Evelyn Wilson and Emily Hopkins uses Rossi's analysis of REF 2014 data to explore how universities and the arts work together and how these collaborations are narrated. They examined nearly 800 REF submissions. The report is available on the NCACE Evidence Hub webpage.

Evidencing and Impact Development

Other Reports

Over the summer, the Evidence and Impact team have also been working on a tranche of other reports, due to be published in December 2021. These include:

Our Arts Professional Survey: General Findings Report ‘Collaborating with Higher Education Institutions: Findings from the Cultural Sector Survey with Arts Professional’ by Evelyn Wilson, Emily Hopkins and Dr. Federica Rossi.

Our Arts Professional Survey: Place-Based Report ‘The role of ‘place’ in collaborations between HEIs and the arts and cultural sector’ by Dr. Federica Rossi and Emily Hopkins.

‘HEIs’ engagement with the arts and cultural sector: evidence from KEF narratives’ by Dr. Federica Rossi, Dr. Valentina Rizzoli and Emily Hopkins.



Three NCACE action research reports - Skills and Capacity Development by Dr Kayla Rose, Literature Review by Sarah Sigal, REF Impact Studies and Arts and Culture Sector report by Dr Federica Rossi, Evelyn Wilson and Emily Hopkins

4. SHOWCASING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Communicating the benefits of cultural knowledge exchange and narrating this emerging field of practice runs to the heart of the NCACE endeavour.

The purpose of this part of our work is to help us in that mission. It is concerned with helping us to raise the profile of all aspects of the programme and actively encouraging a wider understanding of and engagement in the role of HE in KE and the impacts of co-creation of knowledge involving other sectors. We created opportunities for people from across HE and the arts and cultural sector to engage and play a role in shaping work that is relevant, useful and inspiring.

Showcasing and Communications

ACTIVITIES

Our first year's activity focused on the development of the entire NCACE communications platform and plan. In our first months of operation, we ran a successful Press Launch, supported by the communications team at Research England. We developed the NCACE website, and established a monthly bulletin, and various social media accounts. We also developed all important relationships with communications teams across the NCACE Regional Partners. As a result, most of our events have been fully booked. A substantial part of our communications effort has involved convening conversations with NCACE Co-Directors who have spoken with many individuals and institutions, as well as speaking at workshops and conferences. We have also partnered with ArtsProfessional on a brand new Editorial Partnership to communicate NCACE as a new centre and brand with the arts and culture sector.

Editorial Partnership with ArtsProfessional

In addition to working with ArtsProfessional on the afore-mentioned survey, we have also been working with them on an editorial partnership designed, through a series of articles, to promote awareness of NCACE to the arts and culture sector.

Over the course of the first half of the partnership we have published the following four articles:

An ArtsProfessional feature in partnership with  National Centre for Academic and Cultural Exchange



Arts and higher education: a successful partnership in action

21 October 2021 [Feature](#)

Creating and sharing new knowledge - through teaching, learning, impact and public engagement - lies at the heart of relationships between universities and cultural organisations, Professor **Katy Shaw** and **Claire Malcolm** write.



Co-designing a sustainable future for arts and higher education collaboration

14 September 2021 [Feature](#)

While collaboration between the cultural sector and universities has never been more fruitful, **Suzie Leighton** and **Kayla Rose** know there are still significant barriers to overcome.



Arts and academic collaborations in placemaking

29 June 2021 [Feature](#)

We are witnessing a significant increase in diverse and highly ambitious partnerships between universities and the cultural sector. **Evelyn Wilson** and **Emily Hopkins** think it's something to shout about.



A step change in cultural partnerships with Higher Education

2 June 2021 [Feature](#)

The moment for information and peer support to develop partnerships has never been more timely. **Evelyn Wilson** has established a new centre to provide that infrastructure.

1. *Arts and higher education: a successful partnership in action*
2. *Co-designing a sustainable future for arts and higher education collaboration*
3. *Arts and academic collaborations in placemaking*
4. *A step change in cultural partnerships with Higher Education*

Our feature on collaborations in place-making ranks at 35 of the most-read 200 articles on ArtsProfessional in the last year.

Showcasing and Communications

NCACE BLOG

The *NCACE blog* was conceived as a platform to encourage a community of writing practice around cultural knowledge exchange. It is generating significant and diverse stories and experiences of cultural knowledge exchange.

Blogs include:

- *Findings Ways to Collaborate: In the Eye of the Storm* - Dr Nicola Abraham, Senior Lecturer, Applied Theatre Practices at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
- *Joining the knowledge exchange conversation* - Dr Victoria Barker, Research Associate, Creative Economy at The University of Manchester
- *Harnessing the Power of Student Knowledge Exchange* - Katie Stote, Knowledge Exchange Officer for the Engaging Students in Knowledge Exchange project, University of Plymouth
- *Part One: Are Citizens the True Innovators of Knowledge?* - Professor Bambo Soyinka, Bath Spa University and Paper Nations
- *Part Two: Storytelling as a collaborative language for cultural exchange* - Professor Bambo Soyinka, Bath Spa University and Paper Nations
- *The start of a step change in Arts and Cultural Knowledge Exchange* - David Sweeney, Research England
- *STEAMY Principles* - Clayton Shaw, Birmingham City University, STEAMhouse
- *Diversity in the arts and media* - Prof Diane Kemp, Dr Islam Issa & Dharmesh Rajput. Curated by Dr Vanessa Jackson
- *The University's Role in Culture-led Place-Shaping* - Graeme Thompson, University of Sunderland, The Cultural Spring and Sunderland Culture
- *Evaluation as a valuable catalyst for the effectiveness and efficiency of NCACE* - Dr Thanasis Spyriadis, NCACE Evaluation Lead and Manchester Metropolitan University
- *The art and performance of city strategy in a pandemic* - Dr Stuart Andrews, Brunel University London and Dr Patrick Duggan, Northumbria University Newcastle

ncace.ac.uk/evidence-hub/blogs/



Showcasing and Communications

PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

More than 1,200 people signed up to events as part of our activities programme, including staff from 113 academic institutions and nearly 200 arts and culture organisations.

We are delighted that so many individuals have engaged with us over the last year.

113

academic organisations

~200

arts & culture organisations

Events attendance

- 500 people signed up to attend the **NCACE Launch** from academia, arts, culture and policy
- 200 people signed up to attend **Collaborations in Placemaking**
- 438 people from 113 research organisations including HEIs, small specialist institutions, colleges, funding councils and research organisations
- 238 people from 196 arts and culture organisations took part in our events programme
- 789 individual artists, staff from funding bodies and people from fields outside Higher Education and the arts and culture sector also participated in NCACE activities

Other engagements

- 546 responded to the *Collaborating with Higher Education* survey in association with ArtsProfessional
- We have 1,248 Twitter followers and a growing LinkedIn community
- Monthly Bulletins are sent to around 8,000 readers per month
- We have been invited to write features for Wonkhe, Praxis Auril and ArtsProfessional
- More than 1,000 people engaged with ArtsProfessional articles

Image: Map showing the distribution of research organisations across the UK, and a few in Europe.

5. EVALUATION

Evaluation has been integral to NCACE from the outset. We developed an evaluation plan which encompassed the approach; context; purpose; the role of stakeholders; the nature and purpose of the data; and the sharing of lessons learned from the evaluation.

Our approach is strongly underpinned by principles of co-design, with particular regard to inclusivity, difference and diversity. The methodology uses both formative and summative evaluation techniques, in service of the iterative and responsive (to user needs, expertise and inputs) nature of the NCACE programme.

The purpose of NCACE evaluation is twofold:

- to provide the core NCACE team and stakeholders with opportunities for reflection and learning pertinent to each work package's activities and results (outputs and outcomes);
- to create opportunities for ongoing dialogue and connectivity between the work packages across the whole programme.

Driven by this purpose, we worked in small evaluation groups to develop five interconnected, and complementary Theory of Change (ToC) frameworks, one for each work package. This initially provided each group – and the whole team – the opportunity to explore further the causal effects of the programme activity and the associated assumptions.

Through a process of reflection, we can ensure appropriate actions are taken to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of NCACE. The ToC frameworks were used to identify specific areas for monitoring and evaluation of the progress towards achieving the ultimate NCACE results (outcomes).

Evaluation

Emerging from this process, performance is monitored by the KPIs in the original bid document, and by additional KPIs, identified by the evaluation groups, required to capture the performance of each work package. The performance data being collected are made up of (a) management data or (b) primary evaluation data. The former data are captured predominantly for management purposes. Primary evaluation data are being collected using primary research tools (for example, questions identified by each evaluation group).

In the spirit of co-design, NCACE evaluation has been informed by key stakeholders. All evaluation activities, including the evaluation plan, the developed ToCs and KPIs, along

with the research approach for relevant evaluation data collection, have been shared and discussed at NCACE Regional Partner meetings.

Throughout our first year, evaluation activities focused on strategic planning; clarifying NCACE results (outputs) and the pathways to achieve them; developing and/or refining KPIs to monitor performance towards achieving these results; and designing robust research tools to systematically collect performance data to support evaluation of NCACE activities. It's a continuous, iterative process which aims to feed learning from our first year of operation into the upcoming years.

NCACE NETWORKS AND PEOPLE

We have hugely enjoyed the many conversations across the landscape of the Higher Education and arts and culture sectors in this first year of our operation. The insights, challenges and knowledge sharing that these conversations have brought have been catalysing and enriching for NCACE.

NCACE TEAM

- Evelyn Wilson - Co-Director
- Suzie Leighton - Co-Director
- Emily Hopkins - Senior Manager, Research, Evidence & Policy
- Rachel Lasebikan - Communications Manager
- Noshin Sultan - Project and Partnerships Manager
- Dr Federica Rossi - NCACE Core (Co-I, Evidence & Impacts), Birkbeck University of London
- Dr Thanasis Spyriadis - NCACE Core (Evaluation Lead), University of Crete, Rethymno

NCACE REGIONAL PARTNERS

NCACE Regional Hub partners are strongly networked with the arts and cultural sectors across the country.

- Dr Astrid Breel - Bath Spa University
- Professor Bambo Soyinka - Bath Spa University
- Dr Kayla Rose - Bath Spa University
- Dr Anna Simandiraki-Grimshaw - Bath Spa University
- Sara Middleton - Birmingham City University
- Charmaine Stint - Birmingham City University
- Clayton Shaw - Birmingham City University
- Dr Charlotte Carey - Birmingham City University
- Vanessa Jackson - Birmingham City University
- Jennie Shorley - Manchester Metropolitan University
- Dr Heather Robson - Northumbria University
- Professor Katy Shaw - Northumbria University
- Dr Patrick Duggan - Northumbria University

NCACE Networks and People

NCACE SOUNDING BOARD

The Sounding Board provides insight and expertise for our key workstreams and themes. They are drawn from Higher Education and the arts and culture sector and act as project ambassadors. They are actively engaged with NCACE work and with wider policy, social, environmental and technological shifts.

- **Prof. Geoffrey Crossick** - Distinguished Professor of Humanities in the School of Advanced Study, University of London
- **Prof. Maria Delgado** - Director of Research, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
- **Rosy Greenlees** - Executive Director, Crafts Council
- **Victoria Hume** - Director, Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance
- **Claudia Lastra** - Executive Director & Joint CEO, Arts Catalyst
- **Prof. Trevor McMillan** - Vice-Chancellor, Keele University
- **Claire Pattison** - Enterprise Fellow, Manchester Metropolitan University
- **Dr Heather Robson** - Head of the School of Design, Faculty of Arts, Design and Social Science, Northumbria University
- **Clayton Shaw** - Programme Manager, STEAMhouse, Birmingham City University
- **Jennie Shorley** - Head of Engaged Scholarship, Faculty Head of Accreditations, Manchester Metropolitan University
- **Prof. Bambo Soyinka** - Director of Paper Nations & Professor of Story at Bath Spa University

COLLABORATIONS CHAMPIONS NETWORK

The Collaborations Champions Network works with us to develop a vibrant, valued community of practice in the field of cultural knowledge exchange.

- **Dr Nicola Abraham** - Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
- **Professor David Amigoni** - Keele University
- **Dr Victoria Barker** - University of Manchester
- **Professor Angela Bartram** - University of Derby
- **Gavin Brookes** - Lancaster University
- **Dr Susanne Burns** - Susanne Burns Associates
- **Dr Glenda Cooper** - City, University of London
- **Dr Mark Gray** - Middlesex University London
- **David Hockham** - Bathway Theatre, University of Greenwich
- **Sarah Naomi Lee** - Plenty Productions CIC and Brighton and Hove Black History
- **Rupert Lorraine** - University of Plymouth
- **Dr Fransiska Louwagie** - University of Leicester
- **Kathleen Mitchell** - Sunderland Culture and Sunderland City Council
- **Dr Aoife Monks** - Queen Mary University of London
- **Irini Papadimitriou** - Future Everything
- **Rachel Pattinson** - Newcastle University
- **Mark Prest** - Portraits of Recovery
- **Helen Sargeant** - University of Wolverhampton
- **Rob Sherman** - Bonfire Dog
- **Anita Shervington** - BLASTFest
- **Paul Smith** - Dance Consortia North West
- **John Steel** - University of Derby
- **Dr Michael Tymkiw** - University of Essex
- **Dr Kerry Wilson** - Liverpool John Moores University

NCACE Networks and People

PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTORS

A large number of people have contributed to our activities programme in our first year. These include:

- Dr Nicola Abraham - Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
- Jan Adamic - Birmingham City University Media Student
- Dr Nazneen Ahmed - So:Write Stories
- Kate Atkinson - Clore Leadership
- Dr Rowan Bailey - University of Huddersfield
- Dr Victoria Barker - Coventry University
- Andrew Barnett - Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK
- Joe Barratt - The Teenage Market and Institute of Place Management
- Julia Bennett - Crafts Council
- Val Birchall - Coventry City Council
- Dr Carola Boehm - Staffordshire University
- Jane Booth - Guildhall School of Music and Drama
- Mark Brill - Birmingham City University
- David Bryan MBA FRSA
- Hilary Carty - Clore Leadership
- Detta Danford - Guildhall School of Music and Drama
- Sarah Ellis - Royal Shakespeare Company
- Emily Field - DCMS
- David Furmage - Creative and Cultural Lead, Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP
- Rosy Greenlees OBE - Crafts Council
- Alistair Hudson - Whitworth and Manchester Art Gallery
- Ian Hunter - Littoral Arts
- Jason Jones-Hall - Pioneering Places
- Carlos Lopez-Real - Guildhall School of Music and Drama
- Claire Malcolm - New Writing North
- Dr Hamish McAlpine - Research England
- Professor Trevor McMillan - Keele University
- Sean Michael Morris - University of Colorado and Digital Pedagogy Lab
- Dr Karen Patel - Birmingham City University
- Dharmesh Rajput - Birmingham City University
- Piali Ray - Sampad
- Dr Heather Robson - Northumbria University
- Dr Kayla Rose - Bath Spa University
- Dr Federica Rossi - NCACE Core Co-Investigator, Evidence and Impacts, and Birkbeck University of London
- Maureen Salmon - Freshwaters Consultancy
- Clayton Shaw - Birmingham City University, STEAMhouse
- Jennie Shorley - Manchester Metropolitan University
- Dr Sarah Sigal
- Christopher Smith - Arts and Humanities Research Council
- Professor Bambo Soyinka - Bath Spa University and Paper Nations
- David Sweeney - Research England
- Graeme Thompson - University of Sunderland
- Professor Carole-Anne Upton - Middlesex University London
- Kath Wynne-Hague - Kirklees Council
- Natasha Zielazinski - Guildhall School of Music and Drama

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