



Fife Youth Arts Hub and YDance

Case Study

About

In response to the lack of dance activities in the Lochgelly area, Fife Youth Arts Hub and the national dance company, YDance, created a programme of dance classes for children and young people.

The approach

As part of the Hub's development, Fife Cultural Trust commissioned research into local arts provision. At the same, YDance were keen to make activity more accessible for young people of all backgrounds and ability, and wanted to aid enthusiastic and talented young people in their progression from regional to national activity.

As the research identified a lack of dance provision in the Lochgelly area, together the two partners created a dance programme made up of taster sessions and free weekly after school sessions.

Activities

Taster sessions were made available to children and young people aged 7 to 18. Older age groups accessed stand-alone taster sessions at their schools, youth clubs and community groups, while younger participants joined a five week course, culminating in a performance at the Lochgelly Centre. Almost 400 friends, family and community members went to the primary school performance at the Centre, which was the largest audience the venue has ever had.

Free weekly after school dance classes were also made available, out of which two new dance companies emerged – Fife Young Dance Company (ages 7 to 11) and Fife Youth Dance Company (ages 12 to 18). The style of dance is contemporary and the ethos of youth dance is at the core of the sessions. Dancers are introduced to contemporary technique in a fun, creative way, and are encouraged to work with others, especially peers that they don't know very well.

Empowering young people

Young people are involved in aspects of the planning and delivery of their activity. Tutors feel this approach, including young people's creative decisions in the development of the choreography, is the best way of working and that this is reflected in participants' enthusiasm, aspiration and increased confidence.

Impact on young people

Taster sessions received really positive responses, with participants enjoying the dance days for a range of different reasons, such as seeing a show, getting to go on stage and see an audience, dancing with their friends, and that their family came to see them perform.

In addition, their physical and emotional health has been nurtured by the dance lessons, and their parents appreciate having a positive, stimulating, local activity that their children really enjoy. Young people's confidence has risen, as has their willingness to make new friends.

Wider opportunities

As well as spurring young people's interest in arts, the Hub offers access to wider opportunities and raises awareness of what's on in the community. Since joining the project, the older class have performed at Edinburgh Fringe Festival alongside other YDance groups, while others are working with the Hub in a peer to peer ambassador role. Young people and families also benefit from the opportunity to come together to share in events, which in turn benefits the community and helps reduce isolation.

Impact on the youth arts sector

The programme nurtures a generation of young people who wouldn't otherwise have the chance to dance or who wouldn't usually take part, helping to broaden young people's understanding of dance.

YDance and the Hub have also been instrumental in providing employment to the tutors who themselves are young dancers from the area. The work has inspired the tutors and given them the chance to develop their teaching skills.

Successes

The project has been successful in a number of significant ways. Together YDance and Fife Youth Arts Hub have created high quality dance opportunities and established two successful local dance companies with consistently high levels of participation, and a strong rapport between tutors and young people.

In addition, this sustainable programme has given support and employment to young local dancers, involved young people who wouldn't otherwise take part, and bolstered the confidence of those that participate. Key to all these successes is the positive partnership and collaborative approach between YDance and Fife Youth Arts Hub.

The programme has worked well to attract some boys to the weekly classes and maintain their participation, especially as it less common for boys to take part in dance or dance-related activity. Partners believe that going into schools and engaging directly with young boys really helped.

Lessons learned

YDance and Fife Youth Arts Hub believe that, had the taster sessions in primary schools been longer, the experience would have been richer and more time could have been spent creating a performance piece. In future, clearer communication with schools would be beneficial so they understand the project more from the start. Added to this, partners feel that more time is needed for young people to become used to the theatre environment as many have never been in one before.

What's next?

Fife Youth Arts Hub is planning to replicate this project in other areas of Fife with local dance tutors. Nationally, YDance is working to create similar projects in Glasgow and North Ayrshire in partnerships with local Hubs.





Fresh Creations

Case Study

About

Fresh Creations is run by YSortIt, a local youth organisation, and was developed to address the lack of creative opportunities for young people in West Dunbartonshire. The Hub strives to improve the range of quality arts provision and increase the number of young participants. By placing young people at the centre of the decision-making process, the Hub aims to bolster youth engagement. It also seeks to improve the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of youth arts provision locally.

The approach

After a survey of nearly 400 people, YSortIt identified a real gap in affordable, accessible creative arts opportunities beyond music and dance. The survey found young people showed a real interest in drama, digital media, dance and other art forms, including fashion design, jewellery making and cake decorating. In response, Fresh Creations' activities were developed based on these areas with young people taking the lead and building on YSortIt's strong history of youth-led projects.

Activities

After running a series of taster sessions, Fresh Creations discovered the most popular activities were comic book skills, graffiti art, musical theatre, creative writing and fashion design.

Activities are spread across West Dunbartonshire with classes sometimes repeated in different locations so young people have less distance to travel. The YSortIt mobile bus takes arts activities out to the hardest to reach and least engaged young people in the area.

Between October 2014 and May 2015, around 350 young people have taken part in Fresh Creations activities. However, it has been a challenge to involve the older age group of 19 to 25 year olds and Fresh Creations plan to work with the local college to increase engagement.

Working together

Fresh Creations is managed by YSortIt, a strong local youth organisation with clear links to many young people in the area, particularly those that can be less likely to take part. The Hub has also developed strong partnerships with schools, visiting both primary and secondary schools to raise awareness of its work.

Fresh Creations' two main creative partners are Recoat Gallery and Behind the Noise, but the Hub also works with film companies in delivering film and photography workshops. In addition, the Hub liaises with strategic partners in local authority departments such as Education, Youth Services and Community Learning and Development, as well as the West Dunbartonshire Youth Alliance.

Impact on young people

The Hub has changed the perception of art amongst young people, offering a different attitude to arts and creativity, and an alternative outlook to what they might have in their schools or at home. Young people feel the benefit of this, feeling more supported in pursuing their interests, regardless of their experience or talent. They've also developed their understanding of

what art can involve, and learned more about opportunities to develop in the arts.

Participation in creative activities is boosting young people's confidence, commitment, discipline, concentration and team work skills. Many feel ownership over the Hub, part of something bigger, and are now more engaged with their communities as a result. This is partly due to the inclusive, welcoming and nurturing environment of the Hub. It is a place where young people feel safe, are able to express themselves and can make their voice heard. For some, this has a major impact on their happiness, mental health and quality of life.

Impact on youth arts sector and the wider community

The Hub has helped change attitudes and raise awareness among young people and the wider community of the value of arts. It has also helped to foster links between local and national arts activity, with more young people accessing national organisations such as the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, or taking up voluntary posts at local classes.

Successes

Both young people and partner organisations feel the greatest achievement so far has been filling the gap in creative arts in West Dunbartonshire. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of young people getting involved and the Hub has been successful in providing flexible facilitators who can adapt to the needs of young people on an ongoing basis. Creative activities have also given young people the chance to showcase skills at events with family and friends, and created close links between youth work and the arts. Central to these successes is the youth-led ethos of Fresh Creations.

Lessons learned

While Fresh Creations has, to a degree, tackled territorialism by bringing young people together in a safe environment, it remains a key barrier. Partners are working hard to address this, offering free and accompanied travel where needed as there are tensions between the young people which can sometimes be difficult.

What's next?

Fresh Creations hopes to set up a youth exchange programme in Europe with funding support from Erasmus+. There are also plans for young and older people to work together on a heritage project exploring the history of the area. West Dunbartonshire Council is working with the Hub to increase access to music equipment which will hopefully contribute to the longer term sustainability of arts activity in the area.





Glasgow Youth Arts Hub

Case Study

Glasgow Youth Arts Hub was established in July 2014 by Glasgow Connected Arts Network and working group partners to provide organisations and young people with a central point for learning, signposting and engagement.

The working group consists of 10 grassroots youth arts organisations who deliver high quality free arts provision for children and young people in areas of multiple deprivation across Glasgow. These organisations have an active role in the Glasgow Youth Arts Hub, contributing towards decision-making, vision, strategy and programming.

About

The ethos of Time to Shine, the national youth arts strategy, inspired partners to develop an accessible and empowering youth-led Hub. The Hub aims to increase participation in youth arts provision; develop the quality of these opportunities; share best practice between providers; enable peer support; and build confidence, skills and employment prospects for young people, particularly in areas of deprivation.

Activities

The Hub works with over 50 organisations across Glasgow and Scotland to provide arts and arts-related opportunities for young people. Throughout all this work is the ethos of the Hub, ensuring that all the activities are informed and influenced by the ideas of young people.

Youth Committees

In September 2014, three youth-led committees were set up, each of them organising, planning and running their own events. Arts Festival Planning organised the Glasgow Youth Arts Festival; Youth Empowerment/Engagement has worked on reducing barriers to participation and promotes the positive impact that arts can have in giving young people a voice; and Art Form Explore engaged with young people to deliver arts workshops in areas of low provision.

These three committees now work as one, and have 15 members ranging in ages 14 to 20, from a range of backgrounds including young people who are looked after, disabled, from minority ethnic communities, and also young carers. Hub staff have worked hard to involve young people who wouldn't otherwise take part, and targeted grassroots organisations in disadvantaged areas of Glasgow.

Networking events

In its first year, the Hub has run four networking events. Through these, grassroots organisations have been able to share best practice, and develop new and different opportunities for young people.

Glasgow Youth Arts Festival

Organised primarily by young people, the Glasgow Youth Arts Festival included free events, performances and workshops, with an eclectic range of arts activity including puppetry, photography, sculpture and beat boxing. The Festival also offered the opportunity for parents and young people to find out more about career options in the creative industries.

Development fund

The development fund addresses gaps in arts provision, and target areas include young people with additional support needs, young people with physical disabilities, minority ethnic communities, and those aged 8 to 12 in areas of multiple deprivation.

Through this fund, the Hub has so far provided funding to two organisations working with young people with disabilities and additional support needs to develop arts provision.

Impact on young people

The Hub is a great resource for young people who can now access different organisations, meet others with similar interests and develop their skills. In addition, the Hub has ensured that youth arts provision is led by young people, made art more accessible and less intimidating, and encouraged more young people to get involved.

Impact on the youth arts sector

The Hub raises awareness of youth arts and effectively connects the organisations working in the sector. It has steadily gained recognition and is now seen as a source of active and engaged young people.

Successes

The Glasgow Youth Arts Hub has had several successes. It has fostered youth empowerment and increased participation in youth arts, particularly at a local level. One of the highlights of the Hub's work to date is the Glasgow Youth Arts Festival and the ability to bring such a wide range of arts activity to young people.

Challenges

In order to apply for funding, Glasgow Connected Arts Network needed to become an incorporated company. While this was initially challenging as the network was intended to bring organisations together rather than be an entity itself, partners are now working well together and comfortable with a single company leading the Hub.

What's next?

To increase its impact, the Hub will undertake further consultation with young people on what they want, try new approaches, and focus on innovative ways to engage young people and develop their creativity. Mapping work will also be shared in an accessible and interactive way so that young people and organisations can collaborate more easily.

In addition, the Hub also hopes to develop a Youth Arts Network, raise awareness of the sheer variety of art forms, challenge perceptions of arts in schools, and develop a training programme for artists and organisations to engage and support young people with mental health and well-being issues.





Highland Youth Arts Hub

Case Study

About

Established in October 2014, Highland Youth Arts Hub is led by a consortium of 12 organisations with the aim of enabling more arts provision, creating links between partners and art forms, and retaining talent within Highland. Activity is focused on young people who are aged 16 to 25, hard to reach (including young carers), have additional support needs and are geographically isolated.

Activities

To date, the Hub has piloted a range of arts projects, set up a Youth Arts Forum and established a 'Creative in your Community' scheme:

Pilot projects

The eclectic range of pilot projects includes printmaking workshops for young carers, cross art form residential workshops for those with additional support needs, mentoring for young writers and showcases curated by young people. A real range of quality organisations are involved in these projects including Highland Print Studio, Moniack Mhor, Fèis Rois, Room 13 and Plan B.

Future activities include a creative project for young people with additional support needs; a youth-led production combining dance, music and writing; and performance poetry sessions in isolated areas. There are also plans for masterclasses in music and dance, an international dance project, and a creative collaboration between young artists and young disabled artists.

The pilot projects are designed with a loose structure that can be easily adapted to suit the needs of what young people find is best for them, and some programmes are devised entirely by participants.

The Youth Forum

The Forum brings together 25 young people aged 13 to 25 who represent the young community of the Highlands and together they play a vital role in aiding the Hub's development by ensuring that arts provision meets the wants and needs of young people in the area.

Creative in Your Community

This scheme awards grants for young people to develop arts projects in partnership with professional artists and partner organisations in their communities. So far the scheme has awarded funding for free dance lessons, a filmmaking project and a community day.

Participation

Between October 2014 and May 2015, the Hub engaged with over 800 young people, the majority aged 14 to 25, including young carers and those living in isolated areas. To ensure maximum participation and reduce financial and geographical barriers, the Hub has a fund for additional costs such as tickets and travel, ensuring young people are never out of pocket when they attend their activities.

Training and support

Young people and partner organisations are offered training and support, such as training through Social Enterprise, professional development and attending conferences. Young people can work towards Arts Awards, Youth Achievement Awards and Saltire Awards, and 40 young people have developed skills in grant making, working in radio, film making and editing, and Gaelic awareness.

Impact on young people

Young people really benefit from the enhanced arts provision. One of the most significant impacts is in employability, as they're able to gain experience in potential careers and become aware of different routes into the arts.

Those involved in the Creative in Your Community scheme are gaining experience in making funding applications, and in planning, delivering and evaluating events, showing them different aspects of the creative industries.

Impact on the youth arts sector

Partners believe they've benefited from working together as a Hub. The new venture has enabled the joint working that's necessary in boosting provision, and encouraged further partnerships and collaboration. They're now able to provide more opportunities for multi form arts activity and can better engage artists who work in isolated areas.

Successes

The Hub has successfully established a youth forum which has been particularly valuable in supporting the development of young participants. In terms of their creative futures, young people are already responding positively to the idea of staying in Highland to pursue an arts career.

Alongside this, the Hub has created a network of organisations whose collaborative approach has enabled more high quality arts activities. Significantly, the Hub has given young people ownership of the projects, and also worked with those who have additional support needs or who are young carers.

Lessons learned

There have been some challenges around finding skilled artists who are able and willing to work with young people. The Hub has also found that it can be difficult to change young people's attitudes towards some art forms, such as literature and visual arts. An additional challenge is ensuring activities are developed in a sustainable way so they can continue beyond initial funding.

What's next?

Highland Youth Arts Hub aims to continue the pilot programme of activities, grow membership of the consortium, and offer youth work training to artists. The Hub is also planning creative career days and to engage young people in secondary schools to broaden their perceptions of what art can be.





Nurturing Talent Fund

Case Study

About

The Nurturing Talent Fund is for anyone aged 14 to 20, living in Scotland, to further their progression in the creative arts. The fund aims to support talented young artists and remove the financial barrier to accessing arts so that no young person misses out on an opportunity simply because they or their family cannot afford to pay for it.

This fund is a key part of the ethos of Time to Shine, the national youth arts strategy, in that it encourages young people to take their first steps into the arts and helps enthusiastic people to progress and develop their talents.

How it works

Creative Scotland has allocated a budget of £40,000 to the Nurturing Talent Fund for the first two years of the Time to Shine implementation programme. Individuals can apply for up to £200 and groups of two or more people can apply for up to £750. The funding is flexible and can be used to support any aspect of progressing creative talent, including buying equipment or software, travel, hiring a venue, paying for specialist lessons or covering the costs of audition fees. The fund also provides young people with a good introduction to applying for grants around creative arts.

The fund operates through close partnership working between Creative Scotland, Young Scot and Youth Arts Voice Scotland (YAVS). Young Scot check the applications for eligibility, after which all YAVS members are then allocated a share of the applications for comments. Four YAVS members then meet with Young Scot and Creative Scotland to consider all applications. The final decision rests with the YAVS members who, as part of their role, have received training on fund management, team work and grant making.

Activities

By May 2015, three rounds of funding awards had taken place and 115 applications had been received. Over £13,000 has since been awarded to 39 recipients, made up of groups and individuals, across Scotland. Awards range from £30 to £750 and have been distributed to people aged 14 to 20 years old, from a range of demographics, including those with additional support needs.

Funding has supported a wide range of creative arts including animation, theatre, traditional music, fashion design and hip hop. The fund has also supported a number of young people to travel outwith Scotland to pursue their creative arts talents as far afield as Belgium and Norway.

Impact

Young Scot asks all recipients of funding to complete an Impact Report three months after they've received their award. The report shows the way the funding has been used and the difference it's made. Reports have so far shown that the Nurturing Talent Fund has given young people the chance to develop and share their talent, experience working and performing in creative industries, provide arts activity for other young people, and access new art forms. Such opportunities have increased young people's confidence and supported them in gaining experience in potential careers.

Successes

The Fund has inspired and motivated talented young artists, removed financial barriers to progressing innovative ideas, provided new opportunities for young people, and increased the quality of youth arts activities.

The partnership between the three agencies running the fund has also been positive. Involving young people in the process has enabled Young Scot and Creative Scotland to better understand applications from a youth perspective.

What's next?

The process will be altered for the forthcoming round of applications and, rather than all members of YAVS commenting on applications, a team of four to six will be dedicated to the Nurturing Talent Fund for six months. This group will look at all applications and attend the panel meetings.

There will also be more focus on promoting the fund, across social media and other routes, to ensure young people are aware of the opportunity.





Youth Arts Voice Scotland

Case Study

Youth Arts Voice Scotland (YAVS) is a national group of young people aged 12 to 25 who ensure that the national youth arts strategy, Time to Shine, is implemented with a youth-led approach. YAVS influences, evaluates and reports on the development of Time to Shine. The group also leads national projects, provides advocacy for young people, and manages and delivers the National Children and Young People's Arts Conference.

As Time to Shine is intended to be youth-led, the vision of YAVS is that 'All young people in Scotland will have equal opportunities and access to all art forms.' Central to this is representing the voice of Scotland's young people.

YAVS does this through working with hubs and other youth arts organisations, supporting and inspiring young people through all stages of their creative journey, and raising awareness of the opportunities that are available.

Getting involved

After a recruitment drive, shortlist process, selection day and interviews, fifteen young people were selected to become members of YAVS. They represent interests in a variety of creative areas as well as a range of demographics, and have personal interests spanning music, drama, visual arts, textile design and literature.

Members range in age from 13 to 22 and, while most members reside in the central belt, there is representation covering more rural and geographically isolated regions too, including the Highlands and Western Isles.

Through Young Scot, YAVS members have had access to a number of training opportunities, including events planning, grant making, and evaluation training, and many are keen to strengthen their skills in social media and promotion. In addition, all YAVS members are registered for the Saltire Award and many are also working towards silver or gold Youth Achievement awards.

Activities

Since its inception, YAVS has developed three projects: Literature, Film and Digital, and Youth Arts Ambassador.

Within Literature, the group develops strategic links with local and national organisations to encourage more young people to get involved in creative writing. They're also developing an online platform to increase awareness, learn from others and make creative writing more accessible. Through this project, YAVS are working in partnership with Scottish Book Trust to launch a national young writers programme.

The team are working on an upcoming film project to inspire other young people to become more involved in film and digital media. Through this, YAVS will be involved in assessing applications with Creative Scotland and being part of the selection panel.

YAVS Youth Arts Ambassadors programme will run in all Hubs and encourage young people to engage in their local community, increase participation in youth arts and reduce barriers to accessing activity.

At a national level, YAVS members are involved with government consultations and have presented at national conferences. They also contribute to the decision-making around funding through the Nurturing Talent Fund which delivers small grants to the creative arts.

Impact

The work of YAVS has an impact on its members, other young people and the youth arts sector. Members have increased in confidence, gained a sense of empowerment and raised their aspirations. They've also developed new skills and qualifications, increased their employability and deepened their understanding of decision-making processes.

Beyond this, their influence and decisions at a strategic level are supporting other young people to be creative and to have greater access to the arts. Their work has given other organisations greater confidence in how to involve young people, created meaningful engagement with young people and broadened the reach within local communities. They've helped foster targeted, effective and improved provision and played a key role in influencing services so they best meet the needs of young people.

In the long term, YAVS hope they'll be able to change the perception of youth arts, promote positive perceptions of creative activities, and show that a career in the arts can be a viable option.

Successes

One of the key successes of YAVS' work to date is their participation in the Nurturing Talent Fund decision-making process. YAVS helps to distribute the funding and, through this, has already helped to address financial barriers to almost 40 young people across Scotland.

Members also feel their youth-led approach has also been successful. They give a voice to young people, ensure their needs are taken into consideration, and provide a bridge between young people and arts organisations.

The works of YAVS, ranging from ambassador roles to funding decisions, has really benefitted from the commitment of its members, another great success of the project.

Lessons learned

The wide age range of members can sometimes be challenging and some feel that there is a lack of consistency at meetings as not all members can attend every time. Some have also noted that the role of Arts Ambassadors needed greater clarity so the team will be working closely with Young Scot to ensure this in future.

