

Paul Hamlyn
Foundation

**Art
Works** | Developing
Practice in
Participatory
Settings

ArtWorks: A view from funders

Susanne Burns
with contributions from Janet Archer, Diane
Hebb, Phil Cave and Régis Cochefert
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Introduction

Throughout the ArtWorks initiative, it has become increasingly apparent that the role which funders can play in encouraging the projects they fund to incorporate opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) and training could create a seismic shift in provision for artists working in participatory settings.

Of course, we recognise that all funders are different and work in different contexts with different priorities and constraints. However, they share a deep commitment to ensuring quality across the work they support and using their influence to enhance the experience of participants.

ArtWorks believes that supporting artists to develop the skills and experience they need is a critical part of achieving this quality.

Our research has looked closely at ways in which funders can encourage the development of artists. It has shown how they can play a direct role in promoting quality by encouraging employers and commissioners – as well as the organisations they fund – to recognise the development needs of artists and include continuous quality improvement processes within projects.

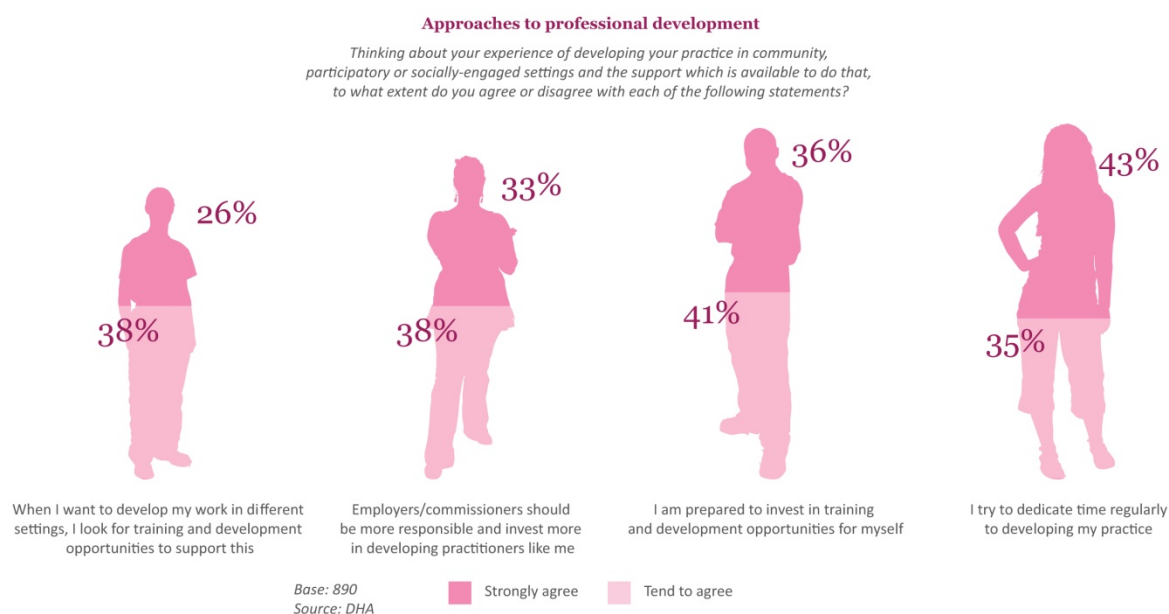
ArtWorks research has also shown that both funders and policy makers can help to raise the positive image of arts in participatory settings, creating opportunities for new partnerships and ensuring the practice – and its impact – is represented effectively where and when it matters most.

As Joan Parr, Portfolio Manager Education Learning and Young People at Creative Scotland stated in a recent ArtWorks publication:

‘Quality experiences for participants will result when the optimum conditions necessary to generate them exist – and which come as a result of partnership, communication and dialogue between artists, employers and commissioners as well as funders.’

We know that the diverse routes into participatory practice, the range of different contexts within which artists work and the professional isolation they often feel, combine to create a strong motivation and passion for development opportunities. A

survey conducted for ArtWorks by DHA Communications in early 2014 sampled 1083 artists. It revealed that 78% of respondents regularly dedicate time to developing their practice and 77% are prepared to invest in their training and development.



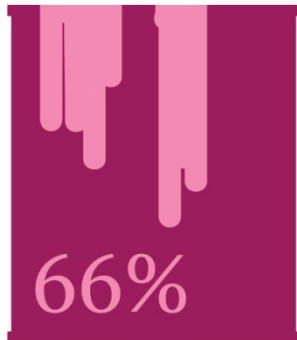
These developmental opportunities may be formal or informal, self-led or taught – or a combination of these approaches. The survey also showed that a larger proportion of artists have undertaken informal training and development than have taken formal training and development. Half of all respondents have undertaken non-accredited short courses and a similar proportion have engaged with formal peer networks or with shadowing a peer.

However there are barriers to this engagement, with 66% of artists citing cost and 59% the time cost of not undertaking paid work.

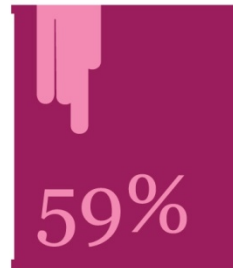
This raises significant challenges for a freelance workforce and for those who fund, employ and commission this workforce. If artists are prepared to take time to develop, then where does the responsibility lie for creating the opportunities for them to do so? Is it time for funders to consider how the organisations and projects they fund might include training and development opportunities?

Barriers to engaging with development opportunities

Thinking about things which might prevent you from further developing your practice in community, participatory or socially-engaged settings, please select the most significant barriers which you have encountered.



The financial cost of paying for courses/development opportunities



The time cost of not undertaking paid work in order to take up courses/development opportunities

Base: 890
Source: DHA

Within the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF), the strategic direction of new funding programmes will reflect the learning from ArtWorks. Creative Scotland has already used the learning to inform their grantmaking practices. However, there are challenges moving forward in influencing the funding system more widely.

As resources diminish and demand increases, it will be important that funding is carefully targeted to where it can make maximum impact. The development grants awarded by PHF as part of the ArtWorks initiative demonstrated that small amounts of money can make a huge difference. Small grants for experimentation can support risk taking and seed new models and ways of working.

However, the real opportunity is for funders to adopt an approach to funding work in this area that encourages projects to plan embedded opportunities for development and learning. If they did, we would see a major shift in the practice that could change the landscape.

So, as we approach the end of this phase of ArtWorks, we asked several funding partners a question: *In five years' time, what would the success of ArtWorks look like from a funder's point of view?*

We invited funders from PHF, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Wales and Arts Council England to contribute to this briefing and their stated interest in taking forward our findings is very exciting.

Janet Archer, CEO of Creative Scotland, outlines their commitment to create proper sustained support for artists to deliver participatory work in all its forms and calls for employers and commissioners to take responsibility for better remuneration.

Diane Hebb of Arts Council of Wales makes a plea for the work being valued: *'This is no second class activity.'*

Régis Cochefert, Head of Arts at PHF, calls for funders to encourage applications for funding for participatory work to include elements of training for artists and highlights what PHF will be doing with the learning from ArtWorks:

'We will welcome elements of training for artists in the applications we'll consider and, if other funders followed our lead, we would soon see a major shift occurring in support for, and the value placed on, participatory practice.'

Here is what they each have to say.

Janet Archer, Chief Executive, Creative Scotland

In Scotland we're thinking about the following things.

We want to see proper sustained support in place for artists to deliver participatory work in all its forms, through developing confidence and skills. Our aim is to exist in a society that properly values the work of individual artists and creative people as integral to the wellbeing of places and communities, wherever or whoever they are.

We also want to generate more understanding of the need for artists to research and develop ideas and form a practice in order to deliver quality experiences for participants. Great participatory work is not engineered overnight: it requires craft, care and application to work well. We want employers and commissioners to understand this. They need to take responsibility to generate better levels of

remuneration for artists and creative people; value their work for what it's worth; and give them the space to develop good practice that delivers meaningful experiences for people across Scotland.

We are committed to working closely with partners to increase opportunities for artists and creative people to flourish. We know that if, collectively, we can establish a better working environment, Scotland's creative output will become stronger. We want to ensure that the learning from ArtWorks is embedded into these partnerships to strengthen Scotland's creative offer and cultural life. To do that, everyone will need to think creatively about creative learning. We are already asking our regular funded organisations to do this and will ask them to tell us what they are achieving every year.

The collective energy of these organisations alongside the 1000's of individuals delivering extraordinary work in Scotland must be celebrated. Through ArtWorks we have already raised the profile of arts work in participatory settings taking place in Scotland. We know that we can do more. We plan to create more visibility for the work we fund in the future by developing media partnerships to better profile and showcase the work of individuals and organisations across Scotland. We are determined to succeed in advocating the value of creative learning across the public, voluntary and private sectors through supporting artists and arts organisations to be much more visible in everyday life.

We continue to work in partnership with organisations across the arts, screen and creative industries and other areas of Government and public life. An important example of this is Scotland's first Creative Learning Plan, developed in collaboration with Education Scotland and other partners. We are committed to publishing regularly the outcomes of the collective work achieved with our partners through our Creative Learning Plan.

Overall, we want Scotland to be a warmly welcoming place through the quality and calibre of our cultural offer and the powerful role that the arts, screen and creative industries play within that. We want to lead the way as a nation which understands human beings, their drives and their needs, and which opens its arms to everyone's creative potential.

Diane Hebb, Director of Engagement and Participation, Arts Council of Wales

What would the success of ArtWorks look like in Wales? I think it has to be about the participant, the audience member, the individual. Imagine a Wales in which inspiring, engaging and entertaining arts activity was simply a routine, normal and expected part of everyday life – with work that's delivered by a dynamic, confident and highly skilled arts sector.

It's not that difficult to imagine, but how would we get there? The skills exist. So I think it's about professionalising and organising those skills, identifying the range of partners who'll be able to deliver collaborative transformational arts projects in communities in all parts of Wales. Because if this work is to have impact and reach, it must be the best that it can. So quality matters, and we'll want to provide the support and professional development that encourages our young, talented and emerging artists to value the participatory arts sector. There is no greater skill than the ability to inspire and excite. This is no second class activity – to change and affect lives is a gift, and one that can provide a viable career, offering creative enrichment and success.

All of these things are reflected in the Arts Council's arts strategy *Inspire: our strategy for creativity and the arts in Wales*. Published in December 2014, *Inspire* is about creative ambition and endeavour in the arts; the need for the arts to connect and engage. It's also about the skill needed to ensure that the impact of what the arts achieve renews itself and lasts. It sets out our ambitions for the arts in Wales over the next five years.

The strategy has three clear and simple strands: **Make, Reach, Sustain**.

When we talk about **Make**, we mean artistic creation. We want to foster an environment for our artists and arts organisations so they can create their best work. We also want to inspire the people of Wales to enjoy and take part in the best that our nation has to offer. Because we believe that actually the experience of art only happens when that chord is struck – when what is made, connects. This is at the heart of our ability to **Reach**, and crucially to reach further than before. If in doing this, something of worth is created in what is made or who is embraced, then we should ask how we protect and **Sustain** these things in ways that will endure.

Wales has a long experience of high quality transformative engagement with communities; a rich history of innovative participatory practice where artists and communities come together to create. Our ambition and our aim is to see more people than ever before creating, enjoying and taking part in the arts, particularly those from amongst our most deprived communities, who may not have had the opportunity to participate before and for whom those experiences have enormous value.

To achieve this ambition, we recognise that we need to support the development of our professional artists. We need to provide opportunities to encourage creative practitioners from across all sectors to value and enhance their skills not just as creators, but as facilitators, leaders and inspirers.

We need to foster an environment in which artists and arts organisations share, exchange and learn from the best of our professional participatory arts practitioners, but which also allows for experimentation, innovation and the pushing of boundaries. And if ArtWorks can be seen to be at the forefront in bringing these ambitions to fruition, it will have succeeded indeed.

Phil Cave, Director – Engagement and Audiences, Arts Council England

The ArtWorks programme of activity has helped to capture the challenges faced by artists working in participatory settings and stresses the special and often delicate nature of the relationship with the communities involved. The pathfinder projects are beginning to play a role in helping others involved in placemaking (as in the Creative people and places partnerships in the North East) to understand how socially engaged practice, alongside other ways of engaging in arts and culture, can have a lasting impact on individuals and communities.

The focus on quality of experience for participants is vital. Where artists are continually reflecting on the impact of their work and, where possible, using evidence to inform this reflection, then this can only help in conversations with funders and commissioners. Arts Council England will continue to place a priority on supporting projects and work that seek to explore and develop quality. The principles and approaches articulated through the ArtWorks programme could help to make a difference and ensure that quality is constantly improving.

Looking forward, I am hopeful that we will see more of a shared view on what quality looks like from the perspective of funders, artists, arts organisations, commissioners, the voluntary sector and the public.

We need to appreciate, and be constantly mindful of, the importance of ongoing support and professional development opportunities for artists. It is right for this need to be reflected in applications for funding.

Régis Cochefert, Head of Arts and Education, Paul Hamlyn Foundation

When I was interviewed for the position of Head of Arts at the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in the spring of 2005, Jane Hamlyn asked me about what I'd like to achieve if I joined PHF. My answer was something along the lines of:

'I'd like to find ways to support artists who work as workshop leaders. These are the people who are at the front line of many arts organisations and they're often quite exposed when they engage with communities or young people. I'm not sure they are always well enough equipped to work participatively and I wonder if PHF could find ways to ensure that they are better trained.'

Obviously, this concern of mine was not the only reason I got the job, but the Foundation did indeed give me the opportunity to act on my desire to support artists in this way.

As we are coming to the end of our initiative, we look forward to working with our partners to secure a strong legacy for the work carried out over the last five years or so. We have indeed already made a series of new grants taking forward some of the recommendations of ArtWorks. It is first a bit of a shock to realise that 10 years have passed since I applied to join PHF! It also feels exciting, though, to crystal gaze and think about what I'd like to find in the next five years...

In 2020, I would want:

Most applications for funding for participatory work to include elements of training for artists if artists are involved in the work.

Arts and cultural organisations are now used to developing evaluation and research frameworks to help them understand the impact of their work as part of the development of project plans, milestones, timelines, etc. Indeed, private grantmakers like us, as well as public funding bodies, expect these research and evaluation strategies to be part of funding applications and we often make them conditions to our support.

I'd like to think that, in five years, many employers and commissioners will take for granted the need to invest in the artists working with them and build at the core of each project or programme appropriate elements of continuing professional development. CPD will be a sign of a well put together project. It will be as indispensable as showing how evidence of impact will be gathered. Funders will expect such training plans to be embedded in the plans they are asked to support.

Many, many more learning opportunities – at initial training stages and later on, when artists are already working in the field – focusing on the skills needed to work effectively in participatory settings.

I imagine a world where there is both offer and demand for formal and informal training and development, where artists can find a match for their needs in terms of art forms and the particular settings they're interested in. Ideally, there will also be the option to have these courses accredited or not, so that the costs can vary and so that cheaper opportunities for learning are more widely available.

A much better integrated and universally accepted quality framework that focuses on the experience of participants and helps the sector recognise and celebrate best practice, whilst enabling artists to develop their practice and improve their skills in recognised ways.

Artists working in participatory ways to feel better valued and understood. The UK has a long and prestigious tradition of artists deeply engaged in communities and I would like them to have become a more articulate and powerful voice amongst the country's rich artistic landscape.

A more joined-up participatory arts landscape, with training providers, employers, commissioners, membership bodies and networks of individual artists, public and private funders working together better to ensure consistently higher quality experiences for the individuals and communities engaged in this kind of work.

I am sure that my crystal ball cannot lie, but just in case the future cannot be relied upon to just happen like I'd want it to, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation has taken on board the learning from the ArtWorks initiative in its new strategic plan. The work that we will support around widening access and participation in the arts or education and learning through the arts – two of our new six areas of strategic priority – will reflect some of the key points above. Importantly, we will welcome elements of training for artists in the applications we'll consider. If other funders followed our lead, we would soon see a major shift occurring in support for, and the value placed on, our wonderful artists.

Conclusion

In our final report, *ArtWorks: Reflections on developing practice in participatory settings*, we conclude that everyone has a role to play.

'By working together, we can improve continuing professional development and training opportunities for artists; promote quality and shared values across the spectrum of the practice; and create the conditions within which change can continue to take place.'

We recommend that funders should encourage and support the inclusion of paid continuing professional development in the projects they support. Opportunities for continuing professional development for artists should be included in all project planning and design.

It is really encouraging that our funding partners take such a proactive stance on this.

Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Paul Hamlyn (1926–2001) was a publisher, businessman and philanthropist who was concerned about social injustice and disadvantage – particularly as it affected children and young people, and those ‘outsiders’ seeking to integrate into British society. In 1987, he set up the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for general charitable purposes, and on his death he, bequeathed the majority of his estate to the Foundation, making it one of the UK’s largest independent grant-making organisations.

The mission of the Foundation is to maximise opportunities for individuals to realise their potential and to experience and enjoy a better quality of life.

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ArtWorks

ArtWorks: Developing Practice in Participatory Settings is a Paul Hamlyn Foundation Initiative which has received funding and support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Creativity Culture & Education (supported by Arts Council England) and the Cultural Leadership Programme.

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Paul Hamlyn Foundation
5–11 Leeke Street
London WC1X 9HY

Tel: 020 7812 3300
Fax: 020 7812 3310
Email: information@phf.org.uk
www.phf.org.uk

Registered charity number 1102927