

# Evaluation of the Developing Cultural Sector Resilience Programme

CidaCo

Final Report

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**BOP**  
CONSULTING



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# 1. Introduction

The Developing Cultural Sector Resilience (DCSR) launched in April 2014. The programme is a pilot supported by Arts Council England which looks at how cultural organisations can be supported to develop resilience by investing in capacity building support. The programme is targeted at organisations based or active in East London and Birmingham/West Midlands.

## Defining resilience

The programme is linked to Arts Council's Strategic Goal 2: *The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable*. It is an important test bed for how organisations can be supported to work towards this goal. Arts Council's *Great Art and Culture for Everyone* ten year strategy describes a changing landscape for the cultural sector and the need to grow resilience:

“In order to thrive, the arts and cultural sector must be able to adapt to these changing circumstances without compromising its core values and the quality of its work. The sector must develop new ways of thinking and working that will increase its resilience. By resilience we mean the vision and capacity of organisations to anticipate and adapt to economic, environmental and social change by seizing opportunities, identifying and mitigating risks, and deploying resources effectively in order to continue delivering quality work in line with their mission.”

The programme's ethos also draws on Mark Robinson's paper “Making adaptive resilience real” (2010), in which he defined adaptive resilience as the “capacity to remain productive and true to core

purpose and identity whilst absorbing disturbance and adapting with integrity in response to changing circumstances.”<sup>1</sup>

## The Developing Cultural Sector Resilience programme

The DCSR programme is concentrating on organisational change “in order to create organisations that are courageous, confident and competent.”<sup>2</sup> The programme is based on six “essential ingredients” which make it possible for organisations to become resilient. These ingredients are:

- Leadership
- Business Modelling / Business Planning
- Innovation
- Diversity
- Environmental sustainability
- Digital capabilities

29 organisations from across the culture and heritage sector have taken part to the DCSR programme. 27 cultural organisations have taken part as full participants; 2 took part in the labs and fundraising sessions as they were additional to the original programme numbers.

The programme approach focuses on two types of support: mentoring and a series of labs. Each participating organisation was allocated a mentor with whom they worked with for the year. The mentors worked closely on an agreed set of issues, tailoring their support to the needs of the organisation.

Organisations were also given access to a series of labs looking at range of issues related to resilience. These included:

- A “What If” session to stimulate thought and blue sky thinking
- 4 *Leading Change Labs* designed to take a strategic approach to resilience and organisational management

<sup>1</sup> Mark Robinson, “Making adaptive resilience real”, 2010  
[http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication\\_archive/making-adaptive-resilience-real/](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/making-adaptive-resilience-real/)

<sup>2</sup> DCSR launch notes – April 2014

- 8 *Resilience Labs* addressing: finance, business modelling, commercialisation, innovation, collaboration, diversity, digital and sustainability
- 2 *CEO Labs* targeting the needs of leaders within the organisation
- 4 *Fundraising Labs* concentrating on how philanthropy and private giving culture can be nurtured in organisations.
- 3 *Board Development Labs* looking the role of boards in resilience and specifically regarding fundraising.

## 1.1 The Participants

In our previous report, we completed an analysis of programme participants and their motivations for taking part.

The types of organisations in the cohort vary substantially, according to art form, age, workforce volume, turnover, national funding levels and earned income. In summary, the 29 programme participants:

- Represent 9 different art forms, including visual arts, combined arts, museum, outdoor art, theatre, dance, media arts, creative writing and literature and community/participatory arts.
- 8 were established less than 10 years ago and over 14 have been established less than 20 years ago.
- The great majority (26) employ less than 20 members of staff. Over half (17) employ less than 10 people.
- At the time of application, organisations' turnover ranged from under £100,000 to £11m.
- The majority of participants are either a NPO or MPM.

There were a range of different motivations for taking part in the programme but generally they fell into the following broad categories: developing a more entrepreneurial approach and leading and managing change process in their organisation.

The organisations cited the following challenges around which they were looking for support and guidance:

- **Mission and vision development:** many organisations felt strongly about the need to clarify their purpose through review of their mission and vision.
- **Business planning:** many organisations were hoping to develop a strong business plan, both in the short term and long term. Other organisations felt confident in their current business plan but they would like to be able to gain an external view on it and identify any potential for improvement.
- **Change management:** a large number of organisations in the cohort highlighted their desire to become more familiar with changing management tools, techniques and approaches.
- **Organisational management:** some participants see the programme as an opportunity to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of management approaches within their organisation.
- **Fundraising:** a consistent objective of many participating was that of diversifying their income and strengthening their fundraising strategy, particularly from private sources.
- **Digital tools and infrastructure:** some organisations were looking to develop a stronger and more bespoke IT strategy. Others wanted to explore how to use digital to develop content and products.
- **Intellectual Property knowledge:** many organisations have expressed a desire to become more confident in understanding and using their IP.

## 1.2 The Evaluation Process

In March 2014, BOP Consulting was commissioned by CidaCo to undertake the evaluation of the DCSR Programme, funded by Arts Council England.

The evaluation of the DCSR programme aims to assess how and to what extent the programme helped participating organisations to develop their adaptive resilience. This evaluation of the DCSR programme is summative, in that it seeks to summarise and report on the impact that the programme has achieved so far. It is also formative in

that it seeks to pick up on the elements of the programme which can be further developed/improved.

The evaluation is based on a logic model. This logic model sets out a pathway of change which considers the range of activities that organisations could undertake as result of their involvement in DCSR. These in turn are linked to positive organisational outcomes in both the short term and long term.

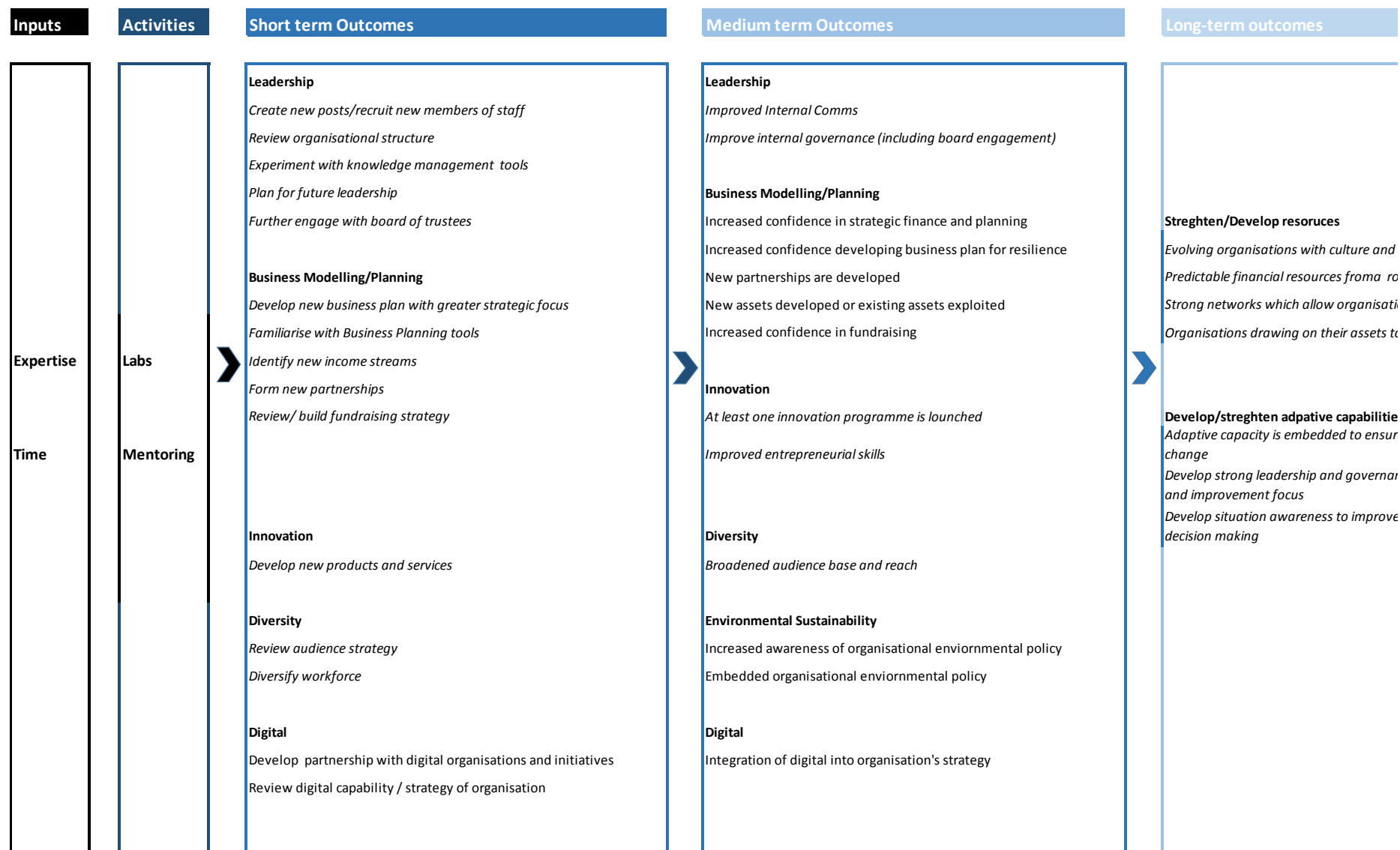
The pathway is based on the programme's aims and existing knowledge of the subject area. The evaluation will aim to capture the extent to which the outcomes are actually fully achieved through the programme

This report follows the outline of the logic model, set out in Figure 1. It starts by looking at the programme "activities" which organisations gain access to by taking part in the scheme. It then moves to outline the "short-term outcomes" that the programme participants have been able to achieve as a result of taking part in the scheme. These illustrate the more immediate change achieved through activity. The logic model then looks at the "intermediate outcomes", demonstrable changes or processes achieved by organisations that begin to help the organisation to progress beyond the timeframe of the programme.

The last section moves on to discuss the kind of skills and expertise that organisation should build as they develop their adaptive resilience. These are reflected in long-term outcomes. Many of these outcomes are likely to fall outside the timeframe of the programme as they are often longer term goals. However, we are able to look at evidence that indicates where they are beginning to be achieved.

Finally, our conclusion highlights the key outcomes from the research and formulates some recommendations for improvement.

Figure 1: DCSR Programme Evaluation Framework (logic model)



## 2. Response to the programme and activity

### 2.1 Views on the programme

“Opportunity to learn from a variety of cultural leaders”

“The sustained and diverse approach to the development of companies which has deepened the experience and started the process of embedding it into the DNA”

On the whole, the programme was positively received by participating organisations. The main feature of feedback, particularly from interviews, is the way that participants felt valued as a result of their involvement in the programme. Organisations recognise that they have been part of a unique pilot programme and, in turn, see the value of the investment being made in their organisations.

#### Space and time to think strategically

“Having an opportunity to spend time away from the office thinking strategically about the organisation.”

“Taking time out with my colleagues to think, learn and plan.”

Through their involvement, organisations got the opportunity to reflect upon their organisational challenges. This was a welcome and unusual experience for most participants. Though many had undertaken regular CPD or can access training, they had rarely had the chance to take time out and reflect on the strategic issues facing their organisation.

This is also true of groups of colleagues who jointly took part to the programme. The space to think and reflect, then collaborate in a

response, has facilitated a greater level of interaction across teams, as we will discuss in the labs and mentoring sections below.

This space has encouraged a change in mind-set and provided the opportunity to initiate a wider cultural change in the organisation, as will be discussed in more detail, in particular within the business modelling, leadership and long term outcomes sections. From this starting point, any actions are seen to have a better chance of making a valuable impact if organisations are open to change.

#### Validation

Through the programme, organisations felt they were gaining valuable external perspectives and additional expertise. Many participants reported that the programme has provided them with the “endorsement” of experts and peers. Some had been feeling uncertain about what they were doing/which way to go next. The programme and the support provided opportunities to benchmark their practices and helped them feel they were making the right decisions and taking the correct course of action.

#### Context

The context in which the programme has been implemented has been influential, both in terms of individual organisational context and the wider context.

The programme worked with many organisations already going through a change process and tackling longstanding challenges. It is clear that the programme did inspire new activity, often the change work being supported was already underway. However many organisations who participated recognised how it helped them accelerate the process or overcome obstacles.

The programme was taking place when many organisations were applying to become portfolio members with Arts Council. This process involved reconsidering and reconstructing their business plan to gain the funding. This naturally meant that some of the programme support, particularly from mentors, was drawn into this process. Though an important part of securing the future of the organisation, at least in the



next 3 years, the planning and application consumed some significant resource.

### Time commitment

One way that the programme differentiated itself from other CPD activity and other cohort based schemes was the time commitment involved. Many participants involved noted that the amount of time related to being involved in the programme was significant, but in the end worthwhile. With at least 2 days a month for 12 months being taken out of their schedules, some did, at points, question if the level of commitment was too much. This was particularly true for smaller organisations with an executive team of 2-3 people. However, as the programme progressed, organisations felt that the time commitment was indeed worthwhile. The time commitment allowed regular opportunities to take time out to think about strategic issues and invest in skills, something that was not always possible in day-to-day life of arts organisations. It also committed them to undertake action on the issues the organisation was facing or allowed them to reflect on the issues of resilience.

“It was very time-intensive for me as I was the only one free/able to attend the labs, but generally it was time well-spent and it has certainly led to a shift in our company's attitude, which I hope will stand us in good stead to face the future.”

## 2.2 The Labs

In this sub-section, we review the responses to the series of structured lab sessions offered by the DCSR programme. These include the resilience labs, the leading change seminars and the fundraising labs. Collectively, we refer to these as “the labs”.

Due to the limited timeframe of the programme and the need to make best use of time, it was necessary to pre-plan and structure the labs in advance of the programme. However, there were still opportunities to tailor some bespoke sessions to participants' needs and some sessions were developed to cater to particular members of

staff (e.g. the CEO lab). Our research suggests that if more time had been available in the programme, a more iterative approach could have been taken to developing the labs, responding to the needs of participants.

It should also be noted that participants brought different levels of knowledge and expertise to the labs. It appears that the majority of those taking part were aware that this is, to an extent, unavoidable and were sympathetic to the difficulties of catering to all people through one lab.

Our research reveals a variety of positive and constructive responses to the labs. The strongest messages include:

### Organisations particularly valued practical, hands on labs

Throughout the research process organisations have been emphasising the value of the labs which had a good mix of theoretical and practical-hands on insights. Interviewees (e.g. the Horniman Museum, Protein Dance, DASH and Daily Life) spoke particularly positively of the DeVos Fundraising labs, the Leading Change labs and the Innovation labs. They felt these labs provided them with tools and approaches which could be directly applied and embedded in to their organisations. This finding was largely confirmed by the programme survey, with DeVos Fundraising labs, Leading Change labs and Innovation labs classifying as the most popular labs by survey respondents.

“Leading Change introduced an understanding of needing to work through change and transition intelligently and sensitively with team. Excellent 4 labs.”

“Very informative and practical. One of the best sessions. Extremely useful to be able to implement COSTAR on the day and to have the feedback to make sure that one listens to feedback and not to assume that you have all the answers.”



“Will suggest at the next board meeting that the model is used for testing out new ideas within the organisation and used as a framework to present back to the board.”

### **Labs were longer than participants anticipated but ultimately valued**

If at the beginning of the programme organisations had “mixed feelings” about the time commitment of the labs, they felt much more positive about it as they approached the end of the scheme. A structured timetable of sessions has enabled people to plan time out for self-development. Often individuals lack the opportunity to do this, due to pressing work commitments, and as a result CPD and training can drop down the list of priorities. Considering survey responses, 19 agreed or strongly agreed that labs provided them with the opportunity to take time off from day to day activities and think of the bigger picture.

“The time and space to take a step back and have the luxury of thinking and talking with colleagues about 'the bigger picture.'”

### **The Labs provided opportunities for internal reflection and discussion**

The labs were welcomed as a practical way to involve other team members (beyond CEO/Director) in the programme. Considering survey responses, 18 out of 20 agreed or strongly agreed that labs helped facilitate internal discussions amongst colleagues. For example, the directors of MAC, Motionhouse and Protein reported that the labs were very useful in triggering internal discussions with their teams as well as with their Artistic Directors. Other organisations (e.g. Horniman, Theatre Centre) decided to send a specific member of a team, such as the Finance Director to a particular session or to bring along other managers to sessions, allowing them to get involved and take back ideas to discuss further.

“These labs offered many useful tools, discussions, and observations/case studies that have helped us think critically about our organisation, both during and outside the labs. They enabled us to have frank discussions within the staff team that we wouldn't have felt able to before.”

### **Getting access to specific expertise and benchmarking existing practices against those suggested by experts**

Out of the 20 survey respondents, 17 agreed or strongly agreed that labs gave them the chance to access specific expertise, which would be difficult to access otherwise. For example, Vivid Projects particularly valued the possibility of accessing IP expertise and is already working to embed their learning in their archiving operations. 13 out of 20 survey respondents also reported they have been able to evaluate their own progress against the theme or idea discussed, and compare with others within or outside the cohort. This benchmarking element also resonated strongly throughout our one to one interviews with organisations such as Ministry of Story, Motion House, and Up Projects flagging this as a very positive element.

“It was helpful to talk to someone with specific expertise in IP and ask them for advice. In reality that kind of expertise is expensive to get”

“It endorsed many things that we are already doing and was timely as we were in the midst of business planning for ACE NPO agreement”

### **Peer to peer learning was an important element of the learning process. This element could be further exploited.**

The participants welcomed the opportunity to hear from other organisations about how they have dealt with a particular issue. This peer-to-peer element is an important part of the learning process.

“We are going to get David over to the Horniman to explore how his work might be able to support ours. I

am going to use the lab to help inform some the audience development work we are doing as part of our current re-display project.”

The programme has already been successful in fostering useful knowledge exchanges. However, more could be done going forward. 13 out of 22 survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that labs were effective in facilitating peer-to-peer learning yet several organisations also felt that the facilitation could be more structured, with people subdivided into mixed or homogenous groups of organisations depending on the task. Other organisation pointed to action learning<sup>3</sup>. Considering survey findings, 8 organisations highlighted peer to peer learning as an aspect which could be further exploited.

“More support for Action Learning sets, which would bring really powerful peer to peer learning at low cost.”

### **Designing the Labs in a more bespoke way**

Some of our interviewees felt like the labs would have been more helpful if they did not try to target such a varied audience. For example, considering the Finance Lab, some organisations found it really useful, some felt the content was too basic, some others felt like they could barely keep up with it. It has been suggested that when such disparity of knowledge and skills applies, it might be worth considering the option of subdividing the cohort in smaller groups, according to organisations’ size, capacity and expertise.

“The Finance lab tried to be all things to all people instead of focusing on either finance experts OR CEOs. Collaboration was a let-down in terms of its potential.”

### **Developing a way to ensure that the content of the labs is then implemented by organisations**

For many organisations the labs were a good space to think and reflect upon how their organisation is run and identify which processes to improve and how. Some organisations found the content of the labs very useful but then found it less clear how to apply the knowledge gained during the session to their organisational context. Follow up and discussion about how to implement the learning has been facilitated by some of the mentors. Other organisations thought having more tangible homework could also be useful.

### **Getting more experts from the commercial sector involved**

Some organisations felt like there could be a better balance between experts working in the publicly funded sector and experts working in the private sector. While appreciating that many facilitators had a strong arts background and a deep understanding of the uniqueness of the sector, some organisations felt it would have been complementary to have some general business management content or views from other sectors (the IP session was raised as an example). This would add a challenging element that could give participants access to new perspectives and approaches.

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<sup>3</sup> We are aware the scheme has already started taking significant steps to support further Action Learning activity. This particular strand of activity is beyond the scope of our evaluation.

## 2.3 The Mentoring Scheme

“ Meeting Anamaria Wills and benefiting from her enthusiasm, outlook, contacts and wisdom.”

Mentoring was seen a major success of the programme, with the large majority of organisations finding it to be the most useful element. Organisations particularly valued mentors' professional attitude and ability to engage with the issues that the organisation as a whole were dealing with.

### Praise for the mentors

The mentors were viewed as being a valuable resource and their expertise was very well regarded. Reflecting this, 15 out of 20 organisations found their mentors able to engage and communicate well with different people in the organisation and the same number thought that mentors were “professional at all times”. Most importantly, the majority of participants (14 out 20) found that their mentor was able to pick up on the particular issues faced by the organisation and to deliver tailored advice.

### Adaptable, evolving support

The mentors reported that their role has been quite fluid, and as they expected, they immersed themselves in the issues that the organisations are facing. According to the mentors, their role was often a mixture of consultant, coach and mentor, with them offering practical skills and guidance as well as critical insights. The role of the mentor is an evolving one and needs time to develop and adapt.

### What mentoring provided

Being able to stand back and look at the big challenges and individual situation was an important way of looking at resilience. A common starting point for the mentoring process was to sit down and identify the key components of resilience that were particularly important to the organisation involved. This included looking at the existing change processes within the organisation or issues causing pressure on the organisation. It appears that the long-term ideas of resilience were

interwoven with the shorter terms, critical issues that an organisation was facing. For example, organisations wish to diversify their income in the long term whilst dealing with more immediate funding pressures.

### Flexibility in mentorship best supports resilience

Organisations also welcomed the chance to access the time of other mentors in the programme. Building resilience requires access to different types of expertise and a programme supporting it needs some flexibility. Though highly skilled, it was rare for mentors to tackle all the issues faced by the organisation, and most mentors decided to focus on specific organisational challenges. However they were still able to provide some guidance on a wider series of issues. If it was appropriate, organisations have been able to work with a specialist mentor on a particular area of their work. This flexibility was valued by participants.

### Tailored support was valued

Some organisations preferred drawing on mentor expertise in a specific way. The Horniman Museum is one example where they felt their mentor played more of a consultant role, using their expertise to help tackling specific institutional issues. Some larger organisations need this direct approach rather than coaching or mentoring to one or two members of staff.

# 3. Short-term and intermediate outcomes – by theme

## 3.1 Overview

In this section, we review the short term and intermediate outcomes achieved so far against each theme of the programme. The logic model (as discussed in section 1.3) sets out how activities undertaken have triggered a series of outcomes to be produced. Short term outcomes *should* then lead to intermediate outcomes being created, which last beyond the lifetime of the programme.

In time, these short-term outcomes and intermediate outcomes *should* help to achieve more long term outcomes. These long term outcomes are the sustained and embedded change in the organisations as a result of their participation in the programme. These will most likely happen outside the timeframe of the programme but a view on their likelihood should already be possible by the end of the programme.

### Short term outcomes

Through the research so far we have been able to identify a range of outcomes that have been undertaken by organisations. These are clearly linked to their participation in the programme. These tend to focus on organisational changes and processes undertaken. We have grouped these activities into those most commonly occurring in the programme.

As with the ‘intermediate outcomes’, we would not expect to see *all* organisations achieving *all* of the following outcomes, as the organisations have differing levels of resource and focus to their DCSR-supported activity. But equally, it would be concerning if none of the organisations were reporting having undertaken *any* of the outcomes.

### Intermediate outcomes

The intermediate outcomes are the medium term impacts and changes being created by the organisations taking part. These outcomes start to look at how the organisation is moving forward, their plans and how resilience will be embedded in their work. They also show how organisations are transitioning out of the programme and driving the themes of resilience themselves.

### The six dimensions at a glance

The outcomes are grouped around the 6 dimensions of resilience. Fundraising / income generation is an area which receives a lot attention and we have drawn this out as a sub-set of business planning. The following sections cover core resilience themes:

- Leadership
- Business modelling and planning
- Innovation
- Digital
- Diversity
- Sustainability

The programme is particularly strong in relation to leadership, business modelling and innovation, themes that appear to resonate with the immediate challenges that an organisation is facing such as, for example, increasing board engagement, fundraising or strategic planning. There are examples of outcomes around the digital, diversity and sustainability themes but at a significant lower level. This might reflect less of a connection with these ideas. Though many organisations were keen to stress they had existing activity in relation to these themes or they had existing plans.

## 3.2 Leadership

### 3.2.1 Short-term outcomes

When considering Leadership, organisations reported the following short term outcomes:

#### **Review of organisational structure/creation of new posts**

Some organisations have taken advantage of the DCSR programme to design new roles and recruit new members of staff. Considering survey responses 17 out of 24 organisations felt that they had been able to review their organisational structure. Out of these, 10 cited mentoring as helping and 10 doing this in their own time. Examples in this category include:

- The Theatre Centre was looking to appoint a new Chair and reported that their mentor advice was pivotal for the recruitment process.
- DASH took advantage of the mentoring scheme to review their internal capacity and take steps to develop new in house expertise.
- Capsule and Red Earth Theatre have decided to hire a General Manager to free the directors from the day to day business duties.
- Cardboard Citizens also appointed a Development Manager to work more closely with senior management.

It is important to note that, in most of these instances, organisations had already contemplated reconfiguring their structure/appointing new members of staff. However, the DCSR scheme helped them to inform and finalise their decision

#### **Experiment with knowledge management tools**

Several organisations (16 out of 23 survey respondents) reported how the DCSR programme gave them the opportunity to facilitate the exchange of knowledge between members of staff. For example, Grand Union sought advice to develop knowledge management tools like Cloud Platforms. The Horniman Museum used Co-Star to help to facilitate a discussion between senior and middle managers regarding how to create a common vision across different strands of their work.

#### **Further engagement with board of trustees**

Research findings further highlight that the programme was helpful in amplifying board engagement and getting trustees to buy into and support their journey toward resilience. Almost all organisations (22 out of 24 respondents) felt that they had been able to hold discussions with the Board of Directors, Trustees, Senior Management. Moreover, 12 organisations felt that mentoring had helped with this. For example:

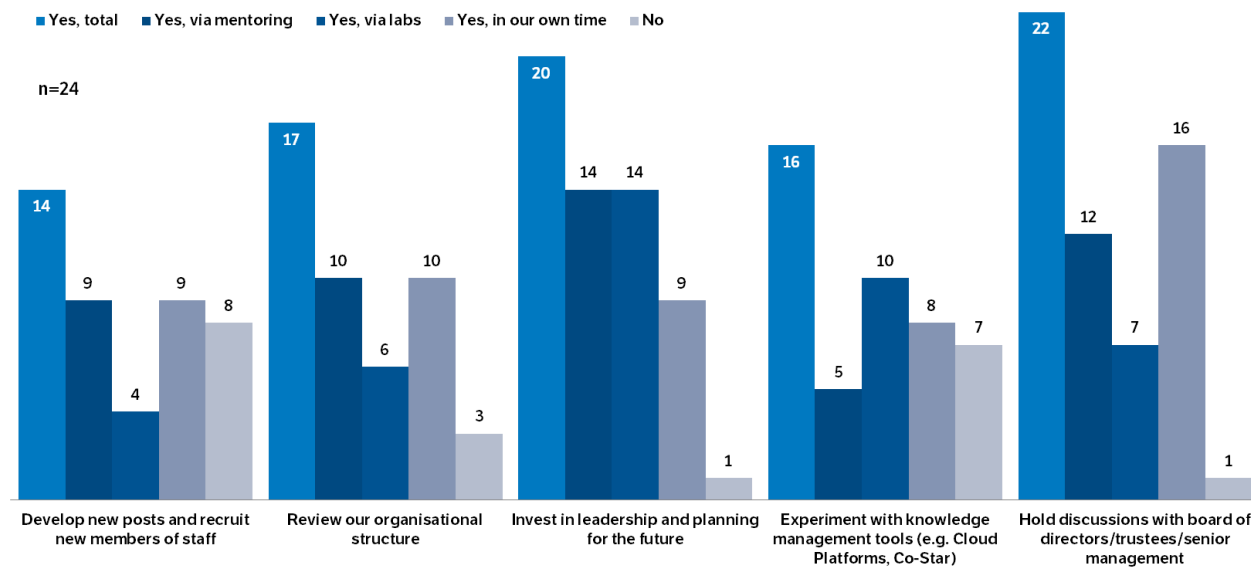
- Up Projects Chair attended some of the labs and took part to the mentoring sessions and that enabled a closer understanding of the Board's function and role.
- Soul City Art also proactively sought to restructure and expand their Board of Trustees.

From our interviews with both participants and mentors we know sessions with the Board have been considering a range of common themes including: returning to and confirming the vision and mission of the organisation; getting long term buy in for strategic plan; building support for the executive; looking at how the organisation can further diversify its income.

#### **Plan for future leadership**

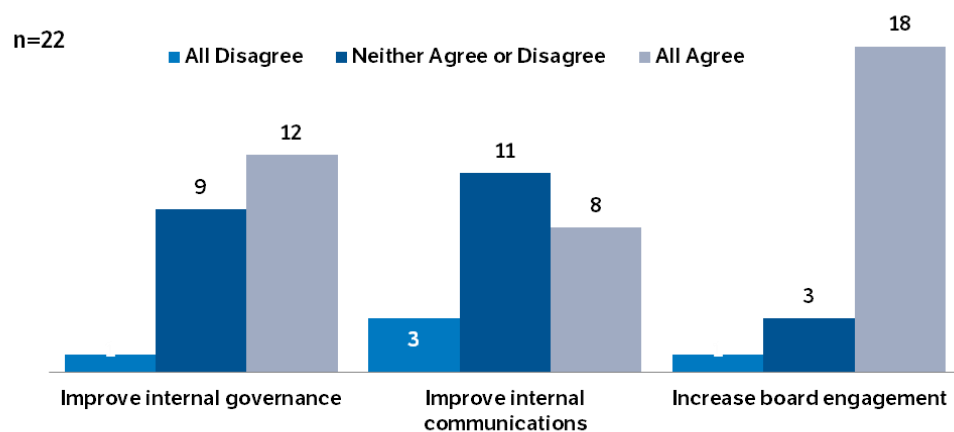
Through the discussions facilitated by the lab exercises and the individual sessions with mentors, organisations (20 out of 24, considering survey responses) have been able to acquire and exchange knowledge and skills. This was equally possible through both mentoring support and labs. An illustration of this particular outcome can be found in MAC or Grand Union, both of which have used the programme to spread knowledge and involvement across their organisations. They felt that this helps foster a shared view on the future of the organisation with those who will be around in the longer term, rather than all strategic knowledge being concentrated in one or two senior individuals. This is an important outcome, which has the potential to improve the long-term sustainability of the organisation.

Figure 2: Leadership, Short Term Outcome



Source: BOP Consulting, 2015

Figure 3 Leadership, Intermediate Outcomes



Source: BOP Consulting, 2015



## 3.2.2 Intermediate Outcomes

### Improve internal governance and increasing board engagement

A high number of organisations already reported improvement in board engagement (18 out of 22 survey respondents) and internal governance (12 out of 22). In addition to thinking more strategically and formulating new plans, the programme provided opportunities to engage more people in the future direction and plans of the organisation (e.g. board of trustees and other members of staff). For example:

- B-Arts have involved several members of the board in their action plan for resilience and consider this critical to their success so far. This “all hands on deck strategy” has been subsequently extended to the wider team resulting into a greater sense of ownership and empowerment amongst the organisation.
- Ministry of Stories have widened their leadership pool, reporting increased ownership of the decision making process across the organisation.

### Improved Internal Communications

Some organisations also reported increased ability to facilitate internal communication. 8 survey respondents (out of 23) reported improved internal communication across the organisation. For example, after implementing Co-Star with the support of their mentor, the Horniman Museum reported increased synergy across different management levels. Several members of staff showed increased confidence to communicate ideas between different strands and different levels.

## 3.3 Business Modelling and Planning

### 3.3.1 Short-term Outcomes

To date, the Business Modelling is the dimension with the highest level of activity and impact. Participants reported a wide range of short-term outcomes, including:

### Developing new/reviewing existing business plan

Our interviews revealed that, coherently with the aims of the programme, many DCSR participants have utilised individual mentorship sessions to assess their existing business plan against the seven strands of the resilience framework. Insights from the survey confirm this: 18 out of 24 organisations felt they were able to formulate a new business plan with greater strategic focus. 15 responses attributed improved business planning to mentoring support. Examples in this category include:

- Grand Union have used their first session with their mentor to reflect on the six areas of resilience and how these fit into their business plan. They have then identified different sets of actions under each theme and developed a task-list allocating roles to each people.
- The Drum has been exploring how programme and education/engagement could be used to deliver financially and artistically.

### Experiment with business modelling/business planning tool

As stated in the labs section, participants valued the opportunity to learn about new tools and to be supported throughout their experimentation. Considering survey responses, 17 out of 24 organisations felt they were able to familiarise with the business planning tool of which 12 attributed the main source to the labs. DCSR participants have also taken advantage of the mentoring to follow up on some of the tools introduced in the business modelling lab. These organisations now feel more confident about these tools and are considering using them independently going forward.

Examples in this category include:

- The Theatre Centre developed a detailed version of the ‘Business Modelling Canvas’ with the support of their mentor.
- With the support of their mentor, UP Projects used the Business Model Canvas (BMC) to engage the wider organisation in clarifying and refining organisational model and purpose.



- The Horniman Museum worked closely with their mentor to apply the Co-Star framework in order to improve its internal communication and management system.

### Identify/secure new sources of income

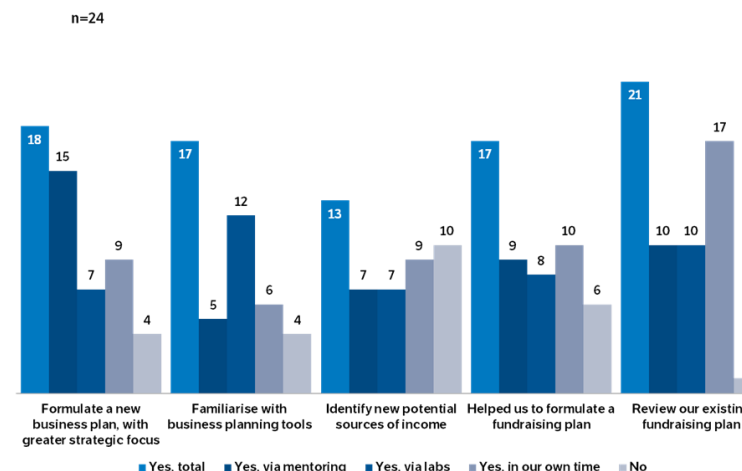
Reflecting the drive towards increased entrepreneurialism and income diversification, a significant number of organisations took advantage of the programme to identify and secure further strands of revenue. Considering survey responses, 13 organisations have taken steps to diversify their income streams. Mentors support was pivotal in the assessment and development of new revenue streams. Example in this category include:

- Sampad deciding to grow its focus on health. Although the organisation had already contemplated expanding this new strand of activity, the programme was important in finalising the decision and identifying the necessary steps to implement it.
- The Birmingham Museum Trust was supported in their development of a new commercial offer around their collection.
- BARTs took advantage of one to one mentoring sessions to review their business model and implement a new revenue generating stream of work, the community bakery's 'Bread in Common' offer.

### Develop or renew existing fundraising/diversification strategies

The majority of DCSR participants (21 out of 24 surveyed) felt they were able to review or develop their fundraising strategy as a result of the DeVos labs. A further 17 organisations now feel they have a clear fundraising plan. Significantly, this applied to both the larger organisations such as the Birmingham Museums Trust and smaller scale organisations such as Red Earth Theatre.

**Figure 4: Business Modelling, Short term outcomes**



Source: BOP Consulting, 2015

### 3.3.2 Intermediate Outcomes

DCSR Participants have already experienced a considerable volume of intermediate outcomes.

#### Increased confidence in strategic finance and planning

Significantly, approximately half of the DCSR cohort have reported an increase in strategic and financial planning (14, considering survey responses). Examples in this category include:

- East London Dance reported increased awareness of financial planning and risk mitigation amongst the Board.
- Red Earth Theatre felt improved confidence about financial reporting and financial prediction as well as much more clarity on risk assessment and decision making.
- Sampad has displayed increased confidence in integrating financial strategy with their overall strategy.

As a result, discussions with the Board have been better informed. Red Earth Theatre, reported:

“Our business plan was improved, our confidence as a company about financial reporting and financial prediction, is strongest we have much more clarity about what it is we will do and we are not going to do.”

### Increased confidence in business planning

In line with the high intensity of business planning activity throughout the programme, a high number of participants have already reported increased confidence in business planning. Considering survey responses, 15 out of 22 organisations agree or strongly agree that their business planning skills have been enhanced.

Examples in this category include:

- Ministry of Stories. Grand Union, B-Arts reported feeling much more business minded in their approach to organisational management and in particular in the development of new products and services.
- Several organisations (including Ministry of Stories, Grand Union, B-Arts, Red Earth Theatre) showed increased confidence about their ability to plan long-term and think about how to support the development of the organisation while keeping up the day to day business management.
- DASH and Capsule also reported feeling more confident about their ability to plan strategically.

### Increased confidence in fundraising ability to attract private income

During the time of application, a high proportion of the organisations (20 out of 29) had mentioned improving their fundraising skills and attracting private income as one of their main objectives for taking part to the scheme. According to survey responses 16 organisations have already been successful in attracting private income (income from

private Trusts and Foundations, Individual Giving, Business Sponsorships and Donations). This is a considerable proportion of the cohort, given that fundraising often requires a “shift in mind-set”, which, in turn, often requires a significant amount of time to be realised.

Examples include both large organisations such as the Birmingham Museum Trust and smaller ones such as the Theatre Centre and B-Arts. Several organisations also feel more knowledgeable about fundraising approaches and techniques and have already started implementing the knowledge acquired through the DeVos sessions. Examples in this category include:

- Protein Dance have substantially intensified their institutional marketing through increasing press exposure (e.g. one of their blogs was published in the Guardian and several articles were published on local magazines).
- Mac Birmingham is looking forward to putting into practice some of the approached suggested by DeVos (e.g. the 10 rules of solicitation) in occasion of their new donors events in the fall. They have also decided to approach corporates and have initiated new relationships in the area.

In several instances increased confidence and enthusiasm about fundraising was also reported across the organisations’ Boards of Trustees. For example:

- The Theatre Centre presented their new fundraising plan to the Board and felt they were foreseeing a new era or board engagement.
- In a similar fashion, Discover presented their new fundraising plan to the Board and reported they were eager in getting engaged when in the past they has seemed reluctant.

### New assets developed or existing assets exploited

Almost half of the organisations were able to identify new assets (12 out of 24 survey respondents) or to further exploit existing assets throughout their resilience journey (13 out 24). Examples in this category include:

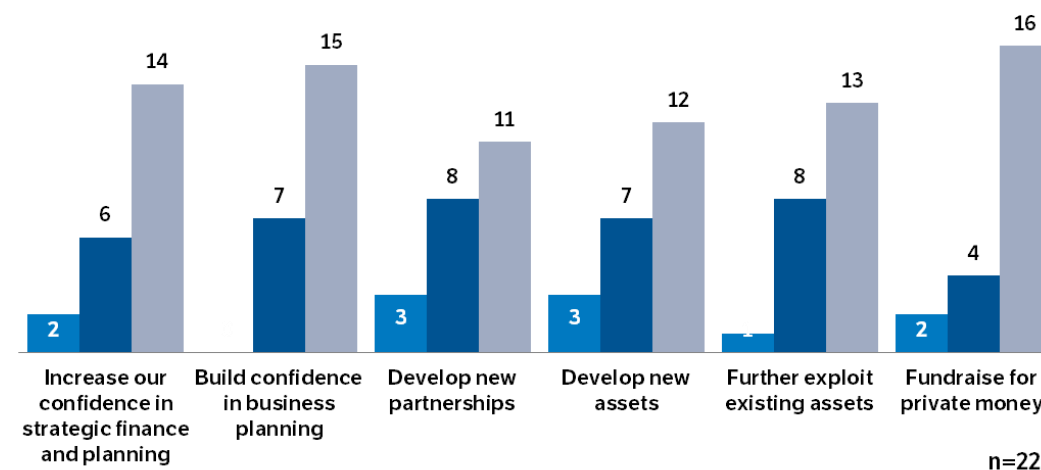
- Vivid Projects has started to further exploit their archives, in line with their ambition to further develop their research strand of activity.
- Sampad has made new products and services the focus of their away day and developed a plan for implementation of the ideas that came out of the day.

### New partnerships are developed

Approximately half of the survey (11 out of 22 respondents) have already succeeded in forming new partners. These partnerships are often seen as strategic and potentially leading to further income streams. This is an important outcome, as developing new partnership emerged as a strong aspiration from the analysis of the application forms. Examples in this category include:

- Capsule secured a partnership with the British Library and is currently negotiating a partnership with The Space.
- Red Earth developed a new research and development partnership with HE (Birmingham and Nottingham) and venues to support residency model.
- East London Dance initiated a Dance Enterprise Hub, building on unique relationship between a Dance Agency and the local community.

**Figure 5: Business Development, Intermediate Outcomes**



Source: BOP Consulting, 2015

## 3.4 Innovation

### 3.4.1 Short-term outcomes

The programme has supported and stimulated thought about how organisations can innovate in their organisation. It has particularly supported the integration of innovation to planning. This was an area of strength in the programme.

#### Developing new products

Looking across the programme, 13 out of 23 organisations came up with ideas for new products and services with 8 citing mentor support as part of this and 9 taking away thinking and using their own time to focus on new service development.

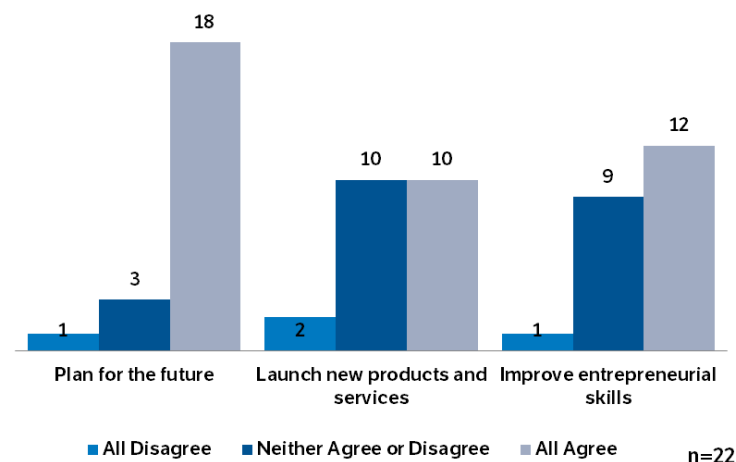
For example, B-Arts is looking to set up a new community bakery and worked with their mentor to formulate a 12 month delivery plan. Eastside Projects are delivering new consultancy services around public art and took advantage of the mentoring scheme to seek guidance on how to integrate this new strand of activity to their overall vision.

It is worth clarifying that in both cases these new products were already under development. However, the DCSR programme provided an important impetus and support to refine the concept or to formulate a viable action plan.

#### Leveraging networks

Other organisations have started to think about networking more strategically. For example, Vivid Projects is now looking to leverage its academic and international networks to seek new partners and to develop new areas of work. Motionhouse has, with the support of their mentor, been looking at how they can use their networks to expand and develop new markets, possibly in new territories

Figure 6: Innovation, Short-Term Outcomes



Source: BOP Consulting, 2015

### 3.4.2 Intermediate Outcomes

#### Organisations have developed/strengthened entrepreneurial skills.

Overall, the programme has been successful in building entrepreneurial skills. 18 out of 22 organisations felt that they were better able to plan for the future and 12 out of 22 organisations felt they had improved the entrepreneurial skills of organisations as a result of their involvement.

Alongside the development of new products and services, organisations also picked up on the need to better exploit their assets. This demonstrates the need to think strategically about how products will help them maintain a commercial income. Several organisations have demonstrated how this has entered their organisational culture since joining the programme. Examples include:

- UP Projects worked with DeVos to develop the language and understanding of commercial exploitation. As a result, the staff is now

more confident and familiar with the language of entrepreneurialism now and thinking about their work in this way.

- Vivid Projects took time to look at their cultural programme and assets, leading to a much more rigorous approach to asset exploitation and this new income generation potential.
- B-Arts are developing a bakery which aims to draw together skills and expertise from different cultures. This is allowing B-Arts to innovate in the delivery of its work, as well as in the way that it markets itself and draws together funding (in this case through crowdfunding).

Some organisations are also exploring innovation through the development of new partnerships and relationships. For example, DASH Arts are developing a new research bid with the University of Birmingham and facilitating new relationships with Birmingham City University.

Some organisations have been able to leverage their networks to build a supporter base. For example, Birmingham Museums Trust have developed plans for increased text donations. This has been linked to increased social media followers and activity with online supporter base rising from 30,000 to 100,000. Based on this the organisation wishes to develop support and fundraise.

There is evidence that organisations have been reviewing their commercial approaches and looking at how they can lever their assets in a new way. This has mainly involved reviewing and creating a planned approach to income generation, built into all thinking and planning, and reflected in management structures. For example, Vivid and UP Projects have both been supporting staff across the organisations to think about commercial opportunities.

### **Confidence in new product development**

Some organisations feel they have developed knowledge and expertise in new product development. 10 out of 22 organisations launched new products and services. Though not a majority this is still a significant number.

Organisations have been developing products and communication strategies which allow them to build a new brand or communicate their organisation/work. An example of this has been BArts developing “Bread in Common”, a new bakery which uses food as a source of celebration, which reaches out across communities.

### **Greater confidence in planning for the future**

Some organisations reported that they have started to shift their outlook on the future, from surviving to thriving. This means thinking more proactively about forthcoming opportunities as well as planning how to cope with threats. For example, both DASH and Capsule reported that the scheme supported them in intensifying their business development activity.

## **3.5 Digital**

### **3.5.1 Short-term outcomes**

Overall the outcomes around digital have been lower than other themes in the programme. This is in part because it has not been seen as a priority among participants and/or because they already have an existing plan that they believe works for their organisation. Nevertheless we have observed evidence that some thought is being given to the role of digital and there are some examples of initial digital ideas being created.

The programme has coincided with some organisations’ own review of digital components of their work and there appears to be some work being done around use of digital for marketing and communication purposes. We’re aware through interviews with mentors that they encouraged organisations to consider their digital assets and to better maximise them for revenue purposes (e.g. Soul City Arts).

### **Explore partnership with digital organisations and initiatives**

11 out of 23 organisations stated that they had explored partnerships with digital organisations and initiatives. For example, Capsule is developing a partnership with The Space.

### Review digital capability / strategy of organisation

There has been some positive thought given to the potential of digital with 15 out of 23 organisations reviewing their digital strategy as a result of involvement. Out of these, 13 spent some time on their own developing this (but 5 felt supported by mentors and inspired labs). This is an area that appears to be driven by some internal thought and consideration.

A number of organisations are reviewing their digital strategy a result of their involvement in the programme. For example, DASH started developing a portfolio of digital work with the University of Birmingham in partnership with a number of other venues around assistive technology, accessibility and artists and digital tools. Birmingham Museums Trust are further developing their digital strategy. Tomorrow's Man are addressing the importance of technology, developing a website which is line with the organisations' structure. Grand Union are exploiting technology to facilitate internal communication and knowledge sharing.

## 3.5.2 Intermediate outcomes

### Integration of digital into an organisations' strategy

Only a minority (8 of 22) felt they had integrated digital into their organisational strategy. This illustrates the challenges that exist and that more work needs to be done to mainstream digital approaches into organisations. This is partly due to it not being seen as core to many organisations' mission, nor seen as a pressing or immediate challenge for organisations.

“Being part of the DCSR programme enabled us to make a number of partnerships with other organisations to explore digital projects.”

“The DCSR has supported our thinking around digital rather than driven it, although the tools and thinking have exerted an element of influence.”

“This was all under way already but spending some time thinking out of the box and off-site helped.”

## 3.6 Diversity

### 3.6.1 Short-term outcomes

On the whole, the theme of diversity split the group. A slight majority felt that the theme offered them a chance to reflect and think about new audiences. Others felt they were tackling this as best as they could and the programme did not offer them new ideas around this. A minority felt that the approach in the programme was not suitable.

The lab session on Diversity received a mixed response, some found it too theoretical, others found it stimulating, but the majority found it too narrow in its focus.

“Diversity lab didn't go into enough detail - again this would have been much more useful as an individual tailored session I think”

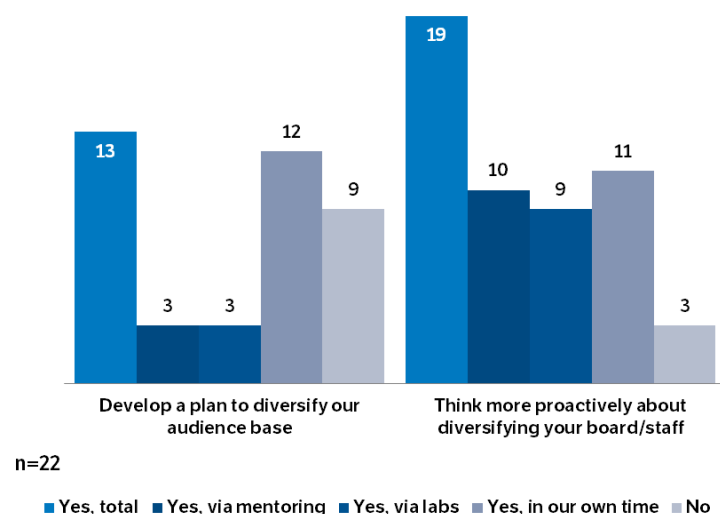
More successful was the time spent with mentors reflecting on audience and governance in relation to diversity. Some organisations used this time to look at issues particular to their organisation.

Some examples of proactive activity on diversity include:

- BE Festivals: Under a theme of democracy, online engagement and audience development, plans have become the tool for encouraging diversity of production and engagement.

- Sampad are now very clear on their importance to the Creative Case in the West Midlands and nationally. They are now determined to develop this unique selling point beyond serving local Asian communities.
- Vivid Projects appointed new Artistic Programmer role, reflecting commitment to diversity as well as the re-presenting and contextualising the role of BAME artists in Birmingham

Figure 7: Diversity, Shor-Term Outcomes



Source: BOP Consulting, 2015

It is evident that organisations are dealing with thinking about diversity and how to tackle it and often this is embedded in their own change process. 13 out of 22 organisations have developed a plan to diversify our audience base, though 12 felt they had done this as a part their own work. 19 out of 22 were thinking more proactively about diversifying their Board/staff as result of the programme, with 10 as a result of mentoring, 9 as a result of the labs and 11 as a result of thinking in their own time.

“Our remit for working with diverse audiences (DISABILITY) has been improved by working with our mentor.”

“Our environmental sustainability and diversity plan had already been developed in time for ACE submissions but the labs were stimulating and useful.”

### 3.6.2 Intermediate outcomes

From our programme survey, organisations were less clear about the impact of the DCSR programme on longer term outcomes. A large number were neutral about the likely intermediate effect on their organisation, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with statements. This is to be expected given the short timeframe in which the evaluation has taken place.

Indeed, 8 out of 13 organisations disagreed that the programme had helped them broaden their audience base and reach. 6 out of 10 organisations disagreed that the programme had helped to embed diversity into their recruitment strategy.

This unclear picture around diversity could be a result of existing work that the organisations are undertaking around this theme in the medium and longer term. It could also reflect the long term cultural change that is required within organisations to create a change. What is clear is that there is a need to understand in more detail how and why organisations approach diversity, what it means for them and what is seen as challenging. For future programmes like this, it could mean looking for new ways to stimulate thought and action around how they diversify their audience or their organisation.



## 3.7 Sustainability

### 3.7.1 Short-term outcomes

“An environmental sustainability plan is certainly on the agenda but we haven't found the time to enact some of the tools given to us at the Lab.”

“All of the [diversity and sustainability] were a fundamental part of our business prior to the programme.”

“All in place before the commencement of the programme.”

The theme which had least traction with participating organisations was around environmental sustainability. Action and outcomes around this area of work are fewer and less clear. 12 out of 22 organisations stated that they had not set up an environmental sustainability plan as a result of their involvement in the programme.

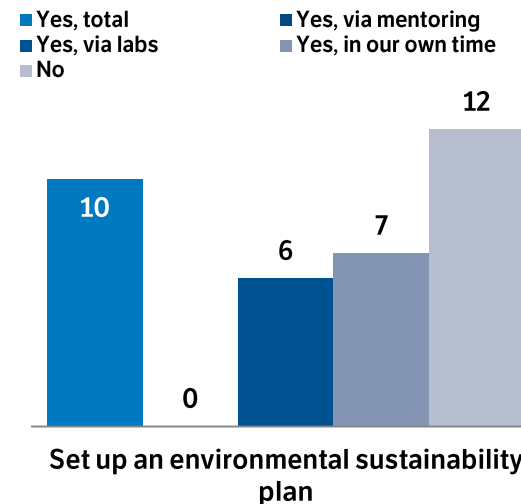
However, it is important to note that this areas of work could have been eclipsed by the business planning process for ACE's NPO grant funding. This formalised it at the time and directed organisations to think quickly about it. The sustainability lab followed this and was trying to stimulate thinking, but on the whole, it seems to have not succeeded.

### 3.7.2 Intermediate outcomes

Coherently with the above, the impact of the environmental sustainability dimension of the DCSR programme remains limited. Although several organisations (11 out of 22 survey respondents) have recognised the effectiveness of the scheme in making them better aware

of organisations environmental impact and about ways to embed environmental sustainability into their organisational strategy.

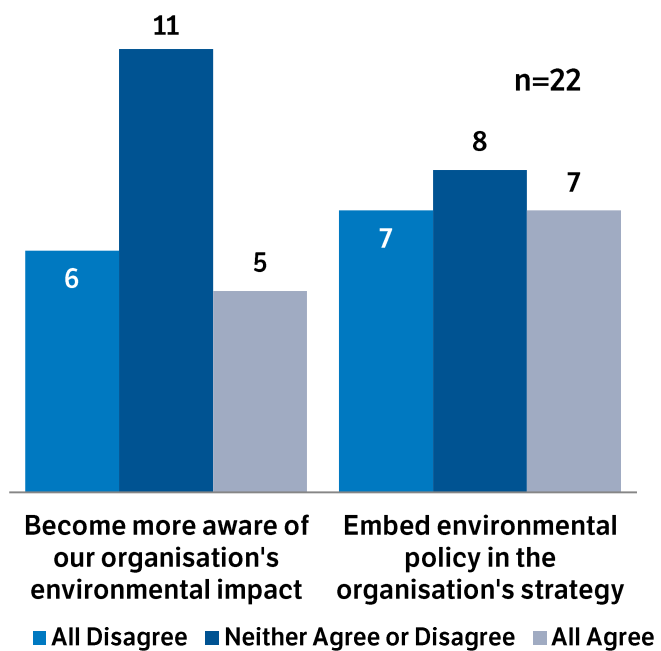
Figure 8: Environmental Sustainability, Short-Term Outcome



Source: BOP Consulting 2015, n=22

“The only weak part of the plan for us has been environmental sustainability - the lab was out of date, depressing, patronising and unimaginative - similar to pious attitude of people who run Julie's Bicycle. There's far more imaginative and intelligent ways of working towards sustainability than we encountered in the lab.”

Figure 9: Environmental Sustainability, Intermediate Outcome



Source: BOP Consulting, 2015

## 4. Long-term outcomes

Developing "Cultural Resilience" requires organisations to undertake a change in culture which can only be achieved through time.

We have developed a set of medium and long term outcomes. These outcomes are likely to be best reviewed in the longer term, falling outside the DCSR programme timeframe as they explore longer term and sustained change within organisations. These require more longitudinal evaluation (e.g. checking in 1-2 years' time). However, we tried to capture some progress towards these in the programme survey and final discussions.

The long-term outcomes have been derived from Mark Robinson's notion of Adaptive Resilience, which was used to underpin the DCSR programme. These are as follows:

### Resources

- A culture of shared purpose and values rooted in a strong organisational memory, avoiding mission-drift but consciously evolving
- Predictable financial resources derived from a robust business model and a range of activities and 'customers', allowing some financial flexibility to be retained
- Strong networks (internal or external), with an absence of 'silos', and collaboration at all levels to make the organisation vital and connected
- Intellectual, human and physical assets used to maximise impact in pursuit of core purpose, with appropriate investment in the creation and exploitation of new assets

### Adaptive skills

- Adaptive capacity: innovation and experimentation are embedded in reflective practice, with change seen as natural and actively prepared for

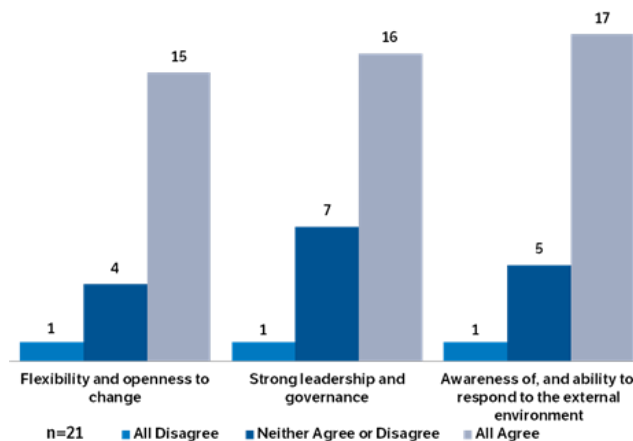
- Leadership, management and governance provide clarity internally and externally, with clear roles and responsibilities and strong improvement focus
- Situation awareness of environment and performance, with good gathering, sharing and consideration of intelligence and information to inform decisions
- Management of key vulnerabilities is regular and integrated into planning and preparation for disruption

### Early indicators of long term outcomes

Organisations, on the whole, feel positive about the future and their capacity to support resilience. They have left the programme with a sense of being in a good place. 18 out of 21 organisations feel they now have an open and evolving organisational culture and 16 out of 21 have viable strategies for maximising their financial value.

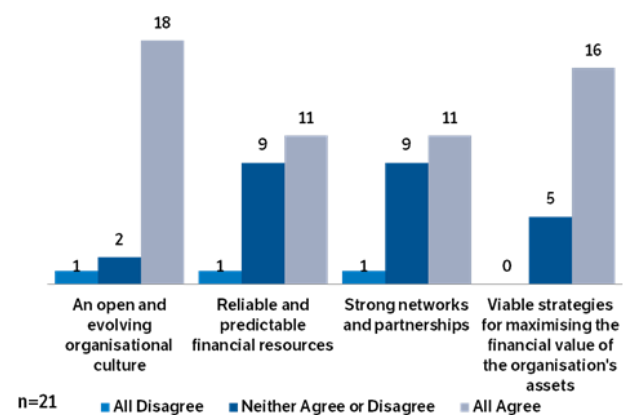
With regard to skills and attitudes, 15 out of 21 felt they now have flexibility and openness to change; 16 out of 21 felt they now have strong leadership and governance; 17 out of 21 felt they now have awareness of, and ability to, respond to the external environment.

**Figure 10: Long term outcomes: Skills and attitudes**



Source: BOP Consulting, 2015

**Figure 11: Long term outcomes: Resources**



Source: BOP Consulting, 2015

# 5. Conclusions

## 1. Investment in skills and capacity creates the conditions in which resilience can be developed. But it takes time to achieve this.

Introducing concepts, nurturing ideas and working one-to-one with those involved in running organisations can start to tackle entrenched issues and build activity promoting aspects of resilience. But this takes time to achieve and 12 months is not a long time to create and sustain change. Real resilience can only be measured in the longer term. However, the programme has achieved a lot, evidencing how the targeted support can help organisations to develop.

*Recommendation: To revisit the organisations in 12-18 months to understand how the skills and capacity are being maintained and developed. A small longitudinal study could be used to track the long term outcomes to test how resilience was being created over the next 2 years (minimum).*

## 2. Resilience is an opportunity to be more entrepreneurial and agile

The prevailing view across programme participants is that resilience is an opportunity to move towards greater entrepreneurialism, underpinned by increased awareness of the changing environment, resulting in an increased ability to attract revenues from different sources. However, a small minority of participants see this as a threat rather than an opportunity, as detrimental imposition on the sector, and as a concept that is not in line with their views.

*Recommendation: The benefits and aim of resilience need to be promoted more to the sector to encourage more organisations to tackle the concept formally and remove any cynicism towards it. Case studies from this programme and others should be used to encourage other organisations to invest in their resilience.*

## 3. Strategic, long-term thinking is a big outcome of the scheme

The DCSR scheme enabled organisations to create the time and the head space to develop strategic and long term thinking. The length of the programme (1 year) was particularly important to enabling this to happen by keeping people actively considering the future of their organisation. With this space to think, participants have taken the opportunity to look at entrenched issues or how their organisation is run and governed, to plan and make long term changes. Reflecting this, the impact of the scheme is very strong across business planning, board management and engagement and fundraising.

*Recommendation: There is an opportunity to continue to encourage people to take time and space to think about their challenges. An informal network or series of workshops could be used to encourage the cohort to maintain the momentum started by the programme.*

## 4. The practical labs have been most popular ones

DCSR participants particularly valued and benefitted from the labs which provided practical and easily applicable knowledge and tools. Noted examples of this were the Leading Change labs and Fundraising labs. Both of these labs included some time to reflect but also something practical to take away and do. They were also led in a way that gave participants confidence that the approach was right and the leaders had “been there and done it”. There is still a role for more experimental sessions (or aspects of sessions) but clear goals and outcomes for the sessions are a must.

*Recommendation: Ensure that future labs have the right level of expertise leading them, accompanied by practical tools and models included which can easily be implemented by participants.*

## 5. Mentoring has been a particularly critical element of the scheme

Nearly all participants saw mentoring as a critical element of the programme, as it provided practical and bespoke tools, knowledge, and expertise. Mentoring sessions have focused on different aspects and

mentors have utilised different approaches. However the enthusiasm around mentoring is shared across all participants.

*Recommendation: Mentoring is the strongest feature of the programme and the approach to it needs to be consolidated.*

## **6. Business Modelling, Leadership and Innovation themes resonated with participants**

Organisations have undertaken a substantial level of activity in relation to Business Modelling, Leadership and Innovation. These are seen to be more in line with the challenges and future plans for organisations.

Organisations were also looking to strengthen their business plans and are, on the whole, open to innovating around their products.

*Recommendation: There is a strong emphasis on these themes already. The only recommendation is to develop masterclasses or bespoke sessions for more experienced and senior staff members who need something more than the labs offered.*

## **7. Engagement with Digital, Diversity and Environmental Sustainability themes was low**

There was a much lower level of activity taking place for digital, diversity and environmental sustainability. These themes were interesting for some participants and offered some ideas for action. However, more needs to be done to convince organisations that they could or need to do more on these.

*Recommendation: Look to consolidate these themes by strengthening the labs used to lead thinking. Also consider mainstreaming aspects of these themes into others (for example, looking at digital product development in relation to innovation or diversity in terms of business planning or modelling).*

## **8. Peer-to-peer learning / action learning sets could be a feature of an enhanced programme**

Some participants were keen to learn from their peers. However, the time constraints on the labs sessions, the common way to bring them together, meant that the opportunities for this interaction were limited.

Despite this, good relationships were formed between participants who began to share their practice between one another. There is potential for this approach to be formalised into any future programme design. Other bespoke learning opportunities such as the CEO lab were welcomed by participants, allowing a focussed group to share their individual experiences. We are aware that significant steps have already been taken in this direction, through the development of an action learning plan and this should hopefully meet future participants' need in the area.