

The cover features a vibrant blue background on the left and a bright pink background on the right, separated by a diagonal lime green stripe. The NCACE logo and website address are in the top left, and the annual report title is in the bottom left.

# NCACE

[www.ncace.ac.uk](http://www.ncace.ac.uk)

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2021/22



# National Centre for Academic and Cultural Exchange



**Research  
England**

NCACE is led by TCCE and funded by Research England

[www.ncace.ac.uk](http://www.ncace.ac.uk)

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report provides an overview of NCACE's work and achievements during our second year of operation, carried out against the backdrop of continued pandemic disruption and ongoing challenges across HE, the arts, and wider society. NCACE aims to support better collaboration and cultural knowledge exchange between universities and the arts and cultural sector and to better understand, evidence and communicate the impacts of such work. The strong engagement with our work in areas such as the Climate Emergency, Placemaking and supporting the capacity and resilience of those leading cultural knowledge exchange, bears witness to this.

Our activities have continued to engage a wide range of individuals and organisations from across the UK and further afield, further consolidating our role as a key player within the wider KE landscape in the UK, and, more specifically, as a thought leader in the field of cultural knowledge exchange.

There have been over 1200 bookings onto our events programme alone this year, as demand increases for spaces where the cultural knowledge exchange community can come together. We have provided many opportunities for showcasing, evidencing, discussion and debate through NCACE and in collaboration with other organisations.

During the year we have produced six new reports, on a range of key areas. We have also been further developing the NCACE

Evidence Repository into an important and unique resource for anyone researching, working in or interested in cultural collaborations and their wider contexts. The repository is constantly growing and evolving as the field of cultural knowledge exchange itself continues to grow.

Our small core team has only been able to deliver this expansive and ambitious programme with the generous support of people and organisations sharing hopes, insights, expertise, energy and inspiration. These include: NCACE regional partners and our colleagues at Research England, our Sounding Board, Collaborations Champions Network and our Evidence Repository Advisory Group.

Particular thanks go to our brilliant team and wider network of associates and collaborators. Over this last year we would like in particular to thank: Dr Kate Holmes, Dr Emily Hopkins, Dr Laura Kemp, Dr Rebekka Kill, Rachel Lasebikan, Dr Federica Rossi, Dr Sarah Sigal, Dr 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*  
*December 2022*





# NCACE OVERVIEW

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**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 the delivery of our mission, we are working across the following key areas:

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

We also work across a range of relevant themes including; Placemaking and Levelling Out, Health and Wellbeing, Technologies for Social Good, and Environment and Climate Emergency.

Our work across these themes aims to realise and communicate the potential of Knowledge Exchange between HE and the arts and culture sector, which we sometimes also call Cultural Knowledge Exchange.

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.

# KEY AREAS OF WORK

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# 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.

As our work in this area continues, it has been clear that Covid has both created new opportunities and also delivered new challenges to those in the higher education and arts and cultural sector who wish to collaborate, exchange ideas and expertise and create new and impactful knowledge and opportunities. It has been inspiring to see the resilience, creativity, and persistence that both sectors have brought to the table throughout a very challenging and fast-changing environment, but undoubtedly capacity on both sides is stretched.

Our [NCACE Micro-Commissions Evaluation report](#) has underlined the need for responsive, flexible and light-touch modes of support for the development of new ideas and partnerships, and to help build capacity-developing collaborations to scale and to embed them within institutions to therefore become more resilient and impactful.

NCACE has continued to advocate to funders and policymakers regarding the need for small amounts of “proof of concept” funding for cultural knowledge exchange. The Micro-Commissions have further provided an opportunity to undertake some additional research with The Oxford Research Centre for Humanities (TORCH) and the Independent Theatre Council to further probe barriers to collaboration, in particular the financial challenges of instigating and developing partnerships.

## Brokerage, Collaboration Support and Networking

### EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Throughout the second year of the project we have continued to produce a series of events and opportunities designed to bring the Higher Education and Arts and Cultural sectors together in strategic and future facing ways. We have also continued to extend the reach of the project nationally, and indeed internationally, expanding the pool of potential partners and collaborators our stakeholders have access to through our events and activities, designing a range of events and opportunities that have provided space and opportunity to discuss issues and opportunities of mutual interest and concern.

#### *NCACE Ideas Pool 1: Co-Creating a New and Different Future for Arts / Higher Education Collaboration - 13 October 2021*

This interactive and action-orientated Ideas Pool brought together artists, arts and cultural organisations, researchers and knowledge exchange professionals to imagine new and different futures for knowledge exchange and collaboration. Through a series of energetic, creative, and (dare we say it) entertaining workshops and blue skies provocations, we asked participants to engage proactively in some creative and inventive problem-solving.

Contributors included: Prof. Christopher Smith, Executive Chair, Arts and Humanities Research Council, Hilary Carty OBE, Executive Director, Clore Leadership Programme, Andrew Barnett OBE, Director, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Suzie Leighton, Co-Director, NCACE & TCCE and Isla Wilson, Ruby Star Associates.

#### *NCACE 'What we're doing and how to get involved' - 10 November 2021 | 25 May 2022*

These events provided an informal opportunity to meet the team and find out more about NCACE and how to get involved with our upcoming activities, as well as learn a little more about our four interconnected areas of work:

- Brokerage, Collaboration Support and Networking
- Skills and Capacity Development
- Evidencing and Impact Development
- Showcasing and Communications

The second event in this series, *Arts and cultural sector perspectives on knowledge exchange*, provided an overview of recent NCACE research into arts and cultural sector perspectives on collaborating with higher education institutions, case studies on the benefits and challenges of cultural knowledge exchange from Opera North and Cap-a-Pie.

#### *NCACE 'What If: Redefining Research and Citizenship' - 13th Jan 2022*

What if citizens were not seen merely as beneficiaries of research but were instead considered as leaders and initiators? What would happen if citizens were recognised as equals in the research process and valued for their unique expertise and insights? In a fast-changing world, how can citizens from all walks of life be at the forefront of vital research? This event considered in particular the theoretical and practical implications for HE institutions and other agencies of engaging citizens as key players in practice-led research. Reputed practitioners were invited to share their understanding and expertise online with a small group of academic colleagues.

## Brokerage, Collaboration Support and Networking

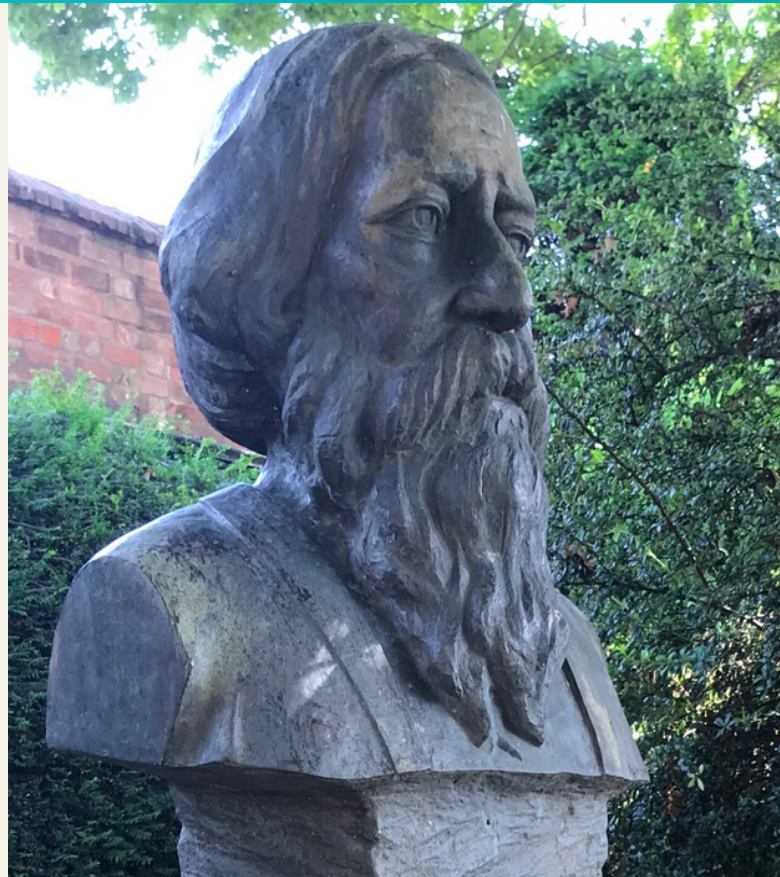
Contributors included Bambo Soyinka, Bath Spa University / TRACE, Robert Crenshaw, Cultural Literacy Everywhere, Anita Shervington, BLAST Fest, Pippa Hale, Independent Artist, Jo Robinson, Newcastle University, Grace Bremner, The Local Trust and Suzie Leighton, Co-Director, NCACE.

### NCACE Micro-commission awards

Arts and Cultural Organisations and Researchers that attended the Ideas Pool were invited to submit proposals for a modest amount of funding to work up partnerships and ideas. We were specifically looking for partnerships that had the potential to develop methods or ideas for overcoming barriers to collaboration between the two sectors. The evaluation of the micro-commissions, and additional writing and research outputs from the funded projects, can be found in the NCACE Evidence Repository.

From a very strong field of applicants, the following projects were selected:

- **The Stables in Milton Keynes worked with The Open University's Music Computing Lab** partnership on the Polifonia project, and deaf and disabled artists, a project exploring the use of adaptive technology to develop inclusive music with participation by Deaf and Disabled people. The project interrogated barriers to knowledge exchange and HE collaboration from the point of view of a cultural organisation developing its disability and access work, and how learning and insights from this work are shared.
- **Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT) and Birmingham City University** used their award to interrogate their existing successful partnership to help better understand the civic role of universities and how this plays a part when developing relationships; how university resources can be unlocked, defining the benefit to the partnership to create sustainable, longer term, meaningful relationships. A particular strand of enquiry focused on how knowledge exchange can help decolonise collections and learning resources.
- **Sangini and Vamos** collaborated with Northumbria University to understand how knowledge exchange between HE and grassroots cultural practitioners (particularly small Black and Minoritised organisations and freelancers) both regionally and in academia can become more resilient, better understood and valued. The Micro-Commission supported two workshops that began to investigate a vision and practicalities for a joint Black-led cultural resource centre and living archive in the North East.





## Brokerage, Collaboration Support and Networking

- The Independent Theatre Council (ITC) and The Oxford Research Centre for the Humanities (TORCH) collaborated to research the key enabling factors that support a theatre organisation (or other arts and cultural organisation) to undertake knowledge exchange or collaborative research with a university partner, and deliver guidance to help universities budget appropriately for this work within funding bids and their wider KE work. The report Exploring value in KE collaborations between higher education and theatres was published to support their findings.

### Micro-Commission Reports:



## 2. Skills and Capacity Development

NCACE's work to support and develop skills and capacity for those leading, delivering and supporting cultural knowledge exchange has been in demand throughout the year.

The impact of the pandemic and the personal and professional changes and challenges it brought to both the arts and cultural and higher education sector, and the ongoing rapid pace of political and policy change and the impact of this means that now, more than ever there, is a need for the spaces and platforms that NCACE offers for peer to peer support and reflection.

We have increasingly seen that our stakeholders and audiences want safe spaces for discussion, coaching and reflection with those facing similar challenges, and systems, structures and tools that can be developed or adapted to reflect an individual's circumstances. We know that successful KE partnerships need time and resources to build and become resilient and impactful, and we have heard throughout the year that this is increasingly challenging on a personal and professional level.

We have continued to develop our collaborations with Clore Leadership Programme and Guildhall Coaching Associates, and been responsive to the articulated needs of those engaging with our work, in order to meet the increasing demand for leadership support and peer-to-peer learning. Special thanks go to Sian Brittain of Guildhall School of Music and Drama and Dr Astrid Breel of Bath Spa University who have worked with us to convene the KIN network this year.

## Skills and Capacity Development

### EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

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Our activities have continued to bring people together through events, workshops, networks and learning sets. We were delighted to once again work with the Clore Leadership Programme, and to respond to the increasing need for support in this area with an additional workshop.

Our Knowledge Impacts Network (KIN) has continued to provide a supportive peer-to-peer space and KIN Support Sets have continued to run throughout the year in response to demand.

#### Knowledge Impacts Network (KIN): Telling the Story of Knowledge Exchange - 16 March 2022

This session of the NCACE Knowledge Impacts Network addressed the particular needs of those who work within Higher Education knowledge exchange, impact development or public engagement. The event was convened by and delivered with those who work in all types of KE professional roles and KE-engaged researchers, and offered an opportunity to connect with others to widen professional networks and to create a supportive and confidential space to discuss issues of mutual interest, including how to report, translate, narrate and engage with KE. At the end of the session, participants were given the opportunity to join a facilitated action learning set to continue to develop their peer-to-peer learning and networks.

#### KIN: Hack KE Metrics - 16 June 2022

Facilitators: Dr Astrid Breel, Bath Spa University, Sian Brittain, Guildhall School of

Music and Drama, Suzie Leighton, NCACE. This KIN session got hands-on with and hacked issues with metrics and reporting that are and aren't raised in the current Research England Knowledge Exchange Funding Review. KIN used key questions to provide a framework for an interactive, informal and confidential peer-to-peer space for those involved in cultural knowledge exchange and impact development to share insights and issues pertaining to KE reporting and metrics. Following the session, participants were invited to contribute to a blog that is hosted on the NCACE *website*.

#### KIN: Conversations for Collaboration - 21 September 2022

This session focused on how to have good, positive and productive conversations with colleagues, collaborators and potential partners and drew on coaching approaches and other techniques that might also be helpful in communicating the value of cultural knowledge exchange. We were joined by representatives from Guildhall Coaching Associates to share their insights on using coaching approaches in conversations and Dr Ash Brockwell who reflected on how techniques deployed in Values-centred evaluation (VACE) can be used in conversations and discussions to establish shared values, and help reveal the 'intangible' impacts of collaborative projects.

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#### KIN Support Sets

Throughout the year we were delighted to work with Guildhall Coaching Associates to run three KIN support sets that each met 3 times. Two sets comprised of representatives from across higher education and the arts sector, with one focussed on internal HE issues. The sets, organised along the GROW coaching



## *Skills and Capacity Development*

model, each met three times throughout the year, forming an important part of our offer to support the capacity of those leading Cultural Knowledge Exchange work across the UK.

### **Annual Workshop:**

#### **The Power of Collaborative Action: People, Place and Planet - 9 March 2022**

In our annual workshop devoted to supporting and showcasing great examples of collaboration between Higher Education and the arts and cultural sectors, this year's event focused on the broad theme of People, Place and Planet and considered how knowledge exchange and working in partnership fosters connections, creativity and innovation across a myriad of important and often interconnecting themes including: Place-making and Levelling up, Climate Emergency and Health and Wellbeing.

Offering reflections from key thinkers, practitioners and policymakers, and showcasing diverse models of excellent and impactful knowledge exchange, this event brought together around 200 people invested in the potential of knowledge exchange between the academy and the arts and cultural sector.

Contributors included:

Professor David Amigoni (Professor of Victorian Literature, Keele University), Dr Jennifer Cromwell (Senior Lecturer in Ancient History, Manchester Metropolitan University), Abas Eljanabi (Sheba Arts), Hannah Irwin (Strategic Projects Manager, University of Plymouth), Ruby Jennings (Little Lost Robot),



Rupert Lorraine (Development & Partnership Manager, University of Plymouth), Claire Malcolm MBE (Chief Executive, New Writing North), Dr Caitlin Nunn (Research Fellow at Manchester Centre for Youth Studies, Manchester Metropolitan University), Dr Karen Patel (Director of CEDIA, Birmingham City University), Rachel Pownall (Innovation Manager, Bath Spa University), Professor Christopher Smith (Executive Chair, AHRC) and David Sweeney (Executive Chair, Research England). NCACE Chairs included: Dr Federica Rossi, Dr Emily Hopkins and Evelyn Wilson.

## Skills and Capacity Development

### NCACE / Clore Leadership Workshop: Leading Through Uncertainty - 21 June 2022

Our second NCACE Leadership Workshop held in collaboration with Clore Leadership focussed on supporting leaders and aspiring leaders through change and uncertainty. We thought about developing collaborations for organisational resilience, and personal networks for self-care.

The workshop involved a combination of reflective and interactive sessions and key takeaways included tips for best practice from leaders in the arts and cultural sector and

higher education, developing value-based collaborations, finding allies internally and externally and light touch strategies for self-care.

Facilitators: Emma Haughton, Dr Rebekka Kill, Suzie Leighton and Kate Atkinson.



### 3. Evidencing and Impact Development

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

Although some useful research has been carried out, especially over the last 15 years or so, such work has tended to be sporadic with relatively few attempts to aggregate a cohesive body of evidence on this important field of work, which we often refer to as Cultural Knowledge Exchange or cultural collaborations and partnerships. A major focus of our work this year has therefore been the continued development of the NCACE Evidence Repository which we launched last year.

A substantial part of our work this year was focussed on the development of a number of original research reports. Following from our '[Collaborating with Higher Education](#)' survey in partnership with ArtsProfessional magazine, in Spring 2021, we have now produced two research reports highlighting key findings from this substantial data set as well as a number of other key reports, all outlined below. We have also commenced work on a series of soon-to-be published case studies on the themes of [place](#) and [climate emergency](#).

Our Evidence Café brand has been further established and interest in contributing to our 2nd annual policy workshop on the climate emergency proved so high, that we ran the workshop over the course of a full day this year. All of these activities are designed to address the need for more and better evidence and analysis on the extent, nature, drivers, and broader impacts of KE collaborations. Moreover, they create much-needed spaces and opportunities for conversation, network development, and knowledge sharing across sectors.





## Evidencing and Impact Development

interviews carried out by Dr Rebekka Kill for NCACE with a number of Knowledge Exchange professionals from around the country. The interviews went on to form a new NCACE publication that was launched in Summer 2022.

Hosted by Dr Rebekka Kill and Evelyn Wilson (Co-Director, NCACE) with Andrew Wray (Director of Research Impact, University of Bristol) and Deborah Keogh (Knowledge Exchange Manager, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland).

### Annual Policy Workshop:

**Culture and Collaborations on Climate Emergency: Shining a light on the contribution of Higher Education and culture led collaboration to our understandings of climate emergency, climate justice and net zero. - 23 June 2022**

Climate Emergency is a key theme underpinning NCACE's work and throughout the programme we are creating spaces for conversations around cultural collaborations on climate emergency, climate justice, and related arising themes and concerns.

The focus of this specific day-long event was to create a space to:

- highlight the role of collaborative initiatives with a focus on climate emergency, climate justice, net zero and related areas that are occurring between key stakeholders including: Higher Education, the arts and cultural sector, local authorities, community partnerships and other relevant actors.
- showcase a diverse range of research projects and creative collaborations from around the country and beyond.



- Encourage dialogue, discussion and information sharing between researchers and others working in Higher Education, arts and cultural practitioners, policy makers and funders on this most timely and important of topics.

Our themes for the event included the following:

**Climate research, creative methods and culture shifts in community contexts; Artists responding to climate emergency; Research, Policy and Practice - Working together for our Planetary Futures; Collaboration and new imaginaries for living in and with Climate Emergency; Science and Culture: Communities, education and knowledge-making.**

We were delighted to be joined by the following contributors:

Fehinti Balogun (actor and writer Can I Live?), Andrew Bedford (Head of Greenspace & Leisure, Islington Council), Stephen Bennett (artist and Co-Head, Policy Lab), Rachel

## *Evidencing and Impact Development*

Briscoe (CEO/lead artist, Fast Familiar), Anne-Marie Culhane (Fellow at Global Systems institute and educator/activist), Dr Ria Dunkley (Senior Lecturer, University of Glasgow), Rachael Duthie (Production Manager, Theatre Alibi), Dr Alba Abad Fernandez and Dr Sarah-Jane Judge (University of Edinburgh and Engage Nepal with Science), Linda France (Poet and Climate Writer, New Writing North and Newcastle University), Hetty Hodgson (National Youth Theatre), Jaime Jackson (artist), Johanna Kieniewicz (Head of Education and Research Collaborations, King's Culture), Sophie Laggan (University of the West of England, Bristol), Professor Ann Light (University of Sussex), Professor Briony McDonagh (Director of Leverhulme Centre for Water Cultures and PI 'Risky Cities: Living with Water in an Uncertain Future Climate', University of Hull), Professor Roberta Mock (Executive Dean, School of Performing and Digital Arts, Royal Holloway, University of London), Sian Moxon (Senior Lecturer & Technology Coordinator: Sustainability, The School of Art, Architecture & Design, London Metropolitan University and Founder, Rewild My Street), Dr Neelam Raina (Associate Professor, Design and Development, Middlesex University), Pauline Rutter (Artist, Researcher, Poet-in-residence and TCCE Associate), Dr David Sergeant (Associate Professor in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literature, University of Plymouth), Jane Tarr (Arts Council England) and Katy Vanden (Cap-a-Pie Theatre).

This event was aimed at those with an active interest in climate emergency, climate justice, net zero and related themes and the role that cultural knowledge exchange collaborations are currently playing or indeed have the

potential to play in addressing the challenges associated with this major global issue which is now and will continue to affect all of our lives.

**We were joined by over 200 people from higher education, arts and cultural, local and regional government, policymakers, funders and other organisations for a highly compelling day of key notes, critical reflections, case studies, discussion and debate.**

Curated by Evelyn Wilson (Co-Director, NCACE) with research support from Justine Kenyon (QMUL).

## Evidencing and Impact Development

# EVIDENCE REPOSITORY

[ncace.ac.uk/evidence-hub](https://ncace.ac.uk/evidence-hub)

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 is the first such collection of materials to focus specifically on literature concerning collaborations in this area. It is being developed as a vital part of the wider evidence base for NCACE, acting as a space to signal, house and promote both NCACE's core research activities and reports as well as other mainly open source, and/or publicly available, materials relating to our core mission.

We intend the repository to act as a collection, an archive and a 'living resource' to be used by at least three key user-groups:

1. Researchers and academics
2. Professionals working in areas such as Research Management and Knowledge Exchange
3. Those outside academia in particular Arts and cultural sector professionals/practitioners and those working in related areas.

During our second year, we have continued to build on this collection of academic and non-academic literature on cultural knowledge exchange, which now amounts to over 230 resources.

The Repository is organised thematically into the following categories:

1. NCACE Publications
2. General Knowledge Exchange
3. Culture-related Knowledge Exchange
4. Knowledge Exchange and Covid-19
5. Toolkits and Skills for Knowledge Exchange
6. Placemaking and Levelling Out
7. Health and Wellbeing
8. Technologies for Social Good and
9. Environment and Climate Emergency

Each year we continue to upload case studies showcasing models of good practice, as well as interviews with key stakeholders. The first selection of NCACE case studies has been in development this year (and will be published in early 2023) and these showcase a range of KE initiatives from across the country, focussing on different areas of the cultural sector and different modes of collaboration. The first series of case studies focus on the themes addressed in our two initial NCACE Annual Policy Workshops; Placemaking and the Climate Emergency. The perspectives of academic researchers, arts practitioners, and KE professionals are represented in these case studies, which will be accompanied by an executive summary of findings.

An NCACE Evidence Repository Advisory Group has been established as a way to gain expert insight and advice on how to promote and augment the value of the resource further, including inviting guest curators and contributors and identifying gaps in user groups. Members of the advisory group include senior academics, KE professionals and arts practitioners.



## Evidencing and Impact Development

### PUBLICATIONS

Since the start of NCACE, we have been active in developing a number of core publications. This body of primary research is a crucial and ongoing part of our work. Over the course of the last year we have published the following reports as part of an ever-growing evidence base for knowledge exchange between HEIs and the arts and culture sector.

- *Narrating Cultural Knowledge Exchange: Stories and perspectives from Knowledge Exchange professionals working in Higher Education in the UK*
- *HEIs' Engagement with the Arts and Cultural Sector: Evidence from the Knowledge Exchange Framework 2021 Narratives*
- *Collaborating with Higher Education Institutions: Findings from NCACE Survey with Arts Professional*
- *The Role of 'Place' in Collaborations Between HEIs and the Arts and Cultural Sector*





## 4. Showcasing and Communications

Communicating the wider benefits of cultural knowledge exchange and helping to narrate this emerging field is a major part of our work.

Liaising with partners and funders and our web development team, developing compelling brands, creating monthly bulletins, encouraging the voices of new writers through our blogs and the promotion of all our events and activities are just a few elements of what this part of our work at NCACE entails.

Through everything we do we aim to showcase models of good practice in knowledge exchange taking place between universities and the arts and culture sector. Through our various communications strategies and initiatives, we are focussed on helping to raise the profile of all aspects of the programme and actively encouraging a wider understanding of, and engagement in knowledge-sharing, discussion and inspiring fresh thinking and possibilities of cultural knowledge exchange.

NCACE produces a Monthly Bulletin, through which we give updates on our latest news, event activities, publications, blogs and the Evidence Repository in addition to industry news. The bulletin goes out to over 8000 subscribers.

## Showcasing and Communications

### NCACE BLOG PLATFORM

[ncace.ac.uk/evidence-hub/blogs/](https://ncace.ac.uk/evidence-hub/blogs/)

The NCACE Blog platform continues to generate a powerful community of writing about collaborations between HEIs and the arts, and closely related subject areas. It showcases significant and diverse stories, experiences and reflections about collaboration.

Our blogs this year have included:

- *Making it Count: How could we be measuring the real value of our Cultural Knowledge Exchange work?* - Suzie Leighton, NCACE / TCCE, Dr Astrid Breel, Bath Spa University and Sian Brittain, Guildhall School of Music and Drama
- *The Climate Crisis as an opportunity for hope, connection and creativity* - Dr Laura Kemp, Senior Manager, NCACE
- *'Mary/Marianne': An installation in development at Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre* - Katharina Reinthaller and Sarah Sigal (writer, director, dramaturg and researcher)
- *Practice as Research and Knowledge Exchange Café's (PARKE): Methodologies to connect beyond academia* - David Hockham, Ghislaine Boddington, Jorge Lopes Ramos and Carlos Eduardo Pires - University of Greenwich
- *Transformations: The Significance of Community Spaces* - Kathy Hamilton, Professor of Consumption, Markets and Society, Dr Holly Porteous, Postdoctoral Researcher and Teaching Associate and Dr Juliette Wilson, Reader in Marketing - University of Strathclyde
- *The Power of Common Life: Action: People, Place, Planet* - Professor Christopher Smith - Executive Chair, AHRC
- *A new model for citizen led research?* - Bambo Soyinka and Robert Crawshaw
- *NCACE Annual Report 2020/21: Activities, collaborations and lessons learnt* - Rachel Lasebikan, Communications Manager, NCACE
- *An Overview of 'The Role of 'Place' in Collaborations': Place-based and Place-focused Cultural Knowledge Exchange* - Emily Hopkins, Senior Manager - Research, Evidence and Policy, NCACE
- *How does academic research generate arts and culture-related impact?* - Dr Federica Rossi, Co-Investigator, Evidence and Impacts, NCACE and Reader in Innovation Policy and Management Birkbeck, University of London
- *Cultural Knowledge Exchange and the Climate Emergency* - Anja Rekeszus - Intern, NCACE



## Showcasing and Communications

- *NCACE supports four Micro-Commissions to co-create a new and different future for Arts/Culture and Higher Education collaborations* - Rachel Lasebikan, Communications Manager, NCACE
- *Welcome to the NCACE Evidence Repository: An introduction to our latest resource* - Emily Hopkins, Senior Manager - Research, Evidence and Policy, NCACE
- *100 ways to cook pasta* - Vic Newton, Associate Lecturer in Design, School of Design, Northumbria University
- *The KEF 2021 narratives and what they tell us about HEIs' engagement with the arts and cultural sector* - Dr Federica Rossi, NCACE and Birkbeck, University of London
- *Healthy Networks: personal and professional development through cross-sector collaboration* - Kerry Wilson, Head of Research at the Institute of Cultural Capital and NCACE Collaboration Champion
- *Around the Kitchen Table* - David Thomson, Eat Club session leader and independent food learning producer
- *Meaningful impact in Arts and Humanities research: Who decides?* - Dr Astrid Breel, Impact Research Fellow, Bath Spa University
- *NCACE Collaborations in Placemaking: Shining a Light on the Contribution of Higher Education and Cultural Partnerships* - Emily Hopkins, Senior Manager - Research, Evidence and Policy, NCACE



## EDITORIAL PARTNERSHIP WITH ARTSPROFESSIONAL

[artsprofessional.co.uk/magazine/ncace](https://artsprofessional.co.uk/magazine/ncace)

Our editorial partnership with ArtsProfessional continued into our second year with a series of articles designed to promote awareness of NCACE to the arts and culture sector.

This year's articles have included:

- *Ways of working with universities revealed* - Evelyn Wilson and Emily Hopkins
- *Building better collaborative futures* - Suzie Leighton and Myra Stuart
- *Reigniting my frazzled brain: the fight against impact fatigue* - Rebekka Kill
- *Avoiding the pitfalls of partnership* - Glenda Cooper
- *Arts and higher education: a successful partnership in action* - Professor Katy Shaw and Claire Malcolm

*Image: Ways of working with universities revealed - Fireflight show at Sunderland cultural venue The Fire Station (Credit: Ray Gibson)*

## Showcasing and Communications

### PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

We are delighted that so many individuals have engaged with us over the last year with particularly high levels of attendance at the following NCACE events:

- *Culture and Collaborations on Climate Emergency*, 23 June 2022
- *Evidence Café 6 - Narrating Cultural Knowledge Exchange: Stories and perspectives from - Knowledge Exchange Professionals*, 18 May 2022

- *Knowledge Impacts Network (KIN): Telling the Story of Knowledge Exchange*, 16 March 2022
- *The Power of Collaborative Action: People, Place and Planet*, 9 March 2022

One of our key aims at NCACE is to ensure that we amplify opportunities and create spaces for showcasing for both small specialist arts and culture HEIs as well as for arts and culture sector organisations and we are pleased that so many people from both sectors have engaged as contributors to events, have written for us or otherwise been involved in our work.

In the course of our second year many individuals, HEIs, Arts and Culture organisations have been engaging with our programme and events throughout the year

**8000** *Monthly bulletin subscribers.*

**1766** *Twitter followers and a growing LinkedIn community.*

**1200** *Event bookings.*

**900** *Individuals registered to attend events, of which;*

**500** *academics, researchers, KE specialists and other staff were from;*

**115** *HEIs, mostly in the UK and including many arts specialist institutions.*

Some of the arts and cultural organisations we have been delighted to welcome as contributors this year have included;

Bathway Theatre at University of Greenwich, BLAST Fest, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Cap-a-Pie Theatre, Clore Leadership, Cultural Literacy Everywhere, Culture Forum North, Eat Club, Fast Familiar, Furtherfield, Future Everything, Independent Theatre Council, Lost Robot, National Youth Theatre, New Writing North, Opera North, Rewild My Street, Sangini, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, The Stables, Theatre Alibi and Vamos. We're also pleased to have worked with individual artists and cultural practitioners.

## 5. Evaluation

Evaluation has been integral to NCACE from the outset. It has the key purpose to ensure ongoing dialogue and connectivity between all the NCACE Work Packages through the lifespan of the project and ultimately enable us to have a clear understanding of our performance, identify areas of excellence or good practice, as well as areas of improvement.

In line with this purpose, our evaluation plan is underpinned by a values-based approach and by principles of co-design, with particular regard to inclusivity, difference and diversity. Our evaluation 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.

Theory of Change (ToC) has been used as a key tool for reflection on the WP results (outcomes), exploration of the causal effects of the respective programme activity, and the articulation of the associated assumptions. This led to the development of new and the refinement of existing (or bid) KPIs that effectively monitor performance towards achieving NCACE results.

With this foundation, early in Year 2, we developed robust research tools that included an interview guide and two survey questionnaires. We used these tools to systematically collect performance data through six interviews (with the NCACE team) and two surveys (with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Arts Culture Organisations (ACOs) and support the evaluation of NCACE activities. The analysis of this data led to the development of three key studies: the **HEI First Baseline Impact Study**, the **ACO First Baseline Impact Study**, as well as the **WP5 Baseline Evaluation**. The synthesis of the findings from these three reports, together with key management data that inform specific WP KPIs, have been presented in the **NCACE First Baseline Impact Study (FBIS)**.



## *Evaluation*

The FBIS, in conjunction with the **Early Baseline** (performed during the design phases of the NCACE initiative and the development of the NCACE funding bid) and the **Planning Baseline** (performed at the outset of NCACE implementation), provides the foundation for properly assessing NCACE results (or outcomes). More specifically, the FBIS serves as a basis for comparison with the corresponding midpoint (May 2023) and the endline (September 2024) impact studies to assess NCACE progress and results on more precise interventions and expected beneficiaries (i.e. HEI and ACO).

In line with the NCACE evaluation strategy, a selected number of NCACE events or activities

have been evaluated, which included: the Knowledge Impacts Network: Support Sets, the NCACE Ideas Pool 1 - Ideas Lab: Co-Creating a New and Different Future for Arts / Higher Education Collaboration, the Culture and Collaborations on Climate Emergency, and the Clore Leadership Collaboration. In addition, we have organised the evaluation of the NCACE micro-commission projects, with the aim to explore any lessons arising from these partnership projects in terms of addressing potential barriers to collaboration, and delivering step change in how HEIs and ACOs approach knowledge exchange and co-creation in the future. Evaluation updates have been shared with the NCACE team and key stakeholders, including the Sounding Board.

# NCACE PEOPLE AND NETWORKS

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## NCACE TEAM

- Evelyn Wilson - Co-Director
- Suzie Leighton - Co-Director
- Noshin Sultan - Project and Partnerships Manager
- Dr Laura Kemp - Senior Manager, Research, Evidence and Policy (June 2022 to date)
- Dr Emily Hopkins - Senior Manager, Research, Evidence and Policy (January 2021 - March 2022)
- Dr Federica Rossi - NCACE Core (Co-Investigator, Evidence and Impacts) and Birkbeck University of London
- Dr Thanasis Spyriadis - NCACE Core (Evaluation Lead) and Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, University of Crete, Rethymno
- Rachel Lasebikan - Communications Manager
- Anja Rekeszus - Intern
- Justine Kenyon - NCACE Associate
- Dr Sarah Sigal - NCACE Associate
- Kate Holmes - NCACE Associate
- Myra Stuart - NCACE Associate
- Dr Rebekka Kill - NCACE Associate

## 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
- Claire Pattison - Manchester Metropolitan University
- Professor Martyn Evans - Manchester Metropolitan University
- Dr Heather Robson - Northumbria University
- Professor Katy Shaw - Northumbria University
- Dr Patrick Duggan - Northumbria University

## NCACE People and Networks

### SOUNDING BOARD

Sounding Board members provide insight and expertise around our key strands and subject matters, drawn from both Higher Education and the arts. Board members act as project ambassadors and will be actively engaged with NCACE work, as well as our wider policy, social, environmental and technological shifts. The board consists of:

- **Professor Geoffrey Crossick** - Distinguished Professor of Humanities in the School of Advanced Study, University of London
- **Professor Maria Delgado** - Director of Research, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
- **Professor Martyn Evans** - Faculty Pro Vice Chancellor for Arts & Humanities and Director of Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University
- **Rosy Greenlees** - Former Executive Director, Crafts Council
- **Victoria Hume** - Director, Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance
- **Claudia Lastra** - Executive Director & Joint CEO, Arts Catalyst
- **Professor Trevor McMillan** - Vice-Chancellor, Keele University
- **Dr Karen Patel** - Research Fellow, Birmingham Centre for Media and Cultural Research, Birmingham School of Media, Birmingham City University
- **Dr Neelam Raina** - Associate Professor Design and Development, Middlesex University London
- **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
- **Professor Bambo Soyinka** - Director of Paper Nations & Professor of Story at Bath Spa University
- **Ellen Bamford** - Head of Data and Evidence, Research England observers of the board
- **Rebecca Emmett** - Senior Policy Advisor, Research England observers of the board

### COLLABORATIONS CHAMPIONS NETWORK

The key role of our Collaborations Champions Network is to work with us to develop a vibrant, valued community of practice in the field of cultural knowledge exchange. The network includes:

- **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 Aberdeen



## NCACE People and Networks

- 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 - BLAST Fest
- Becky Smith - Opera North
- Paul Smith - Dance Consortia North West
- John Steel - University of Derby
- Dr Michael Tymkiw - University of Essex
- Dr Kerry Wilson - Liverpool John Moores University
- Rachel Briscoe - Fast Familiar
- Sian Brittain - Guildhall School of Music and Drama
- Dan Brown - Shakespeare Birthplace Trust
- Tom Cahill-Jones - NESTA
- Hilary Carty - Clore Leadership
- Jason Carvalho - The Open University
- Robert Crawshaw - Cultural Literacy Everywhere
- Dr Jennifer Cromwell - Manchester Metropolitan University
- Anne-Marie Culhane - Artist
- Dr Enrico Daga - The Open University
- Dr Ria Dunkley - University of Glasgow
- Rachael Duthie - Theatre Alibi
- Abas Eljanabi - Artist
- Rebecca Emmett - Research England
- Dr Linda France - University of Newcastle and New Writing North
- Professor Kathy Hamilton - University of Strathclyde
- Emma Haughton - Generate
- Samantha Harper-Robins - Bath Spa University
- Dr Penny Hay - Bath Spa University
- David Hockham - Bathway Theatre, University of Greenwich
- Hetty Hodgson - National Youth Theatre
- Dr Simon Holland - The Open University
- Dr Helen Hopkins - Birmingham City University
- Hannah Irwin - University of Plymouth
- Dr Islam Issa - Birmingham City University
- Jaime Jackson - Artist
- Ruby Jennings - Lost Robot
- Charlotte Jones - The Independent Theatre Council
- Dr Sarah - Jane Judge - University of Edinburgh
- Deborah Keogh - Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
- Dr Johanna Kieniewicz - King's College London
- Dr Rebekka Kill - Independent
- Sophie Laggan - University of West of England
- Professor Ann Light - Sussex University

## PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTORS

Over the course of our second year we have worked with a wide number of people who have contributed in various ways to our activities programme. These include:

- Alisdair Aldous - University of the Arts, London
- Professor David Amigoni - Keele University
- Dr Susan Ashley - Northumbria University
- Kate Atkinson - Clore Leadership
- Fehinti Balogun - Actor
- Ellen Bamford - Research England
- Andrew Barnett - Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
- Rachael Barnwell - Durham University
- Nik Barrera - Vamos
- Andrew Bedford - Islington Council
- Stephen Bennett - Artist and Policy Lab
- Ghislaine Boddington - University of Greenwich
- Kath Boodhai - Northumbria University
- Dr Astrid Breel - Bath Spa University
- Hannah Irwin - University of Plymouth
- Dr Islam Issa - Birmingham City University
- Jaime Jackson - Artist
- Ruby Jennings - Lost Robot
- Charlotte Jones - The Independent Theatre Council
- Dr Sarah - Jane Judge - University of Edinburgh
- Deborah Keogh - Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
- Dr Johanna Kieniewicz - King's College London
- Dr Rebekka Kill - Independent
- Sophie Laggan - University of West of England
- Professor Ann Light - Sussex University

## NCACE People and Networks

- **Rupert Lorraine** - University of Plymouth
- **Claire Malcolm MBE** - New Writing North
- **Dr Hamish McAlpine** - Research England
- **Professor Briony McDonagh** - University of Hull
- **Professor Roberta Mock** - Royal Holloway, UoL
- **Ruth Moore** - *former* The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities TORCH
- **Dr Aoife Monks** - Queen Mary University of London
- **Sian Moxon** - London Metropolitan University and Rewild My Street
- **Dr Paul Mulholland** - The Open University
- **Vic Newton** - Northumbria University
- **Dr Caitlin Nunn** - Manchester Metropolitan University
- **Irini Papadimitriou** - Future Everything
- **Dr Karen Patel** - Birmingham City University
- **Carlos Eduardo Pires** - University of Greenwich
- **Dr Holly Porteous** - University of Strathclyde
- **Rachel Pownall** - Bath Spa University
- **Dr Neelam Raina** - Middlesex University London
- **Professor Jorge Lopes Ramos** - University of Greenwich
- **Padma Rao** - Sangini
- **Dr Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg** - The Open University
- **Katharina Reinhaller** - Artist
- **Anja Rekeszus** - King's College London
- **Dr Valentina Rizzoli** - University of Rome
- **Dr Federica Rossi** - NCACE/Birkbeck University of London
- **Pauline Rutter** - Artist, Researcher, Poet-in-residence and TCCE Associate
- **Helen Sargeant** - University of Wolverhampton
- **Dr David Sergeant** - University of Plymouth
- **Professor Katy Shaw** - Northumbria University
- **Anita Shervington** - BLAST Fest
- **Dr Sarah Sigal** - Artist and Researcher
- **Becky Smith** - Opera North
- **Professor Christopher Smith** - AHRC
- **Professor Bambo Soyinka** - Bath Spa University
- **Graeme Surtees** - Stables
- **David Sweeney** - Research England
- **Jane Tarr** - Arts Council England
- **David Thomson** - Independent
- **Katy Vanden** - Cap-a-Pie Theatre
- **Dr Samantha Walton** - Bath Spa University
- **Isla Wilson** - Ruby Star Associates
- **Dr Juliette Wilson** - University of Strathclyde
- **Kerry Wilson** - Liverpool John Moores University
- **Dr Andrew Wray** - University of Bristol

We have hugely enjoyed the many conversations we have been having with individuals across the wider landscape of Higher Education and Arts and Culture Sector in our second year of our operation. The insights, challenges and knowledge sharing that these conversations have been catalysing have been greatly enriching and constitute a very important part of our wider environment and networks.

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Monthly updates



NCACE activities



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