

# Young Culture Makers:

Pilot Evaluation

2017-2018



# Executive Summary

In 2017-18, London Youth piloted a new arts programme, Young Culture Makers. Delivered in partnership with London Youth's members, the Young Culture Makers programme gives young people the opportunity to work with artists and arts organisations to deliver a youth-led creative project. Ten London Youth members were selected to participate.

The programme structure has four stages:

- Explore (taster sessions)
- Create (group project)
- Inspire (inspiration days)
- Showcase (at local and central London venues)
- In addition, members have the opportunity to attend the Young Culture Makers residential weekend, and to gain Arts Award Adviser training and support to deliver and moderate the Arts Award for young people who are interested.

## Barriers

At the beginning of the programme, the ten participating members told us that the barriers for youth organisations to delivering high quality arts provision included:

- Lack of space for delivery, storing or displaying art work, as well as space that can get messy.
- Funds and resources to continue to running art programmes sustainably.
- Staff did not feel as knowledgeable or as confident in delivering arts programmes as they did in other areas.
- Some young people had preconceptions about 'the arts' which held them back.
- Partnerships can be challenging. One member commented that youth clubs are often approached by arts organisations to run projects with young people. This is broadly a good thing for young people, however it can feel that these partnerships are owned and led by the arts organisations, rather than by what young people or youth organisations want.

The Young Culture Makers programme aims to overcome these barriers by introducing young people and youth organisations to engaging, relevant and high quality arts delivery in their youth organisation. This is enabled through funding for artists'/facilitators' time, materials and other expenses, access to London Youth's network and support with building strong partnerships with arts organisations. We also seek to provide CPD and Arts Award adviser training to upskill staff and

increase their knowledge and confidence.

## Impact

Following the delivery of the programme, the main themes that emerged from the young people's feedback were:

- feeling proud of their individual and collective achievements and the role they played
- trying new things and doing something different
- building friendships and relationships with others
- gaining confidence.

Feedback from youth professionals included:

- The programme enabled organisations to do a project that they had wanted to run for a long time but hadn't, due to a range of barriers including lack of funding, staff or time.
- Members found that their staff and volunteers enjoyed it and got involved.
- Young people accessed something they wouldn't otherwise have accessed, including young people who may face additional barriers such as English not as first language, disability or homelessness.
- Youth professionals noticed strengthened relationships and friendships between young people, with many speaking about the group coming together.
- Young people became more open to trying new things and experimenting with art forms over the course of the project.
- Members valued working in partnership and with organisations they hadn't worked with or even heard of before.
- Members enjoyed meeting each other and having opportunities to network. Young people and youth professionals thought it was beneficial for different groups to meet and work together.
- The residential was very popular amongst both staff and young people, with many young people saying it was one of the highlights for them.

Youth professionals were also asked about the difference the programme made for their organisation. 9 youth professionals responded to this survey. The programme appears to have been very successful in helping organisations make some of these positive changes.

- 5/9 (56%) said their organisation developed partnerships
- 6/9 (67%) gained additional funding
- 7/9 (78%) inspired young people to engage with the creative arts
- 7/9 (78%) enhanced their offer to young people
- 8/9 (89%) discovered new ways of working with young people

## Learning from the pilot

At the end of the 2017-2018 pilot programme, London Youth reviewed the feedback from youth professionals, young people and London Youth staff to make - changes to the programme based on their experience and feedback:

- Partnerships were a key aspect of the Young Culture Makers programme, with strong cross-sector partnerships being the biggest factor in the success of projects. To support stronger partnerships, London Youth will create more opportunities for members to meet potential delivery partners. We will also share frameworks and provide training on partnership working.
- We found that this programme is more effective when delivered with a relatively consistent cohort working with a partner organisation over a number of weeks. As a result we will provide a longer period of time and more support from London Youth for planning and partnership building, and make our learning about successful delivery models explicit in training for youth professionals
- We will run a longer Explore stage over the autumn term, including a residential and taster sessions, to ensure that the Explore stage is effective as a period for young people to try new things, and for youth organisations to learn and network.
- This year, members who participated in the pilot will be able to apply for a small grant to continue developing their arts delivery with an aim of making it sustainable. This is in response to feedback from members that one of the main barriers preventing them from running arts provision is the lack of sustainable funding. With a sustainability grant, youth organisations have more time, support and investment to explore how they can embed the work.
- An open question that we wanted to explore during the pilot phase was whether the programme should support young people to progress into further opportunities in the arts at the end of the programme. After the pilot, we can conclude that it wouldn't be appropriate for London Youth to introduce a

progression phase at this time. This final stage would make the programme very challenging for one organisation to deliver successfully. Furthermore, the idea of progressing young people on to other provision is not necessarily consistent with the ethos of the programme, which is that brilliant arts opportunities do not have to happen in arts venues and can take place in informal, community spaces where young people feel comfortable. Instead, we will focus on ensuring strong outcomes for young people, and developing youth organisations so that all young people can access brilliant arts opportunities in their community.