
Guide to producing **Equality Action Objectives and Plans for NPOs**



Case Studies



In conjunction with Stephen Lawrence consulting

1. CASE STUDIES

1.1 Responding to the Creative Case for Diversity

Effervescent: An exhibition devised and commissioned by young people

Effervescent works with children, young people and vulnerable adults to create art works which simultaneously help build confidence, boost emotional resilience, spark imaginations and trigger the formation of new networks and relationships. Effervescent's project R[eff]uge has received Lottery funding to help teach vulnerable children and young people how to create and display art about taboo subjects that are otherwise difficult to talk about. The exhibitions are shown at Effervescent's gallery, Radiant in Plymouth, which is the only professional gallery in the UK that is curated entirely by children and young people.

Effervescent worked in partnership with Barnardos to train five teenagers who had lived experience of child sexual exploitation to be curators and artists. Over six months, the young people devised and commissioned a glass, ice and sound installation that evoked the physical, cognitive and emotional harm that child exploitation does. The ensuing show ran at Radiant from January to April 2016 and was seen by 5,000 people. The experience encouraged the participants to take up further study and career opportunities and the local council is now working with Effervescent and Barnardos to deliver mainstream services for children and young people.

Contact: Involving young people in programming

Contact is a charity based in Manchester led by and working with young people to provide life changing opportunities for the next generation of creative leaders, artists and audiences. The charity has been highly successful in attracting a diverse audience, with 70 per cent of its audience being under 35 and 31 per cent coming from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. They ascribe this success, at least in part, to their programming.

Every year four young people work with the charity on their programming. They sit on decision-making panels around different artists and attend the bi-weekly programming meetings, which are especially arranged at times they can attend. They also receive footage of potential work which they can give feedback on, and the charity has a budget to enable them to see work around the country.

Suzie Henderson, Head of Creative Development at Contact, emphasises that this is long-term approach. 'It's about working with the young people over time and supporting their development as well as gaining from their input,' she says.

Artsadmin: Supporting the development of new and emerging artists

Artsadmin enables artists to create bold, interdisciplinary work to share with local, national and international audiences. The advisory service supports artists at every stage of their development with free advice and opportunities. And it has

also established a centre for the creation, rehearsal and presentation of new work. Through awards, bursaries, advice and the provision of space it has supported emerging and established artists.

DASH: Supporting the development of disabled visual artists

DASH is a disability led visual arts organisation based in the West Midlands that commissions new work by disabled visual artists, runs workshops, and provides training and mentoring for artists.

DASH identified the need for a robust formal mentoring programme for emerging disabled visual artists to enable them access to opportunities and practical specialist support to develop their practice and to cultivate a visual arts ecology that is diverse and representative of the diversity of our society.

In response, they established **Cultivate**, a three-year mentoring programme for emerging disabled visual artists based in the West Midlands. Through the programme, 60 disabled artists across the West Midlands are able to access a total of 360 hours of specialised, bespoke continued professional development mentoring from a skilled group of mentors.

DASH is working closely with West Midlands' higher education art and design departments to identify and recruit students who are eligible for the programme.

Mentees have also been recruited through DASH's network of galleries across the region, the New Art West Midlands visual arts network, other disability networks, adverts, social media and its own database.

Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art: An exhibition responding to public concerns about migration

In response to the migrant crisis, the exhibition *If All Relations Were To Reach Equilibrium This Building Would Dissolve* explored the subject of migration on Teesside and elsewhere. The exhibition was part of an ongoing process of relationship building with local communities and organisations and was developed in partnership with the charity Investing in People and Cultures, which works with refugee and asylum seeker communities. The show presented documents, artefacts and artworks made by Middlesbrough-based asylum seekers and refugees as well as British and international artists.

During the exhibition, 535 people participated in the monthly film club, the weekly community day, a new community garden at MIMA and regular English language programmes which are now established events within MIMA's core programme.

Read more: www.visitmima.com/news/if-all-relationships-were-to-reach-equilibrium-then-this-building-would-dissolve

Third Angel: Supporting artists from diverse backgrounds

Third Angel is a Sheffield-based theatre company making work that encompasses performance, theatre, live art, installation, film, video art, documentary, photography and design. It runs a mentoring scheme for up and coming artists to support people from diverse backgrounds with paid placements.

The scheme offers up to five artists/ companies a year five days of support from one or a combination of Third Angel artistic directors and the general manager. Mentoring can include career advice, conversation, full and part time collaboration, directing, designing, running workshops, feedback sessions and production support, responding to what the artist or project needs at the time. The scheme also pays participants a fee of £450 and provides a week’s rehearsal and mentoring space.

1.2 Reaching diverse audiences

It’s about more than reaching people with your marketing. You have to do targeted work with the audiences you are trying to reach, so that they feel safe and confident to be there.

Louise Richards, Executive Director, Motionhouse

DaDaFest: Finding safe ways to engage young people online

Parents and schools are often rightly fiercely protective of young people with disabilities, with the result that many young people do not really engage with social media. DaDaFest, an innovative disability arts organisation based in Liverpool, is redesigning its website to include a safe space for young people. It sees the next step as reassuring parents and teachers, who often act as gatekeepers to young people, that this is a safe way for young people with disabilities to engage.

The Crafts Council: Using a range of methods to attract diverse audiences

The Crafts Council’s goal is to make the UK the best place to make, see collect and learn about contemporary craft. One of its core aims is to increase and diversify the audience for contemporary craft. The Crafts Council diversity policy is one of the featured items on its ‘About us’ page, showing the priority it places on diversity.

It is also reaching out to young people from diverse backgrounds through its [Craft Club](#), which is a national campaign championing craft groups in schools, galleries, libraries and anywhere else you can bring people together to share craft skills. As part of promoting craft to a diverse audience, the Craft Club newsletters are edited by different individuals from diverse backgrounds and they ensure that through the imagery and text used they offer a diverse image of craft and involvement in crafting.

The Crafts Council also runs a number of festivals such as Make:Shift:Do nationally. It aims to reach a wider audience by offering additional bursaries to encourage makerspaces to partner with community organisations to programme workshops that engage target audiences (including Black and minority ethnic young people, young people with disabilities, and those living in areas of socio-economic deprivation).

People Express: Using a range of methods to attract diverse audiences

With a staff of only four, but a commitment to social impact, People Express in South Derbyshire runs original projects that work with excluded groups and communities to create artwork.

They have found that [People’s Health Trust](#) has more detailed information on areas of economic deprivation and the people they want to engage with than Mosaic, and have therefore used information from People’s Health Trust to successfully target specific streets with leaflets and increase engagement in these areas.

The organisation keeps a spreadsheet of every workshop and festival they undertake with a breakdown of participants (people who’ve created their own work) and of the audience they have attracted. They use the spreadsheet to identify gaps in the groups they are working with. Through this analysis they were able to identify a lack of participation by older people. As a result they launched [Crafty Chatters](#) open arts sessions for over 55s that aim to combat isolation by providing fun, free art activities for the community.

In other cases, People Express work with an existing community group and support them to run their own arts related project. The approach has been so successful that groups have started approaching People Express to support them to develop their own arts projects. For example, a group of adults with autism have raised nearly £30,000 over three years to provide open arts sessions for vulnerable adults. The group have their first public photography and zine exhibition, currently showing at Sharpe’s Museum.

They have found that monitoring who they are reaching is easier when people want to provide more general feedback on their work. For example, when People Express ran a visual arts exhibition for people affected by domestic abuse, it found that of the 350 people who attended, 60 per cent

filled out a monitoring form. People Express believes that people completed the form in such high numbers because they wanted to feed back on the personal impact the exhibition had had on them, and because the organisation took a light touch approach to the monitoring aspect as part of the feedback.

20-21 Visual Arts Centre: Using a range of methods to attract diverse audiences

20-21 Visual Arts Centre is in Scunthorpe, one of the poorest wards in the country. It shows around 20 exhibitions per year, across six exhibition spaces. It has had to make a particular effort to attract visitors from the most deprived areas close to them, as transport links from the local estate are poor and it is a 20-minute walk into town where the gallery is.

As it is based within the local Council, 20-21 has been able to access the support of the Council’s Business Insights Officer, as well as the local version of Mosaic, which provides a lot more accurate and detailed information about local demographics than the national version. As a result, 20-21 has been able to target specific streets with special offers. As entrance is mainly free, offers include things like a free drink in the café attached to the gallery.

20-21 has also used outreach into local communities as an effective way to attract new audiences to the gallery. Recently, mosaic artist Caroline Jeriwala held workshops with a number of women’s groups in the places where they normally meet. Not only has this brought benefit to the groups and those attending, but some women have gone on to the visit the gallery as a result.

As part of the Museums at Night programme, 20-21 bid for and won a visit from Jessica Voorsanger in the public Connect10 vote. Starting at the far end of the high street, Jessica led a flash mob singing and dancing to the theme of *Men in Black* down the road and into the gallery. The parade drew more and more people with it as it progressed along the high street, bringing people into the gallery who would not normally visit. [Find out more about the exhibition and parade.](#)

Showing different kinds of work can also really reach new and unexpected audiences, says Michelle Lally of 20-21 Visual Arts Centre in Scunthorpe. 'Our recent Lego exhibition has brought in people who wouldn't normally consider going to an exhibition – and I don't just mean children!'

20-21 has also found that sometimes low-tech solutions can work surprisingly well. For £20 and the time of a member of staff and a volunteer, they have been hiring a market stall in the high street. Using an activity that draws people in, they can then talk to them about the gallery, break down people's preconceptions and encourage them to visit.

20-21 have also found that, in the same way young people's sports teams often engage their parents, so can art. But 20-21 found they were able to engage adults through an exhibition of art their children had done.

Motionhouse: Performing in people's communities

As a touring dance company, Motionhouse is determined to reach the widest audience, including people who wouldn't normally go to a theatre and may never have seen live arts before. Showing their exciting blend of highly physical, dynamic and accessible work outdoors, in locations such as school playgrounds, shopping centres and parks, has become a core part of their activity.

'It's about reaching out and about making people feel comfortable,' says founder and executive director Louise Richards. 'We don't just perform in theatres, we perform in people's communities, the places they go to every day, and our dancers chat to people after the performance.'

English National Ballet: Ticket pricing to attract diverse audiences

English National Ballet are working hard to attract to diverse audiences. This includes targeting people from different socio-economic groups. In addition to ensuring they use diverse imagery in their marketing and advertising in broad areas, not just the traditional, the organisation also uses pricing. For example, the [Christmas Nutcracker](#) (external link) includes offers such as reduced prices for students, senior citizens and people who are unemployed, schools matinee performances, up to two children (under 16) can attend half price with every full paying adult, and a 'wheelchair rate'.

1.3 Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce

We are really careful to make sure our person specifications don't exclude people unnecessarily, not insisting people have degrees for example. But we're also aware we need to think about the language we use and the tone, and what that says to people about our organisation.

Clare Hawk, HR Director, English National Ballet

There are some questions in particular that people are reluctant to answer – like questions about sexual orientation. That's why it's really important to have a clear explanation of why you need the information and how you'll use it.

Louise, Executive Director, Motionhouse

Contact: Consulting with staff about monitoring and involving young people in recruitment

Contact is a Manchester-based arts organisation led by and working with young people to provide life changing opportunities for the next generation of creative leaders, artists, and audiences.

As part of the recruitment process all potential members of staff are interviewed by two panels, a board/staff panel and a young person's panel. After the interviews, the two panels come together to discuss the candidates and agree an appointment. 'We say our organisation is led by young people, so it's right they have a say in who's

appointed,' says Suzie Henderson, Head of Creative Development. 'Having a young person's panel gives a different perspective on applicants. Sometimes people say things or behave in ways you wouldn't expect when they meet our young people's panel – it can be quite revealing!'

The organisation has also recently finished consulting with its 40 full-time equivalent staff about their monitoring form in order to reduce the number of returns with 'prefer not to say'. As Contact is a medium-sized organisation, this has included a long discussion about how best to ensure that the process is confidential. It has also led to some changes in the categories, including introducing more options around gender and sexual orientation, and more explicit options around non-physical disabilities, and giving 'British Asian' as an option rather than just 'Asian'. Although this will involve some extra work to match staff returns to the Arts Council's monitoring requirements, the organisation believes it is worth it to have a process that staff feel more comfortable with and which generates more useful data.

NCVO: Ensuring monitoring forms are confidential

There is evidence that personal information in applications can lead to (often unconscious) discrimination or bias. To address this, the NCVO has a two-part application process whereby applicants complete one form which includes their personal details and diversity information, eg ethnicity and whether they consider themselves to have a disability, plus a second form which asks for information relevant to the job, e.g. education and experience. Only the second form, which shows how the candidate meets the requirement for the job, is used for

shortlisting and if the candidate meets the requirement for the post they are automatically short listed.

Unlimited: Creating pathways to employment in the sector

Unlimited is an arts commissioning programme that aims to embed work by disabled artists within the UK and international cultural sectors, reach new audiences and shift perceptions of disabled people. Unlimited has been delivered by the disability-led arts organisation Shape Arts and arts-producing organisation Artsadmin since 2013. The Unlimited commissioning programme has awarded over £1.8 million to ambitious disabled artists working in theatre, visual arts, literature and music. Between 2013-16, these commissions resulted in 2,323 performance and exhibition days, which were seen by 132,059 people.

Unlimited has two trainee positions at any time paid at the London living wage, enabling disabled people interested in producing and arts administration take their first steps into the industry. It also runs an annual international producer placement opportunity funded by the British Council and has a policy to only take on disabled volunteers, to ensure disabled people are prioritised as they are under-represented in the industry.

1.4 Building boards that lead on equality and diversity

Phoenix Dance Theatre: Recruiting a diverse board

Phoenix Dance Theatre was originally started by three Black men interested in exploring Black British dance aesthetic. But the direction of the company has changed over the years as different artistic directors have taken the helm. Despite having a diverse staff group, including four of its eight dancers coming from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds, the board had become made up of predominantly white men. Realising this, the company made a deliberate effort to recruit additional board members from diverse backgrounds. As well as the usual adverts in the *Guardian* and use of LinkedIn, they emailed staff highlighting that they were trying to broaden representation on the board and asking staff to suggest people they might approach. As a result of their deliberate approach, the company now has two board members from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Liverpool Arts Regeneration Consortium: Working together to develop the next generation of board members

Networks can help. Liverpool Arts Regeneration Consortium is an alliance of seven of Liverpool's major cultural organisations. Recognising the challenge around recruiting board members with the necessary skills and experience, they worked collaboratively to provide board development.

Contact: Succession planning for diversity expertise

Manchester-based arts organisation Contact was led by a chair who worked with large organisations helping them to address

diversity issues. When they knew the chair was retiring, Contact didn't want to lose that expertise. The Central Manchester NHS Trust and Manchester University both already worked alongside Contact as partner organisations. Through those relationships, Contact opened conversations with potential board members from each organisation, talking about what was involved as a board member and the skills they were looking for. As a result they have recruited two new board members, one from each organisation, with specialist expertise in equality and diversity.

1.5 Other examples

DaDaFest: Sharing resources and expertise

DaDaFest is an innovative disability arts organisation based in Liverpool, delivering a biennial international festival and other arts events that promote high quality disability and deaf arts from unique cultural perspectives. As a small, non-venue based organisation, DaDaFest uses other spaces to deliver the majority of its work and activities

DaDaFest has developed a formal partnership arrangement with Unity Theatre in Liverpool which is of mutual benefit to both organisations. DaDaFest contributes its equalities expertise and in return the two organisations jointly programme using Unity Theatre's space. The arrangement includes regular joint programming meetings and production arrangements where for some shows ticket sales are shared on a joint risk basis, for some DaDaFest hires the space at preferential rates, and for others Unity Theatre puts shows on but they are included under the DaDaFest festival badge.

20-21: Utilising local authority information and resources

20-21 Visual Arts Centre is based in Scunthorpe and is part of North Lincolnshire Council. As such they have been able to make good use of the council's resources and expertise. The equality and diversity officer provides advice and reviews their equality action plan. Staff receive diversity training through the council, and 20-21 is also subject to some of the council's other equality and diversity requirements, such as only using an approved list of contractors, all of whom have made a commitment to equality and diversity.

People Express: Building an overall impression of the organisation

People Express, a small participatory community arts organisation in South Derbyshire, have found that using relevant opportunities to promote their own approach to diversity helps to build their profile as an organisation that welcomes and works with people from diverse backgrounds. For example, on International Women's Day, the charity posted a series of tweets celebrating its work around including women who might not otherwise participate in the arts.

Opera North: An organisation-wide response to equality and diversity

Opera North is England's national opera company in the North. The HR manager is responsible for co-ordinating the organisation's work on equality and diversity from a workforce perspective. They have recently set up an equality and diversity committee made up of a board member and directors from across the organisation. The committee reports directly to the board and meets three times a year to develop, monitor and review progress on the equality action plan.

