CASHBACK PODCASTS
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

LENGTH: 11:48 MINS

CASH BACK FOR CREATIVITY

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

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ONE OF FIVE PODCASTS, MADE BY YOUNG PEOPLE AT SCREEN EDUCATION EDINBURGH, WHICH EXPLORE THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF CREATIVE CASHBACK PROJECTS ACROSS SCOTLAND, FOR BOTH THE YOUNG PEOPLE AND ARTISTS INVOLVED.

The **CashBack for Creativity programme** aims to tackle inequality by removing barriers to access and provision of arts and creative experiences for young people, aged 10-24 regardless of background or situation.

The podcasts were commissioned by Creative Scotland to further explore and share the findings of **BOP Consulting's 2017 research** into the CashBack programme.

The podcasts each explore key themes that surfaced from the research, including:

- **attainment and progression** outcomes for young people

- **health and wellbeing** outcomes for young people

- **employability routes** and outcomes in creative projects

- **pedagogy** - which explores how learning and training in creative projects, including those found in the CashBack programme, are delivered, and

- a concept of **communities of practice** and how CashBack and other creative projects rely upon these to deliver quality work and deliver programmes with real impact on young people's lives

You can listen to the podcasts at: **Cashback for Creativity Podcasts**

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Narrator
P: Practitioner
YP: Young Person

> **00:00**   **Narrator:** This podcast is based on community of practice and politics of participation in relation to youth programmes run by Cashback funded organisations. For this project, we spoke to participants from Screen Education Edinburgh, Toonspeak SHMU and Reeltime Music. All of these organisations work with young people in order to help them creatively express themselves. Cashback for Creativity is a unique arts programme managed by Creative Scotland and funded through the Scottish Government's Cashback for Communities programme. It takes money recovered from the proceeds of crime and invests it into a range of free arts and creative projects to create opportunities for young people experiencing additional challenges or barriers to access. These barriers can include social backgrounds or not being able to access the resources needed to take part in specific arts. This five part research bites podcast seeks to present and reflect on the finding of "How to draw a rainbow the wrong way", a research report produced by BOP Consulting for Creative Scotland. The report wanted to find out how young people took part in creative projects and how they developed creatively, personally and socially because of taking part. Each of the five part podcasts will be focussed on one of the five key themes of the main report. The theme of this report is community of practice and politics of participation. The aim of this section was to find out how groups come together and gel in a project. Groups were found to gel based on three basic elements; common interest in a subject, working together towards a goal by exchanging ideas and developing together. In the case of this research the common goal for participants was an art form. We spoke to the young people to ask them what they felt brought a group together.

> **01:44**   **YP:** I think a lot of things bring the group together but I think the main thing is always the subject so whatever they're learning about, in my case; film, is the linking factor for people. I've been at youth groups before that were just youth groups and people never really created that strong bond, in my opinion and, but with something like film, having that goal that one interest that everyone's wanting, it gives you a level playing field to speak to people, you know, you know for sure there's one thing that everyone in that room is interested in and probably has a little bit of knowledge.

> **02:30**   **YP:** Well for me I think like, doing shows brings us together because we're all obviously nervous, we're like; "oh crap we're about to go out in front of an audience" and we're like, so we all just kind of come together, calm each other down, do the show, support each other, make sure we're all OK so I feel like doing the workshops and the games but like, the shows are the thing that like, keep you stronger as a group so just after you do a show you're more connected, you feel more confident with these people, you're like, these people have done things that I've done. I can be totally chill around them so I think it's the shows yeah.

> 03:04 **YP:** I think similar goals and similar interests. It definitely helps because then it, it enables you to strike up conversations with people and communicate with them based off that and then you sort of learn to embrace each other's differences as well as their similarities.

> 03:25 **YP:** I think it's similar interest 'cause when this group first started we were quite shaky with each other, if you know what I mean and like, having similar interests has kind of brought us closer and that would then create friendship within the group.

> 03:41 **Narrator:** Some practitioners talk about moving participants towards critical consciousness. This means focussing less on attainment and progression and more on educating young people on their social circumstances. This included educating them on how to resist social structures that held them back. The most important thing about this was allowing the young people to discover that their voice and opinion mattered. The young people told us how they felt being involved in a Cashback made them aware of taking social action.

> 04:08 **YP:** For me, I was never taught explicitly, this is social action and this is what we should do but being taught by people who were from the same background as me I sort of started to learn by osmosis what was wrong with our em areas and stuff like that and so far it hasn't made me take any action but it's made me aware and I think awareness if probably the first step.

> 04:39 **YP:** It's helped me because it's like, you can actually go and like, it's quite, this is, this is actually quite em cheesy but like, you can go out, you can like, help like, other people with helping them do their bit in their community.

> 04:57 **YP:** Em, I, I sort of have a basic understanding of what goes on in society and different societal needs because of youth media because we're definitely a community based radio station so because of that we focus on people around us rather than just general things that are going on in the world.

> 05:20 **YP:** Em, It's made me aware because I've seen struggles that I've never really ever seen before and I want to help people see past it and see the bright side and they're not alone in the struggle.

> 05:33 **Narrator:** Some practitioners talked about how the projects had to be sold as a diverting opportunity. The idea was that the projects had to be a fun activity that took the young people's mind off other things happening around them. Many practitioners stressed that if projects weren't sold this way they would have had a hard time engaging young people. We asked the young people what kept them coming back to the various courses.

> 05:57   **YP:** I just really enjoy it and it's like, kind of my way to leave all my problems at the door when I come into Toonspeak and I can basically just forget about like, stuff out there and that's my kind of way to like kind of chill and forget about like, my other problems from outside of Toonpeak or whatever.

> 06:15   **YP:** Every course is not, it's not always the same, they're all different, they've all got their different things. They've got a, the same, they've got their all, they've got the same attributes in the course, the same attributes, they've got the same ones but they're different, they've got their own way of setting it out, the courses but you do learn similar things.

> 06:35   **YP:** You need to be patient and you need to know how to listen and develop on people's ideas.

> 06:40   **YP:** It's the energy. It's like you walk in the door in the morning and it's just, you feel the energy in the, like, in the room and you're like; "here we go, this is going to be a good day". It's like, it's no when you walk in you're like, everybody's sitting there in a downer and all that and they're like;" aw I don't want to be here". It's like you walk in, everybody's all sitting up and they're all alive and then you're like; "right, let's get some work done then".

> 07:06   **Narrator:** As part of the research bites BOP developed questions for practitioners running Cashback courses. We attended the Cashback delegate meeting to present these questions to various practitioners. Thinking about the definition of a community of practice, is this something that you would apply to the way you work with young people? If not could it be useful?

> 07:26   **P:** Yes, so yes we do use the community of practice idea or theory within our work with the young people and em that's really becoming quite apparent in terms of when the young people are doing their course and they realise that they have similar interests and passions for example - film making or film watching then they can use that similarity of experience, knowledge and passion to then develop their friendship as well as their own skills so for example, we have a drop in here, a like, a film youth drop in and lots of the young people who have created friendships in the course will then start accessing that group. That group is em an informal learning experience where they can come along, they can work together with peers so there is peer learning, peer support, peer education, they watch films together, they discuss the films, they critically analyse the films, they have a good time as well they have, they have fun and they can relax but they can also work on projects together so they maybe go off and create em films of their own just by, just by having conversations with each other about things that interests them.

> 08:39   **Narrator:** How open are you with participants about what they should expect from a project in terms of personal development? Do you ever feel like you are misleading them about what they are there to do?

> 08:50   **P:** I, I, I think we're always a bit conscious of the, em the difference in language that we might use, if depending on whether we were speaking to for example; a funder or we're speaking to a young person and it's, we are conscious of the, that funders, they, they're under a lot of pressure to give their money to the right places and we therefore kind of have a bit of a duty to tell them or explain the reason why they need, they should give us the money and that often involves focussing on the negatives on the problems on the issues on the challenges where as we would much rather be able to just speak about the positives, about the potential, about the talent, about all the amazing things that happen when all children basically get a fair chance, so yeah I think that to some extent there is definitely a difference in the way we would communicate and well we might have at the back of our mind that this is going to be great for personal development, we might not be coming to a ten year old and saying you know come and join this, it'll be amazing for your personal development, what we'd probably say is come and play some games and do some drama, it'll be fun.

> 09:59   **Narrator:** In what ways, if at all, do you think of your practice as political? Can you think of times where participants have gained critical consciousness?

> 10:07   **P:** Yeah brilliant one. We, we definitely, I don't think we ever really said what we're doing is political but we, we, we are a youth-led organisation and that, I mean that the majority of our board are young people aged between eighteen and twenty-three and we do quite a lot of youth consultation and youth-led peer consultation. One of the events that we do annually is, is called "Toon in Speak Out" and at that event young people get together and they tell us anything at all they want to, about Toonspeak, about the programme, about the world, about their lives and one of the things that came out of that when we just said, "what's on your mind?", the amount of things that were political, they were about the world around them, one of the quotes we took from that and reflected on the --- was "Can Toonspeak be more political?" As a result of that the big summer show that we're working on, a lot of the Cashback funded project participants will spend the next term working on developing this show and it's on the, it's got the working title of "Telt" and it's about young people putting themselves in the position of the leaders of the world and of society and imagining how they would do and kind of having the chance to have their voice heard and just have their response em heard.

> 11:29   **Narrator:** This research bite podcast has been focussed on communities of practice and politics of participation. Head to the Creative Scotland website to find the other four bites. The full research report can be found on the website. All podcasts have been recorded by young people working with Screen Education Edinburgh.