Paul Hamlyn Foundation ArtWorks Legacy Funded Projects Evaluation Report Executive Summary

ArtWorks | Developing Practice in Participatory Settings

phf Paul Hamlyn Foundation

1   Executive Summary

1.1   Introduction

This summary provides an overview of the evaluation report for the legacy funded projects made by Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) for activities under the banner of ArtWorks, and following on from PHF's special initiative. The evaluation has been undertaken by DHA.

1.1.1   ArtWorks

ArtWorks was originally a special initiative of PHF, constituting an intervention of £1.47million and involving a range of other partners contributing funding.[1] The stated aim for ArtWorks is as follows:

> **'Overall aim**
> To support the initial training and continuous professional development of artists working in participatory settings in order to enhance the quality of people's engagement in arts-led activity and the arts, and create a more professional and confident sector whose work is validated and valued and is seen as important.' (From the PHF *Call for Submissions from Pathfinder Partnerships 2010*).

Five Pathfinder partnership projects covering different geographical areas were funded for three years (with some projects being extended beyond this period and completing in Autumn 2014) to undertake a range of activities using an enquiry-based approach. They all undertook mapping, consultation and research as a first stage, most engaging with artists to find out what they needed, and in some cases consulting with employers and commissioners, HEIs and FE providers, and participants over specific areas of enquiry. They then went on to test models of professional development, ranging from accredited short courses to on-the-job models for reflection, from student work placements to peer networks, and from contributing to National Occupational Standards through to development of a code of practice for artists.

As the special initiative came to an end, PHF with the support of the Project Director for ArtWorks (an external consultant, Susanne Burns) identified a range of assets and opportunities which would benefit from further funding support. Seven packages of work across the original five Pathfinders were solicited, some requiring a broad proposal ('post-initiative grants') and others going through PHF's open application grant schemes. This evaluation covers the activities of these grants up to the present time. Many of the projects have completed their activities, but two are formally ongoing and others are looking for ways to continue their activities.

These seven projects are: ArtWorks Cymru, a continuation/development of pathfinder activities in Wales led by a freelance consultant with the grant held by Welsh National Opera; ArtWorks London, a continuation/development of pathfinder activities in London, led by and mostly focused upon activity at the Barbican Guildhall; ArtWorks Scotland, a continuation/development of pathfinder activities in Scotland, led by Creative Scotland; ArtWorks Alliance, a network involving lead partners from the original five Pathfinders and all the partners from the ArtWorks Navigator pathfinder with the grant held

---

[1] The other funders for the ArtWorks special initiative were: Creativity, Culture and Education; the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Cultural Leadership Programme.

by People Dancing; ITAC 3, the Third International Teaching Artist Conference, hosted by Scotland with the project led by Creative Scotland; the ArtWorks Fellowship, expanding a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) model, which was piloted at the Barbican Guildhall in the Pathfinder phase, with artists and organisations in England and Wales, with the grant held by the Barbican Guildhall; and the Massive Online Open Course (MOOC), a project run by the University of Sunderland (the lead partner in the ArtWorks North East pathfinder).

Interviewees for this evaluation (covering project leads/managers and PHF staff and consultants) were asked to consider whether ArtWorks' original purpose was still valid. All interviewees felt that there was still a need for ArtWorks, and many frame their projects within the broader context of making arts practice in participatory settings *better*. In this post-Pathfinder phase, many identified a sharpening of the focus of their activities and moving from testing things to delivering things. Despite this, the enquiry-based approach from the Pathfinder phase was considered of ongoing relevance, with interviewees referring to ongoing opportunities to explore, discuss and debate current practice in this area. Respondents were also keen not to lose the learning from the ArtWorks special initiative.

1.1.2   Evaluating ArtWorks

The evaluation team was appointed as legacy funded projects were beginning to get started. DHA also undertook the evaluation of the special initiative, using both a formative and summative approach over the period of the Initiative. For the evaluation of the special initiative key research questions at different levels were established in the first instance, and the Evaluation Team then developed a range of approaches to mapping and analysing ArtWorks as an initiative. Several of these tools are used again in this evaluation. These are:

1. An 'intervention model' that takes the aims, objectives and outcomes sought for ArtWorks and developed an 'ideal' proposition for how the outcomes might be achieved. The project activity was then mapped against this proposition, to see where individual projects and the critical mass of activity might have an impact on those outcomes.

2. Conceptual clustering of activities across the different projects, to bring together and analyse the different approaches taken for activities with similar aims or intentions. This process has been useful in revealing where there is a critical mass of activity/outputs across the project, and where there are gaps.

3. Considering the partnership approaches that the projects have taken, to understand what different kinds of partners have been involved, and how.

The evaluation approach has drawn on a range of data, including: reporting by the project leads/managers as part of the grant processes; written outputs from the Pathfinders, including internal material (e.g. action plans and surveys) and published material (e.g. reports); observations at meetings of the projects, mostly via the ArtWorks Alliance forum; and a series of semi-structured interviews.

1.3   Outputs and Outcomes

As noted above, the evaluation mapped project activities against six outcomes set out for the programme, using an 'intervention model' (a version of a logic model) against which it might be possible to understand how individual projects and the group of projects act as a collective intervention by a funder. Individual projects would not be expected to achieve all six outcomes, and in some cases the outcomes are ambitious and so what can be mapped is the progress towards that outcome. The commentary here summarises these findings.

Outcome 1 - Artists are more confident and articulate about their work in participatory settings

Artists have been involved and benefited from projects in a range of ways, including taking part in networks and events, both in setting up and framing discussions and in participating in them. In some cases this has particularly focused on bringing artists together with others who they may not normally get much opportunity to engage with: artists from other practices, art forms and countries; employers and commissioners within the arts sector; and key stakeholders outside the sector. Artists have contributed to the shaping and delivery of CPD opportunities, contributing teaching expertise, their own knowledge via case studies, research and other routes, and other skills; they have also been the participants in CPD opportunities, sometimes receiving bursaries or other support in order to engage. In some cases artists have set out their own lines of enquiry, and been supported by funding and other resources to pursue it.

Outcome 2 – Participants are benefitting from enhanced quality experiences of engaging in arts-led activity

It remains the case that none of the activity under the ArtWorks banner has specifically sought to identify whether better supported artists provide better experiences for participants. In many cases, this is due to the focus of interventions – most of the interaction is with artists, who then take those experiences back into their practice but are not monitored when they do so. However, some CPD opportunities which took place in this group of projects did involve artists who had ongoing activities in participatory settings taking place alongside their CPD. In these instances, those artists had immediate opportunities to apply CPD; there are useful reflections in individual feedback of the value of CPD support in making small changes to practice in the immediate term. Amongst the projects, there was also some testing of quality frameworks and evaluation methodologies on projects involving participants, and some research into participating in different settings.

Outcome 3 – Artists, employers and participants share a better understanding of what constitutes quality and value in the work

Across the projects two have had specific strands focusing on quality, with national quality frameworks/toolkits being developed for use across the sector and with the support of major funding bodies. These models have been developed based on research from the special initiative phase, and have been piloted significantly with the sector including application to live participatory projects. Funding bodies have explored how to give these tools status by embedding them in existing guidelines and funding structures. Beyond these projects quality remains an area of exploration and enquiry, although it is not always referred to explicitly. More generally, there are ongoing challenges in bringing in employers and others from the non-arts sector to engage with questions about the practice and the quality of the practice.

Outcome 4 – Clear models of good practice are shared, disseminated and replicated

These projects have in most cases specifically taken a model or models which were tested in the special initiative phase and applied them more widely or more deeply. In some cases the model has transferred without very significant reorganisation, but in others models have grown or developed. New models – like the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) – are new to delivery partners. Testing has allowed models to be refined, answered some questions about further roll-out and – in some cases – embedded new models in existing structures where (as long as the market demand remains) the courses will be sustainable.

Outcome 5 – A more effective infrastructure for the training and development of artists at all stages of their careers has been developed across the UK

In addition to courses and CPD events, some other kinds of resources have been developed, tested and rolled out by this group of projects. Two quality toolkits/frameworks are now in place in Wales and Scotland, built on significant research and consultation, and being implemented and tested across the system from funding processes to on-the-ground activity planning. Networks and ways of bringing communities of interest and practice together have also been a significant focus of three of the projects; it has become increasingly the case that these networks are seen as crucial infrastructure for a sector which is otherwise quite fragmentary and includes lots of sole traders.

Outcome 6 – There is more partnership working across funding agencies, public bodies and policy makers

Projects in Scotland and Wales have gone significantly further in connecting major cultural funding agencies to the wider sector, and in exploring routes to engaging outside the cultural sector with other agencies and infrastructures. The presence of ArtWorks networks and capacities in these areas has been important to enabling these relationships to develop. In other cases, organisations and sometimes individuals have been key influences or have taken a lead on significant elements of wider programmes. The attempt at a UK-wide strategic partnership for arts work in participatory settings, in the shape of ArtWorks Alliance, is seen as having significant value but not yet delivering on its promise.

1.4 Activities

The ArtWorks projects covered by this evaluation have undertaken a range of different activities. These were mapped for the evaluation, and the following clusters have emerged.

1.4.1 CPD Opportunities

Within this area, CPD opportunities fall into three broad categories. Firstly there are Higher Education courses, including new MA courses, a new BA course, a MOOC and then smaller interventions (e.g. asking a speaker from ArtWorks to engage with undergraduates). These courses will now continue to run as long as the market remains for them (with the exception of the MOOC where a different business case is likely to be required). The second of these categories is events and conferences. Several Pathfinders ran conferences, and the trend has continued with these subsequently funded projects. Activities like the International Teaching Artists Conference, hosted via ArtWorks Scotland, have proved a strategic link between ArtWorks activities across the UK and the wider international community of arts work in participatory settings. Events have also been a useful way of enabling organisations and artists to set up their own platforms and agendas for debating and sharing practice. Finally, the third category

include less formal CPD opportunities like the Fellowship (matching an individual artist and an organisation in an extended period of largely bespoke CPD activities). Some of these approaches specifically sit alongside an individual artists practice, rather than being a retreat or break from it.

1.4.2   Research and Development Activities

In comparison to the special initiative phase, this group of projects has been less focused on research and development activities. However, some methodologies – particularly seed or development funding, with small grants and open-ended projects to explore, map and test things – have still been popular. Some research projects have taken place, some as commissions of external consultants, some in partnership with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and some undertaken by practitioners who bid for small grants. Some projects have also undertaken internal learning activities, to share learning from ArtWorks and review their own activities in the light of that learning.

1.4.3   Resources

Several projects sought to codify practical knowledge, encourage better practice and raise the standard of practice through frameworks and toolkits. Two of these have provided national quality resources, and have been partnerships involving the sector and major funding agencies. A wide range of other resources has emerged across the projects, including written reports mapping practice and exploring questions and evaluation tools. The ArtWorks Alliance has also undertaken work developing a website with a search function and a range of tagging which enables a user to navigate through ArtWorks resources from the special initiative and more recent projects.

1.4.4   Networks

The importance of networks has already been noted in this report. Three significant in-person networks have been further developed through these projects: in Scotland, in Wales and nationally with the ArtWorks Alliance. They all have slightly different approaches, and different levels of engagement and responsibility in terms of running projects and leading on developing support for artists working in participatory settings. There have also been online networks and communities supported across the projects, with mailing lists, newsletters, Facebook and other social media groups.

1.5   Processes and Structures

1.5.1   The role of PHF

PHF took a different role from the approach it had used when ArtWorks was a special initiative. In the early months staff were still quite involved, managing the transfer of assets to the ArtWorks Alliance and chairing some sharing sessions. On the whole though, PHF operated largely as a grant funder in a more typical sense. Through the ArtWorks Advisor role PHF did continue with an external consultant operating as a kind of strategic and critical friend to the project. All of the projects were encouraged and solicited by PHF, via the ArtWorks Advisor who now holds a considerable portion of the 'institutional' knowledge of ArtWorks on behalf of PHF. PHF has also brought in the ArtWorks Advisor to run a sharing seminar on ArtWorks lessons, and has been exploring ways to apply that learning within PHF.

1.5.2 Partnerships and influencing 'the system'

Some of the projects have involved formal partnership arrangements. ArtWorks Cymru set up a partnership, following on from its period as a pathfinder, bringing in arts organisations and some individual artists to lead the project. They were supported by a freelance consultant as Partnership Manager, and the group took decisions collectively, and individually took a lead on elements of the project. ArtWorks Alliance has sought to develop a similar approach in terms of establishing a collective and collaborative leadership model; however, the focus of the project has been the development of the this model, rather than the delivery of a pre-defined programme of work. On the whole ArtWorks Alliance has found it difficult to make the progress in developing the partnership which it had originally anticipated; significant challenges have included a lack of clarity concerning the purpose and membership of the Alliance, and confusion about the way it should operate. However, it has also been true that all those interviewed feel that the Alliance presents an important opportunity for the sector to organise and develop a strategic, collective voice.

By contrast, whilst ArtWorks Scotland developed a forum for potential partners to come together, the network had no specific decision-making role within the project and was set up more as a route for connecting and exchanging ideas. Projects like ArtWorks London have then tended to involve partners on specific project elements, rather than in the broader direction of the project. In the case of ArtWorks London they have worked with a wider range of partners as part of this project, and they have invited partners in to explore and review some of their existing activities. Projects like the MOOC, the Fellowship and ITAC 3 have brought together specific partners in particular ways: artists and organisations contributing material to the MOOC; individual artists and organisations partnering in bespoke CPD for the Fellowship, and impacting upon both parties; and ITAC 3 representing an international collaboration between the conference committee and ArtWorks Scotland.

1.5.3 Overview

Learning from the different types of collaboration across the projects suggests several useful things. Networks and partnership require significant resources, often in the shape of freelance consultants, to provide an engine. Collaborative leadership models can be very complex, particularly in terms of negotiating permission, authority and responsibility to take action forward. Despite this, collaborative work is taking place and a community of practice – incomplete and developing – is being supported and encouraged.

There are still some challenges in engaging with some important stakeholders. Arts Council England remains significantly less engaged than either Creative Scotland (who have lead projects) or Arts Council Wales (who have co-funded projects). Other national cultural agencies and networks are yet to be further engaged with. It is also the case that engaging outside the arts and cultural sector has proved challenging, even where projects have specifically set out to do this.

1.6 Achievements

1.6.1 Meaningful experiences for artists and organisations

Feedback gathered by individual projects across courses, CPD opportunities, resource development, R&D projects, events and other activities is testament to both artists and arts organisations feeling the benefit of useful discussions and activities as part of the ArtWorks projects. Individuals who have been

involved have appreciated space to reflect upon and share their practice, and the opportunity to prioritise their needs and begin to set the agenda themselves.

1.6.2   Delivery, and seeking sustainability

Projects have moved beyond many of the R&D activities which characterised the special initiative phase, and on to exploring how longer-term delivery might work. Some models are embedded – for example courses within HEIs, which can continue as long as the market for them remains. Others have refined models further and gained wider interest. There has also been work by some institutions to embed the learning from ArtWorks into grant-making processes and core activities.

1.6.3   Practical Resources

ArtWorks projects have produced toolkits and frameworks which are being used, referenced and embedded. They have been consulted upon and tested, and their application is being explored across the 'system' in which art works in participatory settings takes place. Work has been undertaken to make resources more available and more navigable.

1.6.4   A community of practice within ArtWorks

Across firstly the pathfinders, and latterly these projects, many of the same organisations and personnel have been engaging with each other over several years. This phase of activity has included some more specific knowledge exchange, with projects using each other more directly as reference points and inviting each other to share learning at events. Individual projects also have established partners, networks and wider connections. Projects have from time to time leant each other their local communities to test and explore activities.

1.6.5   Learning how to herd cats

Despite some evidence of good collaboration between projects, it has remained difficult to mobilise the kind of sector leadership which the ArtWorks Alliance has sought (and, to a lesser extent, ArtWorks Scotland via an options study on the future of the initiative in Scotland). Part of the challenge has been the diversity of partners involved in the Alliance, and some important questions about who else should 'be round the table' if the Alliance is to be a meaningful collective voice for the sector.

1.6.6   Connecting across and outside the sector

Projects have also reached outside their original partners, connecting internationally as well as more widely within the UK. There have been more opportunities to bring together different partners within the sector, including artists, individuals, organisations, funders, academics and others. Some projects have succeeded in bringing together partners from the arts and other sectors, albeit that these engagements are at the early stages of potential partnership. The brand of ArtWorks has been particularly useful for some projects, creating a kind of umbrella under which different kinds of stakeholders can gather and engage. Projects like the MOOC have also been able to demonstrate mutual benefit, making use of existing material for the course and giving a platform to the voices and experiences of artists and practitioners who might not otherwise be able to share their material so widely.

Despite these achievements, many of the projects have already identified work which is still to be undertaken. The ArtWorks Alliance particularly is at the beginning of what it is hoped will be a long-term intervention by and for the sector. Other projects have specific activities to take forward: ArtWorks Cymru is bidding to Arts Council Wales for further funding. ArtWorks Scotland and ArtWorks London will be working together to pilot the Fellowship model further in Scotland. The MOOC still has a further year of testing to run. Despite these positive signs, several interviewees also noted the relative precariousness of current funding for the arts, and the importance of continuing with activity and keeping the momentum going.

1.7   Conclusions

Looking across the findings from this evaluation which examines the ArtWorks legacy funded projects, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- ArtWorks has delivered better supported artists, and they have been the main site of intervention and the recipient of opportunities. Artists are not yet leading ArtWorks, but they are beginning to determine some of the agenda directly for themselves.

- Organisations and individuals are also better supported, with many of those leading projects having been involved in ArtWorks now for many years. Several major organisations have new programme and activities that are embedded, and that do not require ongoing special funding to continue.

- ArtWorks has made significant in-roads in attempting to engage across the system, though this remains challenging. Things like the ArtWorks brand have proved useful in encouraging different parties to get involved, and there is still a significant opportunity for ArtWorks Alliance to take this forward.

- The two major areas of influence have been individual institutions – for example where courses are now developed and ongoing – and across looser communities of practice. Events and seed funding have proved useful in giving emerging communities an opportunity to set the agenda themselves. However, networks are not necessarily inherently sustainable: they need resources and support to continue.

- Projects have learnt a lot about what it takes to get change to happen – to 'make it stick'. More progress has been made where activities are very tangible, such as courses and resources, though all of these are subject to challenges in terms of the long-term sustainability of these interventions. Ensuring that reports and outputs are accessible via a better online platform is another way that ArtWorks has developed a kind of infrastructure of its own. On the whole, assets have been further developed and consolidated.

Some projects are planning next phases with special funding. The MOOC and the ArtWorks Alliance will continue with PHF funding. ArtWorks Scotland and ArtWorks London are exploring extending the Fellowship together. ArtWorks Wales has applied for further funding. Some activities, like the courses and CPD approaches developed by the Barbican Guildhall, are now largely embedded for the foreseeable future. The Alliance offers significant potential if it can develop a real working model of

collaborative leadership, and if it can begin to deliver some tangible activities. Finally, there remains a question about whether PHF wishes to continue to engage in better supporting artists who work in participatory settings, and how it might go forward in terms of applying the learning from ArtWorks. It is already applying some of the learning via its new strategy and several of the grant schemes consider and encourage CPD for artists and practitioners working in participatory settings as a key element to projects.

Report written by

Tamsin Cox, Head of Policy and Research
Illustrations by David Casey, DHA

Contact us

Tamsin Cox, Head of Policy and Research

Birmingham
+44 (0) 7850 329808

e. tamsin@dhacommunications.co.uk
www.dhacommunications.co.uk
@DHAComms
@tamsinecox

Art Works | Developing Practice in Participatory Settings

phf Paul Hamlyn Foundation