



**What conditions need
to be in place for the
Arts Award to grow in
areas of low uptake?**

Local Area Action Research Projects
2017-18

A report to help cultural organisations plan for a sustainable Arts Award

Created in partnership with six cultural & educational organisations who participated in A New Direction's action research programme, 2017-18.

The organisations identified five universal 'conditions' key to the successful cultivation of Arts Award activity; each of which being accompanied by a series of questions that allow organisations to create meaning specific to their context & place.

Working in areas of London that have low Arts Award provision i.e. where the conditions are not yet in place, the organisations 'experimented to learn' testing out new approaches to planning, engagement, content & advocacy, coming together on a regular basis to reflect, revise & plan anew.

The conditions & questions combined provide a helpful guide for cultural organisations to assess where they are and where they need to get to, when looking to create a sustainable Arts Award offer.



Content

Action research: process, model & example

Projects: participants, activity headlines

Research findings: five conditions for success

Activity: participant project stories

Five conditions for success: planning framework for cultural organisations

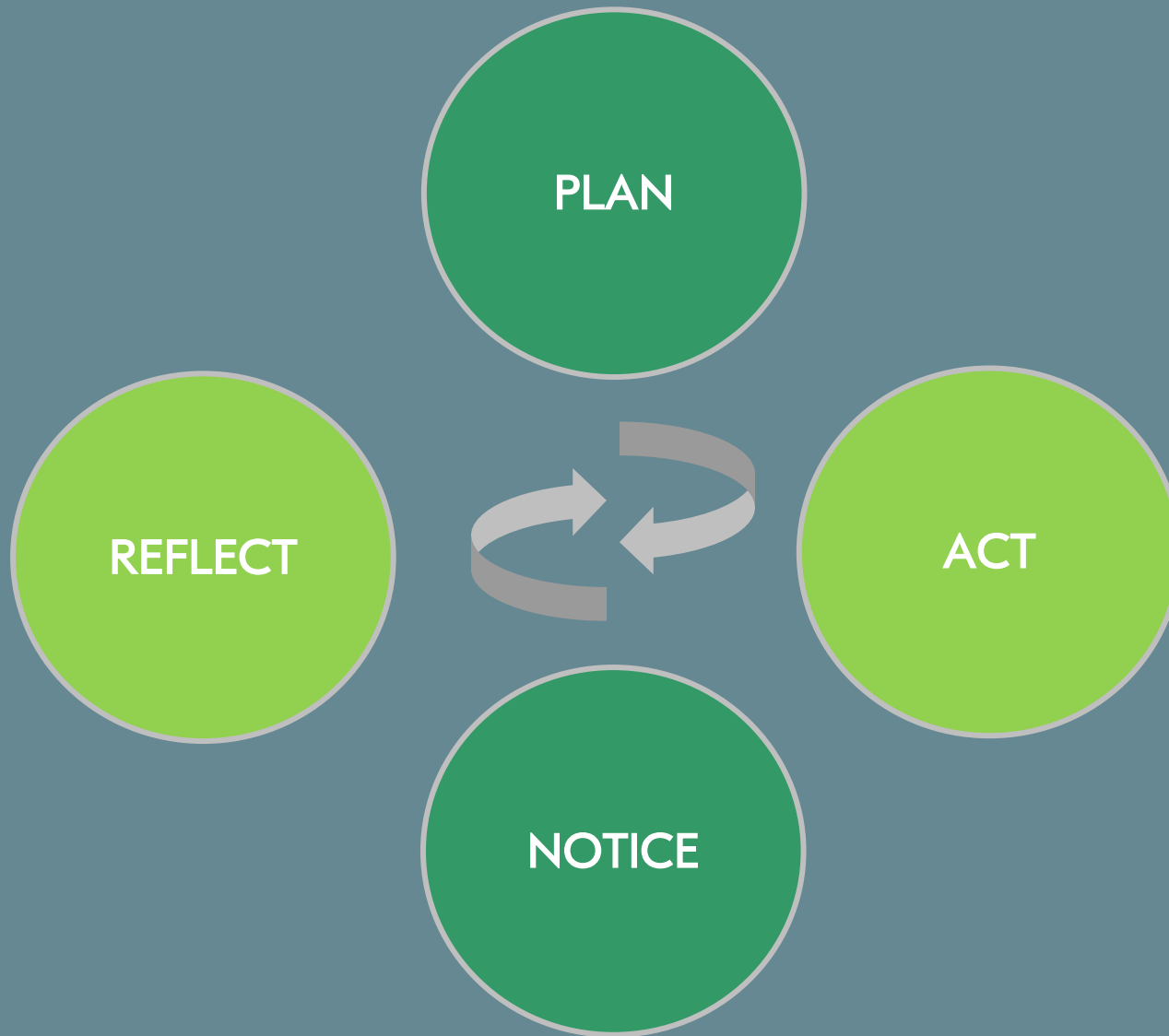


Action research; the project stages

- **Commissioning:** six organisations, six projects
- **Action learning set:** peer network that met throughout with a remit to challenge, support & inspire
- **Areas of enquiry:** identification of challenges & opportunities
- **Assumptions:** naming factors, and creating the challenge.
- **Planning:** activity and scope. What 'things' can we do to create positive change?
- **Experiment to learn:** plan, action, review, plan, action, review ...
- **Distill:** identify shared conditions for 'growth'
- **Share:** learning across cultural & educational sectors



Action research model



Action research – example

1. identify the challenge
2. name your assumptions
3. set your experiments



Action research participants & their focus



Cubitt Artists

*working in
Islington*



Harrow Arts Centre

*working in
Harrow*



Dagenham Park School

*working in
Barking & Dagenham*



Inspire-works

*working in
Enfield, Sutton &
Kensington & Chelsea*



Eastbury School

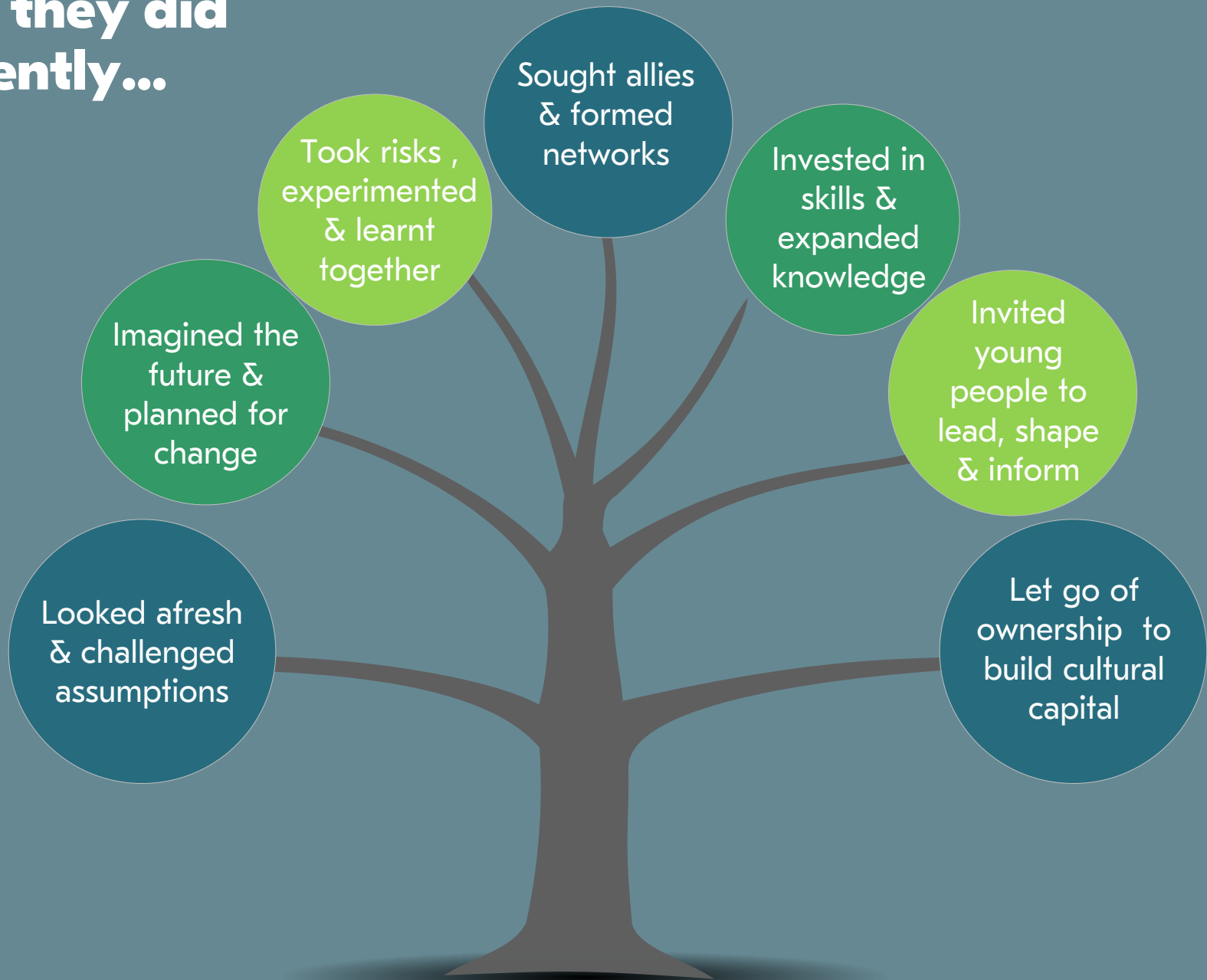
*working in
Barking & Dagenham*



Museum of London

*working in Brent, Tower
Hamlets, City of London,
Camden, Enfield,
Hackney, Harrow, Islington*

What they did differently...



Cubitt Artists project summary

Lead: Lydia Ashman ~ Programme Manager Schools & Young People

Challenge: How can Arts Award add value to the young people's experience and our stakeholders?

Activity: Integrating Arts Award Bronze into our young people's artist-led programme, Institute of Anything (IoA). Project: What is Nationality?

Project data

- **Participants:** 59 young people in Masterclass taster sessions in secondary schools, Key Stages 3-5; 37 sign-ups to the IoA mailing list; 11 young people as participants in the Arts Award programme
- **Relationships:** x 5 secondary schools Lift Youth Hub, Central St Martins, Barbican, project artist Sophie Mallett
- **Awards & levels:** Bronze x 4
- **New Centres activated/ Advisors trained:** x1, Student Ambassador, Central St Martins
- **London borough:** Islington



Dagenham Park project summary

Lead: Jenni Lewis, Learning Area Leader & Dilem Guven, Subject Leader

Challenge: How can we make Arts Award sustainable in a secondary school & increase uptake, especially at different levels?

Activity: An 'opt in' Arts Award where existing offers & resources in school provide opportunities for activity.

Project data

- **Participants:** 33 students, Years 7 & 8; 1 student 6th form **Relationships:** Bloomberg – Teach First Innovation Unit, Performing Arts Technician, Performing Arts Department, Studio 3 Arts, Acting Up
- **Awards & levels:** Bronze 31, Silver 1
- **New Centres activated/ Advisors trained:** 1
- **London Borough:** Barking & Dagenham



Eastbury School project summary

Lead: Aminah Adeyemi, Art Teacher

Challenge: How can we make Arts Award sustainable and embed it in our school?

Activity: An 'opt in' Arts Award 'club' where existing offers & resources in school provide opportunities for activity. Silver & Bronze strands separated to allow for differing levels of contact time needed to complete.

Project data

- **Participants:** 100 students; Years 7, 8 & 9 Explore & Bronze; Year 10 Silver
- **Relationships:** x4 school departments Art, Music, Drama; Year Heads; Bow Arts; Studio 3 Arts
- **Awards & levels:** Bronze x 40; Silver x 10; Explore x 30
- **New Centres activated / advisors trained:** x 5
- **London Borough:** Barking & Dagenham



Inspire-works project summary

Lead: Mike Simpson, Musical Director

Challenge: Why is delivery of Arts Award within whole-class music lessons not more popular, what are the barriers & what support could be given to schools/music hubs to ensure more Arts Award projects are delivered?

Activity: the creation & piloting of a Discover Arts Award that frames a programme of learning, delivered digitally, with one to one support to top & tail.

Project data

- **Participants:** 270 students; Year 3, 60 students; Year 4, 60 student; Year 8, 90 students
- **Relationships:** x3 Music Hubs; x4 schools, x4 music teachers; x1 software designer; x1 film maker; x5 Inspire-works facilitators
- **Awards & levels:** Discover x200
- **New Centres activated/ Advisors trained:** x3 & 1 re-enthused!
- **London Borough's:** Enfield, Sutton & Kensington & Chelsea



Harrow Arts Centre project summary

Lead: Charlotte Baldwin ~ Senior Programmer

Challenge: How can a local area Cluster (for Arts Award) improve cultural engagement in Harrow?

Activity: Deliver a concise programme of Arts Award in partnership with Harrow Music Service, Headstone Manor Museum & with the Young Harrow Foundation.

Project data

- **Participants:** 395 students, Years 5 & 6
- **Relationships:** x3 new partnerships brokered; local Arts Award Cluster set-up; Harrow Music Service; Harrow Museum; Pavilion Opera Trust; x7 primary schools
- **Awards & levels:** x360 Discover; x25 Explore; x10 Bronze
- **New Centres activated/ Advisors trained:** x1
- **London Borough:** Harrow



Museum of London project summary

Lead: Emma Taylor Supplementary Schools Manager & Olivia Murphy Family Programme Manager

Challenge: How can the Museum of London support supplementary schools access the Arts Awards, make it relevant to their curriculums & benefit students?

Activity: work in partnership with schools to deliver a programme; learn together through shared training, activity, celebrations & moderations.

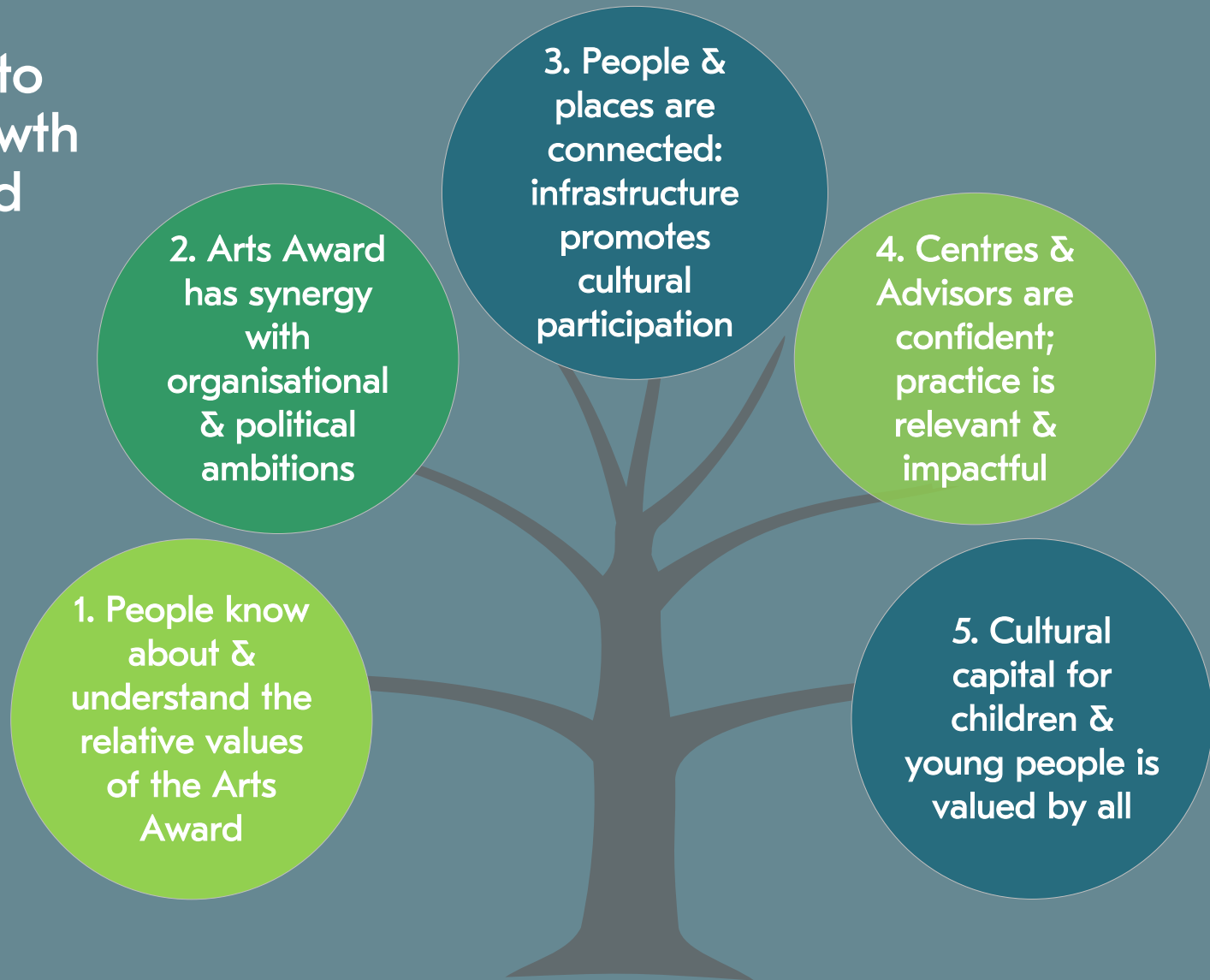
Project data

- **Participants:** 15 young people; 15+ teachers at supplementary schools training as Arts Award Advisors
- **Relationships:** x15 Supplementary schools; The Peace School; Photographer Katherine Leedale
- **Awards & levels:** Bronze x10
- **New Centres activated / advisors trained:** x15
- **London Borough's:** Brent, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Harrow & Islington



Research findings

5 conditions to seed the growth of Arts Award



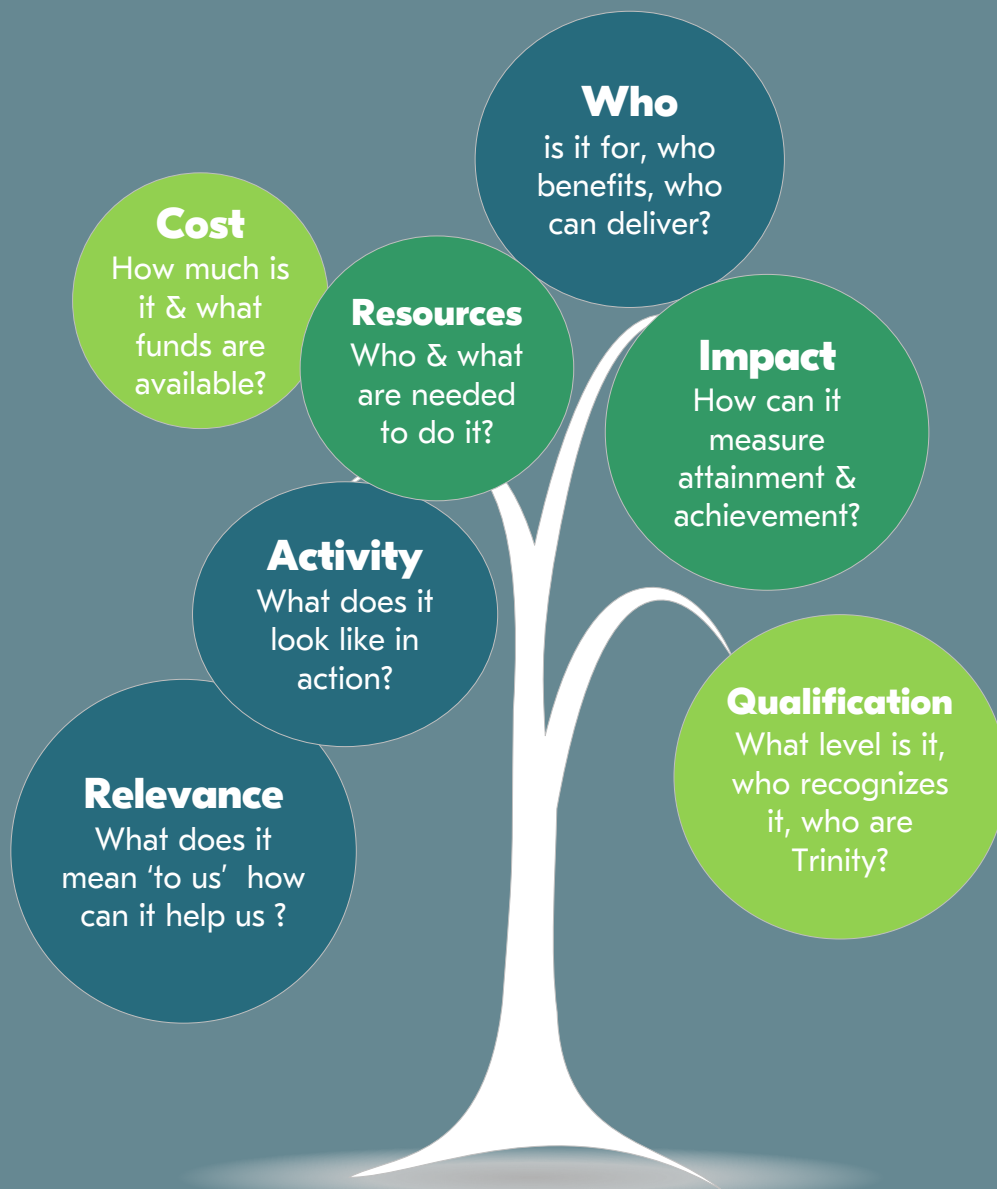
1. People know about & understand the relative values of the Arts Award

Most important to:

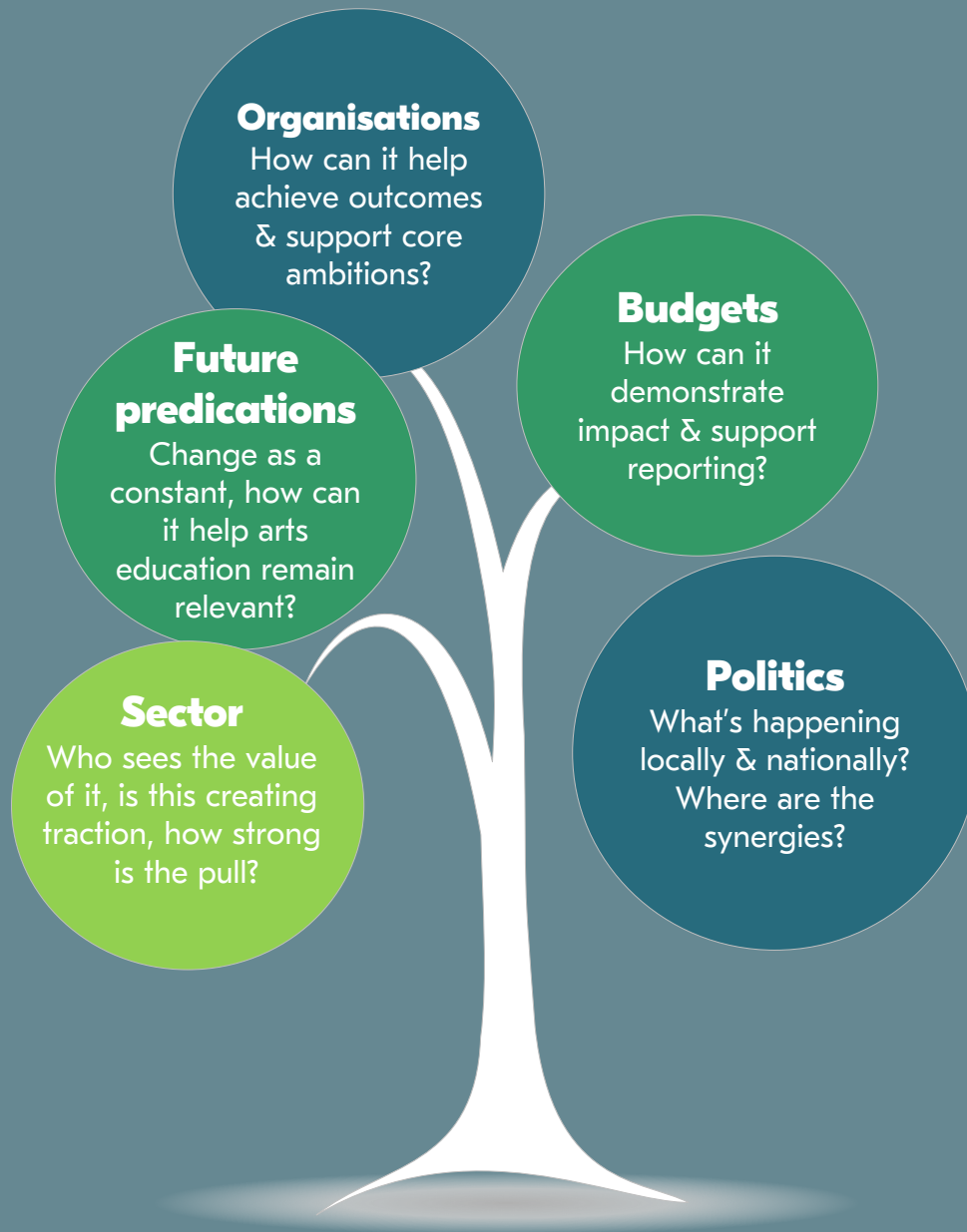
All the research participants. This condition was identified as being critical, if it wasn't in place the chances of activity taking root were minimal - time & resource need to be invested upfront.

Most challenging for:

The two secondary schools, Dagenham Park & Eastbury. The students understanding of the awards value was limited. This could be enhanced by further seeding e.g. what it looks like in action, why its relevant, who benefits etc.



2. Arts Award has synergy with organisational & political ambitions



Most important to:

Inspire-works, whose online teaching resource aims to reach primary schools across the country, meeting the needs of Music Hubs, individual schools & future music education agenda's.

Most challenging for:

Harrow Arts Centre, who worked with multiple (different) partners / stakeholders across the borough - each finding-out, through the process, where & how the award supported their purpose.

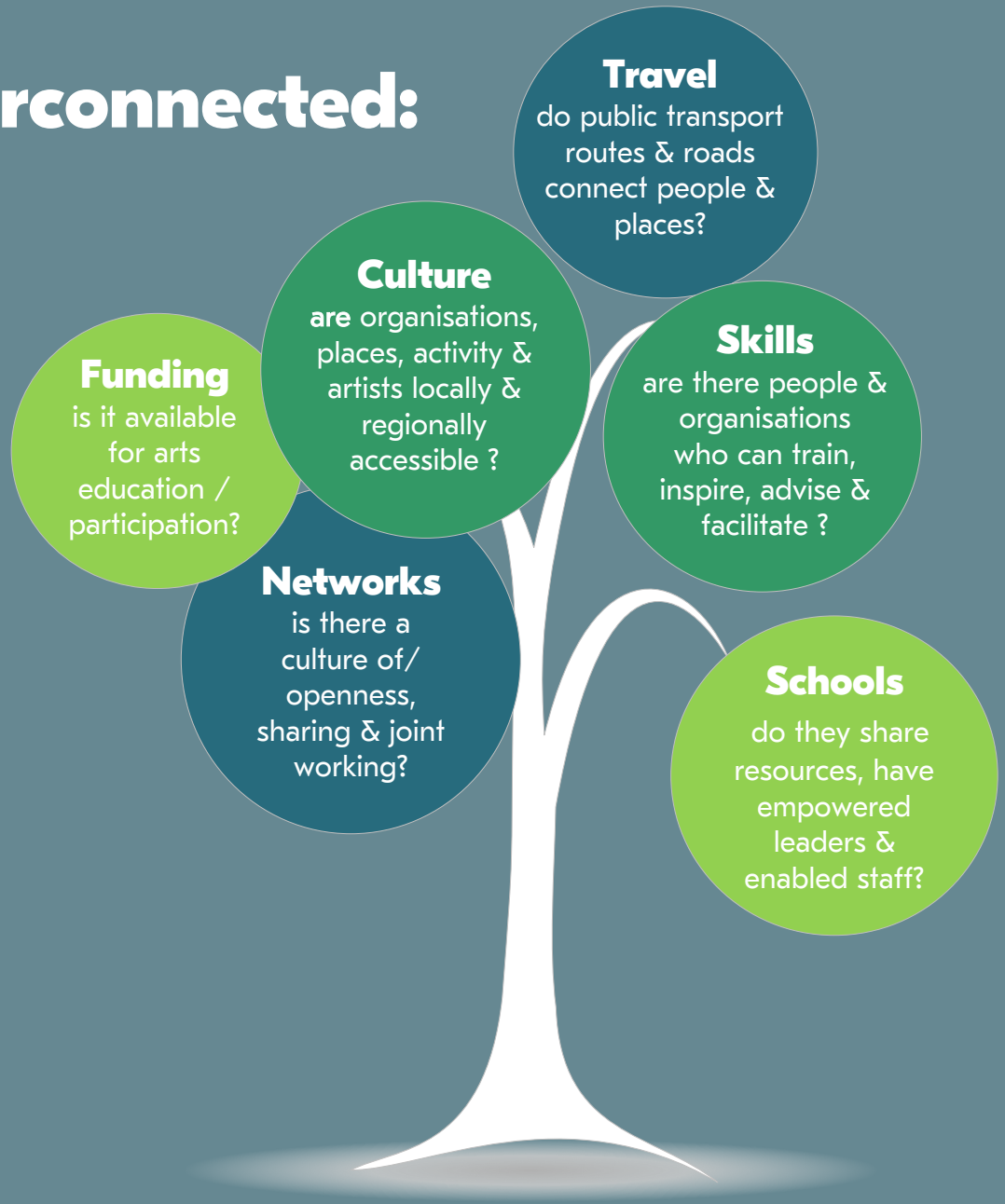
3. Places are interconnected: infrastructure promotes cultural participation

Most important to:

Harrow Arts Centre who, in their role as a pivotal & popular cultural resource, set up an Arts Award Local Area Network to raise the Awards profile & help seed activity.

Most challenging for:

Cubitt Artists working in Islington where although the infrastructure appears good, the nuances of 'place' within young peoples lives, hindered initial plans.



4. Centers & Advisors are confident; practice is relevant & impactful

Planning

Can time can be invested upfront to ensure relevance, build relationships & ensure viability?

Structure

Is delivery & participation inclusive & reflective of young peoples lives?

Time bound

Does activity have deadlines & time frames that maintain momentum?

Outcomes

Do teams have a shared pedagogy & ambitions for quality ?

Experience

Have programmes been run several times, lessons learnt & is practice reflective?

Progression

Is this considered, shared, planned for & foregrounded ?

Most important to:

MoL, who invested in their supplementary school community enabling them to be the Centres & Advisors —using the MoL collections & resources to deliver independently.

Most challenging for:

Inspire-works, who invested in schools to deliver a programme of activity, supporting them with x2 visits & acting as the Centre & Advisor. The challenge here was the differing skills & experience levels of those in the delivery roles.

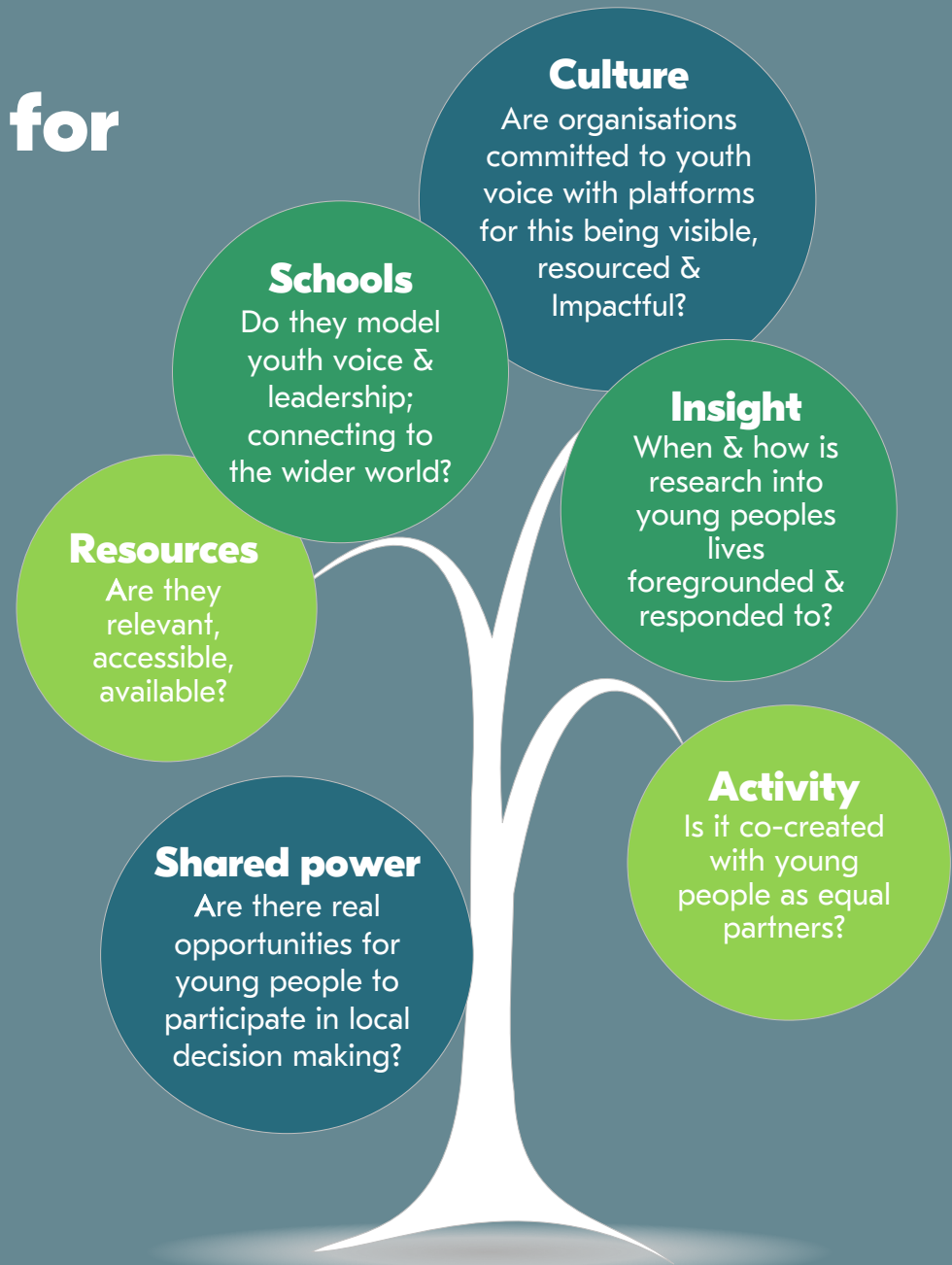
5. Cultural capital for children & young people is valued by all

Most important to:

Dagenham Park & Eastbury schools where the ambition was for young people to determine their own Arts Award journeys, with school culture & resources supporting these.

Most challenging to:

MoL for whom cultural capital is a key outcome of their youth engagement activity - implicitly in the approach to their award activity was the handing-over of this to the supplementary schools.



Activity: participant's stories

What the participants did

The challenges they faced

The experiments they undertook

What they learnt

Their advice to others

Their future plans



What did Cubitt do?

- Five masterclasses, at five schools, led by two different artists, promoting the programme.
- Partnership with Lift youth hub to support recruitment & host programme activity.
- Recruitment & collaboration with project artist .
- Seven workshops, eleven young people, exploring nationality through discussion; flag-making, installation, field recording, sound mixing & performance.
- Reflection on impact; scoping the way ahead!

What challenges did you face?

- Encouraging young people, especially those from school masterclasses, to sign up; many put their name forward but didn't/couldn't commit.
- Limited time to establish school relationships for partnerships & gatekeeping.
- Time, project schedule didn't include 'wiggle room' for much needed flexibility.

What experiments did you undertake?

- Arts Award is an established part of the Summer School — can it work during term time?
- An exploration of the project shape looking at how to maintain motivation & how to fit best into young people's lives. This led to a shift from monthly sessions, each with a different artist, to a more intensive programme with the one artist.



What experiments did you undertake?

- Foregrounding the opportunity for young people to both take-part in the masterclasses & to then opt to take part in the Arts Award; this let young people know about Cubitt first & then choose whether to take-up the extended offer.
- Where to hold the workshops was a question throughout the development stage, transport links, flexibility, opening times, youth appeal, all being factors. Lift youth hub acting as partner & venue was a new opportunity for Cubitt.

What did you find out?

- Skills development should be front & centre of Arts Award programming at Cubitt.
- Recruitment can be done best, for the Institute of Anything , through peer networks & recommendations.
- Cubitt's strengths are in creating artist led activities.
- Collecting evidence needs to be approached creatively.
- Time, time, time; longer sessions, more sessions, the time for all to complete.

What advice would you give to others?

- Identify your strengths in relation to Arts Award at the beginning. What are your unique offers?
- Partnership need time to develop and become robust.
- Allow for breathing spaces in the project so that young people can use their agency.
- The details are important, making people feel comfortable & welcome being key!

What do you plan to do next?

- Arts Award accredited summer school for young people.
- Continue to build partnerships with schools & youth 'Hubs' to develop nomadic, co-created youth programmes!



What did Dagenham Park School do?

- Recruited students through assemblies, form groups & posters.
- Set in place a programme of facilitated sessions for students to attend & receive support to complete the Award ~ extra curricular.
- Provided opportunities for activities to complete the Award & signposted them using the breadth of existing activity within the school for creative activity.

What challenges did you face?

- The additionality of the Award created difficulties; for students who lacked motivation, momentum was hard to maintain & for those who are motivated, competing pressures, at points were overwhelming.
- Staff capacity to support, encourage & drive forward, was another challenge with additionality.
- The new BTEC Drama curriculum wasn't compatible with the Award.
- Theatre show booked to provide a live art experience had to be cancelled at late notice due to unsuitability of aspects of the script.

What experiments did you undertake?

- Student ownership, what would happen if the Award was driven by the students?
- Training of support staff as Advisors, what impact would this additional capacity have?
- Planting seeds for the Award to be delivered at the lower levels within the curriculum, growing the students interest in & valuing of the Award at Silver & Bronze levels.



What did you find out?

- Students finding the worth of the Award for themselves is critical to success.
- Time & timing are crucial to getting it right.
- The action research process provides a helpful frame ~ the team will be using it to set up Arts Award Gold & Silver at Sixth form level.

What advice would you give to others?

- Use curriculum delivery time to gather evidence.
- Forward planning is critical.
- Student individual ownership is central.

What do you plan to do next?

- Run the Arts Award across the curriculum.
- Plan for moderation costs
- Explore how Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations could work with the school & deliver Arts Award as part of their outer London borough commitment.



What did Eastbury School do?

- Identified existing opportunities within school life that could contribute to completing an award.
- Recruited students through targeted posters, assemblies & followed up with form group invitations.
- Trained a new member of staff as an Advisor to help with delivery.
- Ran two different programme, Bronze (repeated twice) & Silver, both took place after school.
- Set-up a Cultural Ambassadors programme programme to help embed Arts Award in school life.

What challenges did you face?

- The competing demands placed on students led to a lack of motivation at points.
- Student drop-out, lack of capacity from teachers to 'scoop' them back-up, activity being outside of curriculum time.
- Lack of knowledge & understanding about the Arts Award by fellow teachers & students.

What experiments did you undertake?

- Student ownership, handing over the Award to students at key points in the process, would this support agency or not?
- Training new members of staff at all Award levels; to what extent would this increase activity?



What experiments did you undertake?

- Embedding aspects of delivery into the curriculum & attaching homework tasks to it.
- Working with feeder Primary schools, would Silver students engage with the opportunity to develop Unt 2 leadership within this?

What did you find out?

- Cultural capital takes capital & cultural investment!
- Support from leadership throughout is critical.
- Without student engagement; nothing works, focus your energy on understanding this most of all!

What advice would you give to others?

- Encourage students to believe in the vision.
- Prioritise – its OK! Work out how it can be most important for the students, for you & for the school.

What do you plan to do next?

- Continue to embed in the curriculum.
- Run Discover & Explore in partnership with local primary school to seed Arts Award knowledge & understanding.
- Run Gold level Arts Award.



What did Inspire-works do?

- Developed software to deliver a 'mostly' virtual music education programme.
- Trained 5 teachers in 4 schools to be Arts Award Advisors.
- Worked with the 4 schools: 3 primary & 1 secondary to run a world music pilot over a term using video tutorials, topped & tailed by facilitated sessions.
- Used the results of the pilot to put the course online & roll-out nationally.

What challenges did you face?

- Software, having digital material that could be used easily, but not copied - ensuring that material created generates an ongoing revenue stream.
- 3 out of the 4 schools didn't know what Arts Award was, building knowledge of this was the first step.
- In the secondary school, music was delivered 6 weeks of the year; the Arts Award course material is designed to cover a full term.
- Schools were responsible for printing the support material & logbooks, these were designed in colour, some schools printed in black & white resulting in clarity being lost.

What experiments did you undertake?

- The overall idea of delivery via video was an experiment ~ for Inspire-works & music education sector!
- Investing in design rather than printing of the logbook, handing printing to teachers.
- Testing out how to embed progression levels, in music education, with the video resource.



What did you find out?

- Arts Award being a qualification was important to some of the lower achieving schools, increasing the likelihood of their uptake.
- Music Hubs each operate differently, this needs to be considered for national delivery.
- A facilitated session at the beginning & end of the project, ensures that momentum is maintained & schools feel supported, whilst being enabled to work independently.
- Not to assume teachers have knowledge for example, a music co-ordinator in a primary may be just that, a co-ordinator.

What advice would you give to others?

- Plan as far ahead as possible!
- Build testing time in when using new technology.
- See what help Arts Award can give when trying something new, for example working with larger numbers — make use of them they are very helpful!

What are you going to do next?

- Roll out the programme for the next academic year; 15 schools are on-board.
- Programme is now all online so schools can pay via the website.
- Continue to broaden organisational reach.



What did Inspire-works do?

- Built new relationships with Harrow Museum & Music Service to jointly deliver Arts Award.
- Trained a new Advisor at Gold level to support delivery.
- Produced an African drumming, Discover Resource with the Music Service.
- Delivered the Arts Award as part of the Harrow Arts Centre holiday programme.
- Devised a 'Discover in a Day' with Harrow Museum.
- Ran Discover with the Pavilion Opera, Harrow Music Service.
- Brought the new relationships together to establish an Arts Award local area network.

What challenges did you face?

- Staff changes during the project & subsequent lack of consistency led to some work needing to be restarted.
- Due to funding, project planning took place after partners had made their plans for the year ahead.
- A key partner was unable to collaborate at a late stage due to staff illness.
- Some areas of work 'appeared' to be a good fit & as such fairly straightforward to achieve, this wasn't always the case!

What experiments did you undertake?

- Working with partners to identify strengths & explore capacity & from this to allocate roles & responsibilities. e.g. schools opted to lead on delivery & HAC to advise & assess.



What experiments did you undertake?

- Looking across the range of activities that take place at HAC, the team have begun to embed the Arts Award more widely identifying where its & to whom it adds value.

What did you find out?

- The Award works best when the facilitation is done by an Arts Award Centre .
- Working with at least one other organisation who is an Arts Award Centre is massively helpful to compare & learning together.
- Parents were keen for their children to take part; parents see the value of the Arts Award.

What advice would you give to others?

- Have more than one person in your team trained as an Arts Award Advisor; people need to be supported if there are staff changes.
- Work with partners throughout to add value & quality to the work.
- Start your project, with schools, at the beginning of the academic year; plan the summer term before!

What do you plan to do next?

- Continue to embed Arts Award into existing activities.
- Build further the Local Area Network.
- Work with school partners to extend the Art Award journey.



What did Museum of London do?

- Consultation with supplementary schools; an evening event to discuss the Arts Award, what it could offer to the schools & the potential role of the MoL, 15 schools came on board.
- Advisor training for teachers (which was well received & attended).
- Arts Award project in Brent as a pilot to illustrate to the other schools how the Award could look in practice.
- Case study produced to outline practice & sharing reflections for the MoL blog.

What challenges did you face?

- The Supplementary Schools Manager post is funded through the MoL Arts Council; grant — this was under renewal in the latter stages of the project creating uncertainty about future commitment, by the Museum, to the schools.
- The MoL has a dedicated Supplementary Schools Manager & Arts Award experience, however had not combined the two together before & were uncertain if it was a fit.

What experiments did you undertake?

- The project as a whole was an experiment, would supplementary schools see the Arts Award as something of value, did they have the time to dedicate to it, would they want to combine activity at the MoL?
- Investing in the supplementary teachers for Advisor training rather than in the MoL, giving ownership to the schools.



What did MoL find out?

- There is an appetite for Arts Award combined with the MoL in supplementary schools, it's a good fit!
- The potential for the Arts Award across the learning activities at the MoL is great.
- Arts Award needs time to deliver, planning well is critical.
- The Advisor training could have supported more of the MoL team; freelance & core.

What advise would you give to others?

- Be open & honest with partners and give them the chance to say no.
- Make sure you find where the Award fits with peoples objectives before you start.
- Planning; make sure you have enough time to complete.

What do you plan to do next?

- The schools as the Centres will need to meet the costs of the Arts Award; will support be needed to help them achieve this?
- Exploration of a 'buddying system' for schools who are just starting out.
- Funding for the MoL post is secure for 2018 -22, Arts Award will be an important part of future plans.



Five conditions for success

Self-assessment framework for cultural organisations

Use the following slides to build a picture of your organisation's Arts Award environment:

- Where is investment needed?
- What's working well?
- Where are you on solid ground?



1. People know about & understand the relative values of the Arts Award

To what extent are the following statements true in your organisation & or local area?

People know that the Award is a recognised national qualification

not at all a bit mostly

People are aware that the Award can be a tool to measure attainment & achievement

not at all a bit mostly

People know what the Award 'looks like' in action

not at all a bit mostly

People appreciate that the Award is a flexible framework for learning

not at all a bit mostly

People appreciate the variety of contexts the Award can take place in

not at all a bit mostly

People understand that it costs & can identify potential funding sources

not at all a bit mostly

2. Arts Award has synergy with organisational & political ambitions

To what extent are the following statements true for your organisation?

The Award helps us achieve our organisational outcomes & meet performance targets

not at all a bit mostly

The Award enables us to demonstrate impact & supports reporting to funders & stakeholders

not at all a bit mostly

The Award contributes to our organisational resilience

not at all a bit mostly

The Award is embedded into our programmes; its value is implicitly understood

not at all a bit mostly

The Award is part of local strategies to achieve political outcomes & targets

not at all a bit mostly

The Awards is driven locally by national political outcomes & targets

not at all a bit mostly

3. Places are interconnected; Infrastructure promotes cultural participation

To what extent are the following statements true in the area you are working in?

Funding can be identified to subsidise cultural participation

not at all a bit mostly

There is a culture of networking, mutual understanding & joint working

not at all a bit mostly

Schools share resources with other schools & beyond

not at all a bit mostly

Schools have empowered leaders & enabled staff who value the arts

not at all a bit mostly

Training & development opportunities are available

not at all a bit mostly

Public transport routes & roads connect people & places

not at all a bit mostly

4. Centers & Advisors are confident; practice is relevant & impactful

To what extent are the following statements true in your organisation?

Practice is reflective & there is an established approach to the Arts Award

not at all ●

a bit ●

mostly ●

Teams have a shared pedagogy & framework to measure quality

not at all ●

a bit ●

mostly ●

Delivery & participation is inclusive, reflecting the challenges of young people's lives

not at all ●

a bit ●

mostly ●

Time is invested in planning & building relationships

not at all ●

a bit ●

mostly ●

Activity is scheduled to maintain momentum

not at all ●

a bit ●

mostly ●

Progression routes are considered, shared, planned for & foregrounded

not at all ●

a bit ●

mostly ●

5. Cultural capital for children & young people is valued by all

To what extent are the following statements true in the area you are working in?

Cultural organisations target young people as audience members

not at all a bit mostly

Cultural organisation & activity is targeted at young people as participants

not at all a bit mostly

Cultural activity is co-created with young people

not at all a bit mostly

Young people are able to participate in cultural decision making

not at all a bit mostly

Cultural leadership programmes are in place, in schools & beyond, for young people

not at all a bit mostly

Youth voice has a visible platform (s) & is impactful

not at all a bit mostly

A New Direction in collaboration with:

