

I liked everything

Celebrating new audiences

North West





I Liked Every thing

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Background

Foreword

This publication is aimed at anyone embarking on an audience development project. It celebrates the learning, which arose from all the 35 new audience action research projects that took place from 2001 to 2002. The defining factor in all the projects is that people are different in many ways. Therefore the publication can not tell you absolutely everything about your audience but it can provide a valuable insight into how to find out for yourself. The first section of the publication identifies the 'light bulb' moments experienced by those taking part in the New Audiences projects. It includes planning points relating to each section and snapshot case studies.

The second part of the publication focuses on the Toolkit, which includes some of the pitfalls, a ten-point plan for developing an action research project and a list of suggestions for getting help. Full details of all the North West projects and many more from around the country can be found on the New Audiences website – www.newaudiences.org.uk
The Arts and Disabled People publication provides information on the work with

disabled people that took place in the early part of the New Audiences programme.

What do we mean by a 'New Audience'?

The term here refers to people attending a wide variety of arts events, and in some cases even taking part, for the first time. New Audiences projects are about turning people who do not attend or participate in arts events into people who do. It is about giving people an experience that inspires, moves or challenges them. It is about giving them something they did not have before and, more importantly, it is about turning a single encounter into a long-term affair.

For the arts organisation it is about learning, it is about changing and it is about creating new experiences for new people.

Regional Challenge encouraged arts organisations to try out new approaches to audience development.

It is probably too soon to tell whether the encounters outlined in this publication have turned into something more sustainable but arts organisations have noted some significant successes and considerable learning experiences. They are sharing these in order to make it much easier for other organisations to give new audiences new experiences. A debt of thanks is due to all the organisations that took part, for sharing their experiences with us. All of them gained from the projects and they are to be congratulated for their innovation and imagination in embracing new areas of work.

Introduction

In the North West from 1998 to 2002, arts organisations throughout the region took up the challenge to look at new ways of developing audiences, attenders, visitors or participants through action research projects involving visual and performing arts. Organisations tested ways of engaging people of African, African Caribbean, South Asian and Chinese descent, disabled people, young people, and socially excluded people. Some of the projects involved work around more than one area such as social exclusion and cultural diversity.

There are many definitions of audience development but generally it can be broken down into four areas:

- developing an existing audience's relationship with an arts organisation and its existing activities
- developing new activities and work for existing audiences
- developing new audiences for existing activities and work
- developing new audiences for new activities and work

Perhaps the most challenging area is developing new audiences for existing activities or for new work.

Those involved in New Audiences projects embraced the principles below. Action research means the testing in practice of an idea or assumption to develop new audiences for the arts. Cohen and Manion¹ describe action research as: "...essentially an on-the-spot procedure to deal with a concrete problem located in an immediate situation. This means that the step-by-step process is constantly monitored (ideally, that is) over varying periods of time and by a variety of mechanisms (questionnaires, diaries, interviews and case studies, for example) so that the ensuing feedback may be translated into modifications, adjustments, directional changes, redefinitions, as necessary, so as to bring about lasting benefits to the ongoing process itself."

Experienced action research practitioners and advocates suggest the action research process is cyclical, having a number of components:

- a commitment to improvement
- a special kind of research question – "How may I/we improve?..."
- the role of I/we at the heart of the action research
- the kind of action involved
- systematic monitoring
- descriptions of the action
- explanations of the action
- representation of the action research
- validation of claims
- making public the research

Bell² points out that: "... an important feature of action research is that the task is not finished when the project ends. The participants continue to review, evaluate and improve practice."

¹ McNiff, J., Lomax, P., Whitehead, J., *You and your action research project*, Routledge, 1996, p16-27

² McNiff, J., Lomax, P., Whitehead, J., *You and your action research project*, Routledge. 1996, p6

I like the way it is set
and I ~~th~~ like art anyway



The learning

Working with disabled people

10 arts organisations embarked on projects with disabled people. A number of organisations highlighted that:

- disabled people are not a homogenous group and have different needs, requirements and interests
- disabled people need plenty of time to plan their visits particularly if bringing a companion, having to arrange transport and so on
- disabled people may feel apprehensive about attending arts events for the first time and it is important that their first visit is a comfortable one
- staff in arts organisations who have no previous experience of meeting the access needs of those members of the audience need adequate training

There were a number of discoveries concerning specific impairments that affect the ways disabled people may access arts activity.

Opposite: Cartwheel music programme

Photographer: Ian Edmondson

Blind and visually impaired people

Five projects included work with Blind and visually impaired people, Deaf and hearing impaired people.

Audio description

Although audio description has been available in theatres in the North West since 1994, there is still a low uptake of Blind or visually impaired people attending audio described performances.

Arts About Manchester (AAM), through their project with the Palace Theatre Manchester, developed a database of individuals and organisations to market audio described events, touch tours and audio guides. This resource is already being utilised by AAM's members. Good practice guidelines have been produced for members.

Planning Points

- Collaborate with other organisations to develop databases of target audiences and shared marketing campaigns in order to increase audiences for audio described and sign language interpreted performances

- Plan the dates of audio described and sign language interpreted performances well in advance to maximise publicity
- If resources are limited, audiocassette may be the best method as only a small proportion of Blind people read Braille. If you do use Braille or large print prepare a sampler format, as a cumbersome multi-page Braille or large print document may be off-putting
- Put together a short sampler audiocassette that includes details of your organisation, contact details, background to the project/festival/event and highlighted listings. Include a 'taster', such as a recorded clip, as an incentive to attend
- Put more time and resources into making people aware of material in alternative formats rather than producing it in large amounts. For example produce a Braille press release/ letter detailing that material is available in alternative formats and send it to relevant outlets such as Visually Impaired People Units, Henshaws and appropriate databases

- Material in alternative formats does not have a natural distribution and therefore a longer lead in time is needed amongst the hearing and visually impaired to achieve the same level of response
- Make sure that the fact your material is produced in alternative formats is included in all relevant disability press and websites

Deaf and hearing impaired people

Organisations highlighted a number of issues around marketing, the booking of tickets, budgeting, and access.

Marketing

Organisations had initial difficulties establishing links with the Deaf communities. Although large national organisations such as RNID (Royal National Institute for the Deaf), BDA (British Deaf Association) and Hearing Concern have active local branches that provide facilities and clubs for hearing impaired and Deaf people, a large number of individuals neither belong to organisations, nor attend their meetings and activities. Marketing to hearing impaired and Deaf people is not effective if only the large organisations are contacted.

If the appropriate action is taken then it is possible to target and encourage the attendance of hard to reach groups. The Deaf community are often prepared to travel longer distances than the average drive time to attend an event that is BSL (British Sign Language) interpreted.

The Lancaster Arts and Events project 'Be My Guest' had a number of project partners: Blind Welfare Society, the Deaf Club, Beaumont College, Lancaster Council for Voluntary Services and Full Circle Arts. There were a number of events and workshops that took place during the project. In developing links with the Deaf community a barn dance event was taken to a Deaf club, which proved so popular that a second event was planned for later in the year. In addition the band members, who had no previous experience of signed performances, were so enthusiastic they were determined to modify their work. Members of the Deaf community then went on to attend a signed performance at the Platform, in Morecambe, given by Sign Dance Collective and there was great interest in attending a signed performance of the Royal National Theatre.

Planning Point

- It is worth advertising further afield to specifically targeted Deaf clubs and Deaf studies departments in schools and colleges

Booking

Advance booking payment can be problematic for hearing impaired and Deaf people who are unable to use a telephone system

Planning Point

- Identify other appropriate booking methods such as fax, post or email

Budgets

There are cost implications in providing access for hearing impaired and Deaf people at free educational events such as lectures and discussions because of the cost of induction loops and sign language interpreters. However, these are standard requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and extra costs need to be thought about in advance when planning any activity.

Planning Points

- When planning an event, decide what access requirements are needed such as BSL, audio-description etc and ensure that they are costed into the initial budget
- Make sure all staff know how equipment works and check it regularly

Access

Film can be a challenging artform to promote to Deaf and hearing impaired people. Films are made up of images and sound and most films use each to enhance the other. Music can add to the impression of dramatic, visual scenes and sound effects amplify the tension in action sequences. If a foreign language film is being shown with subtitles then the caption element, which add to the tension and story line are lost. Live signed screenings may be an alternative but they would need a great deal of preparation, as several signers would be needed to interpret for individual characters within the film and this could not be realistically provided at all cinemas on a regular basis.

Cornerhouse in partnership with Full Circle Arts carried out a project to investigate specific issues related to accessibility, focusing on access to film by hearing impaired and Deaf people. The project highlighted a number of access issues and possible solutions. In order to support hearing impaired and Deaf people cinemas should consider using subtitled film prints when these are available or preferably, if available, both subtitles and captions. In order to improve access by hearing impaired and Deaf people to film, cinemas should consider installing equipment to support hearing impaired and Deaf people.

Do not assume that all Deaf and hearing impaired people use sign language. There are other methods of providing support for hearing impaired people such as captioning, which is gradually being incorporated into theatre performances. Advances in technology for live theatre performances and film screenings in cinemas mean that more people with hearing impairments can enjoy these performances.

When booking BSL interpreters for a performance or event make time to understand their requirements. If you have not worked with an interpreter before there are a number of considerations relating to preparation and delivery.

Planning Points

- Cinemas should consider installing equipment to support hearing impaired and Deaf people such as infra red and wire loop induction systems and using subtitled prints when these are available
- When using BSL interpreters make it clear to artists/directors that it is necessary for the interpreters to receive scripts well in advance in order for them to be able to prepare. Signed Performances in Theatre (SPIT) will require an experienced interpreter to be effective. Use an interpreter who is experienced in drama work and get them involved in the show as early as possible

Learning disabled people

Gaining the views of this group about arts activities proved a challenge for some of the arts organisations.

Learning disabled people may feel excluded from attending certain venues because of their difficulties in reading and writing.

Other adults often make the choices for learning disabled adults and can heavily influence which activities are engaged in.

Cartwheel Arts project, 'Interactive', aimed to develop critical choice and awareness of the arts amongst adults with learning difficulties. The project involved workshop activity in both visual and performing arts. There were several important resulting issues. Visual arts activities were using certain materials and creating some end products that were not age appropriate for adults. In the drama activity they flagged a potential lack of inclusivity of all the participants and the often negative image the public has of people with learning difficulties.

Planning Points

- Be flexible when working with people with learning difficulties. Working to 'formulas' or pre-set strategies is difficult. Form partnerships with groups and develop solutions together
- Ensure that you are using age appropriate material
- Work closely with carers and staff to encourage them to open up their thinking

Young disabled people

It can be a challenge to plan activities for children of widely differing abilities. In some quarters there are strongly held views around segregated schools for disabled children. Should organisations work with segregated schools or work with disabled young people in mainstream schools and other settings? Each area has a slightly different take on this issue.

In schools, classes are often disrupted for personal care needs and physiotherapy. Trips can be a challenge to organise if there are large numbers of young people using wheelchairs. Some lifts can only accommodate one wheelchair at a time. Transport arrangements can often suddenly change resulting in sessions being cut short.

Planning Points

- Ensure that you are using age appropriate material
- Build in disability equality awareness training for artists (this applies to all groups above)
- Ask about the school routine and double check transport times
- Build in plenty of time for outings
- Always have a plan B should you find yourself with more or less time than you thought

Disabled artists

Do not assume that written reports are the best way of getting feedback from disabled artists. Be flexible as there may be more appropriate methods. Teachers working in mainstream schools do not always understand the support needs of disabled artists who may be working on project activity with pupils.

Planning Points

- When running projects involving disabled people it is advantageous to use professional disabled artists as they provide a role model and can help to develop the confidence of those disabled people participating for the first time
- Consult as to the most appropriate way of providing feedback and be flexible
- Be clear on artists support and access needs, and build in training for teachers and other staff

Evaluation of project activity

Good, consistent evaluation is a fundamental part of any New Audiences project. Organisations identified appropriate ways of evaluating projects that were sensitive to requirements of the project participants.

Focus groups can be useful in the planning and reviewing of a programme of work but only if they have a very clear remit.

Volunteers working on a project with people with learning difficulties and people who use mental health services, used a personal diary to log their own observations so that they could produce personal statements on their experiences at the end of the project that would contribute to the final report.

Liverpool Biennial, in evaluating their STAR project, used a mixture of photographic documentation, review meetings, a record of activities and project diary, teacher questionnaires, exhibition comments book, and records of numbers of participants and people attending events. An outcome from the project is the development of a web based resource for schools. This resource includes case studies from the school projects, information for schools wishing to organise visits and suggested starting points for activities exploring an international exhibition.

Another organisation wanted to recruit disabled mystery shoppers to monitor a disability arts festival. However despite widespread advertising no one came forward.

Marketing

Disabled people have a wide variety of access requirements so relying on a simple means of marketing is limiting. Written information may work well for some people but be highly inappropriate with visually impaired and learning disabled people.

Targeting a new demographic group is more expensive than targeting new individuals who have a similar profile to your current attendees.

Production and distribution of accessible information is essential but it can be costly. When promoting an event to disabled people one organisation identified that it was necessary to market further afield than the North West to attract enough people.

Including all an arts organisation/venue's access information in promotional material may take up too much space. Consider providing a separate access guide.

Planning Points

- The production of accessible publicity material and sensitive programming can stimulate interest amongst disability press/organisations and encourage attendance amongst individuals and groups who have never attended before but only if you target well
- Marketing to disabled people needs to be appropriate. Outreach marketing to individuals should use the widest variety of appropriate media possible. Produce information material in appropriate and varied formats such as an information sheet in large print with a tape/CD and a Braille version
- Develop ongoing partnership links with disabled led and umbrella organisations to improve marketing approaches with disabled people. There are a number of disability led agencies, contact your local Council for Voluntary Services for a list
- Work collectively. In London, Artsline provides trained access information to all arts venues in the city. This service is mentioned in all listings magazines as the company to make contact with for information on access. However this service does not exist in any other city in England
- Web based activity and email lists of contacts are valuable marketing tools

Transport, access, and support

Organisations identified several general issues around access, particularly transport to venues and staffing.

Staff responsible for meeting and greeting are not usually involved in the planning of projects or in meetings with partners and are therefore less likely to be aware of the issues.

Be aware that transport problems are often more serious in winter.

Do not always assume that disabled people are free to take part in activities during the day, many do work. Check with your target audience.

Parents /carers can be elderly or disabled themselves.

Most people, not just people with learning difficulties, are unaware of the possibilities open to them and often lack the confidence to participate in arts events.

There are many challenges and discriminations faced by disabled people that need addressing by arts organisations.

Planning Points

- Produce clear information about what is available and more importantly how accessible parking, public transport and taxis are
- All staff working in box offices and at the frontline need to have specific training in Disability Equality Awareness delivered by specialist training organisations
- Beware of health and safety regulations. If buildings have lift access there will be restrictions on numbers of wheelchairs

Working with culturally diverse groups

15 organisations carried out projects involving people of African, African Caribbean, South Asian and Chinese descent. Nine of these projects involved mainstream arts organisations developing culturally diverse audiences from the local communities by developing partnerships and collaborations.

Partnerships

Successful work in this area was characterised by partnerships with culturally diverse groups. Organisations worked to develop and sustain links with the communities in interesting and relevant ways.

Manchester City Art Gallery – Chinese Action Research Project

The project aimed to make the gallery's events and exhibitions programme more appealing and the building more welcoming to people in China Town. The assumption was that low attendance at the art gallery by Chinese people demonstrated a lack of awareness rather than a lack of interest.

Manchester Art Gallery is now providing a Cantonese audio guide tour of the collections and information sheets about permanent displays throughout the building as a result of partnerships with local Chinese community groups. In addition, an artist was commissioned to create two vibrant hangings for windows in the education studio. They combine signage and public art, bearing a welcome in Chinese and English and providing information on the range of artwork on display inside the building.

Some partnerships take time to develop as different organisations work to different time scales and have different priorities.

Kino Film's project, 'Stirred Up', looked at developing new Black and Asian audiences for the Kino Film festival and wanted to work with a major film chain. The chain felt that because of the time restraints of the project there was an insufficient period to organise the showing of short films before the main features. The chain was not tempted by an offer to hand out information about Kinofilm with their screenings and felt that it was not in their interest to help,

despite offers of reciprocal flyer distribution and posters. However they are interested in opening the dialogue to create a future programming of short film.

A theatre wanting to test the demand for good quality theatrical activities for Asian individuals and groups developed a partnership with an Asian theatre company. The theatre now has strong positive links with each community group involved in the project and a wish to continue involvement in the future. Group leaders have a positive understanding of the theatre's desire to be accessible to future work. Individual participants have described the projects as 'fun' and 'interesting' and have a very positive view of the theatre.

CAPE's project 'Dancing without walls' enabled them to set up sustainable links with two new community partners, both of whom work closely with the Black and Asian communities.

Collaborating over a project can prove to be very successful. A collaborative project in Merseyside offered Black community groups opportunities to get involved in a variety of events, with a number of positive results: the appointment of an African Peoples Dance worker; an Arabic steering group with over 4,000 people from the Arabic community attending an event; a growth by 20% of Black audiences at Leap 2003 final event of Reggae, Jazz, Contemporary; a programme of talks set up to youth groups, schools and colleges as a process for getting the marketing process across and encouraging a wider audience to the collaborator events; and the successful production of a performance project using a number of local and regional Black performers, artists, makers and musicians.

Planning Points

- Build up personal relationships with key individuals and sustain them through regular and consistent contact
- Set up or source community links and networks
- Work with artists from the local communities

- Develop a common understanding at an early stage and clear ways of working with partners

Planning and Preparation

All projects demonstrated a need for careful planning and preparation.

Octagon Theatre Bolton wanted to encourage members of the Asian community in Bolton to attend the theatre. The theatre sought to influence all strands of their activity such as programming, casting, activities, events and marketing. The project included practical drama based consultation sessions with groups of young people from the South Asian communities; a production for their mainstream and new Asian audience; and a quantitative and qualitative piece of research to determine the potential for long-term growth and sustainability for the theatre to develop Asian audiences from the locality.

The project was particularly successful in attracting young people through developing an important and potentially sustainable partnership between youth service staff and the theatre.

The time and commitment the youth service staff gave to the project was fundamental to its delivery.

There were issues around planning and preparation. It proved problematic to reach new young Asian participants as school holidays, public and Asian holidays and Asian festivals falling within the project period meant that young people's availability to sustain an on-going programme of activity was limited. This highlighted the need for prior research at the project planning stage.

The work presented was not always appropriate to or reflective of the local communities that live in the area the arts organisation/venue serves. Viewers at one gallery felt that the majority of exhibitions promoting South Asian arts were Indian and there was not the provision for the Pakistani or Bangladeshi communities living in their area.

Planning Points

- Arts organisations need to identify and promote the appropriate artforms and make this clear in their marketing
- Use places such as local libraries and venues where the communities already meet and feel comfortable before introducing them to your venue.

- Conduct education outreach work prior to an event to build up interest within the community and confidence in the company/event
- Make time before or after the event to involve the local community members providing feedback
- Find out when is the best time for the targeted community to attend events
- Building relationships with communities can take a long time. Be realistic about the numbers of new people you want to attract. Expect a new audience to develop and evolve gradually

Language

Language problems can be an issue for adult groups where English is often not their first language. School age children under the age of 16 were mostly found to be fluent in English.

In galleries it was felt that the language should be in plain English for young people from Black and Asian groups but should be 'culturally specific' for older members of the communities.

Translating texts/guides for visitors from diverse communities can have cost implications for the arts organisations. There are also costs in programming separate strands of culturally diverse events throughout the year.

Planning Points

- Partnership working will help organisations which identify what texts need to be interpreted and how. Some product may not be relevant
- Audio guides could be made available in relevant languages for older community members

Young people

A project that aimed to address the under-representation of young men in dance found that the recruitment of young Black men in dance depended on peer pressure, role models, and the appropriateness of the dance form. A great deal of work was needed to develop trust with implications on staff time. The groups involved in the project needed sustained support from an experienced youth worker over a much longer period of time.

Planning Points

- Different groups have different needs and may need different approaches to engage them in activity
- Sustainability is important, make sure you are committed to maintaining a relationship
- There is a need for prior research to a 'research' project, prior to a submission for funding including meetings with potential partners. It will save time in the long run if a common understanding is there from the outset
- Allow at least half as much time again as you estimate a project takes

Marketing

One organisation found that the imagery on the promotional material they had created was not ideal. The visual material on the leaflet and the posters did not reflect the cultural make-up of the target audience. There was also a lack of specific information about the event.

Planning Points

- Be proactive in releasing information and use non-arty, clear language to describe the event
- Word of mouth is an effective form of communication
- Do not expect to see a huge increase in new audiences/visitors straight away; building relationships with communities can take a long time
- Consult with other arts organisations that want to attract the same audience
- If time and budget allow consider doing some education outreach work prior to an event to build up interest within the community

Culture

Some of the culturally diverse community groups felt that a Eurocentric approach to the arts had very little in common with their own lives. Even though they admitted that their experience was limited, the general assumption was that the arts have little relevance to them.

One project explored attitudes to dance in the Pakistani community, particularly the assumption that most Asian dance events promote the Hindu religion and will be offensive in dress and content.

Cartwheel Community Arts found attitudes are changing in Pakistan towards dance and this artform has now become part of the cultural life of the country. For example there is now a dance school in Karachi and mixed gender dancing has become accepted both at private celebrations and in performances. However a focus group of visitors from Pakistan pointed out that the North West communities are 'behind the times' in their views on dance. For example, professional Pakistani dancers are uncommon in the UK. Also it is culturally unacceptable for female dancers to perform in front of a mixed gender audience making mixed gender dance unacceptable within the community at public events. Cartwheel went on to recommend that organisers of dance events, who wish to encourage the Pakistani community to attend, should promote Pakistani artforms and clearly identify this in their marketing. They would also suggest using non-traditional dance venues that are more suited to the traditional promenade dances. Single sex events should also be considered.

Planning Point

- Issues of respect and trust are of vital importance and learning about the culture, history and geography of the groups you are working with is very helpful

Evaluation

Children often have a better command of English than their parents, which had an impact on project evaluation as some adults had difficulties in filling in questionnaires. Additionally one organisation found that when evaluating their project there was a very low return on questionnaires.

Box office statistics can be a useful and accurate way of monitoring activity.

Oldham Coliseum Theatre analysed statistics about the demography, status and attendance history of the audience. The results demonstrated that there was an increase in the attendance of individuals from the culturally diverse communities the theatre was targeting for their project activity.

Planning Point

- Feedback needs to be sought from participants immediately after the activity with appropriate methods for those with language difficulties

Training

There is a need for training in understanding the cultural context of different religions within an open environment, so that the questions people are afraid to ask or can not find information about can be addressed. It is important to understand people's background and migratory context for arrival in the area as well as their cultural interest in the arts.

Planning Point

- Include training or learning opportunities for staff in any project with a new audience

Young people and schools

There were 10 projects involving young people and schools. Within these projects there were overlaps with other priority areas, in particular culturally diverse communities. The organisations involved in these projects highlighted a number of issues around this target group, in particular the fact that they were hard to reach and that it was difficult to gain their commitment. Some of the organisations pointed out that there was a problem with young people dropping out of the projects.

Targeting

One organisation defined its target group of disadvantaged young people as 'hard to reach', which was problematic as there are a number of interpretations to this term. The very nature of the group meant that it was often difficult reaching and maintaining contact with those young people. For example one young person left home the day after they had signed up for the project. Therefore the target group was widened by opening activity to brothers, sisters, best mates of the young people taking part and in some cases the ones seen on a regular basis were those friends and family members and not the original target group. The engaging of 'hard to reach' young people will be a long term task.

A theatre company found it difficult to get initial commitment from young people who have not previously been involved in the arts and it was difficult to get them to work together as a group. They found that the young people were unable to visualise the whole project process and thus could not register their progress. One of the success factors was the use of a young artist. Being close in age to the participants, the project leader was able to act as a youth mentor and offer support and guidance throughout the length of the project.

The same organisation experienced difficulties in getting the balance of the participating group of young people right in terms of attitude and age.

Some arts organisations experienced difficulty in reaching young individuals who are not part of established groups.

Organisations found that the 16-25 age group, the identified age-range for project activity, was too wide in terms of age and interests. Grouping 16 and 24 year olds together is not possible or successful given their different interests.

Planning Points

- Working with young people can mean taking more risks and being prepared for a few surprises, including disappointment with initial commitment
- Recruit participants well in advance of the project start date to ensure that there is additional support, if needed, for specific groups of young people
- Projects involving young people often need more time to establish a deeper level of trust

Partnerships

One project had difficulty in recruiting the target number of young people aged 16-25 to take part in their project. It was very difficult to get groups of young people over 19 to engage with the project. There was also very little interest or excitement from young people's agencies in the area and it was felt that they were not committed to supporting the project. There was initial engagement from the Youth Service, publicising the project to their young people, although their involvement and relationship ended when their time limited activities programme finished.

Unless project partners have an understanding and commitment to project work involving young people, the partners will not become engaged in the activity.

Planning Points

- Involve youth workers and volunteers in the initial planning meetings
- Try to identify one person who has the ability to engage on a personal level to offer leadership, mentoring and direct engagement with the chosen group of young people
- Try to ensure that within the project activity links are made with other agencies and organisations that will be sustained after the project ends
- It is not possible to advertise through the normal channels in order to target young disadvantaged people so partnership is crucial

Evaluation

Evaluation with young people needs time and patience.

A project in a probation hostel used external evaluators from a higher education college and from the Centre for Studies in Crime and Social Justice. This created unforeseen problems as the choice of evaluators, who felt there was a need to give an academically sound base to their work, led to the report being much longer than anticipated. Workshop sessions were videoed, which was felt to be intrusive and made the workshop leaders uneasy and less confident.

Planning Points

- Set project objectives in partnership with young people
- Evaluate work with young people as you go along. Interviewing during sessions/events works well
- Make sure appropriate evaluators who have an empathy with the target group are employed

Timing of events

There was a perception by young people involved in one project that gallery opening times excluded them outside visits organised by schools. Youth night openings could be set up, working with youth clubs to create an evening visiting

time on a regular basis. Young people indicated that they would love to visit a museum if there are activities in which they can participate.

Hyndburn's project with Haworth Art Gallery, commissioned Action Factory to work with a group of young people to create a piece of art to explore the group's attitude to art. The young people chose video because it was a medium they identified with and because it removed the 'I can't draw' situation that alienates some young people from participating. The visual arts work that interests young people is often thought provoking and controversial. Young people like to feel involved and enjoy interactive elements.

Planning Points

- Art Galleries and museums could consider creating evening visiting times for youth groups
- Relationships need to be developed with local youth clubs and encourage visits to galleries to be included in youth club programming
- Galleries could set up young people's advisory groups to assist in young person friendly programming

Location

A community TV project found that young people with challenging behaviour were reluctant to attend a project within an 'established' education building such as a college. The studio's venue was found to be less intimidating. The colleges involved began to look more creatively at setting up access courses to reach those young people. As a result they found that the young people, college staff and artists/practitioners worked well together.

Young people who are reluctant to visit galleries can be reached by creative outreach activity. For example one organisation took their project out to groups packaged as 'a gallery in a rucksack'.

Planning Points

- Attracting a new audience to your venue may mean working outside it at first
- It is important to identify the most appropriate spaces to carry out project work with young people

Child protection

All organisations working with children and vulnerable adults should have a child protection

policy in place. Refer to the child protection advice available on the Arts Council England website.

Working with schools

Quite a few organisations worked with schools during their project activity and they discovered that there are several implications.

Schools are very timetable orientated and have very particular demands and expectations. It can pose more restrictions on time limited projects if school holidays fall in that period resulting in young people's inability to sustain the activity.

It was found that teachers involved in project work became more confident about their creative skills and developed methods that they would continue to use in the classroom. In one project art teachers developed ideas for cross-curricular work. They found that using art to teach non-art subjects worked well.

Shorelines story telling project aimed to increase school children's involvement in literature by using a multimedia approach. The project was successful in reaching a wide range of children from varied backgrounds and of varied abilities and engaged

them thoroughly in storytelling and multimedia narratives. Some of the children wanted to go on to read the versions of the stories that had originally been recorded onto CDs. A recommendation was made that written versions of storytellers stories should be provided for children to read them for themselves. It was also recommended that a CD ROM should be produced for low attainment readers with visual and written cues. In this way all the children's abilities would be catered for. Schools have requested repeat visits and schools as far afield as London have learnt of the project and enquired whether they can be involved. This was an unexpected outcome and demonstrates the success of the project.

Planning Points

- Involve schools at a very early stage of planning due to tight school timetables
- Discuss child protection issues with the school and at an early stage
- Agree the roles and responsibilities of school staff and artists

Social inclusion

For the purpose of Arts Council England, North West's Regional Challenge priority areas, refugees and asylum seekers have been included under social inclusion, particularly as many live in deprived areas. There were three projects that specifically engaged with issues of excluded people or those at risk of exclusion.

Low income households have a lower than average likelihood of attending arts events and have low levels of disposable income. It was found that non-attenders at arts events tend to come from low income groups.

Feedback showed that individuals attending the theatre for the first time benefited from a legacy of increased confidence to attend. "It gave me the push I needed", "I'd never been to ballet before, now I would go again."

There are several issues around targeting a new demographic group. It is more expensive so there are budget implications. It is more time-consuming and this should be recognised when setting targets and agreeing project aims.

One organisation working to develop an audience from a large rural area found that the lack of transport, particularly amongst low income households, is a real problem especially in bad weather.

Virtual Migrants in partnership with Castlefield Gallery, Manchester undertook a project involving immigrant communities. They found that although the project was successful in reaching new audiences there were significant issues regarding evaluation. The aim was to understand how a system of satellite installations might encourage access. It was not possible to use questionnaires or interview techniques effectively due to language problems, interviewees' difficulties in engaging with what was required, concepts about art, general suspicion of any form-filling or questioning, a desire to please, desire to remain anonymous and unrecorded and an anxiety about misrepresentation. Castlefield Gallery found it was important to include friends and allies of asylum seekers/ refugees as advocates. It was found that there was a huge benefit of using the satellite method in being able to reach new audiences since it was seen by a large number of people who would not have seen work in an art gallery at all.

There was a feeling within one of the projects that there is not enough information about art galleries, both regional and nationally. Art galleries and museums are considered to have little publicity compared to the more usual leisure activities such as cinema, clubs and theme parks.

There is sometimes a lack of clarity in understanding works in galleries and this can be resolved through better and more interactive interpretation.

One project proved that participants being able to see and handle textiles and embroideries in a gallery inspired them to create their own work.

The successes

- Arts organisations involved are engaging more regularly with disabled and Deaf people, through training, arts projects, advice and guidance on future activities
- Some participating venues have begun to incorporate facilities and services for disabled people
- Some disabled and Deaf groups have begun to work together and are becoming a stronger and more vocal community
- DaDaFest, the annual disability arts festival run by North West Disability Arts Forum, has now been written into the Liverpool City Council's cultural strategy
- Some organisations have set up sustainable links with new community partners
- Having an appropriate project manager, who understood the needs of the project, was personally committed to the project and provided a good role model to other community members interested in the arts

- A project leader's personal experience with a project involving disadvantaged young people has been a massive learning opportunity and provided him with many new skills and confidence in managing a complex and demanding project
- People developed new skills and confidence
- Some organisations increased their audience base

Everything was fantastic,



The toolkit

The pitfalls

If you want to achieve success for your organisation what are the pitfalls you need to look out for?

Developing an inappropriate project idea

It is important that project ideas are realistic and relevant to the work of your organisation. It can be tempting to put together a project idea because a funding opportunity exists. Taking on project activity does mean more work and always takes longer than you think it will. The commitment to a new area of work needs to be evident across the whole organisation. Ensure that colleagues from within the organisations know about the project being undertaken, understand the aims and objectives and are willing to be supportive. Other colleagues may have expertise that can be utilised and can be encouraged to take responsibility and ownership of aspects of the project.

Not carrying out enough research in advance

Once the scope of the project is identified then it is essential that initial research is carried out to ensure the project is workable. Detailed discussion with partners is essential. Some of the problems experienced by arts organisations in the New Audiences programme could have been avoided if the initial assumptions about the target audience were checked out in the early stages of the project.

Opposite: Chinese Arts Centre group with artwork

Photographer: Alan Seabright

Being over ambitious

Be realistic about the numbers of new audiences you want to build and expect them to develop and evolve more gradually. Building relationships with communities can take a long time.

Not allowing enough time

Project work needs careful planning with an ample timeframe and timetable of operation. Whilst groups found partnership working beneficial, building those partnerships and sustaining them throughout the project was more time consuming than people initially envisaged. Some organisations found that when they worked with schools, they had not allowed for school holidays. Around 75% of the organisations did not manage to finish their projects by the deadline. Build in plenty of contingency time.

Not budgeting sufficiently

It is essential that budgets are costed out carefully and thoroughly. Some organisations found that they had not allocated enough funds to complete all the work and that there were hidden costs that they had not identified. Project evaluation was one element that was often forgotten or not resourced sufficiently. One organisation identified that, with hindsight, they would have added the cost of a professional

photographer to the budget in order to provide high quality images of the project both for recording purposes and for their exhibition.

Not identifying appropriate evaluation methods

It is essential that appropriate evaluation and monitoring methods are put into place. One organisation working with young people found that when they wanted to evaluate an event two weeks after it had ended, there was a low turnout of young people at the evaluation sessions and not all the artists involved turned up. Questionnaires proved the least successful way to gather feedback. Evaluation needs to be an integral component in the process. When carrying out action research projects make sure the final report reflects the work that has been carried out. Revisit the assumption, aims and objectives and draw out the issues relating to those. Try to identify specific outcomes, successes and recommendations and future action points. Some organisations, that had undertaken successful project activity, did not manage to turn the information into a useful report format.

Using inappropriate marketing methods

It can be difficult to identify appropriate ways of marketing activity to new target groups. Word of mouth and recommendation was found to work well with

'cautious' attenders. In some projects work of mouth was cited as the most common reason for attendance. When working with community groups it is imperative to send out information about events as early as possible. Time needs to be built in to organise group visits and bookings. Publicity material needs to be appropriate. One project used imagery that did not reflect the cultural make-up of the target audience and there was a lack of specific information about the programme on the flyer. It is essential to use clear accessible language and images to describe the events. Set up a good communications network, so all the different groups participating know at all stages what is happening and when.

Not defining ways of working together or not developing robust partnerships

Most organisations found that their partnerships worked very well but there is the need for good communication and a clear understanding of common goals. Consult with other venues/organisations working to attract similar audiences. It is also important that partners have an understanding and commitment to the project. Involve teachers, youth workers and volunteers in planning meetings. If they are aware of the aims and objectives of each session

then they are able to provide a greater level of support and are more empowered themselves.

Not having the right people to undertake the project

Be aware of the amount of human resources and staff time required to manage a project. The process can be very intensive and will need to be balanced against other priorities within the organisation. It can be difficult identifying and recruiting an expert project manager with the appropriate skills and expertise to drive a project forward strategically. One organisation said: "We had not worked in this area before and made assumptions that there would be people out there available to undertake this work."

Ten-point plan — guiding principles

Carrying out action research gives organisations the opportunity to be innovative and creative. Do not be afraid to take risks with your ideas if all planning and research has been carefully thought through. Follow this ten-point plan and you should avoid some of the pitfalls.

1. Identifying the appropriate audience group

Are we right for the audience and is the audience right for us? This is crucial. If you are venue based, the location, layout or facilities may be inappropriate for the target group. If your intention is to work with culturally diverse groups then ensure that the chosen group is resident in the area and that the experience you intend to offer is relevant. If the intention is to attract disabled people then is the venue accessible? Check what accessible means to that venue.

2. Background research

Before embarking on any project activity it is essential to carry out the necessary background research. Find out as much as you can about your target group. Do you and other staff need to undertake some specific training? How does this piece of work relate to your past experience?

3. Partnerships

Partnerships should be developed with other appropriate organisations and agencies to assist in reaching the target audience groups. It may be necessary to work with one or more partner but they will include those that have a particular expertise or relationship with the target market group. It is important to develop an understanding and a clear way of working with partners and to define the relationship.

4. An holistic approach

Strive to make audience development and the creation of new audiences a commitment of the whole organisation. Involve board and frontline staff throughout.

5. What is the assumption to be tested?

Action research is about making an assumption and putting that assumption to the test. Be prepared to keep reviewing your original assumption and to adapt or change it.

6. Aims, objectives and measures of success

Set out clear aims and objectives that relate to the assumption being tested. Agree these with partners. All aims and objectives need to be achievable. Decide how you will measure success. What qualitative and quantitative data will you need to collect?

7. Develop a project plan

Any project activity needs to be thought through in detail. Project work needs careful planning within a suitable timeframe and timetable of operation. Build in time to review the activity and amend your plan. Always expect the unexpected with work of this nature.

8. Budget

Setting a realistic budget for project activity is crucial, organisations often under budget when embarking on new initiatives. Build in a generous contingency to ensure you do not run into problems. Make sure that there is enough money to evaluate the project. Do you need to make a photographic record or build in a final celebration? Marketing to develop new audiences can be costly. Your usual design and format may not be appropriate. Do you need to produce print in other languages or in different accessible formats? Make sure you budget for any accessible support services such as British Sign Language, audio description and so on.

9. Monitoring, evaluation and writing a report

All projects need to be monitored and evaluated in an appropriate way. Build it into the process throughout in a creative way. Do not be afraid of the unexpected outcomes even the apparently negative ones.

They can still be important and give the opportunity for learning from them. Reports can also be produced in a variety of media. Choose one appropriate to your target group. Always build in time post project to pull everything together. Producing valuable advocacy material can assist in sustainability.

10. Sustainability and legacy

Do not see audience development as a project. If you are not fully committed to a long-term relationship there is no point in undertaking initial action research. The learning from the project should inform future practice.

I like the bit were you can watch the telly



Where can I go to get help?

There are a number of agencies, websites and publications that can help. Research locally into what support or advice is available. Not all local groups or agencies offer opportunities for funding but they may know someone who will.

Resources, direct financial support, contacts, and help and advice may be available within local authorities' equal opportunities units or dedicated social inclusion units. Contact your local authority for more information.

The Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) can also offer help, advice and support. Consult your telephone directory for your regional branch.

Audience development/marketing agencies

Arts About Manchester

Churchgate House

56 Oxford Street

Manchester M1 6 EU

Phone: 0161 238 4500

Fax: 0161 236 8077

Website: www.aam.org.uk

Opposite: Rose Theatre project

Photographer: Phil Christopher

**TEAM (The Entertainment and Arts Marketers
Merseyside Ltd)**

4th Floor, Gostin Building
32-36 Hanover Street
Liverpool L1 4LN
Phone: 0151 709 6881
Fax: 0151 707 2555
Website: www.team-uk.org

Disability advice agencies/organisations

Full Circle Arts

Greenheys Business Centre
10 Pencroft Way
Manchester M15 6JJ
Phone/textphone: 0161 279 7878
Fax: 0161 279 7879

North West Disability Arts Forum

4th Floor, MPAC Building
1-27 Bridport Street
Liverpool L3 5QF
Phone: 0151 707 1733

Prism Arts

Unit 1, Brampton Business Centre
The Irving Centre, Union Lane,
Brampton,
Cumbria CA8 1BX
Phone: 016977 45011
Fax: 016977 45006
Website: www.prismarts.co.uk

Culturally diverse organisations

Black Arts Alliance

PO Box 86
Chorlton
Manchester M21 7BA
Phone: 0161 832 7622
Fax: 0161 832 2276
Website: www.blackartists.org.uk

Voluntary arts

Voluntary Arts Network

PO Box 200,
Cardiff CF5 1YH
Phone: 029 2039 5395
Fax: 029 2039 7397
Website: www.voluntaryarts.org

Young people at risk

TiPP have a regional brief to provide information and guidance to artists and arts organisations on issues related to the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

TiPP can be contacted at: c/o Drama Department, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL or visit www.tipp.org.uk

Funding opportunities

Grants for the Arts

Will fund audience development activity carried out specifically to meet the needs of audiences and to help arts organisations develop ongoing relationships with audiences.

Phone: 0845 300 6100; textphone: 020 7973 6590;

website: www.artscouncil.org.uk

Awards for All

Awards for All funds projects that support community activity, in particular those that benefit disabled people, unpaid carers, Black and minority ethnic communities, and help to tackle issues of deprivation and isolation.

For more information phone: 01925 626 800;

textphone: 01925 231 241. To get an application pack

phone: 0845 600 2040 or visit www.awardsforall.org.uk

Publications

Partnerships for Learning: a guide to evaluating arts education projects by Felicity Woolf. Phone: 020 7973 6531

The Arts and Disabled People: A New Audiences Programme published by Arts Council England, North West (ISBN 0-7287-0934-1)
Phone: 0845 300 6200

Action for Access —

A practical resource for arts organisations

Contact Bernard Martin, TEAM Phone: 0151 709 6881

Keeping Arts Safe

(ISBN 0-7287-0941-4)

Guidance for individuals and arts organisations on child protection issues, and on devising policies and procedures to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in arts activities.

The Family Factor by Catherine Rose

(ISBN 0-9523278-5-6)

Provides a practical guide to making arts venues and events more accessible and appealing to family audiences.

Funky on your Flyer by Richard Ings

(ISBN 0-7287-0820-5)

Recommends ways for venues to attract young people including programming, partnerships and audience development.

A Guide to Audience Development by Heather Maitland

(ISBN 0-7287-0750-0)

A guide to developing and managing audience development projects.

Websites

New Audiences

www.newaudiences.org.uk**The toolkit.net**

A new website for individuals and groups who are developing creative enterprises and arts projects in Manchester.

Appendix**Steering Group:**

The Steering Group for the New Audiences Programme was set up to represent all sections of Arts Council England, North West. The members of the Steering

Group who have helped over the years are:

Members:

Brian Hilton	former adviser of North West Arts Board
Julia Hallam	former Board Member of North West Arts Board
Shamshad Khan	former adviser of North West Arts Board
Chris Hammond	former Board Member of North West Arts Board
Jane Beardsworth	Head of Development, Arts Council England, North West
Julia Keenan	Diversity Officer (Disability), Arts Council England, North West
Maureen Jordan	Touring Officer, Arts Council England, North West
Anthony Preston	Head of Resource Development, Arts Council England, North West
Paulette Clunie	Diversity Officer (Cultural Diversity), Arts Council England, North West
Bronwen Williams	Literature Officer, Arts Council England, North West

Project Management and Publication:

Anna Hassan, New Audiences Programme Manager, Arts Council England, North West

loved the masked that had the two
blue fetters on its head and I think
they are beautiful.

