

Evaluation Report

The Leap – Year 3 Phase 1

Ruth Melville, David Lee and Rebecca Ranson
September 2023



RMR



Contents

Introduction	3	Case study: The H.E.ARTists Collective	57
Summary	5	5. Sustainable, relevant and influential?	62
1. Background	12	5.1. Sharing the model and enhancing the work	62
1.1. The Leap, a Creative People and Places project	12	5.2. Testing what works	65
1.2. About Bradford District	12	Case study: Bradford District Heritage Action	66
1.3. The Leap Programme in Year 3	13	Case study: Windrush 75 – Legacy of Legends: Bradford Black History Month	69
1.4. The Leap model	15	6. Recommendations and conclusions	74
2. Engagement	22	6.1. Conclusions	74
2.1. Who takes part	22	6.2. Considering the 3 ACE Research Questions	74
2.2. Reaching those least likely to engage	23	6.3. Recommendations	78
2.3. Audience and participant experience	24	Appendices	80
Case study: Brown Paper Books	27		
Case study: The Impact Gaming Academy	30		
3. Leadership in quality community art	35		
3.1. Quality work which is meaningful to local audiences	35		
3.2. Developing community leadership for excellent art	37		
3.3. Sharing power around decision making	38		
Case study: We're Rolling! Bradford Young Filmmakers Challenge	40		
Case study: Our Baul Heritage Project, Manningham Housing Association	43		
4. Creative Place Partners as a model of devolved decision making	47		
4.1. Context and scope	47		
4.2. Community development and "COM-B"	49		
4.3. Outputs	49		
4.4. Emerging outcomes	50		
4.5. Emerging issues, opportunities and challenges	52		
4.6. Conclusions and looking to the future	53		
Case study: Holmewood Collective	54		

Credits

This evaluation was produced by RMR, embedded evaluation and strategic development specialists.

Project team

Project authors and researchers: Dr Ruth Melville, Dr Rebecca Ranson and Dr David Lee

Case studies and Editing: Catherine Doran and Ben Morgan

Photographs: Images used with kind permission of The Leap, Karol Wyszynski, Phoebe Smith & Casey Bernice Shaw (Brown Paper Books), United Art Projects (H.E.ARTists / Holmewood Collective), Ali Khan (We're Rollin'), and Impact Gamers.

RMR would like to thank The Leap for their help in compiling this report, in particular Estelle Cooper, Izzy Rhodes, Stuart Blackburn, Sabir Musaji, Akinwale Ogundipe and Director Zulfiqar Ahmed.

Introduction

This is an evaluation report covering the third year of Phase 1 (April 2022 – March 2023) of The Leap, the Creative People and Places (CPP) programme for Bradford.

This evaluation will continue to March 2024, with a likely extension to 2025. It uses data collected using an action research approach, in keeping with national CPP approaches. Thus, much of the learning has fed directly into the programming through regular feedback to the Director and the Team.

The report also addresses Arts Council England's three National CPP Research Questions (RQs):

1. Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?
2. To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?
3. Which approaches were successful and what were the lessons learned?

Answers are threaded throughout the sections of the report and are addressed directly in Section 6.

The Summary provides an overview of the full report and precis of the Conclusions, answers to the RQs and our Recommendations.

The report is divided into six sections:

- o **Section 1** offers an introduction to Bradford, The Leap, the Programme in Year 3 and model.
- o **Section 2** looks at how The Leap enthuses new diverse groups of people from across Bradford communities to engage with the arts – addressing RQ1.
- o **Section 3** explores how The Leap develops community capacity and leadership to produce high quality art – partially addressing RQ2 and 3.
- o **Section 4** describes a new model for devolving decision making for culture – partially addressing RQ3.
- o **Section 5** considers how The Leap is achieving its ambition to be sustainable, relevant and influential in shifting wider practice.
- o **Section 6** concludes and shares recommendations for next steps – and draws together what works – again addressing RQ3.

Case studies are presented in key sections to highlight our findings and showcase The Leap's work.

Finally, the Appendices provide extra in-depth information and analysis on the content of the report.



Summary

This is a summary of the evaluation findings from the third year of Phase 1 (April 2022 – March 2023) of The Leap, the Creative People and Places (CPP) project for Bradford.

The full report is available from The Leap website and provides detailed analysis and recommendations. It includes activity highlights and explores how the Leap is doing against its funder’s aims.

About The Leap

The Leap’s mission is to change the nature of arts and culture from top-down to community-led. Its purpose is to support people and artists in Bradford & Keighley to shape and lead the arts and cultural offer in our District. The Leap is one of Arts Council England (ACE)’s Creative People and Places (CPP) projects.

The Leap is about making spaces for the ideas, talent and energy of people in Bradford and Keighley. The Leap is a radical change-making programme, focused on innovation, rather than tradition, for arts and culture delivery. It aims to grow communities’ confidence, knowledge and skills in the sector, through financial and non-financial support systems it has developed.



Engagement

Who engaged with The Leap's Programme of activities, and what the impact of the Programme was for those who attended or participated?

This addresses ACE Research Question 1: Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?

We find that:

- In conjunction with last year's engagement figures, The Leap has already surpassed its goal of reaching 100,000 in Bradford with their programming
- The Leap is reaching a diverse audience in Bradford, with particularly good engagement from Asian and Asian British communities
- As with last year, audiences are predominantly younger, female and from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- 94% of audiences come from Bradford
- 73% from those least likely to engage in the arts
- 31% are new to the arts¹
- 54% from 10% most deprived areas of England.

¹ Self-reported response to engagement in arts and culture in the last 12 months

Leadership in quality community art

The Leap has supported the communities of Bradford District to have increased confidence, skills and networks so they can develop arts and culture of the highest quality in terms of process and outcome. This is work which is developed, commissioned and owned by the community and develops leadership in the process.

We find that:

- The Leap is clear and committed to its approach of developing community leadership to enable work to be produced which is meaningful to the community.
- Several new leaders have emerged and been supported.
- The award programme approach – along with pre-award support – has uncovered and valued the existing talent, and led to a diverse set of projects being funded.
- Local community members respond positively to the way the work reflects their communities and cultures.
- The community is very engaged in The Leap's processes – mainly through applying for awards to deliver their own projects along with, and for, their communities
- Funding panels for awards are widely used – and experience from the CPPs offers opportunities to extend these to include a wider range of assessors, particularly from non-professional backgrounds.

Creative Place Partners as a model of devolved decision making

The Creative Place Partners programme is providing a new model for devolving decision making for cultural projects at The Leap.

We find that:

- The Leap have developed an exciting and innovative approach to devolving funding within the arts.
- Partners have taken a range of different approaches to reaching, supporting and awarding projects.
- The range of people awarded funding is wide – very different from the range of people who usually deliver funded arts and culture.
- There has been considerable learning around how to support people to apply for and deliver projects.
- The model needs further time to deliver and more data to provide evidence of outcomes to audiences. But it is clearly already reaching more people who didn't previously engage in funded arts and culture.

Sustainable, relevant and influential?

The Leap is on track to deliver its longer-term goal of radically changing how Bradford's arts and cultural eco-system functions, particularly in terms of where decisions are made.

In order to achieve this change, The Leap need to develop a sustainable and shareable model, and to influence cultural and community partners to buy into it.

We find that:

- It is too early to draw conclusions about this ambitious aim – but a set of leading indicators are in place to monitor its progress.
- There is a clear commitment to action research and testing radical approaches.
- Steps are being taken to share outcomes and learning, and ensure that partners understand the value of The Leap's way of working.
- The Leap remains involved in partnerships that **could** shift the thinking around the city's arts ecosystem –but these need further work to shift practice.

Radical steps are being taken to overcome previous issues in data collection, and thus the ability to evidence the difference The Leap can make.

Conclusions

The Leap has planned and actioned a lot in the year since our last report. This includes increase in staffing, which should enable an increase in capacity around operations, data gathering and opportunities for sharing learning which are key areas we identified in our last evaluation.

The website is functioning well with regular updates and good feedback. The Community Heritage Sharing Event in March was an excellent example of celebrating the work, offering peer-to-peer networking opportunities and opportunities for development with surgeries for funders.

However, there have been significant challenges too, including staffing turnover meaning gaps in delivery and support, as well as challenges communicating aims and intentions.

Where we have data, there is evidence that The Leap is shifting how arts and culture are delivered amongst the communities of Bradford District. In particular, how and by whom projects are run is shifting. The awards process very much places funding to run arts with a broad section of the community, many of whom haven't received arts funding before. This completely changes what funded arts delivery looks like and who controls it. It is likely that this will also shift the audiences for funded arts and culture.

Finally, The Leap continues to test its model with the development of the Creative Place Partners awards. These have devolved funding to organisations with a geographic or 'community of interest' focus so as to further reach into communities who don't usually receive funding for arts.

The operational issues do need to be ironed out if the approach is to be at all efficient. However, where we have data, this shows success extending funding into communities which traditionally aren't funded to put on arts and culture that resonates with them. Again, it is likely that these events will attract communities who don't tend to engage in funded arts and culture.

Key research questions

How is The Leap progressing in terms of the three Research Questions (RQs) that underpin the Creative People and Places programme?

RQ 1: Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?

Bradford District is by ACE definitions a place of lower engagement in arts and culture. The Leap challenges that basic assumption and has shown there is in fact a huge appetite to create and experience arts and culture – and an array of creative talent. However, there has traditionally been lower engagement with ACE funded arts and culture in the district.

By shifting the control of who decides on, creates and promotes arts and culture through the awards approach, **work funded through The Leap has engaged high proportions of people from areas labelled as lowest engagement areas and those less likely to engage in funded arts and culture from across the district.**

These people are inspired by the opportunity to express their own culture and lived reality. They are both attending and also developing their own work.

RQ 2: To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?

The Leap defines excellence in art in terms of how it affects people – through resonance and a sense of connection. It recognises that achieving this comes not from commissioning external arts organisations, but by placing the power to decide and design the work in the hands of the communities it wants to reach. The awards call outs and the community panels approach have been successful in encouraging a wide range of local groups and individuals from diverse communities to apply for their own projects, often receiving arts funding for the first time. This shows effective community engagement.

Responses from the audiences show appreciation for seeing their communities and cultures represented. The most positive come from projects which have partnered different experiences together – mixing local stories with specific artform expertise, or offering mentoring from more experienced artists, dramaturges, production designers etc.

In the future, The Leap's continued support is key to ensuring that the commitment shown by projects is honoured and supported through opportunities to grow the quality of their work. This gives communities across Bradford the opportunity to make, see and engage in truly excellent work which resonates and excites.

RQ3: Which approaches were successful and what were the lessons learned?

What worked

The Leap has taken a radical approach to delivering the aims of Creative People and Places. Indications are that the model could considerably shift patterns of arts engagement and leadership within arts delivery. If managed, evidenced and shared well, this could be ground-breaking for arts funding nationally and internationally.

Successful elements include:

- Developing a network of partners for 'scaling' delivery to reach an even wider range of communities.
- Effective focussed awards programmes which diversify arts delivery.
- Skilled and popular Community Development Managers (CDMs) who build trust and support.

What worked less well

Some challenges remain around retaining staff, ensuring clear and effective data collection and communicating the purpose and benefits of The Leap's way of working to partners and further across the district.

There is also learning about how much time and support is needed to get new models working and the level of time input needed for a truly iterative approach to delivery.

Recommendations

1. **Learn from the work undertaken by Creative Place Partners** to streamline the application processes for all Leap awards, supporting a wider range of applicants and also enabling a more community-based set of core panel members to be able to carry out the assessment.
2. **Ensure the monitoring and evaluation requirements are understood** from the point of giving an award – and award winners are supported by Community Development Managers (CDMs) to collect and see the value of the data.
3. **Enhance commitment to, and understanding of the value of, data gathering** by offering incentives to the award winners. For example, social-media friendly mini-infographics for them to share and use to gain further funding.
4. **Levels of data collection scaled to size of awards.** We suggest, for example, a 3-tier design – perhaps small awards collect 3 main questions, mid-tier awards collect 7 and large collect 15. RMR will work with The Leap to develop this model.
5. **Look at opportunities for more sharing and celebration events** which both value the commitment made and offer networking and peer support opportunities.
6. **Ensure current strong CDMs are supported and retained** – they came in and learnt fast, picking up relationships and adapting to the work.
7. **Review how the team is operating after a few months of the Operations Manager being in post.** This should include good practice approaches, such as 360 degree appraisal. If this single action hasn't fixed all the issues identified in this and the previous report, a more thorough review of structure and delivery should be undertaken.
8. **Look for opportunities to diversify funding** – particularly the benefits to be gained from the non-arts outcomes likely to arise from many of the awards. Ensure that these are evaluated to produce the evidence needed.
9. **Continue developing clear messages** around The Leap's purpose and model so partnering across the district becomes easier. This might be through building on the CPP model. Consider explicitly building in 'round table learning sessions' with other organisations to give space to share approaches and learning.
10. **Continue with steps towards better data collection,** particularly supporting the Community Researcher project.

In conclusion

The Leap has planned and actioned a lot in the year since the last report. RMR Ltd and The Leap continue to work together to ensure we can better tell the story of its radical approach and the implications this has for both Bradford and arts organisations elsewhere.



1. Background

In this section, we set out the context for The Leap – its role as a Creative People and Places project, an overview of Bradford District, its Programme in Year 3 and the model it utilises.

1.1. The Leap, a Creative People and Places project

Creative People and Places (CPP) is an Arts Council England (ACE) funding programme which aims to engage new people in the arts through commissioning projects in areas of low arts engagement. CPPs focus on engaging new audiences with an offer which is excellent in terms of process and product, through building new and unusual partnerships beyond the arts.

The programme started nationally in 2012 and initially funded 21 projects (in three rounds in 2012, 2013 and 2014). Due to its success at reaching those who don't usually engage in ACE funded programmes, from 2019 a whole new round of (new) CPPs were commissioned with 10 more projects funded.

In November 2021, ACE announced another £38.3m to be invested into the programme nationally for 2022-25. This extended 28 projects and created eleven new ones (meaning 39 in total), and saw the programme renamed as CPP National Portfolio Organisations².

The Leap is a CPP programme of arts and cultural activities for Bradford and Keighley³. It defines itself as 'Making spaces for the ideas, talent and energy of people in Bradford and Keighley'. The

Leap is a radical change-making programme, focused on innovation, rather than tradition, for arts and culture delivery. It aims to grow communities' confidence, knowledge and skills in the sector, through financial and non-financial support systems it has developed.

The outreach and partnership building with communities and grassroots artists and arts organisations was significantly held up as communities during the pandemic, groups and voluntary sector organisations focussed on meeting immediate need in their places rather than engaging with a new arts programme. As a result, much of the local networks and relationship building needed to connect to the lowest engaged communities was not possible during this period, and this was reflected in award winner profiles and subsequent audience reach for the first years of the Programme, but effects are gradually diminishing now.

1.2. About Bradford District

Population: The City of Bradford District is a district in West Yorkshire, England. With over 546,400 residents, it is the fifth largest local authority in England for population⁴.

Bradford is one of the most diverse places in the UK. It is a city district with a mix of different ethnicities, cultures and nationalities. It has a significant Muslim population and is home to a number of mosques, temples and other religious institutions. The largest proportion of the district's population currently identifies as White (67.4%), 26.8% identify as Asian/Asian British.

² For more details, see <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/creativepeopleandplaces/projects>

³ <https://www.the-leap.org.uk/>

⁴ Census 2021 data, see

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/Eo800003/>

Additionally, it has a diverse age structure, with a mix of young and older residents and a fairly high proportion of people aged under 25.

Economy and employment: Bradford has high levels of deprivation. 22% of children are living below the poverty line, 15% of people are experiencing fuel poverty and the local authority district is ranked the 5th most deprived for income and 6th for employment in England⁵.

Rates of unemployment in Bradford are high – 7.1%⁶ compared to 3.8% for England.⁷ However, there are signs of improvement – there was a reduction of over 20% in levels of unemployment in the last year and self-employment has grown 23% in the last 10 years⁸.

Health and welfare: For certain health and welfare indicators, Bradford residents have a higher risk than the UK average. In the most deprived areas – particularly inner-city wards such as Manningham, Bradford Moor and Keighley Central – life expectancy is on average 10 years less than the general English population⁹.

People from Bradford are more likely to struggle with diabetes, alcohol abuse or cancer, and there are higher rates of infant mortality¹⁰.

Arts ecology and engagement: Bradford has a bustling arts scene, with 54% of the visitor economy coming from arts and culture¹¹. The district is home to many cultural institutions and organisations and sees many events and festivals throughout the year.

In 2022 Bradford was chosen as City of Culture 2025 and this will see new investment in the arts ecology of the city with 1,000 new performances and events planned and 365 artist commissions¹². Already an additional £3m has been allocated to boost cultural venue space in Bradford in the lead up to 2025.¹³

Audience Spectrum data shows low levels of cultural engagement compared to other cities. However, the work of the Leap, as well as recent research shows Bradfordians are highly engaged in activities not measured by traditional methods.¹⁴

1.3. The Leap Programme in Year 3

During the last year of programming, The Leap:

- Programmed or supported 208 activities at 37 events, totalling 1,450 hours of activity
- Provided over £445,000 in 43 awards through their award programmes, including:
 - 8 community-led heritage awards worth £76,955
 - 10 Radical Social Awards worth £10,100
 - 21 Pioneer Awards worth £183,484

⁵ <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/poverty-in-bradford-district/>

⁶ <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/unemployment-in-bradford-district/>

⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/employmentintheuk/april2022#:~:text=The%20UK%20unemployment%20rate%20was,below%20pre%2Dcoronavirus%20pandemic%20levels.>

⁸ <https://www.cultureisourplan.co.uk/>

⁹ <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/health-and-life-expectancy/>

¹⁰ <https://jsna.bradford.gov.uk/Our%20children%20have%20the%20best%20start%20in%20life.asp>

¹¹ <https://www.cultureisourplan.co.uk/>

¹² <https://bradford2025.co.uk/>

¹³ <https://bradford2025.co.uk/2023/06/08/cultural-capital-fund/#:~:text=Venues%20in%20Bradford%20can%20benefit,activities%20during%202025%20and%20beyond.>

¹⁴ <https://bradfordforeveryone.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Bradford-for-Everyone-Programme-Evaluation-Report.pdf>

With 63% of awards going to people from the 10% most deprived areas of England

- Developed an innovative programme in conjunction with seven¹⁵ Creative Place Partners to support their communities to programme arts and culture events, who in turn have (to date):
 - Received 60 applications from community members
 - Given out 57 of their own awards
 - Supported 57 members of their communities to programme at least 5 arts and culture events
- Supported over 100 people in communities to lead on cultural projects
- Engaged 54,178 people across Bradford district
- Got 531 people across the district actively participating in arts and culture, 128 of which participated digitally
- Reached physical viewing audiences of 42,836 and digital audiences of 10,811
- Given work to 185 artists and creative professionals
- Been supported by 5,626 volunteer hours, worth over £77k
- Delivered 9 training sessions to support people and their projects
- Supported 2 community-led festivals
- Facilitated 4 networking meetings.

The majority of events programmed this year have been either a combination of art forms, or have fallen into the 'other' category, such as the creatives support events, with music and public art events also

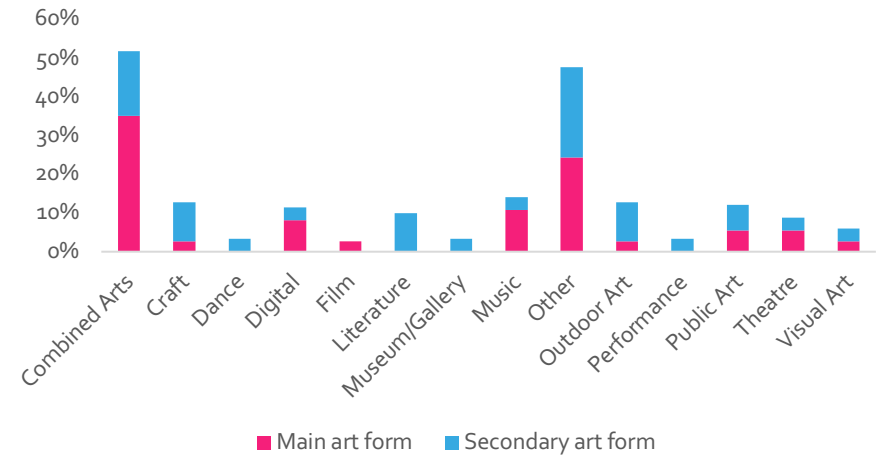


Figure 1: Event art forms. Base = 37

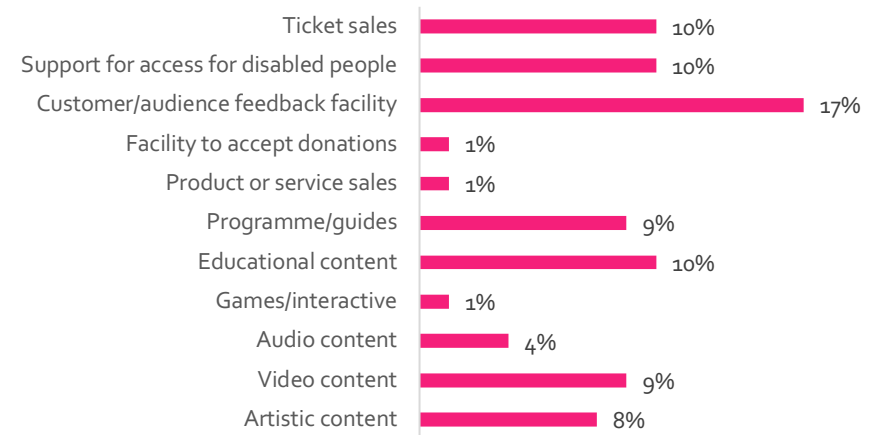


Figure 2: Digital content of events. Base = 37

¹⁵ The Leap has commissioned 7 Creative Place Partners, but due to differences in style we are only focusing on 5 for the purposes of this report. 1 has completed, 2 are well underway and 2 are just getting started giving out awards. For further information on the partners see: https://youtu.be/MoZ_2lzCz6o

What happened?

 **208** activities at 37 events

 **1,450** hours of delivery

Who did it reach?

 **Over 54k** engagements

 **94%** from Bradford

 **73%** least likely to engage in the arts

 **31%** haven't engaged in the arts in the last 12 months

well represented. Figure 3: Specific target audiences, other than 'General/ everyone'. Base = 37 Figure 3 compares main and secondary art forms for events.

81% of all events from The Leap this year included a digital element, with video content, education content, support for access for disabled people and customer or audience feedback facilities being the most popular. Figure 2 shows the percentages of digital content for events this year.

89% of events had a general target audience. Other popular target groups for events included children and young people, families, older people, and people with invisible disabilities. Figure 3 shows rates of specific target audiences other than general or everyone.

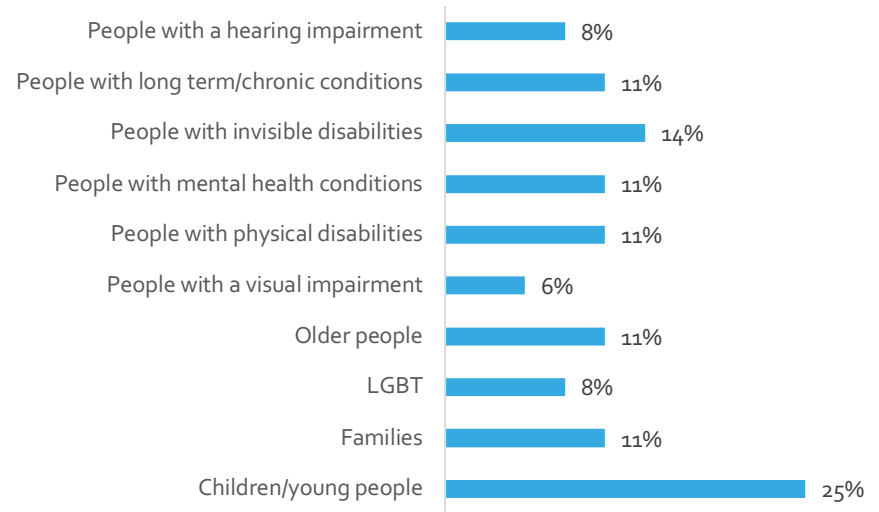


Figure 3: Specific target audiences, other than 'General/ everyone'. Base = 37

1.4. The Leap model

The Leap has taken a radical approach to delivering the aims of Creative People and Places and indications are that the model could make some considerable shifts in patterns of arts engagement, and particularly leadership within arts delivery. If managed, evidenced and shared well, this could be ground-breaking for arts funding nationally and internationally.

We don't deliver arts and cultural programmes in a traditional sense but work directly with our communities to provide support for them to build their own confidence, knowledge and skills through financial and non-financial support systems we have in place.

The Leap CPP website

1.4.1. The principles of The Leap model

While fully following the principles of Creative People and Places, The Leap takes a radical approach to supporting more people from across Bradford District to engage in arts and culture.

In thinking about this, we have modelled it as having five main elements at its heart:

- A. Asset-based approach
- B. Social investment model
- C. Scaling and learning model
- D. Testing, adapting and iterating
- E. Alignment with the COM-B model

A: Asset-based approach

Like many CPPs, but differing from some of the assumptions implicit in traditional arts language, they start with an asset-based model, as Cormac Russell explains:

"Asset-based community development builds on the assets that are found in the community and mobilizes individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to realise and develop their strengths.

This makes it different to a deficit-based approach that focuses on identifying and servicing needs. From the start an asset-based approach spends time identifying the assets of individuals, associations and institutions that form the community.

The identified assets from an individual are matched with people or groups who have an interest in or need for those strengths. The

key is beginning to use what is already in the community; then to work together to build on the identified assets of all involved."

Nuture Development website¹⁶

B: Social investment model

The Leap uses an investment model where individuals or groups who have the spark of ambition and creativity – the entrepreneurial urge and talent – are identified and supported to take steps which in the long-term will lead to self-sustaining work for those who want it.

This has a few specific differences from a traditionally community arts resourcing model:

- The explicit assumption that financial input (the award) is 'seed money' or a starter, rather than part of a long-term model of funding. Most community arts organisations would hope for all work they support to be self-sustaining longer term, but they don't necessarily set things up with this in mind. Making this explicit – and using the language of investment, rather than granting – may make a difference to how individuals develop their relationships.
- The assumption of the likelihood of drop-off and failure of many of the investments – meaning that there would be an advantage of initially supporting more, assuming a need for redundancy, and accepting that only a fraction of those supported at the start longer term move to a self-sustaining delivery model. For the rest there remains community impact and development of skills, confidence and networks as a legacy to the community.

As a result of this model, The Leap itself does very little 'delivery' but is instead a generator and supporter of the entrepreneurialism of others through a system of awards and support, and through making

¹⁶ <https://www.nuturedevelopment.org/asset-based-community-development/>

a space within and beyond the arts eco-system to trial increased risk taking, trialling and evaluating new models, and networking to encourage buy-in to the successful elements of the model from other organisations and institutions.

C: Scaling model

Following its own principles of assuming that the communities of Bradford District have the assets within them to populate the creative eco-system of the future, if they are given that first set of financial and support resources through devolving delivery to them, The Leap has developed a model of passing commissioning further still towards the communities.

Through the Creative Place Partners strand of work – a huge part of the investment from 2022 onwards – seven sets of Bradford and Keighley based organisations will themselves disburse awards into their communities.

D: Testing, adapting and iterating

Finally, importantly, the whole model sits within an action research approach of test, learn and iterate. This allows new and potentially risky approaches to be tried out, rather than just having to do what has been tried before.

An extensive evaluation was commissioned to support The Leap in its action research approach, along with an intention to embed data collection and other learning approaches. Time and recruitment challenges have meant this has been delayed, but the evaluation is adapting to this need with the aim of focussing on those areas which most need to be understood.

¹⁷ See e.g. https://social-change.co.uk/files/02.09.19_COM-B_and_changing_behaviour_.pdf for an accessible introduction to the COM-B model

E: COM-B model alignment¹⁷

The Leap's approach was built to align with the research around the COM-B model. This stands for Capability, Opportunity, Motivation and Behaviour. This approach is a framework for understanding behaviour change and is often used in public health interventions. It suggests that for a behaviour to occur, an individual must have the Capability (physical and psychological), the Opportunity (physical and social), and the Motivation (reflective and automatic) to perform the Behaviour.

The COM-B model which lies at the heart of The LEAP approach to working in communities is embedded within the Story of Change, with behaviour change arising in TWO sets of change beneficiaries of the Programme:

The communities of Bradford – gaining capabilities to lead and confidence to engage as well as gaining the opportunities to do these things, from the behaviour changes (B) arising from COM-B changes from the arts ecology itself, and thus the motivation to participate more in the wider system. This will lead to behaviour change manifested in (behaviour change of) engagement and confidence to shape and choose more arts and cultural engagement which resonates with their experiences. See Fig 4 below.

As stated above, this COM-B cycle is dependent on a shift in the wider cultural eco-system which also follows a COM-B model and is dependent on cross-working with other Bradford projects.

The cultural ecosystem. The COM-B model of change also impacts on the **structures and capabilities of the Bradford eco-system. This recognises that the cultural eco-system itself gains capabilities** through The LEAP to lead, engage and programme activities. These includes skills, capacity and confidence to co-design and deliver projects and to test, experiment and learn from this delivery.

This will in turn develop the capabilities of the communities of Bradford and lead to embedded and ongoing behaviour change.

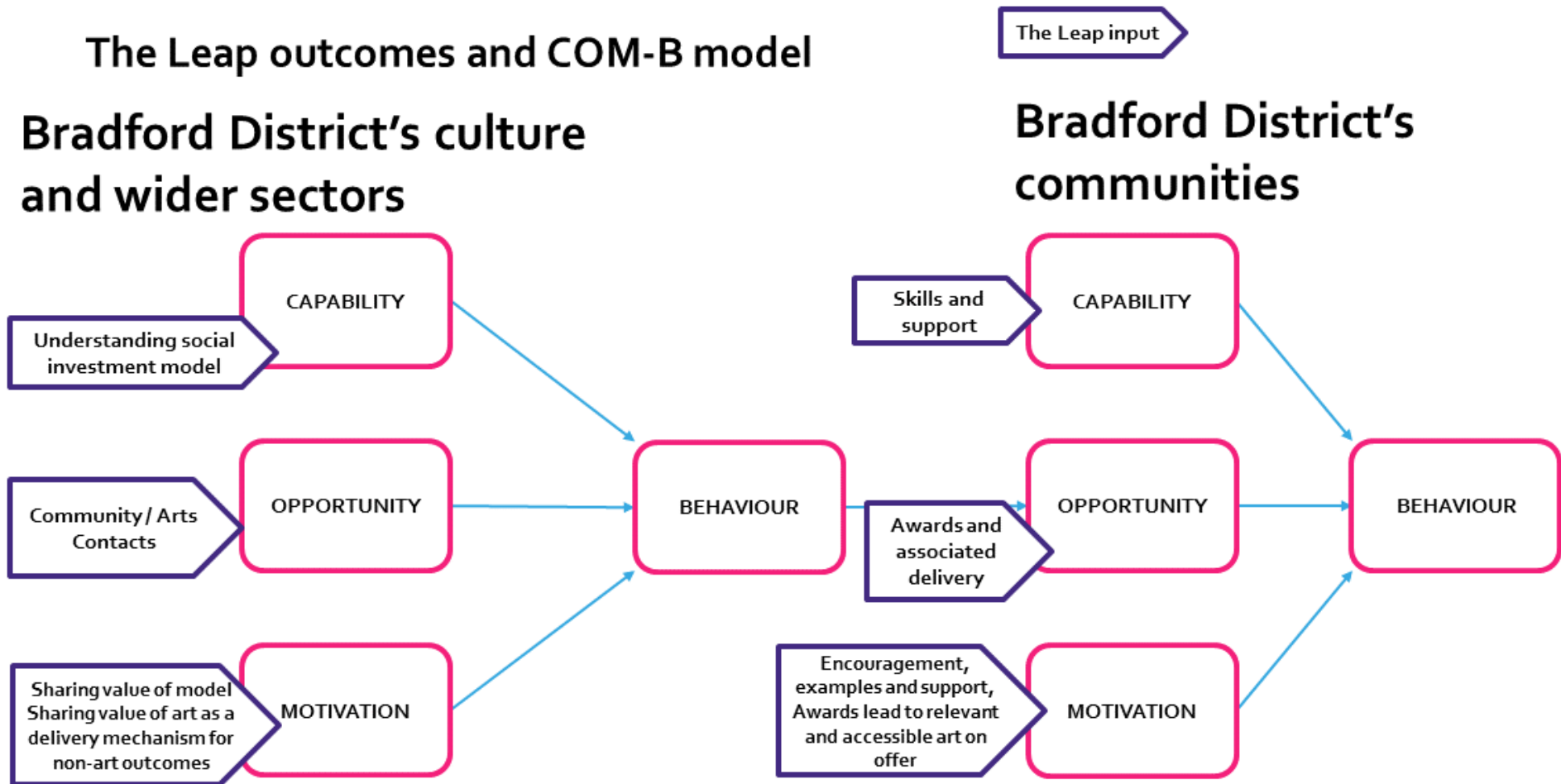


Figure 4: COM-B model within The Leap's approach

1.4.2. The model in practice

The Leap’s mission is to change the nature of arts and culture from top-down to community-led. Their purpose is to support people and artists in Bradford & Keighley to shape and lead the arts and cultural offer in our District, to help build capacity directly into our communities for them to have the power to create on their own terms.

[The Leap CPP website](#)

The delivery is mainly through a significant investment in capacity building and community development support carried out mainly, but not solely, by the Community Development Managers within the team. The Leap Director’s time is also part of this work, as well as increasing amounts of input from partners – in particular through the Creative Place Partners programme. This is support and networking to uncover assets and adapt the offer to fit with these existing strengths within the community or to support them to access wider support.

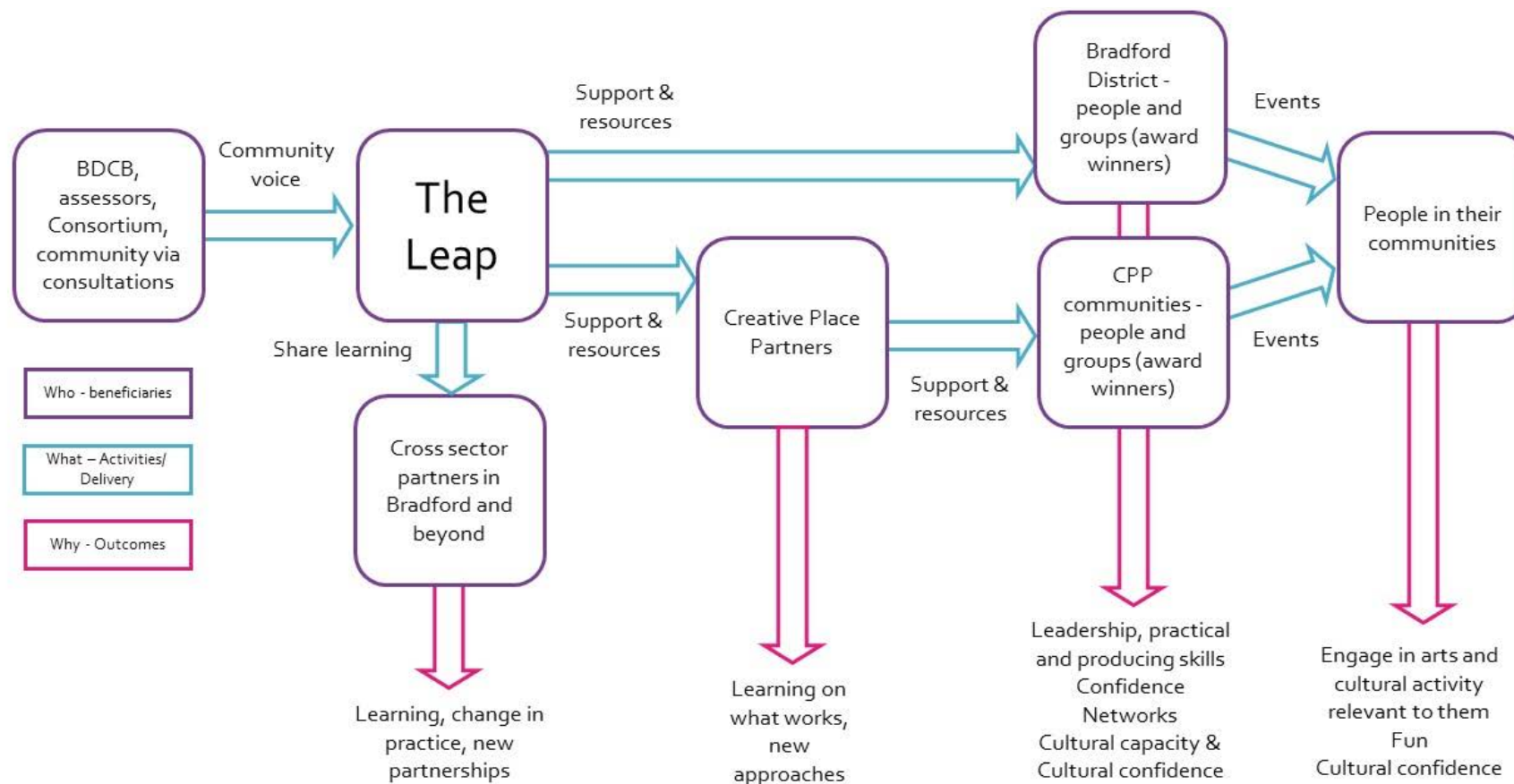


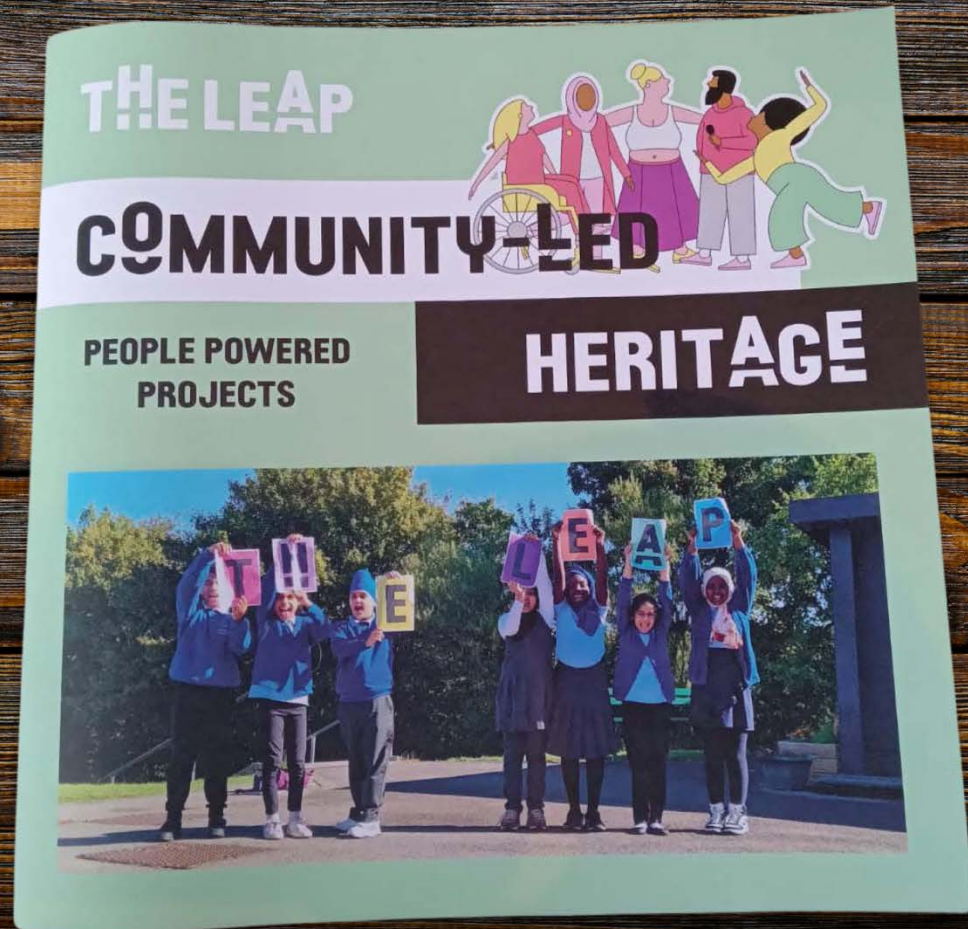
Figure 5: The Leap impact model

Coupled with this is a series of awards programmes which respond to need. They are all assessed by community assessors (local volunteers trained and supported with due respect for conflict of interest) who make the final decisions on awards.

Finally, The Leap works to develop and link into existing networks and partnerships, particularly those beyond the cultural eco-system, to develop buy-in for their model of asset-based community cultural investment.

This delivery model has now been iterated through the Creative Place Partnerships – seven partnerships of organisations with specialism with a particular community (geographic or demographic) who will replicate the general Leap model of support and awards but also adapt it to their communities and experiences.

The Creative Place Partner model is [explored in more depth in Section 4 below](#).





2. Engagement

In this section we consider who engaged with The Leap's Programme of activities, and what the impact of the Programme was for those who attended or participated.

This section addresses ACE Research Question 1: Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?

We find that:

- In conjunction with last year's engagement figures, The Leap has already surpassed its goal of reaching 100,000 in Bradford with their programming
- The Leap is reaching a diverse audience in Bradford, with particularly good engagement from Asian and Asian British communities
- As with last year, audiences are predominantly younger, female and from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- 94% of audiences come from Bradford
- 73% from those least likely to engage in the arts
- 31% are new to the arts¹⁸
- 54% from 10% most deprived areas of England.

2.1. Who takes part

Overall, The Leap engaged with 54,178 people this year. 94% come from Bradford District. Combined with the total for last year, it has already surpassed the goal of engaging 100,000 people across the district during this phase. 31% report not having engaged in arts and culture in the last 12 months.

The infographic shows the demographic breakdown of engagements with The Leap this year.¹⁹

Bradford is a young district, and The Leap is engaging well with this audience. The majority of audiences and participants this year have been between the ages of 16 and 44.²⁰

The majority of those who provided their gender identified as female, although caution should be taken with this figure as previously stated, given the propensity of certain groups to fill in surveys.

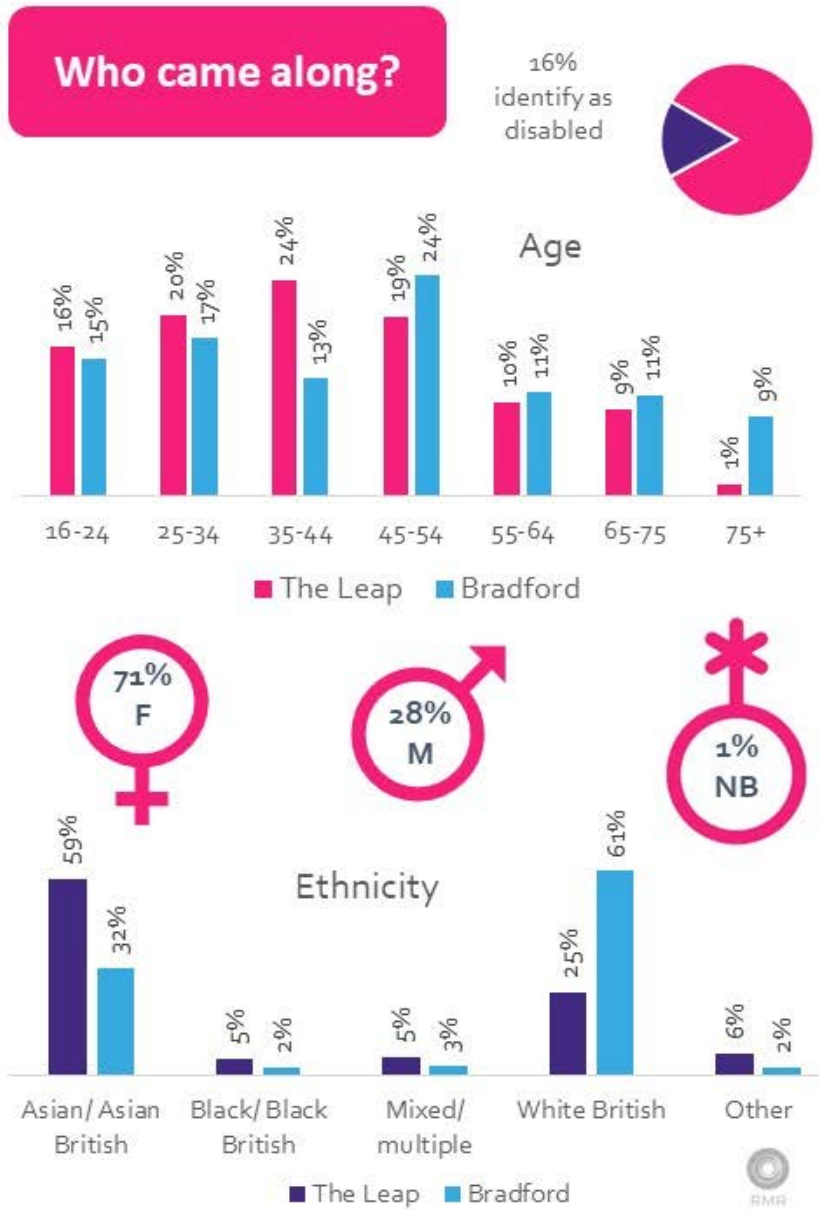
16% identify as disabled, which is notably less than the 27% recorded last year, although more in line with figures for Bradford of 19%.

The Leap has particularly good reach with Asian and Asian British communities, who made up 59% of audiences this year, compared to Bradford's 32%.

¹⁸ Self-reported response to engagement in arts and culture in the last 12 months

¹⁹ Demographic comparators from Census 2021 data, ONS
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/Eo8000032/>

²⁰ Please note, under 16s have been removed from the dataset due to previously highlighted issues surrounding survey completion in these age groups.



Award winners reported a wide range of diverse audiences attending their events, including people who would not typically engage in the arts.

We had people from grassroots communities, multiple generations of families and elders getting involved and committing to multiple sessions. Most of those who came had never really engaged with mainstream arts or heritage.

Award winner, community-led heritage

2.2. Reaching those least likely to engage

Here we consider how well The Leap has been reaching those in Bradford least likely to engage in the traditional arts and culture offer. As highlighted previously, these measures often do not account for a number of 'everyday' arts participation activities, but instead do provide a consistent measure against which we can check year on year reach.

This section considers two types of analysis based on audience and participant postcodes: Audience Spectrum analysis and Indices of Multiple Deprivation analysis. Headline data will be outlined here.

For the full analysis, please see *Appendix 3 - Reaching audiences least likely to engage in the arts.*

2.2.1. Audience Spectrum

Audience Spectrum²¹ analysis uses postcodes gathered at events to categorise audience and participants into three levels of cultural engagement: low, medium and high.

Overall, **73% of The Leap's engagements this year come from groups least likely to engage in the arts**, much higher than the 55% for Bradford in general. This shows **excellent reach into groups in Bradford least likely to engage with the traditional arts and culture offer**, and is **substantially higher than the reach last year** at 54%. This shows a positive trend for The Leap continuing to push themselves to reach further into the communities in Bradford most likely to benefit from their programming.

Furthermore, this result represents great progress towards The Leap's goal of having at least 80% of engagements come from the lowest engagement groups. Should the current trend continue, The Leap stands a good chance of reaching this goal next year. Increasing monitoring data collection would support the attainment of sufficient reach data towards this goal.

2.2.2. Indices of Multiple Deprivation

In this section we compare levels of deprivation²² for The Leap engagements this year with those for the Bradford population as a whole.

Overall, **54% of all engagements with The Leap this year were from the 10% most deprived areas of England**, showing great reach into the most deprived communities in Bradford. This is compared to the just 35% of Bradford who live in these most deprived areas. This figure

²¹ For more, please see The Audience Agency's website <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum>

²² Indices of deprivation are an official way of measuring levels of deprivation in local authorities in England. They rank local authorities using a number of metrics such as employment, income, health

is also **substantially higher than last year's results** at 40%, showing that The Leap has made **good progress towards furthering their engagement with the communities in Bradford who need them the most**.

2.3. Audience and participant experience

Audiences and participants at the community-led heritage award winners' events rated the quality of the events, the value for money and the overall experience very highly. Audiences rated the events 10 out of 10 on average.²³

**Creativity and community is life affirming.
Absolutely magnificent.**

Audience member, via social media

The community-led heritage events also really resonated with audiences across Bradford, providing meaningful experiences for them to engage with their own heritage.

Our history, heritage and culture must be shared and not hidden.

Audience member, community-led heritage event

Award winners themselves saw first-hand what their events meant to the people of Bradford:

deprivation and crime. For more on Indices of Deprivation please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

²³ Based on a low number of responses



Participants came away feeling better connected with their roots, feeling they had ownership of their own history and it strengthened their civic pride.

Award winner, community-led heritage

Audience members and participants also reported having and enjoying new cultural experiences with institutions in Bradford such as the University and their local library:

This project was great because it got the children into Bradford University, which was a great experience for them.

Participant, community-led heritage event

Seeing this [inclusive dance workshop led by disabled dance artist Catrina Farnell] makes you realise this is how it should be, you don't see things like this happening normally, it's absolutely fantastic this is happening in the Library.

Participant, Creative Place Partner award winner event

Events this year also brought communities together to celebrate creativity.

Coming to the event with my 6 year old son and sat at the collage table with lots of other families collaging together, I realised the event offered a rare opportunity for us

to spend time with people from different communities in Keighley in a friendly and creative environment.

Participant, Creative Place Partner award winner event

The Commoners Ball – a wonderful grand finale to the Intercultured Festival, from people from diverse cultures and especially migrant communities. Very refreshing to hear creativity, passion and music from within the heart of the community. Thank you for platforming and showcasing voices and talent which may not be readily heard or visible.

Audience member, Pioneer Award winner event

Participants at The Leap's networking and training events were equally inspired by their participation.

Great insight to the funded projects, good input from the panellists, very helpful workshops. Fab food and networking opportunities. Lovely atmosphere and all in all a great day! Thanks so much.

Really engaging and inspiring - so good to connect with other creatives doing important work via the arts.

Participants, training and networking event

2.3.1. A note regarding the data

As the value of awards given out by the Creative Place Partners were very small, sometimes as little as £50, limited audience data was collected by their award winners given their limited resources. As such, focus was on demographic information, and experience data is less consistent across award types, particularly quantitative data. A bespoke toolkit aimed at addressing these gaps is in development, details of which are shown in the *Appendices*.

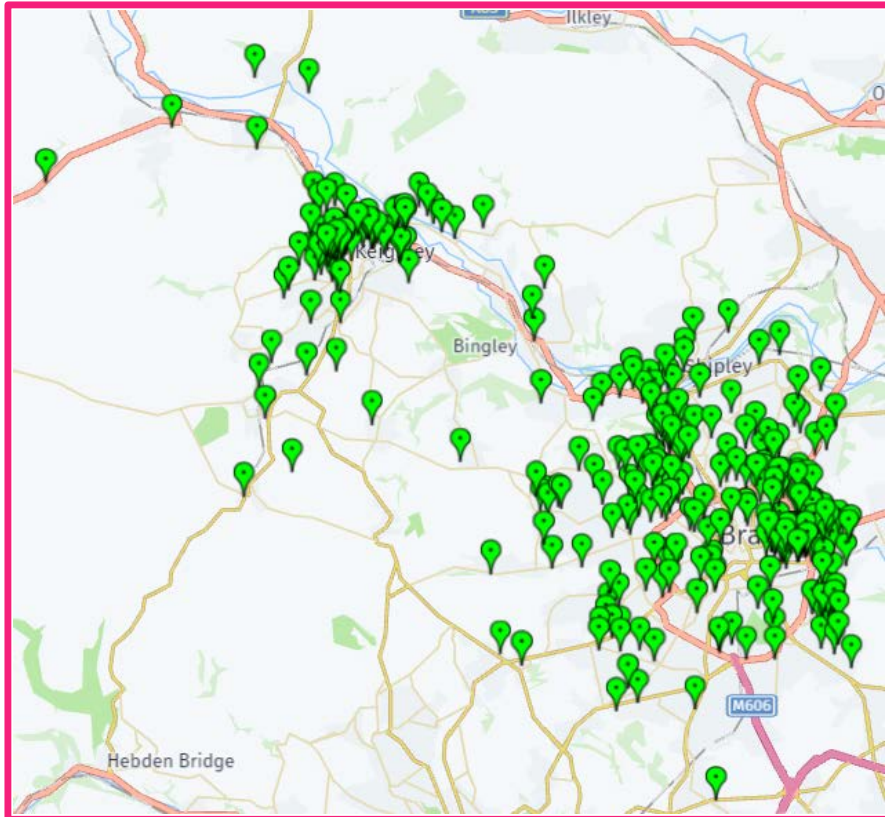


Figure 6: Map of Bradford-based audience and participant postcodes. Base = 645

The map above shows The Leap’s reach with audiences and participants this year. There is a strong pattern of reach in key areas such as Keighley and less reach in areas typically more likely to engage in the arts, which suggests more reach with those least likely to engage in the arts.



Case study: Brown Paper Books

How can a young person with a passion for books inspire people who don't read to engage?

About the project

Brown Paper Books is run by Phoebe Smith, a local actor, and was awarded £1500 through a Radical Social Award, an award from The Leap designed to offer young creative people the chance to act on new ideas which will make a difference to the community. The project has so far reached 45 people.

The project is aimed at people who don't read a great deal, and encourages them to join with others to read a new and mysterious book. People sign up to attend a book club at which they are given a mystery book wrapped in brown paper when they arrive. The books are selected by Phoebe after careful reading of reviews and purchased from independent bookshops. Those attending open the book and they discuss it together.

The project has so far involved four book meetings:

- The first meeting focused on 'Before the coffee gets cold' by Toshikazu Kwaguchi (2015) and was attended by ten people who met at Cake'ole café in Bradford.
- The second, to celebrate Pride Week, explored the book 'We have always been here' by Samra Habib (2019). That meeting was held in the Record Café in Bradford and 12 people came. Two other people came to the café, noticed the group and joined in – Phoebe often brings spare books just in case.
- The third meeting was in the Record Café again and the theme was horror. The book was 'Out of hibernation – the creatures', debut novel from local author Robyn J Hunter (2023).
- The fourth session discussed 'You and me on vacation' by Emily Henry (2021). In this meeting, Robyn Hunter attended to discuss her book, introduced in the previous session, with the readers.

I want to reach people who don't read as much... there are a lot of different abilities. But having the book club and having a deadline of when the book should be finished, it's bringing that to people.

Phoebe Smith

The sessions have been going very well – people are interested and engaged, and the bookshops and cafés are very supportive. The participants often tend to be female, and Phoebe has found that the group haven't really wanted to read much work by male authors, and she wants to explore the reasons for this.

Experience and outcomes

Developing leadership: As a developing young leader in the arts, Phoebe has gained experience and confidence in applying for funding and leading a project.

Although Phoebe found the process of applying a bit challenging, as she had never done a funding application before, she now feels more confident as she knows the process better. She has learnt about the challenges of running sessions, including dealing with people not showing up or cancelling at short notice.

Phoebe also says that looking back she would have organised the first three meetings in one go to give herself more time to spend on the group activities themselves. She has appreciated talking about the project to new people who want to know more, as well as about the books themselves.

New engagement with the arts: People are reading books they would not have considered before. One reader said it was "really different" for her to read fiction as she generally only reads self-help books. Phoebe feels that for this reader "it was quite new for her to lose herself in her imagination and read something that isn't real."

Developing social connections: People attending the sessions have met new people – including Phoebe herself – and got to know people with a shared interest, making new connections.



Learnings

In the future, she's thinking of running another session on a different day, and also perhaps doing a 'book swap trolley' where both covered up and uncovered books would be left in public for people.

She may also experiment with doing a book swap within the group or letting other group members choose books for the group.

I am really enjoying the book club, I am enjoying mixing with different people and reading different books each month and as the host you're really welcoming

Book Club attendee



Case study: The Impact Gaming Academy

Working with a local C.I.C. to reach and support young people with interest in gaming and IT and grow leadership.

About the project

Impact Gamers C.I.C. is a community interest company that exists to inspire young people away from just playing games to becoming game makers.

Their Impact Gaming Academy received a Pioneer Award of £10,000 from The Leap with the aim of building community capacity through training up young adults to act as mentors and run gaming sessions for children. The project reached 145 people and aimed to develop their leadership skills for the future through:

- o Supporting the young adults to develop skills in teaching how to deliver content and develop games,
- o Building self-confidence through positive weekly sessions with good staff support, and
- o Growing ambition by helping the young people become part of a community-based organisation making a difference in Bradford.

The idea developed when Adam Syrop of Impact Gamers noticed that there were a large number of children locally who didn't really engage with clubs or hobbies in any way, partly through lack of funds or interest in the groups available; they spent lots of time playing games isolated at home.

Impact Gamers developed an afterschool group for these children to attend so they could socialise in a safe environment, make friends and create positive games of their own, rather than spend time alone playing games which could have a very negative side. The Pioneer Award helped the project develop further, in training young adults, usually local students seeking relevant work experience, to work with these children alongside staff.

It's not about the games made, it's about the lives changed.

Adam Syrop, Impact Gaming

Impact Gamers helps build up my resilience a lot more, which is something I don't really find it easy to do.

Trainee, Impact Gaming

Approach and learning

The project funded development of a year's worth of curriculum and allowed Impact Gamers to run 24 weeks of induction programmes. This enabled the training up of volunteers to work during the sessions to gain work skills and experience.

Over six months they had trained twelve young people, four of which wanted to continue working with Impact Gamers to support their community work and three come regularly to do work experience and work on commercial projects.

The Impact Gamers designed an approach that was bespoke and highly effective:

- The staff, children and young people work in small groups, usually six children and two to three adults/workers, so there will be one member of staff and two workers trained up through the Pioneer Fund.
- When working, the focus is on the child's screen so the staff and student can all discuss the work or how the child is and not feel pressured or awkward when answering questions.
- Parents are asked to contribute ten pounds a session, but only if they feel they can afford it.
- Adam says 'The kids who are disruptive in groups...are the ones who want to be heard. And so when we start the session, we always start [by saying] 'How has your week been? Do you want to share how your day has been?''

The next steps are for the trained-up workers to take this work forward. The development of the set of session plans through the time spent on course development will allow them to teach and mentor more independently, and they will have the aims and materials needed for each session already planned.

The workers will now be able to carry out more weekly classes, and Adam has been able to arrange to pay them (not through Pioneer Award money) to make their attendance not be at detriment to their finance.

The fact is Impact Gamers is different from college as I feel [it] is more joyful. I'm more open to talking about how things are going. I feel more open to asking questions, seeking support from others.

Trainee, Impact Gaming

Outcomes

Developing new leaders

The 'world of work': The young people develop awareness of and skills for working in the gaming / game development field after college in a way that is both practical and supportive.

Confidence: Both Adam and the young people themselves feel that they have developed in self-confidence. Adam says, 'They make new friends [and have] grown in confidence, they're able to share their ideas, they're able to express their thoughts and creativity; that's a win for us.'

Skills: Programming, game making and tutoring skills – as they learn how to teach others who attend the sessions – have all been developed by the young people.

Reference: They gain a relevant and current reference for any other course or job applications they are interested in applying for.

Mentoring and support: If the young people need support with other issues that they wish to share over the times of the sessions, Adam and the team can offer that to them.

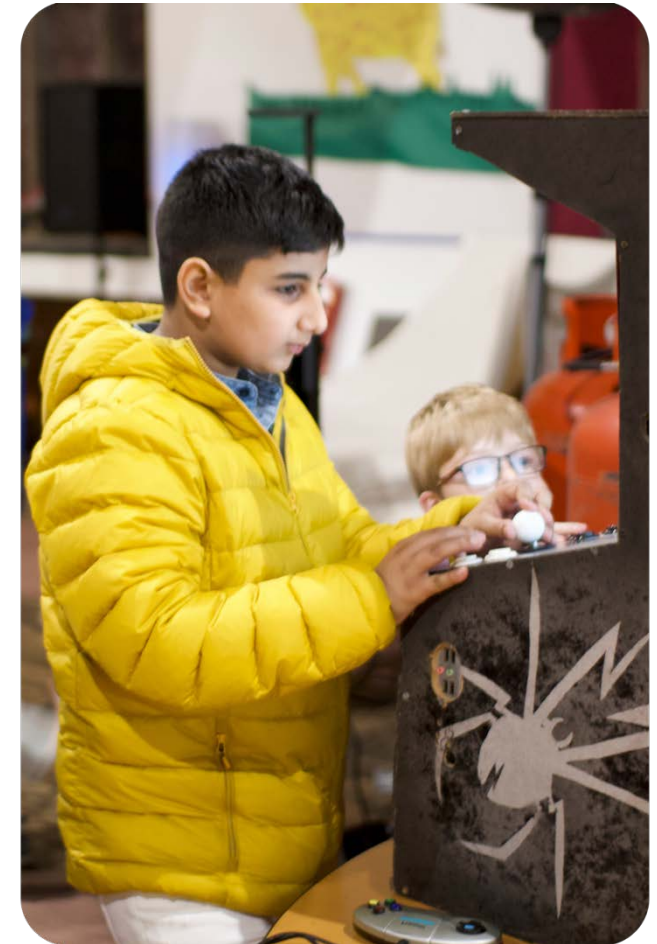
Demand: There has been enough interest from both children attending the Programme and students hoping to become workers to expand the original number of sessions offered, and Impact Gaming will continue to offer further sessions after the Pioneer Award project has finished.

Learnings for all

Planning ahead pays off: Allows staff and all the trained-up workers to feel prepared and confident for sessions.

Communication: The most effective way of communication was to have a 'team WhatsApp' rather than email – it was essential to make sure everyone was updated on what was happening over different sessions in a week.

Safe spaces and talking: Partly because everyone is looking at the screen rather than making eye contact, children found it easier to communicate their feelings. As Adam explains, 'That's really useful in terms of them giving an honest answer. If you ask them



something, it's the same when you're travelling in a car – you have the deep meaningful because you're on a journey together, you can't get out for an hour or so, but you also haven't got that eye contact, you haven't got that awkwardness.' Adam feels that through conversation about how the children are feeling, including by the mentor workers demonstrating this, they children are learning the principles of how to engage with each other and support each other – valuable experiences and skills for them.

A mini website: It would be useful to have a small website with background information on who, where, what, why and how of the project – going into talk to colleges and schools did not always lead to contact with students right away, and that information would have been good for tutors as they often prompted students to get involved in the future.

Women in gaming: Adam has found that men spend more time on their consoles, but women spend more time playing games on their phones; the split ends up around 50:50. However, all the workers coming through the Pioneer Award programme to be mentors have been men (although the younger children attending are also 50:50). By reaching out to colleges and emphasising that this involves design, drawing, youth work and social work as well as programming and gaming, Adam hopes to reach more female volunteers and workers.

Clarity on evaluation: The initial meeting about cocreating evaluation for Pioneer Award winners this was quite intense and overly heavy on information; it also was also in the early evening, a tiring time for Adam. However, Adam said Sabir from The Leap was very helpful at helping to break down what it was that needed to be done in terms of evaluation. A mini website to support understanding and provide resources for what is needed could be used.

Applying for and receiving the award: Adam found the process of applying very clear and says the support and clarity from Leap staff was excellent. The split award payment was very helpful. 'I knew what payment was coming in when and what it was for. So that was that was dead simple. And the fact that it's an upfront payment in terms of the fact that we are at the beginning of that block work rather than the end - in terms of cash flow, that's obviously ideal because payment by receipt is tricky.'

I like that you've been kind enough to give me a PC so I can work from home, and that you [have been] really helpful and kind.

Trainee, Impact Gaming



3. Leadership in quality community art

In this section we explore how The Leap has supported the communities of Bradford District to have increased confidence, skills and networks so they can develop arts and culture of the highest quality in terms of process and outcome.

The Leap aims to ensure there is 'more art of the highest quality in terms of process and outcome' available for the people of Bradford district. It is widely recognised that there are some real challenges to talking about quality both of art and engagement within an arts context, so we look at how The Leap are redefining both to support work which resonates and is developed, commissioned and owned by the community, developing leadership in the process.

This section addresses ACE Research Question 2: To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?

We find that:

- The Leap is clear and committed to its approach of developing community leadership to enable work to be produced which is meaningful to the community
- Several new leaders have emerged and been supported
- The award programme approach, along with pre-award support, has uncovered and valued the existing talent, and led to a diverse set of projects being funded

- Local community members respond positively to the way the work reflects their communities and cultures
- The community is very engaged in the process for The Leap, mainly through applying for awards to deliver their own projects along with and for their communities
- Funding panels for awards are widely used and experience from the CPPs offer opportunities to extend these to include a wider range of assessors particularly from non-professional backgrounds.

As The Leap takes a very hands off approach to the actual producing of the art, it isn't appropriate to assess only on outcomes (although it will be very useful to get this data).

We need to look at inputs and how they may lead to longer term outcomes and impacts. In this section we are considering how the work of The Leap affects their aim of increasing community leadership and capacity to commission, oversee and produce high quality art.

3.1. Quality work which is meaningful to local audiences

Quality is a complex thing to define within CPP art, so we use the central concept within the CPP network commissioned research paper 'What it does to you: Excellence in CPP'²⁴ to define excellence

²⁴See <https://static.a-n.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/What-it-Does-to-You-Excellence-in-CPP.pdf>

in terms of the impact and resonance it has for audiences and participants.

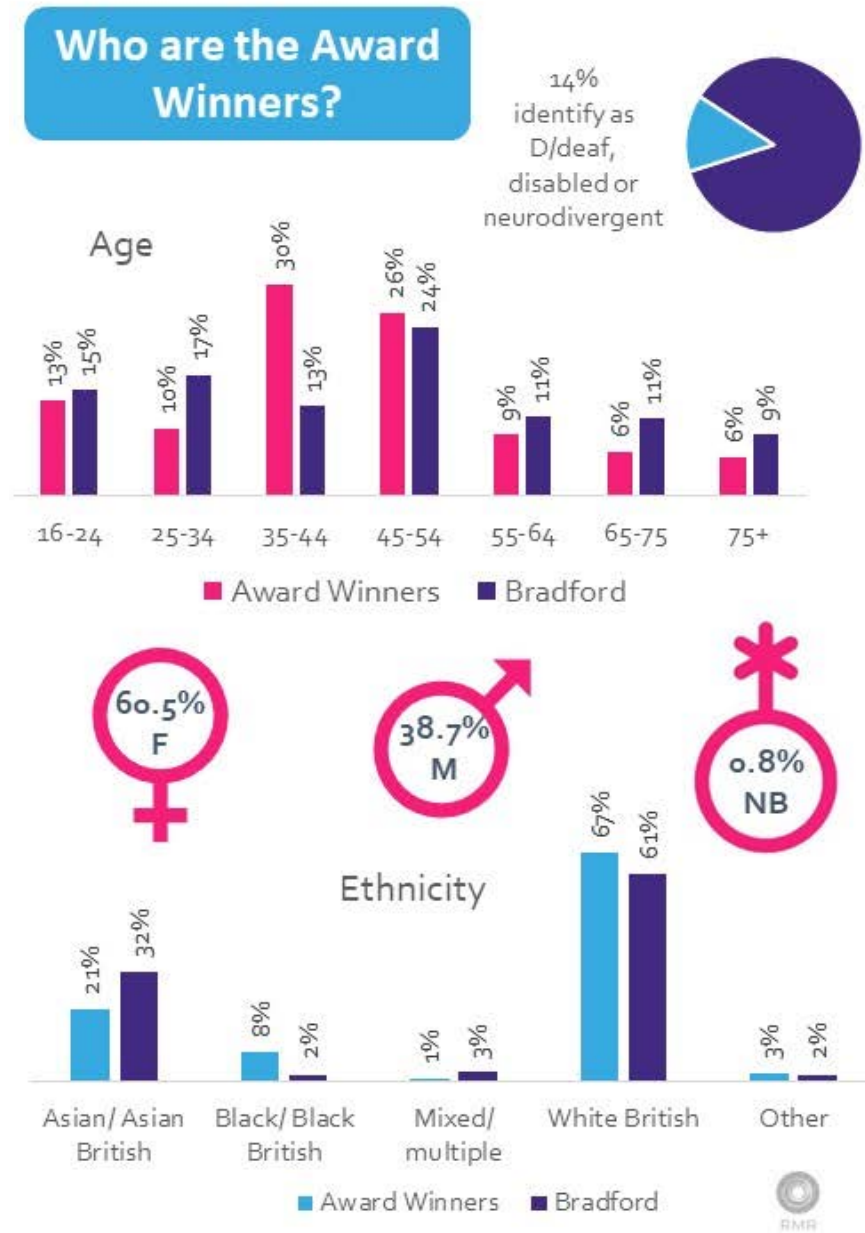
The Leap defines quality art in terms of how meaningful it is for Bradford audiences – particularly those who don't typically engage in the arts.

This 'what it does to you' is affected by the various metrics of quality – the inspiration of the piece, quality of production and certainly resonance of the subject; stories and artists involved really affect the way any art experience affects audiences and participants.

The Leap have been particularly effective at finding people from diverse communities of Bradford and Keighley who have talent and ideas, and often existing artistic or cultural practices which have gone unrecognised, sometimes for years. Along with their partners, they have encouraged people to step forward and apply for awards to make and develop this work, which is particularly resonant with their communities. The infographic here shows a breakdown of award winners this year. Award winners are more likely to be younger and either Black/ Black British or White British than the general population of Bradford. They are also more likely to be male than the typical audience of The Leap this year.

The Leap works with a wide range of artists – funding or employing over 150 different artists and creatives in the 2022-23 financial year. This group includes both people who self-define and have worked extensively in the past as artists, through to artists who in the past might not have had the confidence or validation to self-define as such; all are valued for the quality of their inspiration and insight.

The Leap have been increasingly clear about how they value the technical skills and expertise of experienced artists in making work which resonates and makes a difference to Bradford District communities, and several of the heritage projects in particular were



artist-led – albeit very community co-produced. People who would self-define as artists are increasingly involved with and working alongside the communities, often being part of the communities themselves. It was clear from these and some of the other projects that award winners appreciated having access to the skills and experience of specialists in artforms, producing and production skills, dramaturgy etc. as it added to their own development and skills.

We don't have sufficient direct data on the audience and participant response to the work of Leap awards, and as such this needs to be included in future data gathering. However, we can see indications of how work has resonated and been meaningful to local audiences from the levels of attendance at events and qualitative feedback, highlighted below and above in Section 2.

Your initiative has resonated with people far beyond Bradford city. Well done.

Audience member, via social media

This outcome is particularly seen in attendance by people from areas of the district where conventionally measured arts engagement is low, as well as from diverse communities, as shown in the map in the previous section.

Additionally, Impacts & Insights²⁵ analysis collected for one event by The Leap this year reveals that participants rated the event highly important for the local area (91%), felt the event was well thought through and put together (84%) and would make them come back to a similar event in the future (83%). They also found the content of the event relevant to them (78%), distinctive from

²⁵ Impacts & Insights Toolkit uses multiple dimensions to assess the quality of arts and culture events. For more, see <https://impactandinsight.co.uk/>

things they had experienced before (78%) and felt it made an important cultural contribution (75%).

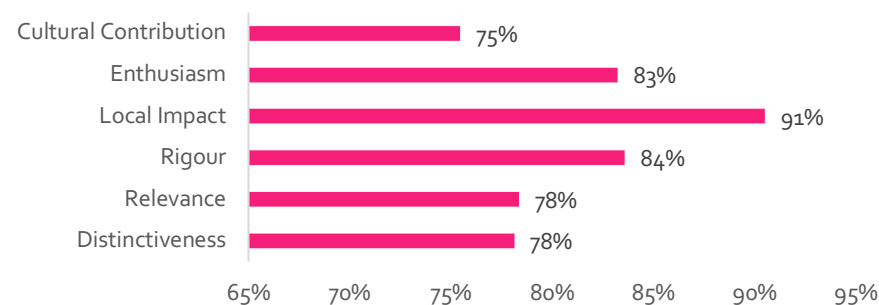


Figure 7: Impacts & Insights quality dimensions. Base = 16

These Impacts & Insights results show a positive reflection of the quality of events from The Leap, and additional data collection next year will support the robustness of this finding.

3.2. Developing community leadership for excellent art

In order to make excellent work by and with the community rather than for or to it,²⁶ there is a need to develop up more local people to have the skills and confidence to lead arts projects. The Radical Social Awards have given opportunities to young people with very creative ideas, but no experience of delivering projects. These projects are usually specifically designed to reach their peers – thus young people across the district – or to put across some of their passions to a wider set of people.

²⁶ For further discussion on the Asset-Based Community Development model of development / producing 'by' the community, see Cormac Russell's work - https://www.academia.edu/38713222/FOUR_MODES_OF_CHANGE_TO_FOR_WITH_BY

3.3. Sharing power around decision making

As part of The Leap’s commitment to being community-led, all project awards are assessed by way of Community Assessment Panels who collectively assess applications against criteria to make funding decisions. The Leap is shifting power by putting community members to be at the heart of these crucial decisions, ensuring they are the ones to decide how funding is allocated.

The community panel members are given criteria to score against, but also encouraged to use their own perspective and experience too. Reasons successful applications received funding included addressing important social issues or community need, programming in areas of current low provision and increasing the autonomy and confidence of young people.

The Leap are using the community funding panel model directly for decisions on their awards programmes such as the Pioneer Programme, as well as indirectly through their Creative Place Partners programme, more details of which are covered below.

3.3.1. Outcomes

Giving community members the power of decision-making has resulted in positive outcomes:

- Communities have a say in how funding is spent
- Panel members felt empowered by the experience
- Panel members made connections with other creatives as a result and even went to see the events they chose to fund
- Having community members on panels led to an increased exposure to different communities and activities

**That’s why I’m saying, “Take the risk!”
I know how it feels to be on the other side of this process.**

Panel member

However, some areas for potential improvement have also been raised

- A greater range of people – particularly including more people who don’t have senior professional jobs – is required for more community representation
- And panels are seen as a time intensive process with longer applications taking longer to assess.

3.3.2. Learning

Build on foundations

Community member panels have already had a positive impact on decision making and networking, so the next step is to increase community member involvement and create a bank of community members who can sit on panels. This is important as it is well known that we all have a tendency to bias thinking towards people more like us – thus reproducing inequality. To increase community representation, include people from non-professional backgrounds too as these will represent the broadest range of target award applicants.

Support collaboration

Stakeholders report that occasionally it was challenging to develop a shared understanding of the process without a pre-panel meeting. Implementation of this could aid cohesive decision-making and collaboration, and reduce the intensity of time resources required.

3.3.3. Review and streamline

Some criteria are felt to be overlapping with others, and the length of the applications hindered the speed with which they could be assessed.

Shorter applications would lead to an increase in processing speed and reduce the resources needed from the panel, whilst being mindful to include enough detail for a fair assessment.

There were also times when the panels were completely overloaded by the level of demand with every application being sent to them. For panels where there are a lot of applications, a pre-selection could be carried out by the team or by the panel each looking at a proportion of applications. This would create a 'shortlist' to be reviewed by all in more depth.



Case study: We're Rolling! Bradford Young Filmmakers Challenge

How do you encourage creative skills in filmmaking?

About the project

We're Rolling! was a Bradford Young Filmmakers Challenge designed for anyone aged 11-20 in school, college, alternative provision or SEN schools in the Bradford District. It was run by Louisa Rose Mackleston of Northern Fortress films, a Bradford based production company founded in 2021. Northern Fortress applied for (and received) £5000 from the Pioneer Awards programme run by the Leap, and an additional £5000 from the Screen Industries Growth Network, and reached 100 people.

The project was designed to help young people get into the screen industries to learn digital skills and storytelling skills and improve social mobility and prospects for young people in Bradford in the creative industries. People submitted their own films made using any camera, on any genre and subject, so long as they were set in Bradford. If they felt additional support was needed in advance of submission, they could opt to receive a learning pack and could receive support by email, calls or even some workshops on particular areas. They were also able to borrow sound equipment, and there were links for educators to sign up their organisations. Prizes included free workshops at Sticks and Glass production company (Leeds) and shopping vouchers.

The original deadline was extended to 31st May. 18 entries were sent which included animations, horror films and dramas and the 9 of finalists' films were screened either at the big screen ahead of the awards ceremony, or at the ceremony itself held on 27th July at Fountains Church in Bradford, attended by over 80 finalists, friends, family and educators.

**The award ceremony...
was amazing for the
students and their
families. They got to see
the other films
nominated and heard
from a range of
filmmakers doing
amazing work locally...
It was inspiring.**

Betts Fetherston, Lead Work Experience
Coordinator, Keighley College

Outcomes and experience

Good response: We're Rolling! was very well received by those who took part and by the colleges and schools and alternative provision centres around them. There were 18 submissions, each involving from one to ten or more people.

Timing: In common with some other Pioneer projects, there were some issues with timing – although the project launched in November some issues delayed marketing, and that had a knock-on effect on the project timeline. That meant that some participants were preparing for and taking exams at the time the films needed to be made, and there were also some difficulties getting hold of schools.

Feedback: Louisa made a point of getting and adapting to feedback and acting on it. For example, this led to the project deadline being extended and to a purchase of sound equipment to be lent to the students to use.

Student confidence: Ten out of twelve students who responded to Louisa's Ceremony feedback survey saying their confidence in their filmmaking skills had increased since they had been before taking part in We're Rolling! (and two saying it was the same). The Lead Work Experience coordinator at Keighley, working with a group of students who often felt excluded from many activities due to SEN or health reasons, noted the development in their 'learning and understanding, and especially confidence and willingness to push themselves'.

Support: All the children who responded to the question 'Did you feel you had enough support throughout the competition?' on the feedback survey, and also all their teachers, said they felt they had enough support, and all said they would participate again in We're Rolling in the future.

Going forward: Some of the Keighley students have linked up to the Unit, a Channel 4 funded project supporting filmmaking in Keighley, and are now involved there.



Learnings for all

Marketing and reach: Well designed and well targeted publicity material helped reach people who might not more traditional publicity – for example, at Keighley College it gained eight submissions from a group of students who often weren't included in activities, whether for health or financial reasons. However, despite all the work including doing workshops and plenty of outreach and having many conversations, the reach wasn't as wide as was hoped for, with response from schools in particular being low.

Louisa may try to team up with someone with an education background for the next project to help attune it more to the education sector and work on ways to get the message out.

Communication: Sometimes after they had applied, the young people could be hard to contact. Support was offered in the form of calls, meetings and emails but 'children are not used to the adult world of emails' and Louisa felt it would not be appropriate to phone or text them (due to safeguarding issues) so communication could be tricky.

Project timing and education: The project, ended up coinciding with students' exam preparations so their time was more limited, but the project needed to complete by July because some of those students would then leave. Timing the Leap awards earlier in the academic year e.g. September would help avoid these difficult times.

Submissions process: A hitch with the sign-up process for sending in the films, which appeared to relate to some education-based email systems, needed some extra support but was successfully ironed out – so there was a need for problem solving during the course of the project.

Applying for The Leap award: The process of applying was very good. Louisa says, 'I'm glad that they put the support in place and explained how to use that at the start, because I've just stuck to it and that's been my working budget.'

Future participation: There will be scope to work with colleges, schools and alternative provision further to perhaps plan future film competitions, building on the engagement that has happened with this project already. This could be an example of a 'scalable' project, one that could be run on a larger scale in the future.

It's helped me see I can do it.

Now I have more confidence that a career in film is possible for me.

Feedback from Challenge participants

Case study: Our Baul Heritage Project, Manningham Housing Association

How do you use community created art to bring people together to engage with their heritage?

About the project

Our Baul Heritage Project is run by Sadar Uddin, Community Partnerships and Investment Manager at Manningham Housing Association in conjunction with community members.

Through conversations at the Housing Association, Sadar discovered that there were several tenants who had been writing poems and songs that represented their culture and life in the UK. This writing was around the cultural and musical heritage of the south Asian communities and included Baul Folk Music - Baul songs are included by UNESCO on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and the Baul were originally mystic minstrels sharing oral history through their music, and travelling in Bangladesh and in West Bengal, India²⁷. The residents felt that this heritage needed to be revived, preserved and promoted for the future generation of communities in Bradford and for other interested people from all over United Kingdom.

Some of the writers had published their work and were highly qualified, but others had spent much time writing Baul songs and poetry which had never been published.

The Our Baul Heritage Project aims to translate the songs to sheet music, so the songs can be shared universally in all communities, and also as into Urdu, Bengali or English as required. One tenant, a Syrian refugee, created artwork based on her life story and has 'translated' the songs into artwork, which will also be included in the book, another tenant is contributing their calligraphy. The translations have been compiled into a book called 'Baul and Mystic Songs of South Asian Heritage' (subtitled 'Celebrating UK City of Culture Bradford 2025'). 500 copies of the book are being published - it is free and comprises two volumes, one of around 50 songs and another of 60 or 70, which were selected by a writer's panel. It will be shared with schools, colleges and community venues.

If it wasn't for this project, then all the writers and the artists and the calligraphers, their work would probably would have been hidden away on a shelf somewhere within their own home.

Sadar Uddin

²⁷ UNESCO website [Baul songs - intangible heritage - Culture Sector - UNESCO](#)

Outcomes and experience

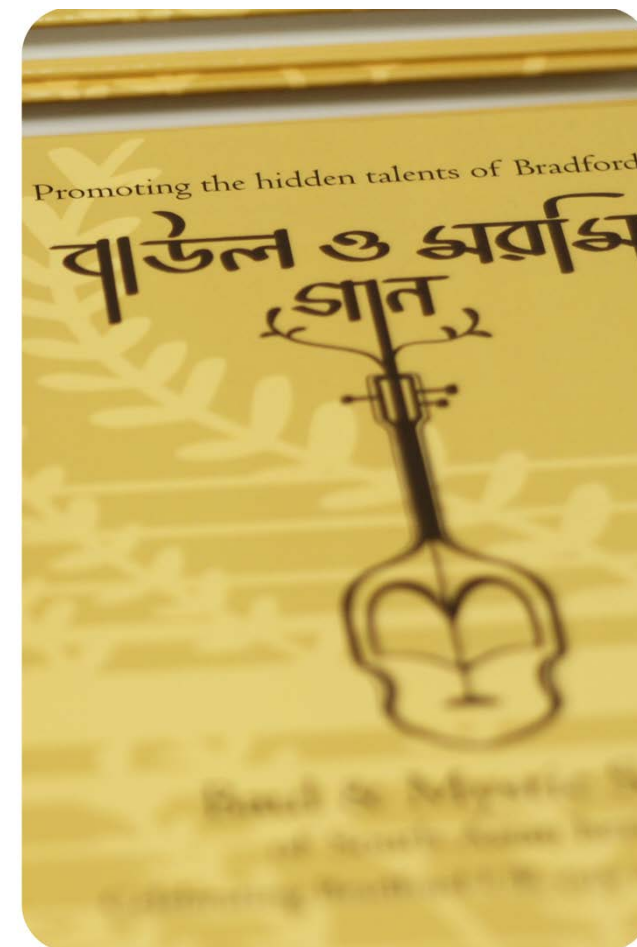
Preservation of hidden, oral histories: The Our Baul Heritage Project has been able to record and preserve a great number of Baul works created by members of the local community.

Community led decision making: Sadar left the group of writers to decide which songs should be included in the project and played at the final event, so that the writers would feel pride in what they had achieved.

Recognition of artistic talent: Sadar says "Baul music writers who live and work in Bradford district class themselves as ordinary people. At Manningham Housing Association, we see them as talented people who deserve recognition."²⁸. Having their work included in this book enables people to recognise and share their own artistic skills, knowledge and experience.

Awareness increased: Promotion of the book to local communities has increased awareness of Baul heritage amongst new audiences – it was featured in several different housing journals, and there was also a radio interview on Bradford Community Broadcasting (BCB) Radio. So far, the project has reached an audience of 200 people (with more who will read the book, and 8 core participants).

Good practice: The Housing Association Charitable Trust (HACT) will be attending the book launch and Sadar hopes the project will serve as an example of good practice so that it can be replicated elsewhere by other Housing Associations.



²⁸ From [Bangladesh folk music project aims to revive Baul music in Bradford | Bradford Telegraph and Argus \(thetelegraphandargus.co.uk\)](https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk)

Learnings

Good application process and payments approach: Sadar says, 'Certainly we'll recommend the Leap because the application process is good; the support from Leap staff is excellent.' He says he was told when the payments would be and found the split award payment very helpful, saying, 'Although we're a Housing Association, slightly bigger than voluntary sector charities, advance payment for smaller organizations with limited financial capacity definitely helps to fix up projects.'

The Leap sharing events: These are a great place for networking, and also help avoid the duplication of work in separate projects in different organisations, potentially leading to complimenting or joint projects instead.

Next steps: Manningham Housing Association hopes to have some of the songs played live to audiences as well as via recordings. 'I think we'll be looking at hiring musicians, artists, singers, putting them all in a studio and getting those songs recorded,' Sadar says. Another aim is to provide a place where young people can come to learn the traditional musical instruments used in Baul music.

If a new generation of people don't learn, or if the songs don't get documented in a book, it will get lost.

Sadar Uddin





4. Creative Place Partners as a model of devolved decision making

In this section we discuss how the Creative Place Partners programme is providing a new model for devolving decision making for cultural projects at The Leap.

We find that:

- The Leap have developed an exciting and innovative approach to devolving funding within the arts
- Partners have taken a range of different approaches to reaching, supporting and awarding projects
- The range of people awarded funding is wide and very different from the range of people who usually deliver funded arts and culture
- There has been considerable learning on how to support people to apply for and deliver projects
- The model needs further time to deliver, and more data to provide evidence of outcomes to audiences, but it is clearly already reaching more people who didn't previously engage in funded arts and culture.

4.1. Context and scope

Through its Creative Place Partners (CPP) programme, The Leap aims to empower local communities by:

- Shifting power and decision-making to the people
- Fostering cultural skills, capacity and confidence in communities and partners
- Expanding the ecosystem of support for people and places that have low engagement with funded arts and culture.

The programme is designed to enable communities to shape and deliver their own arts and culture programmes.

The goal of the Creative Place Partners programme is to broaden and strengthen the creative ecology of Bradford. It aims to make it easier for communities, organisations, artists and creative entrepreneurs to find the help they need to grow arts and cultural activities that reflect the diversity and uniqueness of the people in the district.

To achieve this, the programme co-designs and experiments with innovative approaches to co-commissioning, match-funding, participatory budgeting and decision-making.

The Programme collaborates with partners who have established trust in their communities and can reach out and identify people and groups with great ideas. The Leap aims to share its skills, expertise and networks to provide funding and support to these partners, thus making a positive impact on their communities. Together, the goal is to learn and implement effective strategies for

providing the necessary help to start up and grow arts and cultural initiatives.

CPPs work with The Leap to deliver awards to people in their local communities and are themselves recipients of Leap awards (£25k each) through a competitive tendering process. In addition, some provide match funding (predominantly in-kind), and from that overall amount decide on an award pot. The CPPs then distribute small awards to local community groups and individuals – offering advice and support to their award winners through one-to-one consultation and workshops.

We review five of the²⁹ CPPs collaborating with The Leap. Each operates in distinct ways, engages with diverse communities and works on different geographical scales. This model has been developed through extensive consultations and co-design efforts with communities and sector partners to foster creativity, community engagement and positive social change.

These five CPPs are:

1. **Bradford District Senior Power**, a local charity largely run by volunteers. They serve as an independent voice for older people in Bradford District, advocating for their rights and well-being. They empower the elderly population by providing opportunities for creative expression and community engagement.
2. **Bradford Moor PASS**, an established partnership for over 15 years, works with The Leap to deliver bottom-up solutions to community needs in Bradford Moor. Together, they engage

with local communities and implement initiatives that address specific challenges and improve the quality of life for residents.

3. **The Holmewood Collective**, a collaboration between several community-based organisations, including the Sutton Centre, OutLOUD, and United Art. They focus on supporting underserved communities in the arts and creative activities. This partnership aims to provide inclusive opportunities for self-expression, empowerment, and community development.
4. **KAWACC**, in conjunction with Keighley Creative, is a registered charity and voluntary organisation that provides holistic support to underserved communities in Keighley. Keighley Creative, as a volunteer-led arts organisation, plays a vital role in this partnership by delivering exciting projects and fun activities that engage and uplift the local community.
5. **WomenZone**, in partnership with Kala Sangam, address the disadvantages faced by women in Bradford Moor. WomenZone (registered charity) and Kala Sangam (intercultural arts hub) collaborate to empower women and promote gender equality. Through their partnership, they create a safe and inclusive space for women while celebrating the diverse cultures that make up contemporary Britain.

CPPs operate at a local geographic scale and engage with specific communities. They have distinct purposes and focus areas, as outlined below. Additionally, some CPPs consist of individual organisations, while others are collective groups, including in two cases a community focused organisation with an arts organisation to gain greater reach. For example, NPO Kala Sangam is partnering with WomenZone who have no previous experience in arts delivery.

²⁹ There are 7 Creative Place Partners, but due to differences in style we are only focusing on 5 for the purposes of this report. 1 has completed, 2 are well underway and 2 are just getting started giving out awards. For info on all 7 see - [creative place partners — THE LEAP \(the-leap.org.uk\)](https://the-leap.org.uk/creative-place-partners)

For more information about each CPP, including a breakdown of their distinctive features, please see *Appendix 4*.

4.2. Community development and “COM-B”

The Leap’s work with CPPs is influenced by the COM-B approach. As explained above, this stands for Capability, Opportunity, Motivation and Behaviour. This approach is a framework for understanding behaviour change and is often used in public health interventions. It suggests that for a behaviour to occur, an individual must have the Capability (physical and psychological), the Opportunity (physical and social), and the Motivation (reflective and automatic) to perform the Behaviour. This approach is an important part of The Leap’s methodology and relates to the CPP outputs and outcomes, as discussed below.

The CPPs operate on a philosophy of asset-based community development, which involves working with communities to identify their strengths, needs and aspirations, and supporting them to take collective action to achieve their goals. This approach recognises that communities have unique assets and resources that can be leveraged to address their own challenges.

The Leap/ CPP Programme has three main parts:

1. **Delegated funds:** Local communities receive money to support their own arts and culture programs, and they get to decide how to use it.
2. **Skills, capacity and infrastructure development:** Partner organisations receive support, training, resources and connections to the creative sector and artists. This helps communities deliver high-quality arts and cultural initiatives.
3. **Promoting local decision-making:** The program supports partners in adopting community-led decision-making practices

for arts and culture, giving the local community more say in the process.

Under this model, The Leap does not distribute funds directly, but directs funding through the CPPs. This allows for a more localised approach to funding distribution, as the CPPs have a better understanding of the needs and strengths of their local communities. By working closely with local communities and award winners, the CPPs can ensure that funding is allocated in a way that is most likely to have a positive impact on arts and culture within those communities.

4.3. Outputs

This section of the report aims to evaluate the outputs of the CPPs since their inception. The purpose of this is to determine how well the CPPs have been performing in terms of achieving their stated objectives and whether they have been successful in delivering value to the communities they serve.

A key output is the funds that have been allocated to the CPPs by The Leap. This is an important indicator of the level of support that the CPPs have received and can help to provide insight into the scale and scope of their activities. The number of awards given by the CPPs is also evaluated, as this indicates the number of individuals and organisations that have been supported through the Programme.

We then discuss the number of events and workshops that have been held by the CPPs, which provides an indication of the level of community engagement and participation in arts and culture activities. The demographic reach of the CPP activity across their communities is also assessed, where data is available. This information provides insight into the diversity of the communities



that are being served and whether the CPPs are reaching a broad and representative audience.

From the data we have received so far, £25k has been allocated to each of the CPPs by The Leap. The CPPs have given out 57 awards to award winners. At least 5 events and workshops have been held. To date, fairly early in delivery for most of them, the CPPs have reached at least 587 people through events.

In future updates, we will detail the number of people reached through events, which refers to the size of the audience that has attended CPP-funded events. However, at this stage we do not have this data. This output will provide a measure of the impact of the CPPs' activities on the communities they serve and can help to determine whether the Programme is achieving its objectives of increasing access to arts and culture.

Further information about CPP budgets, approaches and awards can be found in the *Appendices*.

4.4. Emerging outcomes

At the time of writing this report, most of the CPPs are just at the start of the journey in terms of giving out awards. Therefore, the data here is partial. However, our research has highlighted several important outcomes already.

4.4.1. Confidence, skills and capabilities

It is clear that the approach is beginning to deliver significant outcomes – especially around confidence, skills and capabilities.

The awards decision process itself provided the CPPs and the panel with the confidence to make decisions and to engage with culture.

For example, Ibrar Ali from Bradford Moor PASS described how working with The Leap has grown the confidence of the panellists and award winners, especially at this early stage for the panellists evaluating the applicants. He talked about how helpful The Leap was, with someone being there for advice during the week:

Where they thought there wasn't enough information, we had the applicant ready to answer questions by mobile phone. We had one applicant that was a 10-year-old. But we decided not to type it in adult words. We had a basic description of the proposed project; she came in and spoke to the panel direct. She came in and sat there, panel members around, and they talked to her. Again it's an opportunity for a young person to talk to about what she wants to do - amazing. We made sure [that for] every obstacle - we cut it out.

Ibrar Ali, Bradford Moor PASS, Creative Place Partner

He described the impact of the Programme on an award winner called Alice, which led to a community event which 70 people attended:

She had never done a project like this before...someone from The Leap sat down with her [and went through] how to shape the idea, how to budget it. Then she went off and took care of everything, all the event management...so she went through a lot of learning as an individual. Having done this sort of thing for the first time, she's very keen to do another project. She will be on the award panel too now - she's also had invitation from another organisation to have her on the panel.

Ibrar Ali, Bradford Moor PASS, Creative Place Partner

Other interviewees talked about the benefits of networking and extending networks that working with The Leap had given them. The support from The Leap was also mentioned by CPP leaders, as something unusual:

I'm finding that this is the first time a funder is providing a lot of support.

Rubina, WomenZone, Creative Place Partner

This chimes with Ibrar's earlier point about support being readily available from The Leap team.

4.4.2. Opportunities to create projects

The Leap also provided the CPPs with clear opportunities to undertake projects in their communities. Sometimes the opportunity was somewhat undermined by the process.

For example, Ibrar from PASS reflected on the training process itself as being overly burdensome and time consuming:

[It] took so long to get it off the ground...remember we are voluntary organisation we wanted a significant youth presence on the panel. Some of the young people really got into

the whole thing, going through the training [but] I don't think everyone enjoyed the training. It was the kind of training that you'd deliver to an adult panel.

Ibrar, Bradford Moor PASS, Creative Place Partner

However, despite these teething problems, those CPPs that have moved further forward in the process have begun to take ownership of the process.

For example, PASS amended aspects of the process to make it less bureaucratic and better suited to their participants who are young people in the community.

Looking forward, I would be a lot more selective on the panel going forward - have individuals that were keen to get involved in this world, as opposed to being involved in a panel for the sake of it.

Ibrar, Bradford Moor PASS, Creative Place Partner

Time was a factor for many of the CPPs. But the less bureaucratic funding structure was generally appreciated and the micro-grants enabled them to extend their reach into their communities. A key outcome for the CPP award winners was also the ability to do something different.

For example, as WomenZone told us, their award winners gained:

A bit of happiness of experience....a bit of looking out of the box, gaining experience, doing something.

Rubina, WomenZone, Creative Place Partner

4.5. Emerging issues, opportunities and challenges

This thematic analysis explores key themes emerging from interviews and survey data regarding partnership working, reflections on The Leap's methodology, communication and the award process. The analysis draws on direct quotes from respondents and incorporates theoretical and academic analysis where applicable.

4.5.1. Award assessment process

Currently, we are still gathering information from the CPPs about their award assessment procedures. However, some interesting findings came out of discussions about the initial award assessment process by the panel in deciding which CPPs should receive funding.

Reaching smaller groups and individuals

Positive reflections were made on the way awards were made: a CPP representative noted that the CPP award process meant giving awards to smaller groups and individuals that may go unnoticed.

Time constraints

Some interviewees noted that the award assessment process was time-intensive for both applicants and panel members. Time constraints limited the depth of engagement with applications, potentially impacting the quality of decision-making and collaborative assessment.

The process

The award assessment process plays a crucial role in identifying projects that align with The Leap's goals and objectives. However, transparency, fairness and inclusivity are essential for an effective assessment process. The challenges identified in The Leap evaluation align with existing research on award selection processes. Studies highlight the importance of clear criteria, transparency, diversity in panel composition and training for panel members to ensure fair and effective decision-making³⁰.

To date, the feedback from the CPPs themselves about the award process has been very positive, with no applicants raising concerns and a commitment to a very community-led (and peer-led) approach. Further research on this will draw out how this affected the award winners selected.

4.5.2. Challenges and benefits of Creative Place Partnership model

The evaluation of the Creative Place Partnership funding programme revealed challenges and benefits. The themes discussed below include flexibility, lack of clear guidance, concerns about budget and funding allocation and the evaluation of impact.

Flexibility

The Creative Place Partnership funding programme was recognised for its flexibility, providing organisations with the opportunity to explore new ideas and initiatives. One interviewee highlighted this aspect:

³⁰ Bovaird, T., & Löffler, E. (2009). Public management and governance. 2nd edition. London: Routledge.

If I concentrate on the really good side of it...it really feels like it has been designed with the flexibility to just let those organisations have a go ...

CPP partner organisation

This fits with the aims of The Leap in allowing new approaches and taking risks to pursue creative endeavours without excessive restrictions.

However, the flexibility of the programme also presented challenges, particularly regarding a perceived lack of clear guidance provided to the participating organisations. The same interviewee expressed frustration about the initial stages of the programme, stating:

The flip side of that [was] where it's become really difficult... right from the off there was just a complete lack of knowledge or guidance about what should we be doing and what you are going to need from us.

CPP partner organisation

This suggests a need for clear and comprehensive guidance from the Programme administrators to ensure that participating organisations fully understand the extent of the expectations and requirements, and thus only those willing to work in this way take part in later rounds.

Budget and funding allocation

Budget and funding allocation were raised as concerns by the interviewees. It is certainly clear that there have been problems for some organisations in managing their ambition to give out a lot of money to their communities, with the need for funding to deliver the operational processes and also the support and mentoring.

This 'balance' between funds given out and money used for support is very different across the CPP models, with one giving out all of The Leap money in awards (using core funds and volunteer time for support) and others giving out a tiny proportion.

Once we have sufficient data on outcomes for award winners, we will review these models. It is certainly clear that some of the partners struggled with delivery due to not having the staff in place to do the recruitment support.

4.6. Conclusions and looking to the future

The evaluation of The Leap's engagement with the CPPs has highlighted important themes related to partnership working and communication with CPP delivery partners.

It identified the need for improved communication about The Leap's methodology, support and advice to CPPs in approaching delivery, as well as creating an appropriate monitoring approach and clear guidance on all aspects of the process. This section is nowhere near as developed as we had hoped for this stage of the project. This is partly due to the levels of progress of the Creative Place Partners work itself, but also reflects serious delays in data delivery and in some cases no data coming across. Current CPP awards finish delivery in December 2023, meaning that next year's report should be able to reflect all the outcomes – if measured – of this round of the funding.

However we don't think that this should stop The Leap from looking at renewing and further developing the model of devolved funding to upscale the potential difference they can make. At this stage, the indications are very positive about the reach it has into communities in terms of award holders.

Case study: Holmewood Collective

Inspiring and empowering communities through creative funding and support

About the project

The Holmewood Collective is comprised of three community organisations: The Sutton Centre, The United Art Project CIC and OutLOUD Ltd., all focusing on culture, creativity and community empowerment in the Holmewood Estate in South East Bradford.

Despite facing economic and social challenges, the estate boasts a strong community spirit and high levels of everyday cultural participation. The Holmewood Collective received £25,000 in funding from The Leap as a Creative Place Partner. Since then, they have successfully distributed 23 awards, utilising a unique and community-oriented approach to assessing applications. The project has reached 1023 people.

Approach

Building trust through a community-centred approach

Lauren Batty of OutLOUD, a key member of the Holmewood Collective, emphasized the importance of engaging the community and building trust throughout the award process. She highlighted the specific circumstances of the applicants, "with the kind of clientele that we were working with, people that are not used to applying for grants, many of them on benefits."

To bridge this gap and ensure accessibility, the Collective embarked on extensive community outreach efforts. Lauren elaborated, "We had to do quite a lot of work beforehand to help people understand what the grants were for, who could apply, and that it wouldn't affect their benefits." Overcoming initial scepticism and misconceptions, they demonstrated their genuine commitment to supporting the community's creative aspirations.



Outcomes

Diversity of projects. The Holmewood Collective got going well before other CPPs were ready to start and ran their programme throughout 2022. Through the funding provided by The Leap and the guidance of the Holmewood Collective, a diverse range of projects came to life. Residents were invited to theatre trips, art exhibitions, festival meetings and subsequently engaged in weekly art sessions ready for the Holmewood Christmas festival. These initiatives enriched the cultural landscape of the Holmewood Estate.

High levels of engagement. Each project reflects the unique aspirations and talents of the community members involved. The projects were all timed to culminate with a Christmas celebration event which the group knew was what the community wanted. 1023 people from across Holmewood attended this event.

Mentorship and support. Recognising the importance of guidance and support, each awardee was assigned a mentor from the Holmewood Collective. Lauren highlighted their role, stating, "Each person was assigned a mentor, either myself, Carly, or Sam. And then it was our job to support them in whatever way they needed." This support system proved instrumental in nurturing the awardees' confidence and helping them navigate the challenges they encountered along their creative journeys.

Lauren further emphasized the role of encouragement in the mentorship process, stating, "And actually, I think for some of them, they wanted support. They thought they wanted support. But then when you ask them what they need, they're like, 'I don't know.' And I think some of it was more encouragement, just being like, 'You can do this, go on, do it.'"

It was clear that community/people had been involved in the planning and prep [of the Christmas Festival], as there was a real buzz and personality to the event.

Christmas Festival participants

Learnings

The Holmewood Collective's journey highlights several key lessons.

- Engaging the community, building trust and offering accessible funding opportunities are vital for empowering individuals and fostering creativity and maintaining relationships.
- Mentorship and encouragement play a crucial role in supporting aspiring artists, while collaboration and collective vision contribute to the success of community-led projects.
- Speed and diversity in programming has led to high levels of community engagement.

Holmewood Collective's work continues already with Pioneer Programme Award 'The H.E.ARTists Collective' in which Kayle McCoy of United Artists Projects further develops work begun during the CPP by supporting and mentoring the development of some of the young artists who received awards from the CPP.³¹

Looking ahead, the Holmewood Collective envisions further growth and expansion, including the creation of a creative café, an artistic space for exhibitions, crafting, and a recording studio for young people to record music.

The area deserves events like these to cherish and enrich the lives of the people who are rarely able to access such things. A huge well done for the success and joyful celebration!

Christmas Festival participants



³¹ See Case Study below

Case study: The H.E.ARTists Collective

Scaling and multiplying effect: Can we use Pioneer Programme Awards to build on and sustain Creative Place Partner work?

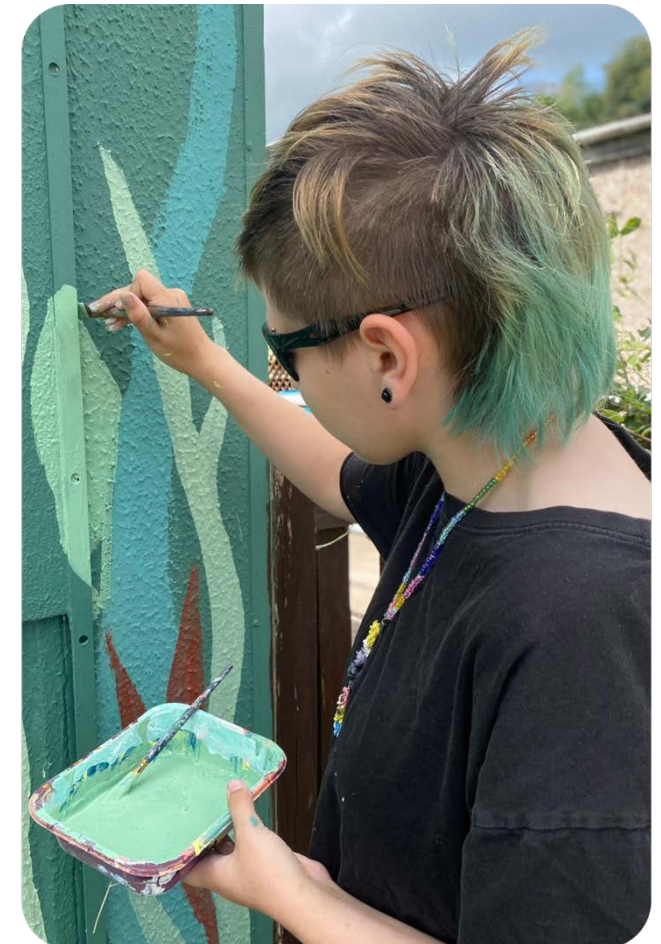
About the project

The H.E.ARTists Collective is a United Art Project (UAP) programme aimed at young Higher Education level artists. The project has its roots in the Holmewood Collective Creative Place Partnership, of which UAP is one third. It received £9990 from The Leap through a Pioneer Award to develop the Collective, allowing young people space to think about what modalities of art they favour, explore the professional and business side of art and develop their career plans. It has reached 106 people.

It aims to:

- Address the need for younger, developing artists to be seen, heard and respected in the field of art
- Lay the ground for future projects of the same type
- Upskill project staff in how to go about this
- Offer a taste of how higher education students could aspire to the Arts profession
- Inspire other networks of Higher Education artists in the area.
- Create a collective of aspiring artists within the Bradford District
- Increase autonomy and leadership skills for the artists, as well as influence the development of social capital, through creating a space where they can develop their talent.

UAP itself is a Community Interest Company made up of Kayle McCoy (drama therapist and one-to-one special educational mentor) and Sarah Fearne (a professional photographer and fine artist). They have worked on several art and creative projects both in and around the Bradford district and the Holmewood area of Bradford since 2020, aiming to facilitate bespoke art and wellbeing experiences for local communities.



During past projects, young people discussed logistical issues with attending and funding college and art school, and lacking access to art opportunities within their locality. This gave Kayle the idea to offer something locally for them to address that.

From this, UAP are piloting the development of a small group of Higher Education age girls in the Bradford/ BD4 area that produce evocative pieces of artwork and learn and develop their artistry. They are called the H.E.ARTists Collective “because they put their HEART in the ART”, Kayle says. The Collective consists of two GCSE and two college age students who had first worked with a UAP project during lockdown.

The Collective first met in March 2023 and decided to begin a ‘dialogue’ with the local community that offered space to think and feel and helped each H.E.ARTist develop a piece for exhibition.

In July, after their exams, the H.E.ARTists sent out ‘themes’ to the public and asked them to respond on canvas at five workshops facilitated by the United Art Project. Some were ‘open to all’ and others held in organised community settings with specific groups, involving partnership working with another Pioneer funded organisation and establishments already worked with in the past.

From August, the ‘togetherness’ phase of the project began. A new set of workshops developed new experiences of art modalities for the H.E.ARTists which included a reflective process session continuing the dialogue between artists and community members, then taking it forward through two sewing and customising sessions, a portrait workshop, a Reso print workshop and a mural paint workshop.

In October the process will culminate with a final exhibition held in Kala Sangam, showcasing the results of the dialogue, and the skills and talent of the H.E.ARTists and their journey.

Really enjoyed speaking to the H.E.ARTists and learning about the origins of their art and what everything represented. I loved hearing about their passion for creating and how much they enjoyed being part of this project and the friendships that have obviously been created.

Audience member

Outcomes

Embedding of a new Collective in Bradford which represents the up-and-coming talent and expertise of young artists.

Holding workshops - five public workshops held, canvases from the public submitted, one group reflection workshop, and a new set of workshops underway.

Booking a final exhibition for 6th October 2023 at Kala Sangam.

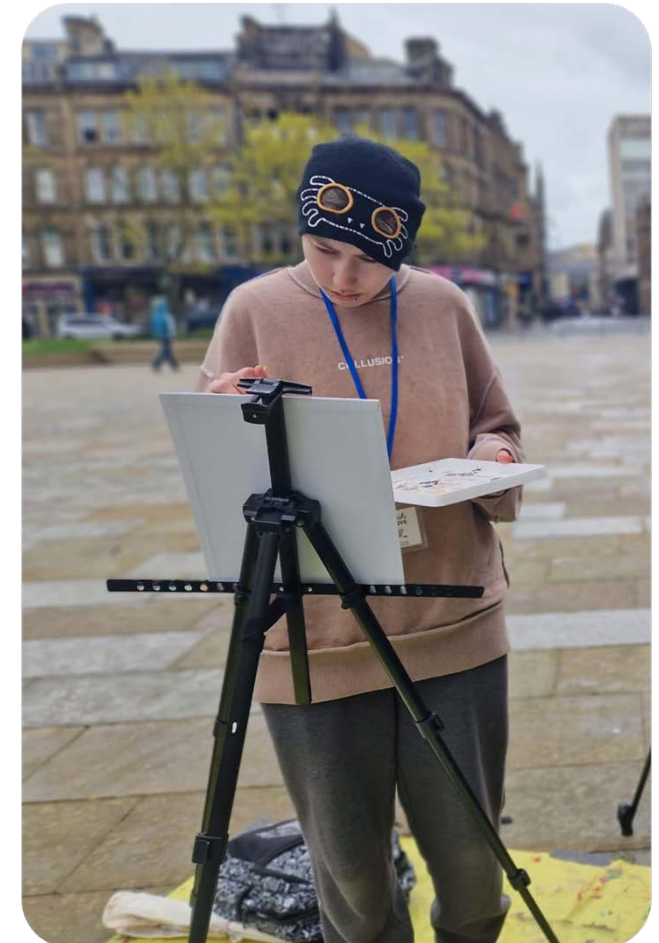
The Pioneer Programme supports flexibility – as one of the initial artists dropped out, the flexibility of the Pioneer Awards working as a pilot project meant that Kayle could then put out an underground call resulting in the gain of two other young people.

Supporting transition from education to employment – Kayle says the project has helped these young people get to grips with the art world and how it works, and they have been encouraged to attend and support UAP commissions to gain hands-on experience. Kayle hopes that by the time Bradford 2025 comes round, the older two of the four young people in the Collective will be fully embedded in projects taking place around the City of Culture. She is looking into potentially being able to pay the H.E.ARTists for their work. During the events, the artists have liaised with the public and customers and worked in busy environments, having to think objectively and subjectively to support the work.

Creating a haven to explore, seek out and trial new art methods – the artists have been able to do this throughout the project workshops and, in their final response, pieces that will be exhibited on Friday 6th Oct.

Extra support if anyone needs it – Kayle has also found that sometimes her clinical practice as a drama therapist and one-to-one mentor to support young people with neurodivergence has come into play. This is ongoing, and Kayle says the development of new links for the group has been a ‘wonderful organic process’.

Linking organisations – the work of this project was partly enabled due to connections made between UAP and other community settings, and also through the Pioneer Award, plus the UAP ongoing invitation to involve the H.E.ARTists in sessional, commissioned one-off events.



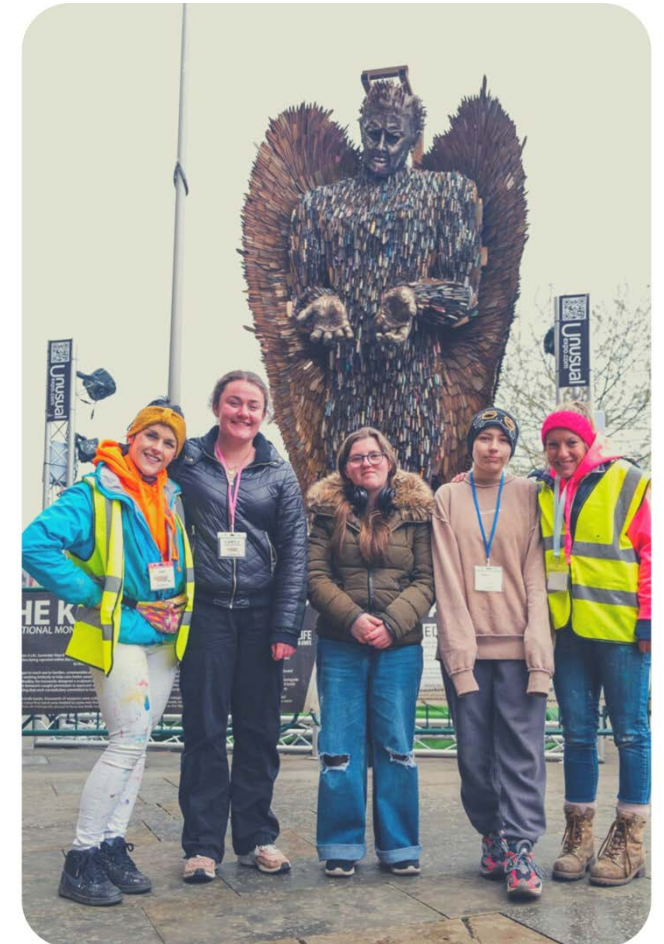
Learnings

Project timing – the active phase of the project after funding was awarded happened to coincide with some of the artists' main study time for exams. The timing of the Pioneer Awards could be more flexible to work around this.

Breathing space – a 'liminal phase' (a pause to the project while the artists completed their exams) gave real flexibility. It has allowed the embedding of a research element into the programme.

The workshops have been great, and gotten me into other artforms I haven't really been able to explore too much before. Also obviously I am very grateful for the £100 budget for the exhibition – it's been helpful for supplies but also learning how to organise a budget for them. Thank you!!

One of the H.E.ARTists





ENGLAND

impact

SCIFI
GAME

5. Sustainable, relevant and influential?

In this section, we consider indications as to whether The Leap is on track to deliver its longer-term goal of radically changing how Bradford's arts and cultural eco-system functions, particularly in terms of where decisions are made. In order to achieve this change, The Leap need to develop a sustainable and shareable model, and to influence cultural and community partners to buy into it.

We find that:

- It is too early to draw conclusions about this ambitious aim – but a set of leading indicators are in place to monitor its progress
- There is a clear commitment to action research and testing radical approaches
- Steps are being taken to share outcomes and learning and ensure that partners understand the value of The Leap's way of working
- The Leap remains involved in partnerships that **could** shift the thinking around the city's arts ecosystem, but these need further work to shift practice
- Radical steps are being taken to overcome previous issues in data collection and thus the ability to evidence the difference The Leap can make.

5.1. Sharing the model and enhancing the work

5.1.1. Approaches and opportunities

Partnership working to embed successful approaches from The Leap into the wider ecosystem of Bradford District is a key aim for The Leap, and would offer huge benefit to the arts and wider Bradford ecosystems which are aiming to be more inclusive and diverse. The Leap has a model which does reach and give resources (support and funding) to people who are not at all typical recipients of arts funding, and who in turn link into communities who are far less likely to engage with funded arts and cultural activity.

From initial anecdotal evidence, the Creative Place Partnerships in particular have shown a radical shift in who receives funding. This leads to a shift both in thinking and practice, as a wider variety of people, more diverse in terms of class, age, education and other characteristics, are 'legitimised' as 'an artist' (changing perceptions and self-confidence) and also in who chooses to attend. At the most extreme end is the ten year old who has set up art classes in BD3 for her peers, with support from Bradford Moor PASS. But the work in BD4 by Holmewood Collective to pull together an area wide celebration event entirely featuring local artistic talent and engaging over 500 people is another example of mass engagement with the arts – both as artists and audiences, within an area labelled by national statistics as low engaging.

In terms of leadership potential and breaking down assumptions this is a huge shift.

These shifts in both engagement patterns, and more particularly perception (internal and external), is what Bradford District as a whole is aiming to do through the 'Culture is our Plan' Cultural Strategy and with the huge boost of Bradford 2025. Linking The Leap's award winners and their communities into this wider offer, as well as ensuring the wider models are set up to devolve power and build community leadership, would bring lasting opportunities for everyone.

These stories, properly documented and shared, should be central to the local narrative and the aim from the start of The Leap as a CPP was that this should be 'test bed' for this sort of work.

5.1.2. Outcomes and challenges

There have been some definite successes in sharing the model, most clearly shown in the way that Bradford Council adapted their element of the delivery within the Bradford District Heritage Action project (see case study below) to use an approach nearer to The Leap's CPP approach. The Council is also going to look at their approach to small grant funding in the future to make it more accessible and thus hopefully reach more and more diverse communities.

However, there are still some major challenges in this sharing and embedding of the understanding of the potential of The Leap's model within the wider decision-making groups within Bradford District. Our research³² shows the following challenges still feature, although things are changing in many areas:

³² Research carried out through a series of stakeholder interviews among senior leaders in the cultural and statutory sector in the district, 2021.2022, 2023.

Lack of understanding of The Leap's model

Although The Leap is widely recognised and seen as a major resource within Bradford District, there is some lack of understanding as to what value The Leap brings, and what the model is doing and trying to achieve. As The Leap Director, Zulfiqar Ahmed, recognised, some of this comes down to the fact that when introducing something new, it takes a while for people to understand and even accept a radical shift from the way they perceive the world.

There is also the issue that, particularly for those who find abstract thinking harder, there is a need to see the model at work in practice – rather than just hearing or reading the theory. The Leap's rationale and model can be expressed in a very theoretical way at times which seems to have been a challenge for the less abstract thinkers around the sector. The Leap has worked extensively since our previous report to explain their work and model, and particularly to give examples of projects. However, there is not a clear 'theory of change' or causal model mapped out and shared. It might be worth considering attempts by other CPPs to do this (see for example [Transported's video on this](#)³³).

Lack of evidence of outcome and impact

Linking to the issue of the model is the fact that there isn't yet a great deal of concrete evidence of impact. As stated above and throughout this report, there is a lot of anecdotal evidence of the beginnings of significant shifts in outcomes and practice particularly around leadership and engagement in the arts; qualitative data from many projects is backing this as well, however the many challenges in data collection mean that we don't have the

³³ <https://www.transportedart.com/about/evaluation/>

hoped for bank of evidence to share which would help to convince people of the outcomes and impacts – and thus the value of this approach.

Challenges in building and maintaining partnerships

Given all of the challenges above, as well as the fact that inevitably change will be slow, particularly given the radical and systemic level of the change which The Leap is aiming to achieve, it is vitally important that partner relationships are good. Partnerships are a chance for The Leap to share their approach 'in practice' and for others to give these methods a try. The potential for a partnership to lead to a shift in the partner's practice towards The Leap's model is shown by the shift in Bradford Council practice during the Bradford District Heritage Action project.

The research finds that The Leap is not perceived as an easy partner to work with. The reasons for this include:

- High turnover of staff meaning that it is hard to have consistency in building and maintaining relationships within partnerships
- Some people noted that they felt unclear as to what The Leap's aims were within a partnership and that The Leap could be inflexible within partnerships. This seeming 'inflexibility' is at times down to The Leap needing to maintain its core priorities, so good communication and positive relationships are needed to find and build in alignment.
- Despite a lot of work carried out over the last few years to rebuild relationships with artists, there is still sometimes a perception that The Leap don't recognise the value of artists and what they can bring to a project beyond and alongside community members. It is unfortunate that the focus that everything should be community-led which The Leap rightly

promoted from the start was initially mis-framed as excluding or not valuing artists. Hopefully the high levels of engagement with artists over this last year in particular is shifting this perception. It is important that The Leap are careful to continue to explicitly talk about the value that artists bring to projects; this will ensure that the communities of Bradford District have access to all the technical artistic expertise that they deserve to make sure what they produce is as high quality in production as it is in engagement values.

As a result of these issues, although The Leap is a major arts organisation in Bradford District in terms of spend and reach, and reaches into areas no one else within the larger arts and culture ecosystem reaches, it hasn't yet made the level of impact on the ecosystem as a whole that it hopes for.

Zulfiqar and his team are aware and working on these challenges, which are particularly complex given the changes underway in Bradford which are differentially affecting the varied communities. Being change agents is not easy and requires ongoing dialogue which the team and wider Consortium commit to.

We know that we cannot deliver the scale of change needed alone, and actively want to partner with others who share our vision and values and our belief in the transformative change that arts and culture can bring about for people and places. The Leap is a learning organisation, developing our practice as we learn what works from artists and communities. We are fortunate to be able to take risks and create radical new ways of working for community-led culture to grow and thrive. To succeed, we will need partners from our sector and beyond to join us on this journey.

Zulfiqar Ahmed, Director, The Leap

5.2. Testing what works

As a team and a project, The Leap continues to be committed to an iterative approach - testing new ideas with their community partners, listening to feedback and changing as they go. There is also a strong commitment to trying new and radical approaches, accepting that some of them won't work. Furthermore, the commitment to sharing what works has resulted in the production of an increasing 'body' of resources to support and share the learning. This includes the [booklet on supporting community-led heritage projects](#)³⁴ and the forthcoming toolkit on supporting and producing community-led work which was developed as part of the Creative Place Partners work in 2022-23.

The commitment to iterative practice is also evidenced by the openness of the team, including leadership, to making time for reflection and change. As part of this commitment, The Leap have produced a response to RMR's recommendations from last year's report. The action plan to address these includes the appointment of a Head of Project Operations, a review of engagement targets and the sharing of opportunities for award winners, plus a new website as part of continuing digital outreach. For a full breakdown, please see *Appendix 5* below.

As is clear from the data gaps in this report, there is still work to be done in ensuring that sufficient data is gathered so that we can really test what is working, but this is well underway.

A new approach to data gathering has been designed in partnership with RMR, which takes a four-fold approach:

- Consistent monitoring requirements clearly shared and explained at the beginning of each award
- Training and support from The Leap team, particularly the appropriate CDM and Monitoring and Evaluation Manager at the start and as needed
- Additional support in data gathering at events through the Community Research Commission, a partnership with Muslim Women's Council
- Input from the evaluator including scheduled-in reflection sessions and specific additional more in-depth data gathering around a sample of projects – all linked into and able to feedback iteratively to The Leap.

Good communication around all of this will be supported by regular catch ups and quarterly in-depth planning and review sessions between RMR, The Leap and Muslim Women's Council.

Using this approach, along with hopefully a more settled team with less turnover (and thus less need for retraining and handover of information) we envisage that most of this year's challenges in data gathering, and thus analysis, can be overcome.

³⁴ https://issuu.com/theleap_bradford/docs/the_leap_-_community-led_heritage_booklet

Case study: Bradford District Heritage Action

How can strategic partnerships influence change in investment?

This case study explores how The Leap is influencing a change in investment through strategic partnerships, presented in the context of the Bradford District Heritage Action Project.

About the project

The Bradford District Heritage Action Project (BDHA) was a joint venture between The Leap and the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (here referred to as Bradford Council) with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) which concluded early in 2023.

The aims of the project were to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Bradford, increase appetite for heritage activity, support a thriving and connected heritage sector and share best practice for heritage work locally and nationally.

Outcomes

The Leap encouraged the community to apply for heritage awards through their Heritage Development Manager. 151 community groups or individuals were connected with by the Heritage Development Manager, and a huge 124 of these later applied for funding, with 80 receiving pre-application support. The 116 applications that were unsuccessful due to the sheer demand were worth over £1m.

Through the BDHA, The Leap gave out 8 community-based heritage awards worth £76,955 to people in Bradford. The funded projects were:

I think there is a view that communities aren't ready or don't have the appetite to do things around heritage now; I'm very happy to blow that assumption out of the water.

What it does tell us is that that demand is there.

Zulfiqar Ahmed, Director of The Leap

- **Any Old Rag'n'Bones** – documenting the heritage of Holmewood’s scrap metal collectors, or ‘Rag n Bone’ people
- **Bradford Book Project** – a book by children and for children, celebrating the diverse history of Bradford
- **Bussing Out** – audio-visual installation of oral histories from adults who were ‘bussed out’ of Bradford schools as children
- **Commonwealth Contribution Military Memories** – exhibition and resources chronicling Bradford’s serving Commonwealth soldiers
- **Palay dey Khan** – bringing life to intangible linguistic heritage through proverbs and sayings of those from diverse communities
- **Pitch and Pair: Freedom Series** – community-led mini-series pairing artists with community members to pitch creative ideas for installation
- **Scones and Samosas** – book of special recipes that ‘remind people of home’
- **Special Histories of Bradford** – participant-led events exploring the heritage of people with learning disabilities in Bradford District

Learning

Supporting different people to apply: Heritage Instigation was a clear success, bringing in and supporting additional quality heritage applications from community members. A large proportion of the people connected with went on to apply, and many received pre-application support to strengthen their application. Both The Leap and Bradford Council took a proactive approach to identifying underserved communities in Bradford.



Making the most of local community connections: After Bradford Council were not able to appoint a Heritage Instigator post, The Leap introduced the Council to one of their Creative Place Partners, Bradford Moor PASS. As a result, the Council contracted Bradford Moor PASS and also Windrush Generations to do the community Heritage Instigation, following The Leap's scaling model and resulting in increased funding directed to community groups.

Overall, Heritage Instigation provided valuable resources to community members, and is an example of the best practice developed in the BDHA by The Leap in partnership with Bradford Council.

Striving for more: Another key success of the strategic partnership between The Leap and Bradford Council was the evidence of a huge community appetite for heritage work, as seen by the large number of applications at The Leap. As there was only enough funding for 8 Leap projects from a total of 124 applications, the BDHA has provided a benchmark for the level of heritage interest in Bradford and will provide evidence for the need for increased heritage funding here in future.

[When we got such a positive response to the call out] I went back to Heritage Lottery Fund and said, basically, we've got a million pounds more [in ideas] than we [have to] spend ... [they then] invited us to apply [for another project]... the great thing is that they're willing to see if they [make] it happen

Zulfiqar Ahmed, Leap Project Director



Case study: Windrush 75 – Legacy of Legends: Bradford Black History Month

How do you inspire people to engage with heritage?

About the project

Windrush 75 – Legacy of Legends were a series of events planned in Bradford in 2023 to mark the 75 years since the Empire Windrush carried passengers from the Caribbean to Tilbury Docks in Essex. The programme was organised by the Bradford Black Heritage Arts and Culture Planning Group (BHAC) led and co-ordinated by Nigel S Guy (MBE), Director of Windrush Generations. Overall it reached 5700 people.

The group aimed to gather and coordinate a collective of organisations from smaller independents to larger mainstream organisations to cover the '**seven Cs of Windrush**': the **Celebrations, commemorations** and **contributions** of the Windrush Generations, the **care, challenges** and **conflicts** they can face, and the **change** needed. The focus is contemporary as well as historic.

The group was awarded £15,000 through The Leap Pioneer Awards scheme, which was matched with another £6,500 in funding from Windrush and other partners and in-kind support. The award was used to put on a series of fourteen events (which ran alongside others which were not in this project application), and to help support other organisations in doing this. Nigel says, 'What we did as a group was support those organizations, whether it was funding to help them do the projects, or even finding the manpower and volunteers to deliver the projects as well.' Overall, these events reached an estimated 5700 attendance.

An example of one of the events was the Windrush 75 'Full Basket' Tea Party, run by ten volunteers, which hosted 120 Windrush elders and advocates and it was named from a Caribbean saying which, Nigel explains, means 'collectively, when we do our little bit together, we can achieve more'.



We're honouring, celebrating and commemorating the contributions that people from the Commonwealth have made.

Nigel Guy

This included entertainment and speeches and was attended by many community elders and the Lord Mayor. Guests were also able to preview the 'Wah Inna D Grip' exhibition (which means 'What's in your suitcase?') before it toured the rest of the district. This was put together by project partners supported by the Bradford Black Heritage Arts and Culture Planning Group and featured artefacts of people who had come from the Caribbean and kept those objects as precious.

These events were very well attended with many surpassing expected numbers although some had reduced figures for unavoidable reasons, for example one was on the same day as the funeral of a popular local figure.

Some, such as Windrush 75 Not Out Cricket and Dominoes Tournament, which was supported by Yorkshire Sports Foundation, were attended by people who came from all over the country. Schools also attended to learn more about cricket. Unfortunately, the Bradford team were beaten by the Allcomers, from London, Leeds, Preston, Manchester and the Midlands.

Outcomes and experiences

Raised the profile of the Windrush generation – and made their experiences more accessible to a wider audience.

Working in partnership – one of the best things for Nigel was to see 'various groups and individuals who were coming together as one and giving people the opportunity to have that expression and platform to the funding', and hopefully to also enable that to happen further down the line now this stage has happened.

Keep the momentum going for all – sometimes, initial enthusiasm from organisations who came with their ideas could wear off – while they received support from the Bradford Black Heritage Arts and Culture Planning Group and kept momentum this year, it may be that the focus on encouragement and motivation needs to increase in future years. This was especially important as many organisations were involved in the partnership, and many/most were volunteer led.

Positive reception – the organisations were very receptive and enthusiastic about the programme.



Learnings

Leap support – The Leap’s support was very much valued. Nigel says, ‘the support that the Leap have given has enabled us to realize the activities and give people the aspiration and inspiration and hope to do more and also create that presence and sense of belonging ...without that we wouldn't have been able to shine as much and put that brightness and significant impact into the projects.’

Plan much earlier – for this scale of project especially, next time planning would start earlier in the year.

Media promotion – raising the profile of Black History Month 2022 in the media, for example through speaking to journalists from the Bradford Telegraph and Argus led to a large article about the events giving more information.

Timing of award – because of the need to get plans in place earlier, it could also be useful to receive the Leap award earlier in the year. ‘Bigger planning, and having funding that would come in earlier, rather than later’ would be helpful.

Collective working – sometimes working as a collective to make decisions and plans could be challenging in certain ways in terms of getting partner organisations to take more initiative and complete tasks as ‘many hands make light work’.

Leadership and development - working in a group meant a mixture of larger and smaller organisations, with different levels of experience, were able to help each other gain skills. For example, with one event working with the Alhambra Theatre in Bradford, the group received support from Theatre technicians and managers so they could deliver a good production. ‘We had our sound people who were not as seasoned in terms of doing technical sound, and, seeing what some of the established technical sound people and the people doing audio visual, were able to see how it worked’.

In turn, Windrush Generations was able to help others. ‘People have gone leaps and bounds. Again, they've gone beyond our expectations, because they've had a project, which was very limited project, and now they're expanding their projects into bigger things as well.’





I loved the flag raising ceremony and the Tea Party. Thank you for considering us... one thing – I would prefer rice'n'peas instead of the plain rice next time!

Mrs Viola Mckenzie, Windrush Elder.

Inspiration – as a result of the experience of these events, other groups have been inspired to do more. 'The work that we've been doing has sparked them to be more encouraged, and favourable to putting on events which acknowledge cultural heritage, but also creative acts as well.' For example, Nigel tells me the local Nigerian community are now planning various cultural events and are applying for funding in different areas to support them.

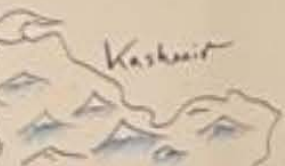
Next steps

Keep the connection going – 'we've created a forum, where we've continued [to try and] create a discussion panel or a planning group to move forward with heritage arts and cultural events as well, with a focus on future rather than trying to do things last minute - what can we do collectively, what is it that people are wanting to see or wanting to do?'

Wellbeing – the aim is to now further develop the wellbeing side of the work, as the group's remit is heritage arts and culture but also includes the challenges people face. This project was able to support smaller partner organisations to run their own projects, but in the future, Windrush Generations hopes to be able to support individuals and communities' health and wellbeing more as well.



South Asia



No

6. Recommendations and conclusions

In this section we outline how The Leap is progressing in terms of the three Arts Council England Research Questions. This includes a review of what is working well and less well, referencing Research Question 3. Finally, we give a set of recommendations for The Leap's Consortium and management.

6.1. Conclusions

The Leap has planned and actioned a lot in the year since our last report. This includes the appointment of a Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, an Administration and Events Assistant and an Operations Manager. These should enable an increase in capacity around operations, data gathering and opportunities for sharing learning which are key areas we identified in our last evaluation.

The website is functioning well with regular updates and good feedback. The Community Heritage Sharing Event in March was an excellent example of celebrating the work, offering peer-to-peer networking opportunities and opportunities for development with surgeries for funders.

However, there have been significant challenges too. For example, very high staff turnover amongst Community Development Managers. They act as the 'frontline' for The Leap, so this leads to gaps in delivery and support, as well as challenges communicating aims and intentions.

Where we have data, there is evidence that The Leap is shifting how arts and culture are delivered amongst the communities of Bradford District. In particular, how and by whom projects are run is

shifting. The awards process very much places funding to run arts with a broad section of the community, many of whom haven't received arts funding before. This completely changes what funded arts delivery looks like and who controls it. It is likely that this will also shift the audiences for funded arts and culture.

Finally, The Leap continues to test its model with the development of the Creative Place Partners awards. These have devolved funding to organisations with a geographic or community of interest focus so as to further reach into communities who don't usually receive funding for arts.

The operational issues do need to be ironed out if the approach is to be at all efficient. However, where we have data, this shows success extending funding into communities which traditionally aren't funded to put on arts and culture that resonates with them. Again, it is likely that these events will attract communities who don't tend to engage in funded arts and culture.

6.2. Considering the 3 ACE Research Questions

RQ 1: Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?

Bradford District is by ACE definitions a place of lower engagement in arts and culture. Along with the rest of the district, The Leap challenges that basic assumption and has shown through its approach that there is in fact a huge array of talent, appetite and motivation to create and experience arts and culture. However,

there has traditionally been lower engagement with ACE funded arts and culture in the district.

By shifting the control of who decides on, creates and promotes arts and culture through the awards approach, **work funded through The Leap has engaged high proportions of people from areas labelled as lowest engagement areas and those less likely to engage in funded arts and culture from across the district.**

These people are inspired by the opportunity to express their own culture and their lived reality. They are both attending and also developing their own work.

RQ 2: To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?

The Leap defines excellence in art in terms of how it affects people – through resonance and a sense of connection. It recognises that achieving this comes not from commissioning external arts organisations, but by placing the power to decide and design the work in the hands of the communities it wants to reach. The awards call outs and the community panels approach have been successful in encouraging a wide range of local groups and individuals from diverse communities to apply for their own projects, often receiving arts funding for the first time. This shows effective community engagement.

Responses from the audiences (where available) – as well as some qualitative evidence from interviews – show appreciation for seeing their communities and cultures represented. The most positive come from projects which have partnered different experiences together – mixing local stories with specific artform expertise, or offering mentoring from more experienced artists, dramaturges, production designers etc.

For the future, The Leap's continued support is key to ensuring that the commitment shown by projects is honoured and supported through opportunities to grow and expand the quality of their work, thus giving communities across Bradford the opportunity to make, see and engage in truly excellent work which resonates and excites.

RQ3: Which approaches were successful and what were the lessons learned?

What worked

The Leap has taken a radical approach to delivering the aims of Creative People and Places. Indications are that the model could considerably shift patterns of arts engagement and leadership within arts delivery. If managed, evidenced and shared well, this could be ground-breaking for arts funding nationally and internationally.

Developing a network of partners for 'scaling' delivery to reach an even wider range of communities

Through the Creative Place Partners approach there has definitely been a new level of disbursement of funding into communities and to individuals who may never have thought to apply for arts funding. This in turn is very likely to shift the pattern of audiences for the work.

The CPPs themselves are beginning to shape into a strong set of delivery partners for The Leap, receiving a range of awards and bringing their own practices and specialisms to play. If this group can be formed into a self-supporting and peer-supporting network there is the opportunity to add immense capacity and skills – as well as ability to bring additional funding into Bradford District's ecosystem.

Effective focussed awards programmes which diversify arts delivery

The Radical Social, Pioneer and CPP Awards running this year have built on the success of the previous Festival and Heritage Development awards, and the earlier rounds of the Radical Socials. They now reach into a number of areas with a focus that attracts a good range of applications. In particular, the success of encouraging applicants from areas or communities which don't usually apply for funding is really notable and compares strongly with applications to Bradford Council's culture and heritage awards.

Research shows it is the pre-application support which encourages applications from people who might not otherwise apply. In particular, it helps those least used to the process to produce applications that are more thought-through and better explain the benefits than would happen otherwise.

Skilled and popular Community Development Managers who build trust and support

As outlined above, the role of the CDMs is key for all the success The Leap has achieved so far as they are the 'frontline' for giving support and advice to encourage award application, and for support and mentoring for award winners.

Feedback on the CDMs has been universally positive, with many being singled out by name as particularly helpful in developing ideas or problem solving when issues arose. For example, one Pioneer award winner explained how their CDM supported their confidence in dealing with a problem with their participants:

[We didn't get enough applicants, so] ... we diversified. Izzy was [supporting]... that idea of 'It's a pilot, you're pioneering, you're working it out, you're seeing what it is, you're responding.'

Award winner, Pioneer Programme

What worked less well

Serious challenges in retaining staff

The Leap continued over the course of 2022-23 to face serious challenges in retaining staff – with all the CDMs leaving, including one arriving and leaving within the year.

New, experienced CDMs have been appointed³⁵ and there is good feedback already on their skills and commitment. However, everyone we spoke to flagged up some issue with communication or confusion over contacts at some point.

The level of turnover is higher than other Creative People and Places projects elsewhere and we recommended in last year's evaluation report that it should be reviewed. We understand this was reviewed and the level of the post raised to attract and retain more experienced staff. The new Operations Manager will also add co-ordination and administrative capacity to the team, giving Director Zulfiqar Ahmed time to work on partnership and funding development.

Challenges in clarity around monitoring and other requirements

Feedback from award winners noted a lack of clarity over their requirements around data gathering for monitoring. This was

³⁵ At time of writing there are three appointed, two of whom have been in place for long enough for us to get extremely positive feedback about their work and style from partners and award winners. Two more are due to be recruited within the project year.

linked to the issue of staff turnover and led to issues around data collection.

Some of this resulted from the level of requirement which The Leap asks from every award winner, large or small. They are all expected to gather full monitoring data. This can be challenging for small projects, particularly those working with vulnerable people for a short time, and those who need to deliver in multiple languages. It is an Arts Council England funding requirement that The Leap as a whole return figures on a wide (and growing range of) data which is widely accepted to be challenging. However, some CPPs take an approach of sampling a given amount of projects or looking at other ways to reduce the burden particularly where the projects are very small or involve light-touch engagement.

Some support for this will be provided once the Community Researcher team contract is in place. It would also be advisable to look at taking the following steps:

- More time and support for award winners in understanding the value of collecting monitoring and evaluation data.
- Opportunities to gain value from data provided. For example, through feeding data back in appropriate formats (perhaps, an infographic for sharing on social media for help with future recruitment or funding) so people see what is in it for them.
- Reducing the range of data collected particularly from smaller awards to help encourage some data rather than none.

Data collection from project audiences almost non-existent

Extensive work has been undertaken to develop a different approach to data gathering, including the recruitment of a Monitoring and Evaluation Manager post.

However, the effects of this have not reached the point of data gathering at events. This will always be a challenge for The Leap as there is such a delegation of funding, and thus responsibility, down through award winners, and Creative Place Partners add another level to this.

This issue has not been helped by the turnover of staff, meaning that training on evaluation approaches has had to be delivered a number of times. It is hard to embed a set of processes with a team which is always understaffed. For projects, the issues with communication from staff turnover also do not help.

This has made writing this report time-consuming as multiple routes have been taken in attempting to get data, and there are still large data gaps.

Not realising how much support would be needed to get the CPP model working with partner organisations.

One of the major findings from The Leap is the amount of time needed to get a truly devolved and community-led approach to arts awarding working. This has been shown again through the delivery of the Creative Place Partner awards where, with one exception, all the 'core model' partnerships experienced some serious delays and challenges in getting their projects going.

These largely came from not realising how much work and time it takes to set up this sort of programme. In some cases, this was around the time needed to recruit additional staff for added capacity – in others, the time to support a truly inclusive panel.

None of this needs to imply that the approach isn't working. It is just extremely useful learning for The Leap and partners in developing the next stages and should be shared openly for other projects to learn from. In particular, there is a huge amount of

support time needed, and this should be calculated and set out clearly in future calls for partners.

Challenges in communicating the purpose and benefits of The Leap's way of working to partners and further across the district

As raised in previous reports, although improving over time, there are still some significant issues in how The Leap is seen as a partner and effective deliverer of work across Bradford District.

There are perceived to be issues in terms of willingness to adapt within partnerships, lack of clarity on the aims and purpose of The Leap and a wish to see more concrete outcomes.

Given all research points to the importance of seeing arts and culture as an ecosystem, it is particularly important that The Leap can overcome these issues by communicating its intentions and approaches more. Successfully addressing these issues would ensure that it, and more importantly the communities it is reaching and supporting, can be included in the wider opportunities and developments within Bradford.

Commitment to iterative approach and learning takes time which is a capacity challenge.

As an action research project, it is particularly important that The Leap makes time for its staff to reflect, share and iterate their learning. This requires time to be set aside from heavy workloads, particularly where these are affected by staff shortages and turnover.

The time for this, and time for reflecting on and learning from the projects and award winners themselves, is still not ringfenced. The space for learning and sharing between award winners is also not fully operating. However, there has been good feedback when it

has happened and been facilitated so that it gives time for genuine learning and sharing.

6.3. Recommendations

1. Learn from the work undertaken by Creative Place Partners to streamline the application processes for all Leap awards, supporting a wider range of applicants and also enabling a more community-based set of core panel members to be able to carry out the assessment.
2. Ensure the monitoring and evaluation requirements are understood from the point of giving an award – and award winners are supported by CDMs to collect and see the value of the data.
3. Enhance commitment to, and understanding of the value of, data gathering by offering incentives to the award winners. For example, social-media friendly mini-infographics for them to share and use to gain further funding.
4. Levels of data collection scaled to size of awards. We suggest, for example, a 3-tier design – perhaps small awards collect 3 main questions, mid-tier awards collect 7 and large collect 15. RMR will work with The Leap to develop this model.
5. Look at opportunities for more sharing and celebration events which both value the commitment made and offer networking and peer support opportunities.
6. Ensure current strong CDMs are supported and retained as they came in and learnt fast, picking up relationships and adapting to the work.
7. Review how the team is operating after a few months of the Operations Manager being in post. This should include good

practice approaches such as 360 degree appraisal. If this single action hasn't fixed all the issues identified in this and the previous report, a more thorough review of structure and delivery should be undertaken.

8. Look for opportunities to diversify funding, particularly drawing on the benefits to be gained from the non-arts outcomes likely to arise from many of the awards. Ensure that these are evaluated to produce evidence needed.
9. Continue developing clear messages around the purpose and model of The Leap, in order that partnering across the district becomes easier. This might be through building on the CPP model. Consider explicitly building in 'round table learning sessions' with other organisations to give space to share approaches and learning.
10. Continue with steps towards better data collection, particularly supporting the Community Researcher project.



Appendices

Appendix 1 - Methodology

Here we outline our methodology. This report is based on work carried out by RMR Ltd and The Leap team using an evaluation approach developed by Ruth Melville with The Leap team.

Our evaluation framework answers Arts Council England's three core questions:

1. Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?
2. To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?
3. Which approaches were successful and what were the lessons learned?

It draws on the monitoring and reflection required within the ACE Quarterly monitoring and reporting model, as well as data needed to answer RMR's research questions.

Data collection was carried out by RMR and by The Leap team. Analysis of postcodes was carried out by The Audience Agency for Audience Spectrum and on behalf of RMR for Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Full analysis and reporting was carried out by the RMR team.

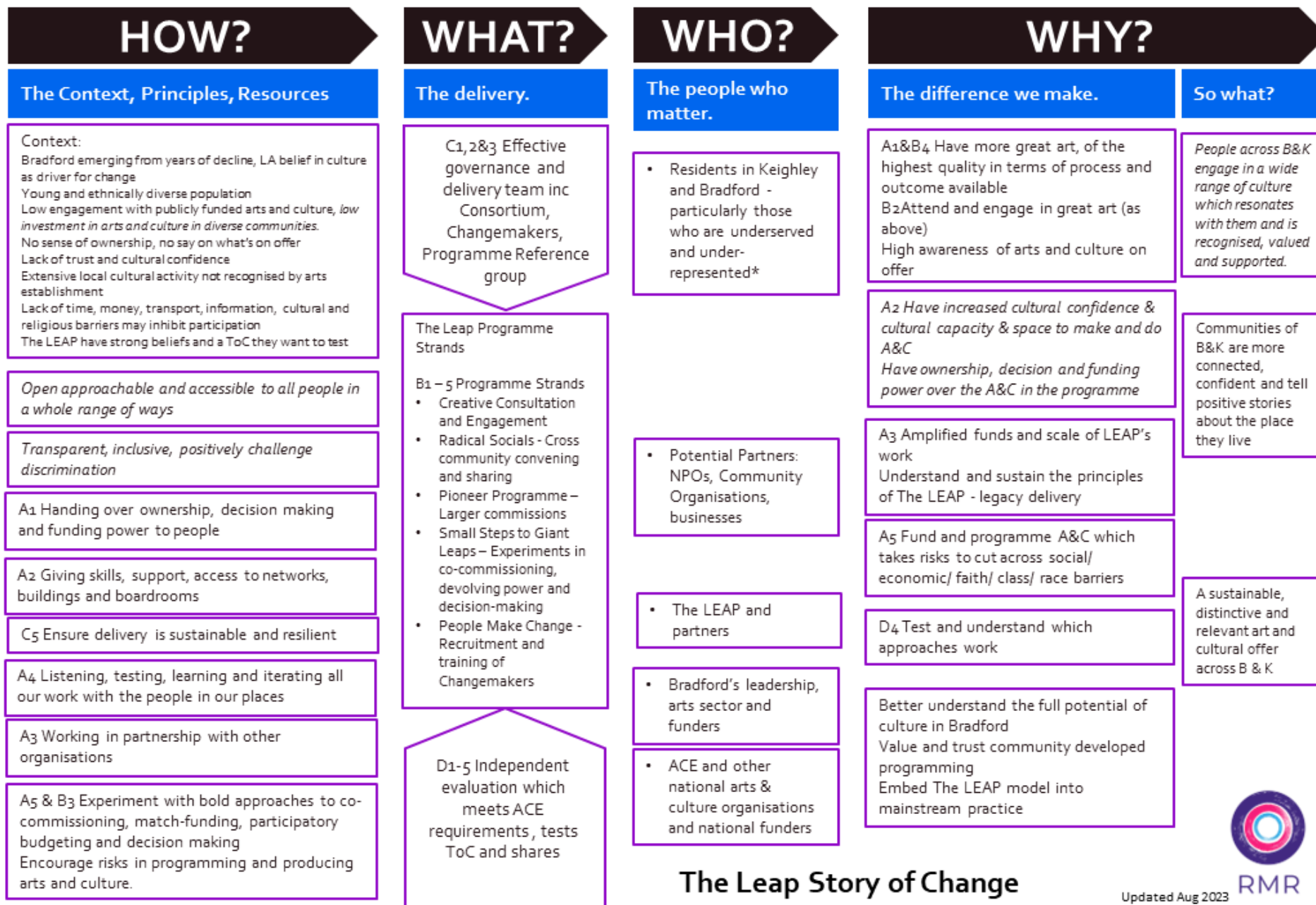
A note on changes to our methodology this year

Our evaluation framework was designed around being able to access audience and participant feedback in order to answer RQ1. RMR worked with The Leap to provide training and support for co-creation of evaluation tools, to embed evaluation within the programme.

However, due to high staff turnover this did not produce sufficient data from audiences. As such, we have adapted our methodology this year to include additional in-depth interviews with award winners directly in order to access audience feedback to provide context for the limited data we have received. Data gathering this year included:

Data Source	Description	Sample Size
Engagement and demographic monitoring data	Data collected at events demographic information of audience/ participants	1,874 responses
Indices of Multiple Deprivation and Audience Spectrum postcodes	Data analysis by RMR team (Mac Ince) and The Audience Agency of postcodes collected by The Leap team or award winners at events this year	667 and 672 valid postcodes respectively
Interviews	1-to-1 interviews with The Leap award winners	15 interviews
	1-to-1 interviews with stakeholders	8 interviews
	1-to-1 interviews with The Leap team members	3 interviews
Project feedback and evaluation reports	Feedback and evaluation information from award winners	3 written feedback
Focus groups and training sessions	Interactive, multiparticipant focus groups with award winners	3 focus groups
Community-led heritage celebration event	Observation at networking and sharing event celebrating the heritage award projects	1 event
Impact & Insights toolkit analysis	Analysis of the impact of award winner events, comparing scores on various dimensions from the artist, a peer reviewer, and the public	1 event analysed
Team Workshop	Team reflective workshops held in Bradford to help draw out learning and challenges in Year 3	2 workshops

Appendix 2 – Story of Change



The Leap Story of Change

Updated Aug 2023



RMR

Appendix 3 - Reaching audiences least likely to engage in the arts

Headline findings are reported above, with the full in-depth analysis provided here for reference.

Here we consider how well The Leap has been reaching those in Bradford least likely to engage in the traditional arts and culture offer. As highlighted previously, these measures often do not account for a number of 'everyday' arts participation activities, but instead do provide a consistent measure against which we can check year on year reach.

This section considers two types of analysis based on audience and participant postcodes: Audience Spectrum analysis and Indices of Multiple Deprivation analysis.

Audience Spectrum

Audience Spectrum³⁶ analysis uses postcodes gathered at events to categorise audience and participants into three levels of cultural engagement: low, medium and high. The chart below shows The Leap's results for Year 3, compared with the average for the Bradford population.

Overall, **73% of The Leap's engagements this year come from groups least likely to engage in the arts**, much higher than the 55% for Bradford in general. This shows **excellent reach into groups in Bradford least likely to engage with the traditional arts and culture offer**, and is **substantially higher than the reach last year** at 54%. This shows a positive trend for The Leap continuing to

push itself to reach further into the communities in Bradford most likely to benefit from their programming.

In our last evaluation report, we suggested increasing programming targeted to the four lowest engagement groups. While there has been a small decrease in the proportion of those in the 'Up Our Street' group reached, and reach with 'Supported Communities' remains the same, there has been a 5% jump in reach with Frontline Families, and the proportion of Kaleidoscope Creativity engagements, reported as the most ethnically-diverse group, has **almost doubled**.

Furthermore, this result represents great progress towards The Leap's goal of having at least 80% of engagements be from the lowest engagement groups. Should the current trend continue, The Leap stand a good chance of reaching this goal next year. Increasing monitoring data collection would support attaining sufficient reach data towards this goal.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation

In this section we compare levels of deprivation³⁷ for The Leap engagements this year with those for the population of Bradford and England as a whole.

Overall, **54% of all engagements with The Leap this year were from the 10% most deprived areas of England**, showing great reach into the most deprived communities in Bradford. This is compared to the just 35% of Bradford who live in these most

³⁶ For more, please see The Audience Agency's website <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum>

³⁷ Indices of deprivation are an official way of measuring levels of deprivation in local authorities in England. They rank local authorities using a number of metrics such as employment, income, health

deprivation and crime. For more on Indices of Deprivation please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

deprived areas. This figure is also substantially higher than last year's results at 40%, showing that The Leap has made good progress towards furthering their engagement with the communities in Bradford who need them the most.

The chart below compares The Leap engagements, showing all engagements, as well as a breakdown between audiences and participants, and those who won an award from The Leap this year. It also compares these figures with those for Bradford population in general.

From this, it is clear that The Leap are not only engaging audiences and participants who are from some of the most deprived areas, their awards are also going to people from communities most in need of support, with 63% of award winners living in the 10% most deprived areas of England. With increased awards given out by the Creative Place Partners, which by their very design go directly to the communities of most need, this figure is likely to increase next year given sufficient data collection.

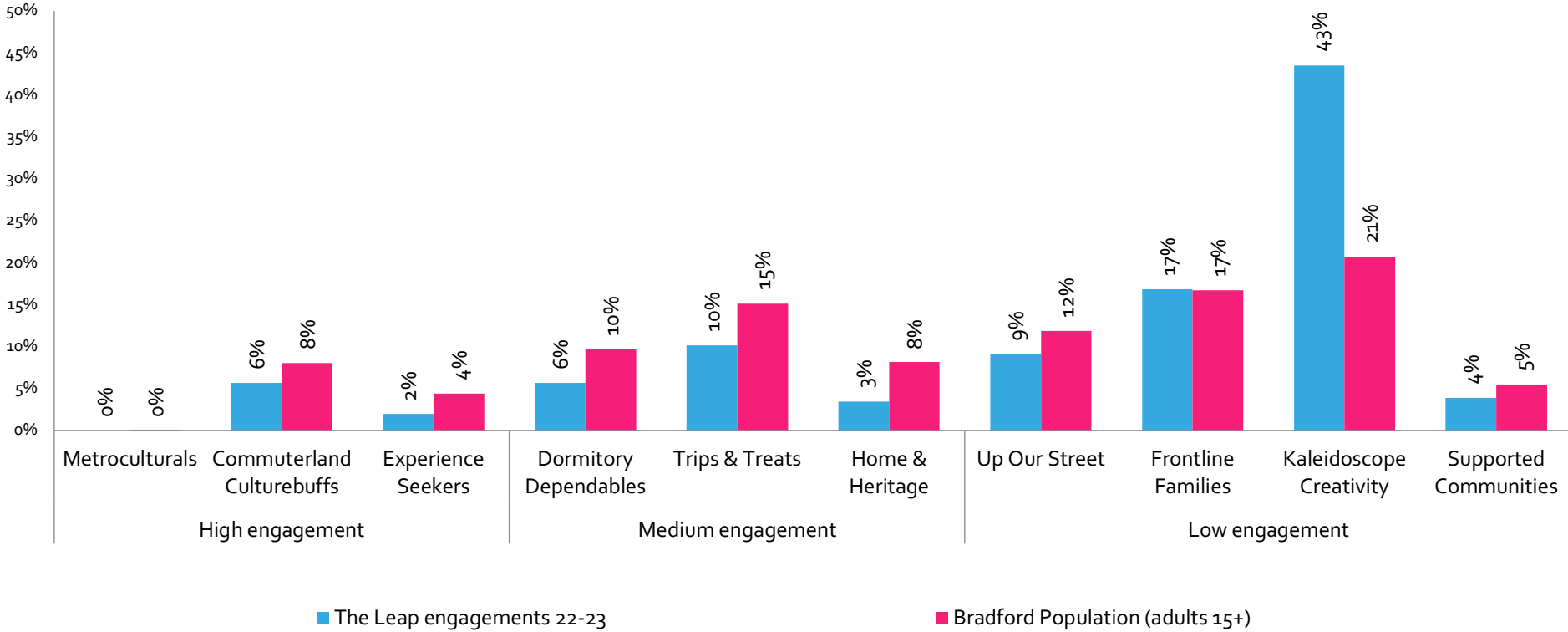


Figure 8: Audience Spectrum analysis for engagements with The Leap in Year 3. Base = 672.

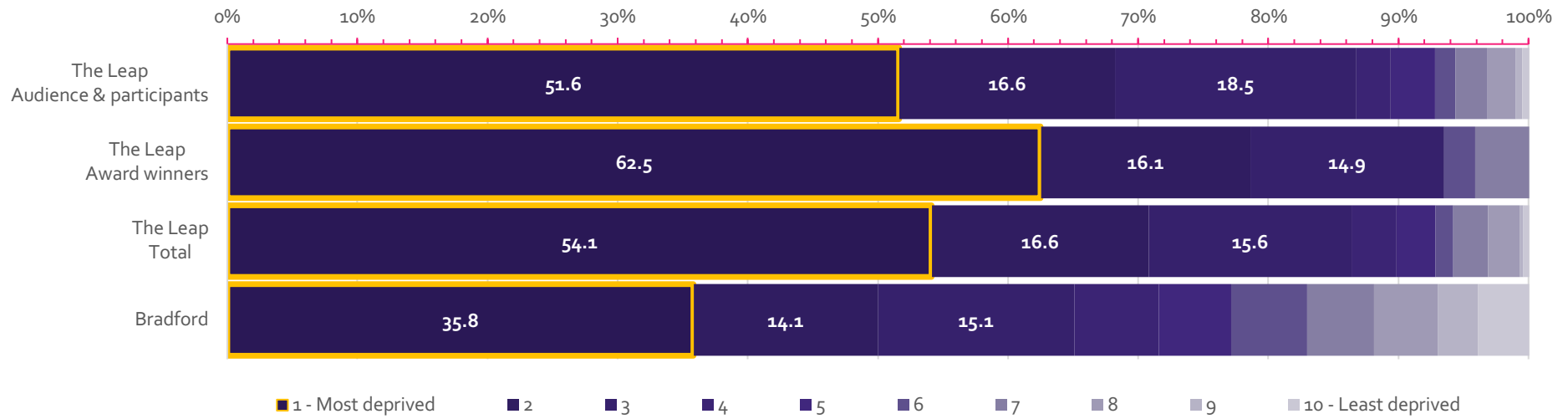


Figure 8: Indices of Multiple Deprivation analysis, comparing total engagements this year, audience and participants, award winners and Bradford population. The gold bar shows the proportion that live in the 10% most deprived areas in England. Base = 66

Appendix 4 – Additional Creative Place Partner information

Here we provide a table of additional information about Creative Place Partners for reference.

Creative Place Partnership	Geographic scale	Purpose and focus	How they work
Bradford District Senior Power	Bradford District	Advocate for the rights and well-being of older people in Bradford and Keighley	Local charity largely run by volunteers
Bradford Moor PASS	Bradford Moor	Deliver bottom-up solutions to community needs for young people in Bradford Moor	Working in partnership with local communities, voluntary and statutory services
The Holmewood Collective	Tong Ward	Support underserved communities in the arts and creative activities with a focus on young people	Collective made up of the Sutton Centre, OutLOUD and The United Art Project. Designing and facilitating tailored art experiences for local communities
KAWACC	Keighley	Provide holistic support to underserved communities in Keighley	Partnership of Keighley Women and Children's Centre & Keighley Creative.
WomenZone	Bradford Moor	Empower women and promote gender equality in Bradford Moor	Partnership between WomenZone and Kala Sangam

The table below shows the data we have received so far during the evaluation process, showing where each CPP is in terms of budget, matched resources and awards given.

Partner	Budget	Matched resources	Awards pot	Award decision making process	Applications received	Awards made	Award sizes
BDSP	£34,864	£9,864	£19,500	Community votes on each other's ideas supported by the team	10-15 EOIs	11	£250 - £1,000 (2 award levels planned)
Bradford Moor PASS	£31,950	£6,950	£20,000	A panel of 8 young people, a member of PASS, and a senior Youth Worker make decisions	12	11	£500 – £2,500
Holmewood Collective	£46,000	£21,000	£5,000	Internal	Yes, many across 2 rounds	23 awards made plus some to young children where parents have managed the budget/taken cash on their behalf	£50+
KWACC/Keighley Creative	£56,411	£31,411	£15,000	tbc	Not yet, launch and outreach happening Oct/Nov	Not yet, may have first awards by Dec/Jan	£500 - £1,000
Women's Zone/Kala Sangam	tbc	tbc	£5,000	External advisory panel	Not yet, launch and outreach happening Feb/March 2023	Not yet, may have first awards by March/April	tbc

Appendix 5 – Response to RMR recommendations from 2021-2 report

Here is the full response from The Leap to RMR’s recommendations from last year’s report:

Recommendation	Action	Status
Operations		
<p>Review operating approaches to work more effectively and efficiently to achieve aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review team structures, staffing support and management and implement any changes needed to reduce staff turnover levels. 2. Review the engagement focus and targets in light of the last two years of delivery to ensure that activity is reaching those who are least likely to engage in traditional arts. 3. Look for easy ways to maximise outcomes, for example making opportunities for award winners to get together and share learning across. 4. Identify opportunities to bring in more resources to develop the action research as well as other areas of the Programme 	<p>Appointment of Head of Programme Operations</p> <p>Review to be undertaken as part of business plan development 2023/24</p> <p>To be strengthened in activities plan 2023 onwards</p>	<p>Role agreed and to be recruited summer 2023</p> <p>Reviewed by The Leap team Feb 2023, and to be detailed in business plan 2023-25. Key change is to multiple engagement targets which will be removed.</p> <p>Recruitment of admin and events assistant allows extra capacity for events and peer learning sessions.</p> <p>The Leap menu of support.</p>

<p>Review communications to build understanding and trust:</p> <p>Communicate more with awardees (and unsuccessful applicants) in a systematic way so as to bring out the potential which is sometimes lost if not followed up.</p> <p>Ensure The Leap’s purpose, principles and structures are clearly and transparently shared.</p> <p>Work on a set of clear messages suitable for a variety of audiences so all partners understand the aims and approach of The Leap to enhance partnership working.</p>	<p>New Website</p> <p>1:1 meetings with key stakeholder</p> <p>Ongoing outreach</p> <p>Formation of menu of support for award winners agreed with CDM’s</p> <p>The Leap website and events, plus ongoing outreach</p>	<p>Feedback on website is strong</p> <p>The Leap team outreach is ongoing</p> <p>Plan for quarterly stakeholder events from 2023</p> <p>Website will be updated as part of forward business plan and restructured for clarity.</p>
<p>Radically overhaul approach to monitoring and evaluation to be able to understand and demonstrate value</p>	<p>Reintroduce team reflection in the form of regular reflection sessions in year 3 onwards.</p> <p>Embed evaluation into delivery to ensure sufficient data collection.</p> <p>Recruit community researchers to ensure quality and quantity of data, and free up team resources.</p>	<p>Plan agreed with external evaluator</p> <p>Recruited Monitoring and Evaluation Manager to assist systemization of data collection tools and methods</p> <p>Community research partner identified and budgeted and due to be contracted summer 2023.</p>