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A New Direction's Conversation with Arts organisations

Analysis of focus group discussions and survey results

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A New Direction – Arts Conversation analysis, February 2012

1. Introduction

This analysis draws on inputs from a "conversation" facilitated by A New Direction in Autumn 2011. The conversation was designed to engage arts and cultural organisations in helping A New Direction define its priorities as a strategic Bridge organisation, which it will become in April 2012. This document represents one of the inputs which will feed in to A New Direction's consideration of its new role and priorities.

2. Methodology

The "conversation" consisted of a series of focus groups with arts organisations, and an online survey.

In total, over 80 organisations were represented at the 4 **Focus Groups** which were held in November and December 2011 (a full list of participating organisations is attached at Annex 2). The focus groups were organised in collaboration with 4 "Associate Bridge" organisations – the Lyric, Saddlers Wells, Apples and Snakes and the Roundhouse.

The main focus was to bring together organisations funded by Arts Council England through the National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) process – particularly those who had expressed a specific interest in work with children and young people. It was important that the discussions were "cross art form" with each Associate Bridge hosting a session. The decision to start with the 'NPO' portfolio was taken partly for ease and partly to reflect the Arts Council's wish to understand better the work of NPOs who had made a commitment to 'Goal Five'– The Arts Council's aim concerning children and young people within their strategic plan. Over the next six months A New Direction will engage with other arts providers and individuals practitioners and artists.

Each focus group discussion was divided into two parts. In the first part participants were asked to consider the challenges of working with schools and young people, and some potential solutions to those challenges. In the second part, the groups were asked to consider a specific question – around engaging young people, evaluation or progression and were also encouraged to have a general discussion on the potential role of the Bridge organisation.

The **online survey** was promoted on the A New Direction website and through its network, to secure a wider range of views from across the sector. 75 organisations completed the survey, though not all responded to every questions. The biggest proportion – 64% (32) – were representatives of creative organisations, followed by individual artists / creative practitioners (15) and teachers (7), but there were also some responses from local authority officers, music services staff and other young people's organisations. Between them, the survey respondents said they worked in every London Borough, with highest numbers working in Hackney and Tower Hamlets, and lowest in Merton, Redbridge, Enfield, Sutton, Kingston and Richmond.

3. Summary of key challenges emerging from focus groups

Under each heading below are some of the key challenges and solutions for arts and education partnerships which emerged from the focus group discussions. Subsequent sections of this briefing explore in more depth the implications of these challenges for the role of the Bridge organisation and look at some emerging themes in more detail.

- **Communication**: Arts organisations are keen to explore partnerships, believe they have something hugely positive to offer young people and can contribute to enhancing education and life chances. But they can sometimes feel that they don't know how to communicate with schools or market themselves effectively, and do not have access to even basic information such as contact names within local authorities of relevant staff in schools. The Bridge Organisation could play a vital role in brokering and supporting partnerships and providing basic information to help arts organisations share best practice and navigate their way through the education system.

- **Sustainability and funding**: Financial sustainability is clearly a key issue for many organisations. The tone of the focus group discussions around this area was broadly positive, with much enthusiasm expressed for identifying new sources of income and using new models (eg social investment, private sector partnerships and an increased focus on stimulating philanthropy). Arts organisations could see that the changed environment might create a different opportunities to have a new relationship with other sectors – particularly with schools. The Bridge organisation will play an essential role in helping navigate this territory. There was realism, of course, that the situation was challenging, and an acknowledgement that there are risks around sustainability for some. Services currently available to schools at low or zero cost will be very difficult to sustain in the future and reductions in local authority funds are seen as a particular challenge.

- **Quality of provision**: As noted, funding is tight, and in this circumstance, organisations recognise that there is an even greater premium on ensuring quality of provision. Although every organisation consulted was completely committed to delivering high quality, there were fears that a lack of clarity about the criteria being used to assess and evaluate could mean that outcomes were not always sufficiently robust. There was also a clear sense that there was a need to move away from "tick–box" measures of success and toward something more responsive and reflective. It was felt that more could be done to help organisations develop and use a common language around evaluation, and this could be something for the Bridge organisation to explore. At the same time, it was acknowledged that existing standards such as Artsmark and the Arts Award could be better used by the sector to drive up quality and raise awareness of commitment to quality.

- **Inputting across the curriculum**: There was a very clear understanding amongst arts organisations that arts and culture should not be pigeonholed

to "creative" parts of the syllabus and that they could support and make a strong contribution across the curriculum. This insight was one of the guiding principles and underlying priorities of the Creative Partnerships programme of work, and there has been much learning about how arts organisations can make their offer(s) fit with broader school priorities. A critical role for the Bridge organisation will be to make use of that learning, and continue to support the arts sector in effectively making its case.

- **New technology**: There was some discussion of the importance of "digital" opportunities. It was not clear to everyone what this might mean in practice, though it was understood that this is something that policy makers are keen to explore and exploit the possibilities. The Bridge organisation might be in a position to help the sector develop a broader strategy for using new technology for delivery.

- **Recognising challenges of partners**: Many of the challenges identified were not confined to arts organisations, but also applied to the education sector. Funding, of course, is an issue for all public services, including education. But there are other challenges for schools, including the demands of the existing curriculum, the availability of appropriate space for some arts and creative activities, timetabling– in particular around exam time – and the degree of expertise and knowledge required by school staff to engage with arts organisations. More activities such as joint events, networks and discussion forums between teachers and arts organisation were all felt to be potentially helpful ways to build understanding.

- **Engaging young people, and supporting their progression**: Arts organisations recognised that they are not alone in sometimes struggling to engage young people even in the most creative and stimulating of activities. There was a strong sense amongst the focus group organisations that the expertise within the sector, where some organisations have a well deserved reputation for engaging young people, needs to be shared more widely. The challenge around progression is something that is keenly felt across education with schools and teachers under strong pressure to show how all activities help move the child forward towards outputs specified across the curriculum. Better understanding of what that means for the arts and better alignment of some creative activities with the curriculum were felt to be important.

- **Valuing the arts**: Finally, embracing many of the other themes, the organisations who attended the focus groups all felt that there was a pressing need for the a strong emphasis on the value of creativity – and the contribution it can make to the development of young people in the broadest sense. The role of the Bridge organisation, as something of a champion for arts and the value of culture and creativity, was thought to be a central part of this.

A full breakdown of all the challenges and solutions discussed in the focus groups is attached as Annex 1.

4. Summary of Online Survey Results, December 2011

Below is a summary of the key findings from the online survey, which was completed by 75 organisations or individual providers during November 2011 and February 2012. Not all the respondents answered every question.

Knowledge of and relationship with A New Direction (75 responses)

- Almost half the respondents (37 of 75) felt they knew A New Direction fairly well (25) or very well (12).

- 33 of the 75 did not know A New Direction very well (17) or at all well (16)

Artsmark (68 responses)

- 17 arts organisations work with schools that have Artsmark

- 20 respondents (29%) either did not know about Artsmark or did not know what it was for

Arts Award (68 responses)

- 13 respondents said their organisation is an Arts Award centre and 7 that they were either working toward this status or interested in it.

- 20 respondents either had not heard of the Arts Award (11) or had heard of it but knew nothing about it (9)

Priorities for the Bridge organisation (based on Survey responses)

The majority of the respondents felt that all of the options offered in the survey were either very important or fairly important.

- **Funding** was the priority felt to be "very important" by the highest number of respondents (50 out of 57 answering that question, with 6 more believing it fairly important).

- 37 felt that supporting **improved partnership between arts organisations and schools** was very important, and 17 fairly important (of 57 respondents).

- 27 felt that **creating a stronger evidence** base was very important, 23 that it was fairly important, though 5 thought that this was NOT important (of 56 respondents).

- 27 felt that **more support for developing and commissioning work** was very important, and 22 fairly important, with 5 thinking it NOT important (of 56).

- 21 thought that **more support for delivery** was very important, with 28 thinking it fairly important (of 55)

- 48 of 57 felt **that work on the national curriculum changes** would be a very (33) or fairly (15) important priority.

- 25 felt that leading **strategy on involving young people** was very important, and 20 fairly important, though 5 felt it was not very important and 2 not important at all (of 57).

5. Summary of key priority areas for the Bridge Organisation – based on focus group feedback.

The focus group feedback identified many similar issues to those emerging from the survey responses (above). The discussions were able to give some more definition to what the potential opportunities for the Bridge might look like. These fell broadly into three areas:

- Supporting organisations to understand the needs of schools and the curriculum and enabling better communication with those in education;
- Providing opportunities for action learning and knowledge exchange around shared issues such as effective evaluation and working with hard to reach groups;
- Building a strong advocacy base for the value of arts activity with children and young people

5.1 Supporting organisations to understand the needs of schools and the curriculum and enabling better communication with those in education:

- The Bridge can act as a broker of partnerships, through which arts and cultural organisations can learn from each other, and develop stronger understanding of shared issues. These partnerships could be between organisations and educationalists, major institutions, government, the London Mayor and GLA and importantly with the private sector. The current Create Jobs programme provides a platform for engaging employers and linking creativity in education to skills and employment.

- The Bridge can also extend these partnerships – perhaps into new areas such as publishing – and also build links with colleges and other training providers. There is a major policy priority on apprenticeships and creating skills based opportunities for young people. The Bridge can help connect organisations to this policy agenda and build their understanding of the practical opportunities it might offer.

- The government's plans for Music Hubs to support and champion music education in schools present and opportunity for the Bridge organisation to play a role in linking up the hubs across London. If the hub concept is extended across cultural education more generally following Darren Henley's broader review (expected during 2012), then this role and these relationships will become all the more important.

- The Bridge can facilitate dialogue with those who have strategic responsibility for education development in London. So the parts of the curriculum review that are intended to support and shape teacher development and training are important areas where the Bridge organisation could input.

5.2 Providing opportunities for action learning and knowledge exchange around shared issues such as effective evaluation and working with hard to reach groups:

- Another role for the Bridge should be about supporting the improvement and sustaining of quality in cultural education, through knowledge sharing and information dissemination. So helping develop a common language on evaluation and documenting and disseminating good practice for engaging young people might be two priorities.

- The Bridge must of course be clear that its role is predominantly a facilitative one. The sum of money at its disposal is not sufficient for it to be able to manage significant additional delivery – nor should it. It should focus on supporting networks, within the sector and between arts organisations and others.

- Arts Award and Artsmark present opportunities for arts organisations and for schools. The Bridge has a vital role to play in ensuring that both sectors understand the benefits of and how to engage with both of these initiatives. Currently understanding and participation are not as high as they could be and the Bridge can help those organisations who want to know more to learn from those that are already using the standards effectively.

- The Bridge's focus should be on strengthening and supporting organisations and partnerships – but always with an understanding of the impact on and outcomes for young people.

- The Bridge needs to consider how it approaches the issue of supporting and overseeing quality of delivery in arts and education. There was a sense from some of the discussions that some organisations might find some work on quality standards helpful.

- It is of course very important that the Bridge seeks to add value where it can, but not to reinvent or begin new initiatives where others already exist. The relationships with the Associate Bridge organisations and the wider sector in London is going to be important to ensure that a clear strategy and rationale for new work is maintained and explained.

5.3 Building a strong advocacy base for the value of arts activity with children and young people

- The Bridge has the opportunity to be the kind of organisation that successfully makes the case for arts and shows its value in education, and more broadly to the development of young people. It is in a unique position to gather evidence and show impact from activities across London and in all different arts sectors.

- This is particularly important in relation to funding and sustainability. It is recognised that the Bridge cannot provide funding, nor is it likely to be able to lobby for specific sources of new income for the sector. But the Bridge can play a role in helping organisations to understand and to explore new models of funding, and can work strategically with policy makers and funders to create new opportunities.

- It was widely felt that Bridge organisations can and should respond to emerging policy developments and government (and local / London-wide government) consultations – this would not preclude others in the sector from responding, but it was felt that the Bridge could take a cross-sector role. In 2012 the consultation on the national curriculum will gather pace, and it was felt to be important that the Bridge should play a role in feeding in sector views. The Bridge could also assist in co-ordinating sector responses on certain issues.

- The Bridge organisation has a strong role in defining the value of arts and culture to young people. Many London arts organisations work with children and young people, and many other community and non-Arts Council funded organisations are doing a wide variety of education work. The Bridge organisation can help define and demonstrate the impact that this collective activity is having.

- Finally, in partnership with established organisations such as Creative and Cultural Skills (CC Skills) the Bridge could help to develop a picture of what the cultural and creative sector looks like in London. As well as potentially opening up opportunities for additional funding, this might also help in showing where career paths in the sector may lead, and identify existing and future skills need.

6. Other issues covered in the focus groups

As well as discussing challenges and potential solutions, and possible priorities for the Bridge organisation, the focus group participants also addressed a number of related questions, including engaging young people, the importance of evaluation and progression routes for young people. The key discussion points – including suggestions of best practice – under each of these headings are noted below.

6.1 Engaging young people

Creating strong links and maintaining contacts with young people
- It is important that the right focus is given to "recruitment" of young people (to participate in arts and education programmes), especially initially, and the need to think about when, where and how. Examples given were starting schemes off in a school – even if they were to be delivered outside of the school setting – and making good connections with teachers or local authorities.
- Local ambassadors can also help – by advocating, leafleting or spreading information about an opportunity, especially targeting areas where young people are likely to be.

Choosing the right time and place
- Knowing when, where and what to offer young people. For example finding families in shopping centres; not seeking to attract young people with the 'label' of a big venue; timetabling work in and out of school time – encouraging young people to move forward in their engagement; moving young people from 'receiving' to 'choosing'; and offering different choices to different communities and in varying settings.
- Making offers affordable and unthreatening. For example making sure that young people are not put off by events or projects in imposing settings such as large theatres.
- Going out to people. Attempting to engage with people in their own environment and on their own terms helps overcome resistance and barriers to engagement.

Sustaining engagement
- Providing initial opportunities which do not require long–term commitment. Running drop–in activities for example, or mass events, which can then lead to more focused activities.
- Providing a sustained offer can make the difference – ensuring a routine and often giving young people the chance to move up through the project and shape it.

Designing programmes with young people
- Giving young people the chance to co–design or shape the opportunity is vital. Asking them what they want – and also to help you implement – are both vital.
- Forming partnerships. Examples given were theatres or galleries' outreach schemes partnering with schools or community organisations to bring in participants. Using these partners for feedback.
- "Competition" frameworks can be useful at stimulating some young people, but need to be backed by supporting environments.
- Care should be taken to avoid "what doesn't work" eg 'Hit–and–run' work, 'Adult–heavy' places, and not recognising or valuing cultural sensitivities.

6.2 Evaluation

Understanding the different types of evaluation

- There are many different evaluation models – some too short term/only for individual projects. There is a need to embed evaluation across the organisations and develop a consistent language surrounding the understanding of outcomes.

- The length of evaluation is a consideration, as is timing. It's good to capture immediate impact but also long term. For some interventions, it's important to accept that you can't necessarily show impact in just a year

- There may be tensions between quantitative and qualitative evidence – the sector can be very good at anecdotes but they are potentially losing their power when numbers are needed too.

- There are challenges with partnership working – often hard to find a common evaluation framework. BUT, it's very valuable as can learn from each other

Important not to be funder led or influenced by other external factors

- Arts organisations are anxious to use evaluation for funding – but it's also crucial that it used to feed into future planning (e.g. regular monitoring, logged meetings etc) which will lead to better outcomes.

- Vital to be objective, so using external evaluators can help. But external evaluators can be challenging to the organisation or may not always fully understand all issues. There is a need to find a balance between the objectivity/rigour that external evaluators can give, and the knowledge that the organisation has of itself. The Bridge organisation may be able to assist with this, perhaps by stimulating discussion around a common language and understanding around evaluation.

- Important to clarify what (and who) you are evaluating for – children and young people? Artists? The Sector? For the organisation itself?

Collecting information – what are the key principles?

- Key Performance Indicators need to be translated into practice and need to be presented in appropriate language

- Organisations need to collect the right type of information – in relation to the outcomes they are seeking – and ensure it is consistently collected so it can be tracked and compared.

- Evaluation should be flexible with clear guidelines and simple to implement and understand

- There is a risk that too much information can be collected sometimes. Focus on what is the really important stuff.

6.3 Progression routes for young people – through education and through the arts

Definitions of progression

- An important insight from the focus groups was that there are two slightly separate understandings of "progression". In education terms, it is taken to mean the extent to which the child is developing new skills and knowledge in line with the expectations at each stage of the curriculum. There is also the more distinctive notion of progression in terms of way the young person can increase and expand their exposure to and involvement in the arts.

- The sense of the discussions was that arts organisations needed to show an understanding of their role in relation to both of these – so both to focus both on delivering a strong and broad experience of arts and culture throughout the learning–lifetime of the child, and ensuring that this exposure to arts and creativity could play a role in helping the child progress through the school curriculum.

- Separately, for some organisations there was a perceived pressure from funders to that programmes should always be looking to deliver something new. There was a feeling that this might actually work against progression at times. It was suggested there needed to be more acknowledgement that progression takes time, and can only come if inputs are sustained over a period.

Engaging children with appropriate opportunities where they CAN progress

- There needs to be as much focus / support for non performance activities eg children doing production / back stage / technical work on school shows as the performers themselves – this way we can show the broader value of arts in education.

- Children love incentives and competition (with each other). If adults suggest children do things, they may not engage. But if ways can be found for children to compete with each other – and achieve recognition or status – this can sometimes bring young people in

Social mobility

- There may be some tension between merit–based programmes and expansion of access – important that the "talent" is not just drawn from one social group.

- Digital technology may help – home production of music and other creative outputs. But there is a risk this just becomes the territory of those who already are in more access to equipment and facilities.

Focus on end results / outcomes

- Honesty about job and career prospects is also needed – a dancer needs to retire at 28 and may only earn £12,000 per year.

- The other side of this is that there are lots of jobs associated with the cultural and creative industries that aren't about performing – but support great art. These need to be promoted to young people too.

- There is a need to engage employers – what ARE the job opportunities? What ARE the skills needs?

Annex 1: consolidated discussion notes from Focus Groups

Challenge 1: Communication	Solutions
• We need the schools to know what we can offer, but marketing is a time intensive activity and has costs • Need to be able to show where approaches work in one context, how they could be replicated in others • Capacity of small organisations to communicate with schools and youth groups • Particularly a challenge for creative businesses which might not have networks. • Schools need to know and understand that the arts and creative sector can offer them something that helps them to meet their needs. • Finding the key individuals within schools and building relationships – and finding multiple points of entry into schools • Saturation – schools being asked to take on a lot of additional roles	Role for the Bridge organisation to help build and support networks Developing and brokering partnerships between organisations and schools – or clusters of schools Bridge organisations can make the case for arts in education • Bridge organisation can create opportunities for links between sectors (eg conferences, networking, virtual groups) • Arts organisations can become better at using the feedback they generate from young people as leverage • Training and information for schools
Challenge 2: Value of the arts	**Solutions**
• Do parents and teachers really understand what the arts / creativity / culture can add across the whole curriculum? • Is there "real advocacy" for arts and culture within schools – without LA arts officers, who are the champions within the local authorities? And how do we reach them	Case for arts in school to be clearly articulated by whole sector Identifying other key players within local authorities / schools to target and make the case to Targeting particular offers to particular schools / groups of schools / teachers

Challenge 3: Ensuring quality of provision	Solutions
• Demonstrating how quality translates to better outcomes for the school and children • Distinction between amount of hours in classroom, or number of children having "an experience" and real quality for smaller numbers • Showing outcomes for children – progression • Defining progress for harder to reach groups • More support needed for existing quality marks / systems • Being honest about what works and what won't work – pressure to do certain things because of money • Pressure to guarantee "results" • What works for one group may not work for others – not everything is scaleable	Better evaluation across the sector Model of outcome measurement so quality can be effectively gauged Progression / outcomes better defined – not just about overall numbers taking part • Building evaluation models that arts organisations can use • Better relationships and networks so the key challenges in education are understood Bridge organisation to make the case for Arts Mark and Arts award • Highlight successes of small but significant work as well as the big numbers • Be very clear about the quality and robustness of the process Commitment to learning lessons and sharing them across the sector
Challenge 4: Sustainability and funding	**Solutions**
• Schools fear of spending money when budgets are tight (even if they do have some allocated) • Loss of core funding cuts in arts, youth services and other "young people" funding • Lack of money in schools and youth sector as well as in arts – double whammy • Need to find money from other sources – but lack of fundraising capacity • Schools hoarding the resources they have as future is going to be even harder • Pressure to show results – value for money. "Payment by results" may not be far away for the arts in education	• Broker partnerships with other organisations seeking to work with young people • More "market driven" approach – identify what schools need and they will be able to purchase (some schools with more freedom over budgets) • New models of patronage and fundraising (eg City investors supporting east London schools) • Need for a mixed economy model – public, private and philanthropic • Learning from other sectors where payment by results is being applied • Partnership and matched funding potential models
Challenge 5: Keeping schools and young people engaged	**Solutions**
• Need to build relationships between individual teachers and artists / providers • Need to change our thinking as organisations – more end user focus	• Need to expand or build on things like junior arts awards • Demonstrate we understand the journeys that young people are making

Focus Group 2

Challenge 1: Changing school curriculum	Solutions
• E-BAC does not include any arts/creative subjects • Focus on exams	• Look into cross-curricular learning • Practitioners should be aware of curriculum changes, but it's teachers who are best placed to apply learning to their pupil's curricular needs
Challenge 2: Sustainability and increasing resources- time/funding/ expertise	**Solutions**
• Rarely Cover is expensive • Schools having to make difficult funding choices • Lack of time for schools to commit • Lack of knowledge of how much things cost • Many teachers and young people don't know what's possible • Internal capacity of arts organisations to deliver new and exciting work- alongside need to fundraise in order to exist	• Work with schools on looking at alternative funding sources • Work with schools on budgets for arts provision • Arts organisations to spend a day in a school and vice versa • Message that longer-term projects have a real impact
Challenge 3: Progressions routes (at school and through the arts)	**Solutions**
• Need to engage young people initially • Need to match provision with need • Make sure the offer is right • Must manage expectations of jobs/ employment prospects	• Paid internships/ apprenticeships • Raising awareness of transferrable skills • Expand pool of practitioners – both those who pass on specific skills and those who can teach how the arts can enhance creativity more generally • Promote the value of arts for enjoyment/doing it for fun – not necessarily as a career

Challenge 4: Communication / sharing information	Solutions
- Need to communicate effectively with schools – including non-proactive schools - Unlocking schools - Primary/secondary - Creative ways exchanging information, renegotiating relationships between schools and arts - Raising awareness of the type and amount of work that is going on - Demonstrate value/impact rather than simply telling	- Bridge can help 'break-in' to schools - Arts organisations to identify where there are gaps in their capacity to deliver – and work in clusters (with other arts orgs) to deliver - Work through 'pro-active' schools to spread the word to others - Develop creative ways of connection/exchanging information – including creative teaching of non-arts subjects - Swaps/exchanges – 'teachers in residence' - Bridge is in a good position to provide: - Information - Advocacy - Profile - Campaigning (challenging policy together) - Using the voices of young people (youth forum?) - Use teachers to spread the word

Focus Group 3

Challenge 1: Perception of Arts Sector	Solutions
- Schools - Young people - Elitism - Threat/rivalry - Teachers 'making space'	- Marketing - How arts are portrayed in schools - Advocates: teachers and young people - Long term partnerships with community organisations - Working with us - Celebrating success

Challenge 2: Logistics	Solutions
• Local authority has responsibility but no input • Navigating curriculum • Getting kids out of school • Funding • Number of relationships needed •	• Head teacher 'hubs' and clusters • Map existing networks • Making schools aware of existing/extra resources • Conversations
Challenge 3: Reach	**Solutions**
• Don't always know if kids are hard to reach • Measurement • Progression routes • Pressure to reach numbers – requires resources • Postcodes/compartmentalising	• Partners to broker reach • A New Direction as broker • Identifying routes • Signposting • **Join up** mapping – for overview • Information for different levels – young people; teachers etc • Justifying to funders the resources needed for reach.
Challenge 4: Valuing the arts in education / showing quality	**Solutions**
• Being honest about what works and what won't work – pressure to do certain things because of money • Pressure to guarantee "results" • What works for one group may not work for others – not everything is scaleable	• Highlight successes of small but significant work as well as the big numbers • Be very clear about the quality and robustness of the process • Commitment to learning lessons and sharing them across the sector

Focus Group 4

Challenge 1: Obstacles in schools	Solutions

• Cost to school of funding visits/trips
• Rarely Cover expensive
• Costs associated with bringing practitioners in
• Timetabling can be problematic
• Schools require long notice period (though this varies between schools)
• Time of year is important – coursework deadlines, exams and mocks mean teachers and students are less willing to engage
  • (price resistance) Arts organisations increasingly facing resistance on the basis of price
  • Inconsistent offers exacerbates this
• Free offers don't necessarily lead to commitment
  • Many schools are uncommitted to the arts
  • Diversification of schools
  • 'deskilling' of teachers in arts – particularly in primary teaching
• Curriculum challenges
	• Consistency of offer, and regularity of offer
	• Need for awareness of peaks/troughs in school calendar
	• Build links to curriculum
	• Ensure content is meaningful and demonstrably contributing
	• Co-planning with schools
	• Build long-term relationships
	• Provide greater support for teachers – increasing skills and confidence
	• Co-planning with schools to link to curriculum
	• Collaboration with schools to find funding for their arts schemes
	• Build links to curriculum
	• Build evidence base
	• Demonstrate links to outcomes
	• A cross-arts approach can make for greater leverage in schools

Challenge 2: Finding young people	**Solutions**

• Finding sufficient numbers
• A 'lost' age group between 15–30 y.o.
• Travel and care costs of disabled young people make many unable – made worse by cuts to support networks
  • Reaching the hard to reach
• Almost 'random' who works where
	• Ensure clear progression routes
	• Ensuring practice is reflective of what young people think
	  • Better collaboration between organisations over funding
	• Use schools to get to hard-to-reach families

Challenge 3: Finding the right space	**Solutions**
• Different responses according to context • Often association with school makes participation unappealing to young people • Physical/facilities challenge of certain projects e.g. dance	• Better awareness of impact of space/venues • Make • Tailor projects to context

Challenge 4: Shrinking address book at council/education level	Solutions
• Contacts in schools and councils are changing frequently • Former 'gatekeepers' are no longer in post • Recruitment requires greater resources (time/money)	• Bridge could help in building these connections

Annex 2: Organisations attending focus groups

Akademi	LSO
A New Direction	Mahogany
Arcola Theatre	Midi Music
Arts Admin	Ministry of Stories
Arvon Foundation	National Theatre
Audiences London	National Youth Theatre
Barbican	Oily Cart
Battersea Arts Centre	Orange Tree Theatre
Bhavan	Oval House
Booktrust	Paddington Arts
British Library	Philharmonia Orchestra
British Youth Opera	Poetry Society
Broadway Theatre	Polka Theatre
Camden Arts Centre	Punchdrunk
Candoco	Rambert
Children's Book Show	Random Dance
Clean Break	Raw Material
CM Trust Ltd	Richmix
Company of Angels	RollingSound
Continental Drifts	Royal Opera House
Crafts Council	Royal Philharmonic
Create London	Small Green Shoots
Discover	Sound and Music
Drake Music	Sound Connections
Dune Music	South London Gallery
East London Dance	Southbank Centre
Eastside	Spitalfields
Emergency Exit Arts	Studio 3 Arts
ENB	Tara Arts
English Touring Opera	Tate
Eye Music Trust	Thames Festival
Fevered Sleep	The Circus Space
Forward Arts Foundation	The Place
Freeword	The Place
GLYPT	The Reading Agency
Graeae	Theatre Centre
Halfmoon	Theatre Peckham
Headlong Theatre	Theatre Rites
Heart n Soul	Trinity Laban
House of Fairytales	Unicorn Theatre
Kazzum	Urban Development
Kinetika	Whitechapel Gallery
Lift Festival	Wigmore Hall
London Philharmonic	