

# Grants for the Arts Case Study

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# ART31KENT



Image courtesy of Gulbenkian

# Young people and the arts



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
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# Case Study Introduction

## What will I learn and is it relevant to me?

### Themes...

- Young people
- Engagement
- Youth-led initiatives

### Learning...

- Engaging young people in the arts
- Marketing to young people

### Relevance...

This case study is relevant to:

- Artists and organisations keen to engage young people in arts and culture
- Artists and Directors keen to champion a youth-led approach
- Grants for the Arts applicants who want to find out more about funded projects



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# ART31KENT

‘No decisions about us without us’

## Introducing ART31

ART31 is an ambitious project to revolutionise Kent as a creative county. It is led by 13 - 25 year olds and supported by Kent County Council, Arts Council England, Artswork, Gulbenkian\* and more than 20 cultural organisations across Kent.

Borne out of a need for an improved cultural offer for children and young people, ART31 aims to give young people a voice and empowers them to lead the process. It takes its name from Article 31\*\* of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The ART31 ethos challenges the cultural sector in Kent to change the way it works to ensure that young people are not considered ‘audiences of the future’. Instead they should be respected as artists, producers, programmers, technicians, activists and audiences now.

ART31 encourages joined-up thinking between arts organisations in the county. For the organisations, this means new networks, opportunities for collaboration and more diverse audiences. For the young people, it means a high quality offer of events, mentors, insight into creative industries and valuable career experience both on and off stage.

## Creating ART31

The founding ART31 group was established at Gulbenkian and meets every Thursday. This acted as a catalyst for further groups to develop across Kent, linked to other arts organisations.

An ART31 Youth Board has been launched to steer, manage and develop ART31 across the county. TECH31 was also established by young people wanting to develop technical and production skills, with opportunities to work on live events.

With support and mentoring from organisations on the Kent Youth Arts Network, a range of artists are being selected and commissioned by young people. Young people’s commissioning and programming choices were limited by their knowledge and experience so a ‘go-and-see’ programme has been offered. This gives young people access to national and international work to develop their skills and show them what is possible.

All ART31 opportunities are open to all and shared via social media. A digital platform is under development to capture the experience for anyone who cannot attend. A new website is currently being created to provide pathways to information for young people. It will also give access to a range of artists as they create work, engaging young people in the creative process itself.

In September the group worked on developing their identity and adopted the hashtag #ChangeKent, working with a graffiti artist to create placards bearing their slogan ‘No decisions about us without us’.

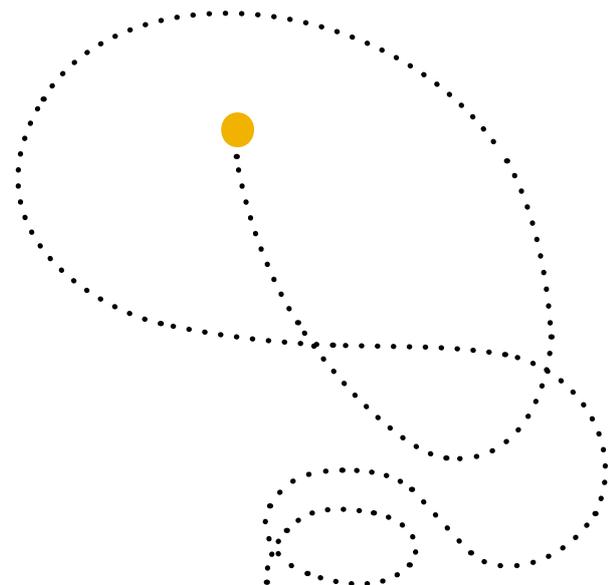
## \*Gulbenkian

Gulbenkian is the University of Kent’s Arts Centre offering innovative, engaging and high quality arts activity for the public, staff and students. It provides a key role in delivering the University commitment to public engagement and has a particular focus on the creative empowerment of children and young people.

## \*\*Article 31

That every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

That member governments shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.



## ART31 gaining momentum

To widen ART31 activity, young people have been invited to apply to the ART31 Youth Board for seed funding of up to £2,000 towards youth-led arts projects tackling issues that are important to them. These will be documented on the ART31 website.

ART31 programme their own events including The Stage is Yours and a large-scale outdoor stage at bOing! Festival, each supported by TECH31 crew. Young people including dancers, musicians and performance poets apply to perform via video audition, and are selected by secret ballot. These events are staffed by young people in all roles - including artist liaison, front of house and marketing - with support from professionals.

In November TECH31 were supported by technical Apprentices and staff at Gulbenkian to run the inaugural 'Sunday Sessions' music gig. This was part of a new music programming strand of activity to help develop an emerging music scene – one of ART31's key goals.

As policy-shapers, ART31 have held a 'local conversation' to inform the development of the Kent Cultural Strategy 2016-2026. It addressed issues with the current education system and the position of the arts within it. A series of provocations were delivered by arts industry professionals selected by ART31 to challenge the education sector and try to find new ways of working together.

ART31 recently proposed the idea of a Youth Arts Council in a meeting with Darren Henley, CEO of Arts Council England, and hope to see their plans develop in 2017.

## ART31 Gulbenkian promotional copy

ART31 is an exciting new movement for 13-25 year olds. Our main aims are to create more events for teenagers and other age groups around Kent, as well as to show just how much young people can achieve.

We get to decide what events we'd like to create and then make them happen, picking up valuable skills along the way, as well as having a great time.

ART31 is about young people having status as arts practitioners and technicians and about being 'activists', advocates and policy shapers.

Join us on Thursdays, 4.30-6.30pm at Gulbenkian and get involved!

#ChangeKent

## Costs

The total budget for setting up and delivering the ART31 programme of activity is £519,000.

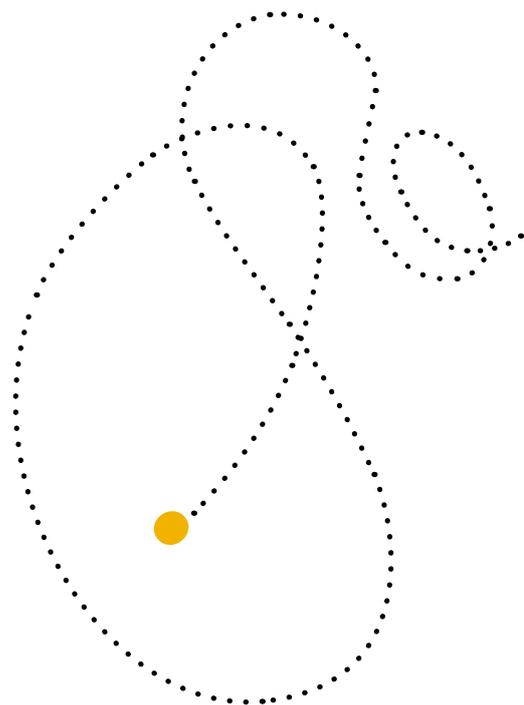
Arts Council England's Grants for the Arts contributed £95,000. Kent County Council contributed £80,000 and Canterbury City Council contributed £5,000. There were significant 'In Kind' contributions and a further budget line for fundraising alongside the young people involved.

The main sources of expenditure have been £105,000 on artistic, £75,000 on organisational and development costs, which include skills development and mentoring for ART31. A further £45,000 was allocated to marketing, audience development and transport.

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[www.art31.co.uk](http://www.art31.co.uk)

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# ART31 Insights

## Top tips from young people

### ART31 - why we got involved

- To learn more about the arts and to be part of it
- Because we'd been told by friends, or people we knew from arts activities, to take part or had heard good things about ART31
- To learn more about technical theatre
- To meet other young people from different backgrounds
- To organise events for other young people to try out
- To develop skills and practical learning

### ART31 - why we enjoy it

- We've become quite political about the arts and creating opportunities for young people
- We're learning practical skills that will set us apart from other young people when applying for jobs in the future
- We're learning lots about the arts and new acts that are out there
- It gives us the chance to meet like-minded people and make new friends
- It gives us an opportunity to change things and make Kent a more exciting place to live for young people

### Tips for marketing to young people

- Attack social media - we use Twitter and Facebook and we're creating a new website
- We use leaflets for some events but we focus mainly on digital - young people are much more likely to see adverts on Facebook than posters around town
- Marketing through schools is fine but posters in corridors are likely to get ignored; it's better to present in an assembly and get people excited about a project or activity
- Workshops in schools are good to get young people involved

### Things to avoid when working with young people

- Don't assume you know what young people want because you were young once - our motto is 'no decisions about us without us'
- Don't invite young people into a formal environment full of people in suits - we are creative and want to enter a creative space
- Don't ask for ideas and then ignore them - we don't just want to be asked for our opinion, we want you to listen
- Don't assume all young people are the same - we're all different and if you want us to get involved you need to listen to our interests

### Useful links

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[twitter.com/Art31Kent](https://twitter.com/Art31Kent)

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[facebook.com/ART31Kent](https://facebook.com/ART31Kent)

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[ART31 Video Provocation](#)

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