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visual arts**



Youth-led Practice in Galleries, Museums and Archives

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Youth-led Practice in Museums, Galleries and Archives

1. Background

In the last ten years there has been a major shift in the way in which museums, archives and galleries work with young people. Learning programmes are no longer restricted just to school children or supporting the school curriculum. Nowadays there are hundreds of cultural organisations in the UK who have opened their doors to young people and are listening, engaging and involving them in their programmes. As the National Museum Directors' Conference report, 'Learning to Live'¹ asserted, working with young people offers great opportunities to provide new avenues for their personal development while also building relationships with future audiences and changing the profile of visitor groups.

This shift in practice has been partly instigated by the previous government's push to actively integrate young people into the national agenda in the last decade. It has been supported by legislation, policy and guidance ranging from the Convention on the Rights of the Child, *Every Child Matters*, the Children Act 2004, *Youth Matters*, to the creation of the Children's Trusts. The principle of engagement and participation was put into practice through programmes such as Renaissance in the Regions, the Strategic Commissioning Programme for Museum and Gallery Education, Creative Partnerships and Find your Talent. This work has been further enhanced by the action research initiatives led by engage, the National Association for Gallery Education such as enquire, envision and Visual Roots².

We are currently at a critical juncture where it is not clear how future work with young people in these sectors will be sustained. As the unemployment rates within the younger population continue to rise,³ an ever-growing demand will be placed on our organisations to support their development. While the concept of the so-called 'Big Society' is still in the process of being shaped, there is an opportunity to influence and advocate⁴ for the presence of young people

1 *Learning to Live: Museums, young people and education*. Kate Bellamy and Carey Oppenheim (eds). Institute for Public Policy Research and National Museum Directors' Conference 2009

2 These projects have been instigated and supported by engage to encourage new and innovative practice within the visual arts and galleries. The projects have supported more than 100 organisations in the UK. See <http://www.engage.org> for more information

3 "OECD warns of bleak job prospects for the young", Sean O'Grady, Economics Editor, The Independent, Thursday, 8 July 2010

4 Enyan, the national association of youth arts organisations has launched a campaign for 2010, Youth Arts Transforms Lives-FACT!, to provide evidence of the impact of the arts in work with young people. For information see (www.enyan.co.uk)

within our organisations.⁵ This is the right moment to listen to what young people have to say and devise new and creative ways of involving them. They know what they want and what they need. A recent survey conducted by the national charity Catch22 found that nearly a quarter (23%) of young people interviewed want to see more training opportunities and apprenticeships.⁶

The challenge in the year ahead will be to find flexible strategies to continue the work with young people. It is a time to celebrate our achievements, but also to reaffirm and state publicly the transformative effect this work has had on young people themselves, as well as on our organisations.

1.1 Survey of youth-led practice

This report provides a snapshot of the range of youth-friendly programmes that are being offered by galleries, museums and archives in England. It aims to offer a general overview of who is involved, what is on offer, benefits to the organisations, what has worked well and key challenges. The report has been compiled from data gathered in an online survey that was made available to members of engage (the National Association for Gallery Education), GEM (the Group for Education in Museums) as well as those who are involved in the Strategic Commissioning Programme led by MLA (the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council). It includes both a summary of the findings and detailed analysis of the data together with some insightful comments from the respondents. To supplement the findings, Section 3 includes a number of interviews with colleagues in museums and galleries to give more in-depth information on what has worked well in their settings. Oliver Sumner, an Education Consultant, gave valuable insight and conducted four of the interviews. Also included is a list of the 80 organisations that responded to the survey. The list is complemented by additional information from organisations that have long records of working with young people but were not able to respond to the survey.

The report was commissioned by engage (the National Association for Gallery Education) and supported by MLA (the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council) in response to a request from the sector for a directory of youth-friendly initiatives in galleries, museums and archives in England. The survey and the subsequent analysis of data were conducted from May to July 2010. Given the size of our sectors and the limited timeframe for this research, the analysis,

5 For further information on the impact of the Big Society on the voluntary sector see policy briefing: <http://www.ncvys.org.uk/UserFiles/NCVYS%20briefing%20on%20Building%20the%20Big%20Society.pdf>

6 Catch22 is a national charity that works with young people who find themselves in difficult situations. They work across the England and are leading a wide range of projects in different contexts to improve the lives of young people. <http://www.catch-22.org.uk>

lists and findings included in this report make no claim to be either exhaustive or represent all existing activities in museums, galleries and archives.

1.2 Summary of findings

Programming youth-led activities

We identified 106 museums, galleries and archives in England that are programming youth-led activities. Of these, 80 organisations responded to an online survey that was made available to all GEM and engage members as well as museums and galleries involved in Renaissance in the Regions and the Strategic Commissioning Programme for Museum and Gallery Education. Although the survey was disseminated to a wide range of organisations, it is noticeable that the majority of those who responded come from the gallery sector (44%), which has a longer history of working with young people. The second largest groups were museums (34%) followed by a small sample of heritage sites, cathedrals and archives.

Characteristics of programmes

- On average these programmes have been running for 3-8 years
- The majority of programmes involve more than 35 young people (61%), aged from 16 to 17 years old (95%). The second largest group is 18-21 years old (84%)
- There are a higher proportion of female participants (58%) than male (40%)
- Most of the participants take part in activities on a voluntary basis (81%)
- Most of the respondents prefer to involve young people in workshops or devise projects that are led by an artist, historian or curator
- 40% of respondents offer some form of accreditation such as the Arts Award,⁷ the national qualification that supports young people to develop as artists and arts leaders. 39% of the organisations do not offer accreditation.
- There is no single approach and no agreed definition of what youth-led activities entail. Organisations experiment with different formats and encourage young people to be decisionmakers. Young people's roles range from forum members and young curators to ambassadors and guides.

Commitment and impact

The rise in the number of youth-led initiatives in recent years can be partially attributed to the increased funding and support that has been made available. However, we have found that the

⁷ Arts Award is a national qualification that supports young people to develop as artists and arts leaders. It is open to all young people aged 11-25. The Award is an accredited qualification at three levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold) offered at Levels 1, 2 and 3 on the QCF (Qualification Credit Framework) and is accredited by Ofqual. See <http://www.artsaward.org.uk>

key to understanding why this work has flourished lies in the passion, belief and dedication from the educators and individuals who work in the sector. They bring a genuine motivation and desire to engage in real and meaningful dialogue with young people and offer them a voice and space within their organisations.

The survey provides some initial evidence of the ways in which young people are beginning to transform these organisations. They are changing the approach to programming, displays, and types of exhibitions offered to the public. More importantly, their presence and positive contribution has changed the attitude of staff and visitors towards young people. Young people are also more receptive and open to taking part, as active contributors, to the life of our cultural institutions. We believe this will have an impact in the way in which the next generation will engage with museums, galleries and archives.

Challenges ahead

There is a strong commitment and drive within the sector to continue integrating young people into their organisations and their programming. However, we have found that this work is not visible and that awareness and dissemination of it outside our sectors is limited. Organisations are now facing the prospect of major hurdles ranging from funding cuts to lack of time and resources, and there is a danger that these activities will be drastically reduced or cease altogether if they are not fully supported. We hope that organisations will be able to continue their work and find new ways of making young people an integral part of our cultural institutions.

2. Where are we now?- Questionnaire Responses Summary

2.1 Who is working with young people?

The largest group of respondents (36%) came from large institutions with 40 or more members of staff. In contrast, the second tier of activity seems to be concentrated in much smaller institutions with just 5-10 members of staff (31%). It is notable that many of the largest organisations that responded have a designated member of staff to work with young people, which is an indication of commitment and support for this work at management level. The range of medium to small organisations involved illustrates how committed these organisations are to engaging with their local communities. This is quite significant given the fact that such organisations have bigger financial constraints and smaller staff teams, and therefore greater pressure to juggle different priorities.

Most of the respondents are based in London and the second highest areas of activity in are the North West and South West of England. The limited scope of this research doesn't enable us to

confirm whether this reflects a pattern or whether there are other areas in England with a similar concentration of activity.

2.2 How has working with young people benefited organisations?

We understand that many organisations are motivated by both altruistic and educational ideals. There is a strong desire to support young people in their development and to provide new opportunities. However, one of the key benefits of this work is that it has helped break the barriers of perception within the younger population, bringing a new and lively audience to organisations. When asked what the benefits to the organisation had been, one respondent said: *“Getting young people involved with their community and interested in heritage: allowing young people to realise there is more to a museum than artefacts and people saying ‘sshhh!’”*.

Engaging young people has not only changed their perceptions, but has also brought new ideas and outlooks about how to present collections, exhibitions and displays.

One respondent explains that young people are *“a new voice and perspective within the organisation”, bringing “flexible and new ways of working; reinvigorating and questioning what we do; involving new members of our community in what we do; changing our public programme and making it more relevant”*.

Another respondent described the *“dynamic way young people have of changing the status quo of a chronological gallery hang by introducing their interpretations and [placing] contemporary work alongside historic,”* elaborating that, *“young people are the decision-makers in this process and gallery staff have learnt a lot about managing expectations, taking risk and handing over authority”*. The respondent concluded that the work had created a growth in participation: *“More young people come to the galleries and take part in artist-led activities”*.

Another response touched on the fact that young people’s input has also made staff rethink their own practices: *“By working with all kinds of people, including young people, staff improve working practices”*.

In addition, long-term benefits to the cultural sector were identified: *“Young people are the staff of the future, so we need to inspire them today”*.

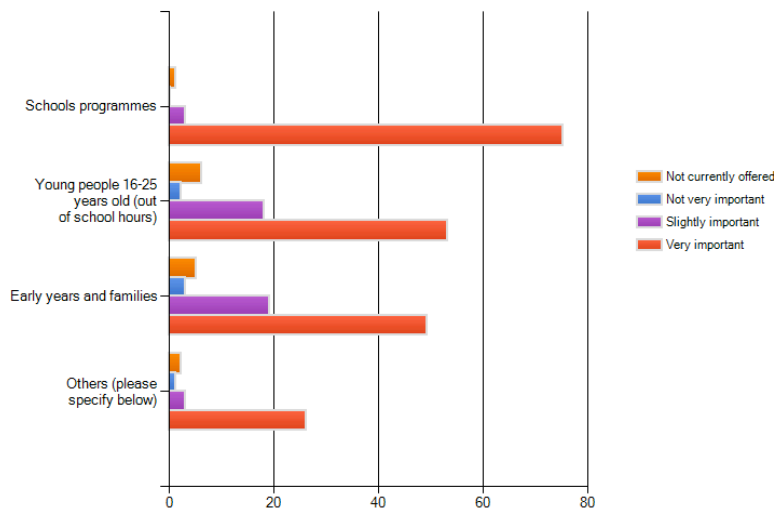
2.3 What are the priorities and the challenges?

Working with young people outside schools hours was considered a high priority by most of the respondents (67%). However, it is clear that the youth programmes are competing with many

other priorities. For example, most respondents indicated their schools programmes to be the most important areas of activity in their organisations (94%). They also ranked their work with families and early years very highly (64%). This gives an indication of the multiple priorities that educators have to deal with, balancing these areas of work to cater for different groups.

Constraints on funding and time were consistently identified as the two main challenges facing organisations. There are also other diversions such as the pressure to deliver other activities within the learning programmes or within the organisation. In addition, as one respondent identified, there is a need for *“respect by peers for the value of this work beyond thinking of it as education work: to ensure that it is considered to be just as important as the other work the organisation does”*.

Please indicate what type of formal or informal learning programmes are offered by your organisation to children and young people? Please rank each of the programmes according to their importance within your organisation



2.4 Why have organisations decided to work with young people?

“A belief in cultural entitlement and in the transformative power of culture” – Survey respondent.

Many of the arguments that are presented to encourage work with young people are based on legislative, financial and management issues. However, the majority of respondents are motivated by the prospect of widening the range of opportunities that are available to young people in their area (91%). They are seeking new ways of expanding their audiences and attracting a younger group to their organisation (65%). In addition, working with young people is considered an important vehicle for bringing ‘a new voice’ to the organisation (63% of

respondents). As one educator observed: *“It provides a different way of looking at the buildings and objects”*.

2.5 Who are the young people we work with?

We found that the average age of participants is between 16 and 21 years old (90%), with a smaller percentage working with older young people in the 21-25 age groups (53%). The majority of participants are female while male participation is lower, depending on the type of organisation that hosts them. This high number of female participants seems to be an issue for some of the organisations, in particular to those who have Youth Forums, as we found in the interviews. They are conscious of a need to diversify the profile of their groups, and are also aware that there are very few male role models in their sectors to act as mentors.

On average, most of the respondents work with groups of 35 young people or more (61%) while a smaller percentage is working with groups of 10-20 (17%). All organisations are clearly committed to making their programmes available to all young people (86%) without making any distinctions or targeting a group. One respondent commented: *“We instil an inclusive ethos where young people from all different cultural, ethnic and socio-economic identities get to mix in ways they wouldn't normally, for example our forum brings together young people recruited from local estates and private schools, and including some with disabilities”*.

However, when asked if they specifically target any group, some acknowledged that they tailor the programmes according to the different groups they are working with, such as those Not in Employment Education or Training (26%), hard-to-reach (30%) and refugee and asylum seekers (10%). *“We have different target groups for different programmes, for example, vulnerable young people and those in hospital (arts and health), students (student social), excluded and difficult to reach young people (projects).”*

2.6 How are young people being recruited?

There is ample published guidance advising organisations how to recruit young people to their programmes. We found out that most respondents acknowledged that the most effective form of recruitment is peer-led or via word of mouth (41%). Schools are also considered an effective recruitment ground (31%) as well as youth clubs and via youth workers (30%). 29% of the respondents ranked targeted marketing campaigns to young people as ‘relatively effective’.

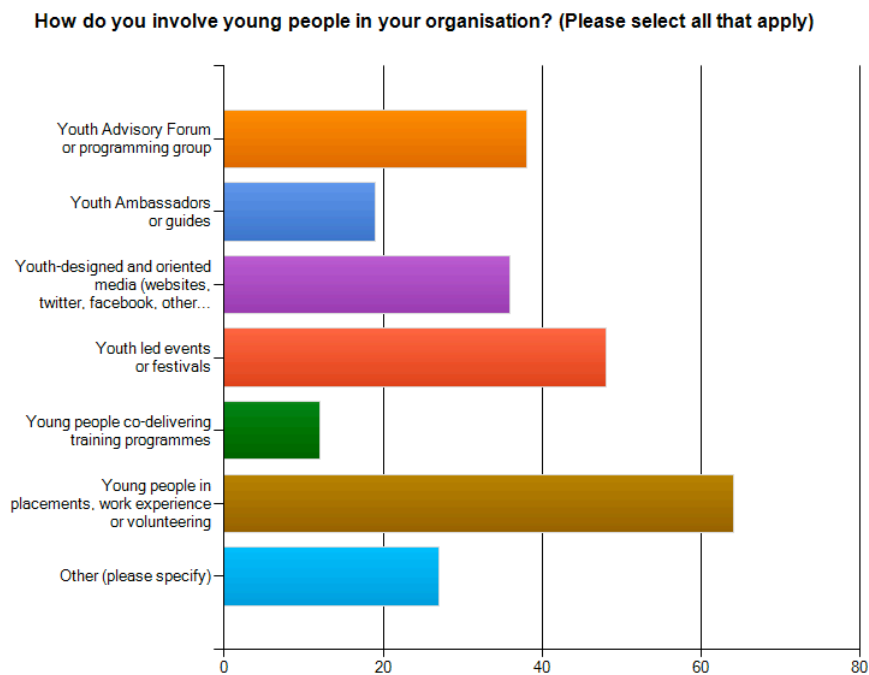
2.7 How do organisations involve young people?

The emergence of programmes for young people outside school settings is a recent development in the museum and gallery sector. On average, most of the organisations that responded to our survey have been offering activities to young people for 3-10 years (41%). Around 20% of the organisations started this work in the last 1-3 years.

Given the diversity of genres, structures and types of collections in our sectors, we have found that there is no single approach or format that is being used to involve young people. Most of the participating young people are taking part in activities on a voluntary basis (81%). Many are organisations that are involving young people in youth-led events or festivals, where they act as programmers (60%). Organisations are experimenting with different formats to bring young people together and encourage their involvement. For example, almost half of the organisations have a Youth Forum (48%) or a programming group, while a smaller percentage have established Youth Ambassadors or guides (24%). It is clear that organisations are offering multiple programmes. We have interviewed a number of galleries and museums to identify which of these options are most effective (See Section 3).

Organisations are also using different names to describe their young people’s groups and the roles they play. For example, one respondent described their group as:
“Creative Consultants: a group of young people aged 15-19 who work on programmes to create interpretation to link historic with contemporary artwork. They produce exhibitions and curate objects for display, designing new interpretation and working with artists”.

Another said: *“Our Young Curators have curated an exhibition, developed resources for use in the galleries such as costumes for dressing up and created original work for display in the galleries”.*



2.8 What type of activities do organisations offer?

We asked respondents to identify which types of activities they offer to young people and to select their preferred options. The list of options was not comprehensive but it aimed to capture which are the most popular types of activities that are regularly offered.

The activities included were:

- Planning exhibitions/installations
- Planning and developing events or festivals
- Developing websites or media programmes
- Working with an artist, historian, or curator on a project
- Taking part in workshops
- Supporting marketing campaigns

According to the responses, 96% of organisations are delivering workshops to encourage young people to take part in activities. A high number are also developing projects led by an artist, historian or curator (91%). In contrast, more than half of the respondents engage young people in planning and developing an event or festival (66%). This is an indication that organisations are offering a wide variety of opportunities to young people that combine both adult-led activities and youth-generated and controlled events. One respondent described how their organisation offers young people multiple options, *“from co-delivering exhibitions, designing marketing and media for all audiences, collections research and documentation and object selection for display, to paid work-based activities such as internships or apprenticeships”*.

3. Interviews: what has worked well?

The survey disclosed a wide range of opportunities that are currently being offered to young people and the diversity of approaches that are being used to engage them. We interviewed six organisations to give some further insights into how these programmes are implemented and what lessons have been learned from their experiences. The organisations range from small galleries funded by local authorities to larger national institutions. All have tried innovative approaches to give a voice and visibility to young people within their organisations. They have commented on the time it takes to build relationships, with both young people and staff, but they all have affirmed the value of this work and the ways in which the work of the young people has changed attitudes, programming and exhibitions.

3.1 Thelma Hulbert Gallery, Devon: Angela Blackwell, Curator

<http://www.thelmahulbert.com>

The Thelma Hulbert Gallery is located in Devon in a Georgian building that used to be the home of the artist Thelma Hulbert. The gallery aims to support and promote contemporary visual arts and crafts in the East Devon district and beyond. They started working with young people in 2006 as part of the envision programme, led by engage.

Which of the programmes you offer is most effective? In what way?

We run a young people's group and we have found that offering workshops is one of the most effective ways of engaging them. The take-up is greatest and the impact is so immediate. Young people get an impression of the gallery in a shorter time.

We often offer volunteering and work-related learning opportunities (work placements) but this approach works only with much smaller numbers of young people. It offers a greater level of engagement for the most motivated young people.

What specifically worked well?

We started with a project that aimed to consult young people and we ended up setting up a young people's group, which was very successful. Having the group made a big difference both to the way young people see the gallery and how the gallery presents itself. Now the focus is not only on consultation - we bring in artists, run workshops and take the young people on trips. It took some time to set up the group but eventually it took-off through word of mouth and by enabling young people to have a say in the alteration plans for the gallery. They helped us think about the way in which we display young people's work in the gallery and encouraged us to rethink the use of our space. We also found that the public enjoyed seeing the young people's work in relation to the main exhibitions.

What specifically did not work well?

The uptake from boys rather than girls in the Young People's Group is relatively low and this is also true across our workshop programme. Boys often attend workshops and drop-in sessions but few of them stay on as members. As the Young People's Group is mostly female, their ideas might sometimes be considered quite female-orientated. However, we have to be open to young people's ideas and to what they propose and not dictate the agenda.

How have young people contributed to the programme and what impact have they had in the organisation as a whole?

As I am both the exhibition curator and also lead on learning programme, the work with young people has begun to influence the way in which I generate exhibitions. We embarked on a major redesign project for the gallery, which opened in May 2010. Before this project, we did not have a space to work with young people, but now we have reconfigured the gallery and integrated new working areas such as the Learning Room. This plan and the ideas were very much led by the work with young people. Now they have a presence throughout the building, areas where they can just pop in to do work. Their ideas have informed the way in which we are displaying work, as well as the resources that are included in the Art Trolley.

Funding is obviously a challenge, but our work with young people is now core to our mission and the gallery's offer. Whenever funding is not available the Young People's group continues in a reduced form. They work with core staff, rather than getting artists in to work with them.

Which programmes or people, that you are aware of, have inspired you to do this type of work?

The support from engage through its envision programme was a real impetus to set up our Young People's Group and gave us lots of support through the network and briefing events. We are also part of the Devon South West cluster group which has been supported by engage's enquire programme. This has enabled us to work in partnership with other arts organisations in our region, such as Spacex and Plymouth Arts Centre, which has been a great support. We also worked with the Education Department at Tate St Ives and have organised exchange visits where the young people from both organisations can meet.

3.2 Tate Britain, London: Mark Miller, Curator, Young People's Programme

<http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/eventseducation/youth/default.htm>

Tate Forum is the peer led initiative for young people at Tate Britain. The programme has been running since 2001 and is aimed at young people aged 13-25. Tate Forum offers young people a platform to explore the Tate Collection displays and exhibitions, work with contemporary artists, and talk about art and cultural issues.

Which of your programmes is most effective? In what way?

Each of the four Tate Galleries has created a distinctive approach to engaging young people from their areas. At Tate Britain, we started our programme, Tate Extra, in 2001 as an out-of-school initiative for young people from Lambeth and Westminster. The experience made us realise that we needed to offer some continuity to young people who were taking part in short-term projects. We established the Forum in 2002, which initially acting as an advisory group. The programme has evolved and it is now fully run by young people who programme, mentor and support other young people. We have around 80 young people registered, but there is a core group of around 25 to 30 participants who are more actively engaged. They meet every two weeks at the gallery to discuss and plan a number of activities and projects they are involved with, including the large-scale events.

What specifically has worked well?

I have found that that you need to be clear from the start of what you want to achieve and think long term, not just about the immediate programme. You also have to be very flexible and adaptable and understand the nature of young people and the pressures that affect them. When I started, the young people at Tate Forum were responsible for creating around eight events every year for their peers. The events were wide ranging, from annual large events such as the BP Saturday's Loud Tate to smaller events like Taster sessions and Meet the Artist. As the programme has grown, the young people have taken more responsibilities as marketers, designers and production managers, and have been co-producing larger scale initiatives. We have found that programming these large-scale events has helped us raise the visibility of the group, both internally and outside Tate. These events take a lot of energy, resource and time to manage, but they seem to have a more profound impact and create a legacy for the work of the young people within the gallery. They also give a great sense of achievement to the young people and develop their transferable skills.

What specifically did not work well?

All aspiring participants are invited to a Training programme, which is offered every year to give them a better understanding of the organisation. They learn about the all our departments and the basics of how to organise events. The programme is very comprehensive, but we have found that given the size and structure of the organisation, it is sometimes very difficult to get them to meet the exhibiting artists and discuss ideas with them.

How have young people contributed to the programme and what impact have they had in the organisation as a whole?

Tate Forum has stretched the boundaries of how we view Tate Britain as a space and as a gallery. The presence of young people in the gallery has made everyone more aware of the needs, likes and dislikes of young people. This has been particularly noticeable in the marketing and publicity of events.

Which programmes or people have inspired you to do this type of work?

I have always hoped that there would be better opportunities for young people and that it is necessary to listen to and act on what they think. Art and art practices have also helped me think about the social, cultural narratives and issues that we are constantly dealing with. Many people at Tate have supported me, but I particularly have been inspired by the work of my colleagues at Tate Britain Learning Team and the partnerships with organisations such as University of the Art London Widening Participation team and Looked After Young People teams at Westminster Council. They bring passion, realities and a knowledge that is unique, together with a great understanding of the institutional processes.

3.3 Iniva, (Institute of International Visual Arts), London: Teresa Cisneros-Ledda, Education Curator

http://www.iniva.org/learning/the_inivators

Which of the programmes you offer is most effective? In what way?

I probably would choose the peer-led youth forum. It all depends on how you define 'effective', either as a way of measuring the quality of engagement or in terms of audience development. Our youth forum, which is called *Inivators*, gives the opportunity for participants to work with artists to develop programmes, learn practical skills and explore creative approaches. The full impact of this work may not be immediately apparent, but we have found that even when we do not always achieve the intended creative results there are still some unexpected learning outcomes. The key is to give the young people a space to be nurtured and inspired, but supported, in their own expression. Some participants come out stronger than others, but it is important that they are given the same support and visibility in the programme.

What specifically worked well?

The Inivators is supported by a team which includes the curator/manager, an artist and a researcher. Our role is to be a critical friend and introduce critical approaches and ideas. It is an intensive way of working which encourages them to keep coming back and to encounter a different format each time for engaging. The group has always worked with an artist who is at an early stage in their career, usually in their late 20's, so that the age difference is not so great.

I have also found out that workshops can only offer a temporary activity and that this needs to be backed up by an ongoing engagement that is offered by the youth forum.

What specifically did not work well?

Working with young people can be really challenging because they have different levels of commitments to a project. They have many other things in their lives - academic work, jobs, social lives, families etc. They are here because they want a different experience. If they have

given their intellectual commitment to a project, we also have to understand their situation and work with them.

How have young people contributed to the programme and what impact have they had in the organisation as a whole?

The Inivators began as education project and was almost invisible in the public programme, but I have pushed internally for their recognition. By staging one-week events they have staked out their position and there is now an expectation across the organisation for them to programme something in response to each exhibition. In addition we are increasingly enabling them to use the venue to programme their own events, such as their own critique film night. I am now thinking about ways to get young people to visit on their own and am looking for ways to continue providing quality of experience. Iniva should be a playground for young people, a place to learn things and ask questions. They need to find out about the possibilities of working in a place like this. Our job is to stick our necks out and back them up.

Which programmes or people, that you are aware of, have inspired you to do this type of work?

It is usually artists' practice what inspires me - for instance, we have worked with Yara El-Sherbini, who experiments with using different public formats. We start almost from zero with each programme and try to be informed by artistic practice.

3.4 National Portrait Gallery, London: Rachel Moss, Head of Young People's Programmes
www.npg.org.uk

The National Portrait Gallery has been running programmes for young people since 2006 and established a Youth Forum for those aged 14-21. The Youth forum helps organise different events throughout the year for other young people, which aim to make the Gallery a more youth friendly place.

Which of the programmes you have offered is most effective? In what way?

It has taken a long time to build those relationships, but we have found that the Youth Forum has been very effective and we are seeing now the results. The programme started as a young people's advisory panel, but it has evolved so that the young people also run their own events, *Youth Forum Presents*. The group is now responsible for creating a large annual Friday evening event, as well as smaller events throughout the year, and taking control of most of the aspects of the project. These events require a lot of planning and my role is to act as mediator between the young people and gallery staff, facilitating the meetings and providing some guidance to the young people on what works in our space. The young people decide who will work with them, which artists will be contracted to deliver activities with them, and the format and types of activities that will be offered. They tend to programme cross-art form, including music, gallery talks and workshops where people can take part in a practical art activity.

What specifically has worked well?

The support and endorsement from Senior Management and the Director has helped us take the work forward. We have also found that programming cross-art form activities seem to work quite well, as it gives the young people a greater choice and a space to be innovative. It is important to have a public element to most of the activities, because it gives them a sense of achievement and completion while presenting young people to visitors in a positive light.

In terms of planning, it is better to give the young people specific areas to develop instead of engaging them in the development of the whole programme. It is also important to consult and involve them in the selection of imagery for marketing. Our Youth Forum attracts young people from all age groups and backgrounds and even though there are big differences, we have found it is more effective to work with them as a whole team.

What specifically did not work well?

Some of our more directed programmes with hard-to-reach young people, such as the Young Mums project, have become more difficult to retain. We value this programme and have seen its impact, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to find the financial backing to sustain it.

How have young people contributed to the programme and what impact have they had in the organisation as a whole?

In the last year we have been exploring ways of creating self directed learning activities by using social networking media. Involving them in new media has given us new ideas on how to tap into different audiences and make our space more dynamic. It has also made the gallery rethink the way in which it uses social media. For example, young people have taken control and generated the imagery, text and content of two recent initiatives, the One & Other guest bloggers, which was part of the Fourth Plinth project in 2009, and the Youth Forum Facebook fan page, which is ongoing. More recently, they have been developing a Youth Forum mobile phone audio tour of the Collection. They are researching the Collection and creating their own interpretation of the works they select.

Which programmes or people have inspired you to do this type of work?

I had a good experience as a child and it was my parents, particularly my Mum, who encouraged me to visit and explore galleries and museums. I also had a fantastic group of mentors and people who inspired me during my university years and early career, such as the education staff at Southampton Museums and Galleries, Leicester City Museums, the Bass Museum, Tate Modern and the Serpentine Gallery. I was really pleased to recently discover that one of my former Youth Forum members has been inspired to start running her own workshops with young people.

3.5 De La Warr Pavilion: Polly Gifford, Head of Education

<http://www.dlwp.com/education/YoungPeople.htm>

The Pavilion has two main groups, the Arts Ambassadors, which are young people aged 14-21, and the Film Club. They have been running programmes for young people for more than six years.

Which of the programmes you offer is most effective? In what way?

Offering peer-led activities has worked well for us, although it takes a lot of time and investment to get to the point where it can be really effective. Volunteering has also been a strong area of our work because of the time and effort we invest in individuals. Many of our young people have started with a work experience placement and then progress to the volunteer programme. Volunteers' work is varied and supports many areas of our programme, from assisting with school workshops to providing support for events. The experience we have offered has helped many young people into careers in the arts, particularly gallery education. We spend time identifying their interests and find appropriate opportunities for them.

What specifically worked well?

Youth-directed work and peer-led activities are starting to underlie our whole approach to working. This approach varies from project to project depending on the group. For example, we have a film group that started with us delivering film-making workshops and now they are about to show a film they have produced and created themselves. They worked quite independently from us and the older ones supported younger ones, whereas our Arts Ambassadors group was set up more formally to be peer-led. In many ways we believe that an informal approach can enable young people to take the lead more naturally and its results can be most powerful.

What specifically did not work well?

The concept of creating a youth forum, as a gathering of young people to discuss the workings and development of an organisation, may not always take-off. Youth Forums work better if they are integrated with peer-led projects. We retain aspects of the forum, such as consultation and developing their own ideas, but take a more active approach.

How have young people contributed to the programme and what impact have they had in the organisation as a whole?

We started a big youth arts festival in October, now in its fifth year, called 'Access All Areas', which the young people help us run. The festival is a vehicle to realise things that might not happen otherwise. It helps me to avoid through the year having to say 'that's a really good idea but it is not possible'. Other departments are consulting with the group to inform their research, such as the live programmes. There have been other projects, such as the Young Curators project, which have involved a wide range of staff in the organisation. Through these projects some staff who might normally have no contact with young people have been able to

work much more closely with them. That contact around a real project seems more rewarding than something fictional, or than work related learning that can, by necessity, be a bit contrived.

Which programmes or people have inspired you to do this type of work?

For my initial inspiration I would have to go back a long way to the first job I had in this sector, at Greenwich Young People's Theatre. They had a strong ethos about developing young people rather than teaching drama. Although the language was different then to the terminology we use now about youth-led programmes, it was essentially a demonstration of how these approaches can be successful.

More recently, being a member of enquire (the engage action learning programme) has influenced my thinking. Particularly, it has encouraged me to reflect on how we develop projects rather than on the practicalities on the ground. It has helped understand better the relationships between artists, galleries and youth workers.

3.6 Manchester Art Gallery: Alex Woodall, Interpretation and Development Officer
<http://www.manchestergalleries.org/supporting-us/get-involved/creative-consultants/>

The Creative Consultants are a group of young people aged between 15 and 19 who meet regularly to explore the collections and interpret artworks for their peers. They work on a variety of projects led by artists and use different techniques to interpret the artworks in the collection different audiences. The Creative Consultants has been running for six years.

Which of the programmes you offer is most effective? In what way?

Our Youth Forum, called Creative Consultants seeks new ways of linking historic collections with contemporary artworks. They produce exhibitions and curate objects for display, design new interpretation and work with artists. Everyone has to work together, staff and participants alike. Having a peer-led youth forum creates ideas within the organisation for interaction led by young people: for instance they may decide they want to create a video piece in relation to a particular artist. In terms of audience development having a youth forum is key for us. When I go to do my 'sales pitch' to schools and colleges the fact we have this group that they can join appeals to people. Young people come because they want to be part of something at the Gallery, and to meet other young people. Some of them are also very aware of gaining experience for their university applications.

What specifically worked well?

Giving young people the chance to devise interpretation programmes for our exhibitions has been very successful. Originally the work of the group was seen by some as an 'add-on' to bring some young people into the gallery, but now they are very much part of the set-up and have a

relationship of trust with staff across departments. One advantage of this programme is that it was established as partnership and funded by Tate, through their Visual Dialogues programme. This gave us free reign internally, as the framework was designed by an external organisation, and it also gave the project a higher status in the Gallery. As a consequence, we have been able to establish better communication links with some of our departments such as the interpretation team. This has influenced other staff members in teams such as marketing and web development, who are starting to ask to work with the education staff.

The programme has also opened up new opportunities to many of the participants and many have continued with the museum either in volunteering capacity or have opted for art-related careers. Working with the Creative Consultants is the most rewarding part of my job.

What specifically did not work well?

Internal procedures have sometimes been difficult. With peer-led projects we may have no idea what their exhibition is going to look like until just before the opening, which can be too risky for some staff members who are responsible for some of these areas of work.

How have young people contributed to the programme and what impact have they had in the organisation as a whole?

The experience and projects that have been developed by the Creative Consultants have encouraged the institution to rethink what interpretation actually is and the young people's views have informed our thinking. The group has also produced high quality exhibitions and have questioned our approaches, for example by placing one of their own etchings next to a Goya etching. They have produced events for families and peer-led activities in their classes. They have also organised large one-day events, such as Counter Culture, involving a wide range of art and activities inspired by youth culture, from DJs to people dressed as polar bears. These projects have acted as pilots to give us further ideas for future programming.

Which programmes or people have inspired you to do this type of work?

Working within the Tate Visual Dialogues programme has been influential as this project is aligned to [then] current policy thinking, such as the Find Your Talent principles, and the McMaster report. I have also worked with Manchester City Council, supporting the Children's Plan, and this has given me further awareness of the government agendas. From a personal perspective, there are some fantastic models of working with young people that have inspired me, such as the Young Tate group at Tate Liverpool; we take our Creative Consultants to visit Tate Liverpool. Prior to working in this post, I was inspired by the Bradford Young Ambassadors scheme, which was part of the Yorkshire hub.

Resources

There is a wealth of information available on the internet on how to work with young people and there are hundreds of publications, resources and toolkits that offer guidance on how to work with young people. To help you identify the right information, we suggest readers look at *envision: a handbook* as a starting point. Published by engage in 2008, the handbook provides very useful guidance, case studies and a resource section that can assist in the planning and development of projects. For further reference, we have included in this section up-to-date information on websites, resources and organisations that have continued to be active since the publication of the envision handbook in 2008.

Young People and the Arts- the Policy context

At the point of publication of this report, the Department of Education (previously DCSF) has not issued any guidance of the changes that will be implemented to the work with young people. Prior to the change of government in May 2010, DCSF issued funding, support and guidance on how to take this work forward. The *Youth Matters* and *Aiming High for Young People* papers published in between 2005 and 2008 outlined the government's commitment and aspirations to this work. For historical reference and a simplified version of what the policy entailed, see the young people's version of *Aiming High for Young People*⁸ published by the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) in March 2010.

The Coalition Government has recently issued some guidance on what will be retained but has not yet provided details of how this will be implemented. In the budget of June 2010 the new government committed to:

- Support the creation of apprenticeships, internships, work pairings, and college and workplace training places as part of our wider programme to get Britain working.
- Setting colleges free from direct state control and abolishing many of the further education quangos, so that public funding should be fair and follow the choices of students.

⁸ See <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/download/?id=5808> for details

For up-to-date information on policy, news, briefings and toolkits see:

The National Youth Agency, an independent charity and the partner of choice for local government, local authorities and third sector organisations, delivering with them, and advising and supporting them in the development of programmes and policies for young people.

<http://www.nya.org.uk/>

The National Council for Voluntary Youth Services is a diverse and growing network of over 170 national organisations and regional and local networks that work with and for young people. <http://www.ncvys.org.uk/homepage.html>

Youth Action Network's vision is for all young people to have the opportunity to participate in youth action volunteering and develop their own solutions to community needs. They work across England, promoting the youth action approach as a way of making volunteering for young people a more fulfilling, rewarding and beneficial experience. See their policy and news section for updates:

http://www.youthactionnetwork.org.uk/yn/policy_information/partners_news

For advocacy, support and networking initiatives

ENYAN (English National Youth Arts Network) is an Artswork initiative, working on a regional and national level to establish support and development for the youth arts sector, including a website, a programme of professional development, and a national forum for advocacy and lobbying. <https://www.enyan.co.uk/article/show/407>. **ENYAN** has recently launched a campaign for this year titled '**Youth Arts Transforms Lives- FACT!**' which supports the sector at this crucial time when changes to investment in the Third Sector are afoot and affecting projects at national, regional and local level. For information see their website.

The Cultural Learning Alliance is for everyone who believes that children and young people should have an entitlement to quality cultural experiences. It offers case studies, advocacy documents and information on what is taking place in the sector. See:

www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk

Why work with young people?

Learning to Live: Museums, young people and education, Kate Bellamy and Carey Oppenheim (eds). This collection of essays, authored by prominent and expert figures from the worlds of

culture and education, addresses key questions about the role of museums and other institutes of material culture in young people's wellbeing and learning. The aim in bringing their thinking together was to explore what museums, working with policymakers and delivery bodies such as schools, can and should be doing, both within and beyond the classroom, to inspire learning and creativity among all.

See: <http://www.ippr.org.uk/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=665>

Positive activities for young people

This guidance sets out a number of case studies that demonstrate where strong partnership working is helping to meet expectations. It demonstrates the benefits of a partnership approach, and shows that working this way can help local authorities meet their statutory duty, support the delivery of the five hour sport offer, and enrich local youth offers through the inclusion of a diverse range of arts, culture and sport activities - particularly on Friday and Saturday nights.

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00369-2010&>

Using the arts and culture to deliver positive activities for young people

Includes case studies and information on projects which are involving young people to meet the Local authorities' agenda of providing positive activities to this group. This information was compiled from a number of events that took place across England supported by ACE and MLA. Published October 2009.

http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/using-arts-and-culture-deliver-positive-activities-young-people/

How can you involve young people?

Apprentices

Apprenticeships are increasingly seen as a key means of ensuring work experience and training for young people, offering a qualification that is achieved whilst working 'on the job'. A Creative Apprenticeship Scheme has now been developed by Creative & Cultural Skills (the skills council for the creative and cultural sectors) in conjunction with employers, to ensure that both they and their apprentice benefit. There are pathways within this which are of particular relevance to the museums and heritage sector. For information see

<http://www.creative-choices.co.uk/knowledge/creative-apprenticeships/>

Work placement guidance for museums, libraries and archives- a toolkit

This toolkit has been designed to help you make work experience placements a productive, positive and pleasant experience for both you and for students.

<http://www.creative-choices.co.uk/jobs-careers-news/cultural-heritage/work-placement-toolkit-for-museums,-libraries-and-archives/>

The Arts Award

This is a scheme developed to support young people who want to deepen their engagement with the arts, build creative and leadership skills, and to achieve a national qualification. It is offered at three levels and aimed at young people aged 11-25. It encourages young people to explore any of the art forms including performing arts, visual arts, literature, media and multimedia. The award builds confidence, helps young people to enjoy cultural activities, and prepares them for further education or employment. It can be taken at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels, which are accredited at levels 1, 2 and 3 on the National Qualifications Framework. Nine regional agencies offer advice, training and networking and can help venues to set up the award. www.artsaward.org.uk

Youth participation and consultation

How to develop a Youth Forum in your museum - A toolkit of ideas, Claire Adler, 2009 An excellent resource with case studies and step-by-step guidance on how to create a youth forum within your organisation. The toolkit has been developed out of the direct experience of developing Youth Forums and in particular the Kent Museums Youth Forums (KMYF) funded by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's DCMS and DCSF funded Strategic Commissioning and Renaissance South East programmes. See:

http://www.museumse.org.uk/ABC_working_with_schools/downloads/YouthForumToolkit1.pdf

<http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/view-publication.php?pubid=990>

Involving children and young people – an introduction

<http://hbr.nya.org.uk/files/Involving%20cyp%20-%20an%20introduction.pdf>

This briefing, developed by National Youth Agency, provides good guidance and information on areas to consider when involving young people in your organisation. It has been developed by the **Hear by Right** programme, which is the National Youth Agency framework for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people in decision making. To find out more information, resources, case studies and training see their website,

www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright

Consulting young people: a review of the literature

A report for Creative Partnerships by Sara Bragg, Open University

This review introduces readers to the field of consultation work with young people. It is not a comprehensive review of all published literature but it indicates some relevant references, broad schools of thought, major conceptual issues and practical approaches, as a guide for those interested in this area.

<http://www.creative-partnerships.com/data/files/consulting-young-people-13.pdf>

Participation works, the national network supporting youth participation, has a website which includes information, resources and training courses of how to involve young people in decision making activities and influence a wide range of settings.

www.participationworks.org.uk

Making contact with young people

Engaging through social media: Social media explained

This guide, published by DCSF in February 2010, explains social media and how you can work with it. It will allow you to start a conversation with young people and get them actively involved in creating and maintaining a social media group, page or account.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00676/>

About engage

engage is the National Association for Gallery Education, a UK-based international membership organisation. engage works through its members to promote access to, understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts.

engage members are those who deliver learning programmes in the visual arts, including gallery educators, artists and artist educators, as well as students, teachers, curators, youth and community workers, policymakers and others involved in arts education and the visual arts.

<http://www.engage.org>