

# Supporting Arts in Harrow

Impact Report for Round 1 (2023)



## Funded by John Lyon's Charity

In order to address a lack of Arts opportunities in Harrow, in November 2022 Young Harrow Foundation (YHF) was awarded £40,000 for two years to distribute as grants to organisations to help bring high quality arts opportunities for young people in schools across the borough. The first grants panel, held in March 2023, saw seven grants approved for funding. Two of the JLC team sat on the Panel to represent the Charity's grant making strategy. Funded projects were wide ranging and included acting, spoken word, classical Indian dance, carnival costume design, songwriting and music production



JOHN LYON'S CHARITY



youngharrow  
foundation

# Summary

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## Project Vision & Aims

Our vision through this programme was to involve all communities in arts and culture and to give those children and young people who are not engaging in the arts the voice and power to help shape local arts provision.

We wanted to involve YHF members and community based groups and to co-commission sustainable activity that celebrates Harrow's diverse culture & heritage, and to support the creation of excellent arts provision

. The overall aims were to increase engagement in the arts across both schools and communities in the borough including:

- Engaging those children and young people who are least involved in the arts across Harrow.
- Giving those not engaging in the arts the voice and power to help shape local arts provision.
- Celebrating Harrow's diverse culture & heritage through supporting arts-based provision.
- Developing locally led networks for arts organisations in partnership through the Harrow Culture Forum.

## Projects Awarded

We awarded 7 organisations (YHF members) a total of **£43,667** to deliver a diverse range of creative and performing arts programmes, connecting them and inviting them to engage with the Harrow Culture Forum.

**Total Awarded £43,667**

**Total CYP Engaged 4,588**

2,143 from Black and Asian Communities  
128 disabled participants  
Practically a 50/50 male/female split



# Fresh Arts CIC

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**7,968**

Grant awarded (£)

**670**

CYP supported, aged 4-11

## Project Description

This project reached children in Harrow who were typically unable to access arts activities by bringing the arts into school settings. We were pleased to be able to use this funding to work with 670 children in Harrow and make the arts more accessible to them.

We have developed an offering for Harrow called Fresh Arts: Act Sing Dance and Fresh Arts Chatterbox which built on our existing expertise. We also offered the option of Drama and Wellbeing for the 1st half term of this year for schools who preferred this option which was chosen by 3 schools who wished to do drama but with a wellbeing focus and ran an event for Black History Month which had 360 children from St Jerome Bilingual School in Harrow attending.

We were able to work with 40 children for the Chatterbox LAMDA programme, we were able to work with 15 children for the small drama and wellbeing group, we were able to work with 15 children for Act Sing Dance, we were able to do Act, Sing, Dance for 360 children in Harrow themed around Black History Month, we were able to work with 240 children for drama and wellbeing on a weekly basis for six weeks.

This has made a difference to the children and young people that we have worked with as we have been able to provide many children with access to the arts some for the first time meeting the aims of the programme to increase participation. We had much higher numbers than anticipated when we applied for the funding, which has been a great achievement.





## Outcomes and Outputs

- 80% of YP showed Teachers reporting children are contributing more to class discussions and are more confident speakers (Chatterbox)
- A minimum of 85% of children saying they had tried a new activity over the course of the project.
- A minimum of 85% of children reporting increased confidence.

## Case Study

A is an 8 year old student. In her first session she was quite shy as she is on the younger end of the age group in this club. She didn't put her hand up to contribute much in class and was often singing quietly and looking to others to lead in games and activities. As the sessions have gone on, she has shown a progression in confidence. She now puts her hand up a lot during the sessions, and often volunteers to perform. She asks the teacher for feedback and homework to practice each week and is very excited about musical theatre as a subject, despite having never seen a musical or participated in a musical theatre club before. She appears to be growing in confidence in front of her peers in the way that she contributes her ideas to drama activities as well, rather than letting other children direct her.

# Srishti Yuva Culture



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**7,500**

Grant awarded (£)

**1,440**

CYP supported, aged 13-18

## Project Description

Bringing Bharatanatyam dance (classical Indian dance) and Karnatik music (a highly systematic learning tradition) to Harrow's secondary schools. Excellent tool for developing posture, alignment, balance, coordination, control, flexibility, mobility, strength, stamina, extension, isolation as well as technical skills including accuracy of action, timing, dynamics, rhythmic and spatial content, the reproduction of movement in a stylistically accurate way, and physical relationship to other dancers.

We targeted children and young people at Key Stages 3/4 level as we found that there's a worrying lack of arts provisions in schools. Facilitating our workshop programme alongside the National Curriculum in the Physical Education programmes of study (GCSE Dance can also be addressed), and the music programmes of study for GCSE Music helped us link and partner with 6 schools across Harrow over the duration of 2 terms.

This has made it accessible for us to reach those who cannot access arts due to geographic/economic/social barriers and gave them the opportunity to learn and inspire more in the traditional arts and culture through Indian classical dance/music.

Many of the students who attended our workshops also came from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities, which also aids promoting cultural and traditional arts to a wider audience.

Moreover Shaftesbury High, one of the schools we conducted our workshops in, were keen to take it further and perform the dance sequence they learnt over the 6 weeks for a Diwali celebration in school. The school has children with special needs, and the workshops helped them engage and improve their performance skills while developing their creative side.

## Challenges

It was a huge challenge to pin down schools for delivery. Though there was no cost implication for them, schools find it very difficult to timetable anything additional within the day. The fact that the workshops addressed the National Curriculum helped us gain interest, but still we didn't know until very last minute whether the school was committing, and if so, what day and time they wanted the workshops. It meant we had to do a lot of chasing and planning at the last minute.



# Srishti Yuva Culture



## Outcomes and Outputs

- 100% of participants engaged with arts activity without geographic/economic/social barriers, within school time, at no cost to them, and without hindrance from any third person.
- 30% accessing more arts-based activity in schools that in turn will create more participants/audiences for dance/music in Harrow.
- This project has helped partnership working with YHF and schools and to draw attention to us so that future arts-based activities by us or our peers, is more readily supported.



## Participant Quotes

'I learned how to meditate. It has taught me patience' (Aged 15)

'It has helped me improve my coordination skills' (Aged 13)

The music workshops have allowed the students to further nurture their interest by learning a more classical and traditional form. This has helped develop their creativity and confidence as they can explore and engage in a different genre/tradition, aiding and increasing their overall knowledge in music. They learnt about pitch, scales, building upon a melody and rhythmic variations.

'I enjoyed learning a new style of music. I loved making our own melodies and performing it at the end.' (Aged 12)

'I would like to thank you for this great opportunity you have given us. The students have really enjoyed it and have had a great time. Abi is lovely and the students got on very well with her.' (Shaftesbury High School Dance Workshops)

**6,250**

Grant awarded (£)

**106**

CYP supported, aged 8-18

## Project Description

The project focused on visual art, specifically painting, with the aim of increasing engagement in the arts among children and young people in Harrow. The project worked with local schools and community organisations to provide arts-based programmes that celebrate Harrow's diverse culture and heritage and engage those who are least involved in the arts. We worked with a diverse range of young people. The project provided a safe and welcoming space for participants to explore their creativity, express themselves through their art, and develop their technical skills.

Participants also learnt about the wider art world and how art can be used as a tool for social change. The project involved workshops and classes led by professional artists to teach various techniques and styles of painting. Participants learnt how to work with different mediums such as acrylic, watercolour, and oil paints, and experiment with different tools and textures. Participants were also encouraged to draw inspiration from their own experiences and cultural traditions and incorporate these into their artwork.

The project provided a platform for participants to explore their creativity and express themselves through their art. In addition to developing their technical skills, participants developed their own unique style, and were encouraged to think critically about the messages and themes in their artwork.

## Challenges

The project engaged with participants in discussions about the role of art in society and how art can be used as a tool for social change. This brought up many ongoing current issues such as the cost-of-living crisis, financial inequality, health inequality, mental health issues, etc. As a result of this, some sessions became more serious than initially planned. Our experienced instructors were able to steer the conversations and sessions to more positive tones and try to assist with those who had such experiences.

## Outcomes and Outputs

All outcomes exceeded the planned number anticipated in the application.

- 59 in total had increased engagement in the arts.
- 79 developed technical skills and creativity.
- 66 helped to use their art as a tool for social change and to positively impact their community.
- 50% of participants report that they feel more confident in using art to express their ideas and opinions about social issues.

We are currently running a partnership programme with Priestmead Primary School funded by John Lyon's Charity. This project has greatly enhanced and assisted our partnership with the School. The aim of this is to enhance the education and opportunities, thus the life chances and choices, of disadvantaged young people from Harrow over three years. As part of this partnership, we aim to build the capacity, professionalism, and sustainability of both organisations by sharing resources and expertise. Another is to build organisational capacity and develop services to the community.



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**4,250**

Grant awarded (£)

**2,199**

CYP supported, aged 0-25

## Project Description

The project engaged children in primary schools/evening faith schools and women and children through community organisations working actively in Harrow. Working with them to design beautiful carnival costumes through workshops as part of their in-house school parades/carnival at their end of year funfairs. Children at Longfield Primary and Grange school took part in costume making workshops and sessions took place at Bilal Mosque and Northolt Islamic Centre, engaging children and young adults through creative Islamic art. The project also worked with Harrow Central Mosque to develop work/props that would be showcased as part of their annual Procession through Harrow town centre.

### Participants engaged in the following

- Pattern making/designing costumes
- Showcased their work as part of their in house events
- Worked with costume and performance artists.
- Learnt and rehearsed parade performance routines.
- Partners and volunteers took part in logistics of the parade entry
- Families were supported and encouraged to participate at the procession.

## Outcomes and Outputs

- 90% Increase engagement in the arts across both schools and communities in the borough.
- 80% engagement from those children and young people who are least involved in the arts across Harrow.
- 80% more involved in celebrating Harrow's diverse culture & heritage.

### Legacy

- Through the procession with Harrow Mosque, families took part in new opportunities and created lifelong memories for those families/women/children who have not had access to such events before. They had immense sense of belonging and pride. The work will be enhanced to be part of ongoing celebrations and annual events and celebrations.

## Participant Quotes

Feedback from children showed they were happier and healthier through rich creative learning. Their comments included "this is fun" another participant said "I want to make another one" Many others wanted to take templates home with them.

The partners we worked with built confidence in each other and agreed to work together to achieve an inclusive society for all. The head teacher in Grange school commented "I wish we would have recorded the introduction of the session" The arts leader added "Thank you so much I've had lovely feedback from the teachers"

# Crowning Greatness

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**2,779**

Grant awarded (£)

**16**

CYP supported, aged 6-18

## Project Description

Becoming Me' Programme allows Youth to be on a journey to self-discovery through music. This programme allows individuals to self-express through writing, music production and to be creative vocally. The young people involved were helped to boost confidence and bring about an 'anything is possible' attitude, as absolute beginners learn how to sing, write lyrics and get to know their own personal style. Through our work we definitely engaged more young people in the arts to a wider audience and introduced them to skills and techniques they hadn't used previously.

## Challenges

As we delivered our programme in a school setting, we were unable to access the space beforehand to allow time for setting up and had limited time to leave the premises. This was fine as we have enough staff on site that was able to do this in enough time and also still engage the students.

We considered many schools within the borough of Harrow to support but found the uptake very challenging even with a fully funded programme as the one we presented.

Although we spoke with and emailed many schools, we were introduced via our networks, other teachers we had discussed the programme with did, not prevail. If funded again, we would like to target areas that have a greater need in social economic support, such as schools in Wealdstone.



# Crowning Greatness



## Outcomes and Outputs

Numbers were slightly lower than anticipated.

- 90% experienced enriching activities, working as part of a team and sense of belonging.
- 85% gained increase in confidence and self-esteem.
- 75% developed their knowledge of key music techniques, such as song writing, vocal training and music production



## Quotes

The feedback from the students, showed this was something different they hadn't honed into. They also learnt about things they didn't know about, for example how to structure a song and breathing techniques.

They were able to mix with students they wouldn't normally work with.

They felt like part of a group and also felt like they're confidence had increased. 40% of the students said after doing the programme they now think of music as a career choice.

"The programme was great, don't change anything"

"I have never done songwriting before, it was so much fun, I learnt so much"

"I enjoyed working as a team, with other people, I wouldn't have ever worked with"

"The artwork was so....wow"



**8,000**

Grant awarded (£)

**37**

CYP supported, aged 13-18

## Project Description

This project differed slightly to the application, in negotiation with YHF, based on discussion with the school about the cohort and what would be the most engaging for them considering their individual needs. This resulted in one Spoken Word project and one Film project. The film project, though a change from our original application, meant that young people who were interested in acting could learn specifically about acting for screen and young people who may be shyer about acting and performance could learn key skills related to film making and directing. The three young people who took part in online one to one projects took part in acting courses, which were designed to teach them new arts skills and build on skills they had already started to develop whilst working on the projects in school. As with all of Synergy's work, the creative projects were based on a stimulus (a professional play or film) that explored themes related to crime and youth violence. The project worked with the Helix Education Centre, Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) ensuring that the young people they were engaging with were the most in need of our programme- both to learn a new skills and to engage with themes in a creative, artistic way. We know that young people in PRUs face significant disadvantage

## Challenges

As with all projects in education settings, we experienced issues with attendance, often through young people missing weeks due to suspension. As this is a regular issue for us, we are always able to adapt our projects so that we can pick up where we left off when young people return and we're able to continue with their project regardless.

One of the challenges of the online one to one work is that the young people often experience chaotic home lives. In some instances, this meant young people struggled to access either the technology, the Wi-Fi, or the quiet space at home to log into online sessions. To alleviate this issue Synergy always offer to loan young people technology, cover the cost of additional data that may be required or speak with the school about accessing a space that they can use there



## Outcomes and Outputs

- 90% of YP rated the project as good/excellent.
- 80% of YP showed an increase in having their voices heard.
- 70% of YP reported positive mental health by the end of the project
- 75% of YP are more likely to do more creative things or be involved with further school activities.
- 80% of YP reported they were at low risk of offending at the end of the project.

## Participant Quotes

'You have treated me like family, I feel respected and listened to. Thank you for giving me the time. I've really enjoyed it!' (young person)

'I'm really proud of myself- I feel like I'm properly acting! It's amazing. I'm smiling from ear to ear' (young person)

'It's been great to see J commit to something and fulfil his potential'

– *Teacher of one-to-one participant*

'She's been more focused than I've seen her, she seems really passionate about acting now!' – *Parent of one-to-one participant*

# Creative Futures

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**6,920**

Grant awarded (£)

**90**

CYP supported, aged 6-12

## Project Description

Our Hopes and Futures project was successful in addressing all three funding objectives: engaging children and young people in the arts, promoting cultural and traditional arts to a wider audience, and developing links with schools.

Engaging Children and Young People in the Arts: During the summer term, we implemented an enriching spoken-word project for 90 students in year 6 at Vaughan Primary School. Led by skilled spoken-word artists, Nikita and Kenji, the students participated in engaging activities for 2 ½ hours per week. Our project commenced with introductions, mini performances from the spoken word artists, and fun icebreaker activities to get the students enthusiastic and inspired from the offset. The spoken word activities explored language and the flow of poetry to build the students' connection with words and their community. Throughout the project, students were exposed to different forms of poetry and learned how to write, structure, analyse, and perform their work through guidance and support of our specialist practitioners. Students engaged in self-reflective practises paired with creativity and imagination to write poems which were published in an anthology book at the end of the project. Our project promoted cultural diversity and self-expression within the community of Harrow. By partnering with local spoken-word artists, we offered authentic experiences that celebrated the rich heritage and traditions within the community.

## Challenges

During some weeks, teachers were clearly overworked and understaffed. Unfortunately, a teacher could not be present every week, and when someone was present, they were frequently inconsistent. Having one primary teacher throughout the project would have been preferable as it would have allowed us to establish rapport and maintain consistency, leading to better outcomes for the students. The duration of the project was initially 10 weeks, however due to SATS, strikes and end of term trips, the project was reduced to 8 weeks. This provided us less time than we had intended and towards the end we had to condense some of the activities and spend less time rehearsing and planning the final showcase. It also meant that the students had two fewer weeks to create their poems, which felt a touch rushed given that we planned to print the anthologies for students by the end of term. We were very ambitious in what we aimed to achieve with the students.



# Creative Futures



## Outcomes and Outputs

- 90% pupil's with improved confidence and public speaking skills.
- 90% of students developed creative, expressive, and written abilities.
- 80% of students feeling a stronger connection to their community, cultural heritage, and identity.
- Improved social skills and teamwork.

## Quotes

### Case study E's Transformation:

Initially shy and reluctant to participate, E gradually became more involved and enthusiastic about writing a poem about his journey at Vaughan Primary and transitioning to Year 6. On the last day, E gained the courage to stand up and proudly read his poem in front of his peers, marking a great milestone in his personal growth.

### V's Enthusiasm for Writing:

V, a non-verbal student, actively engaged in the project through writing poetry. Though not directly involved in group discussions or presentations, V's peers read out her ideas and poetry suggestions during each session. On the final day, V stood up with her partner, and though she did not read her poem herself, she took pride in hearing someone read it on her behalf.

"The children have really loved this project. We've seen some of our most anxious students become more confident in presenting and talking about their experience of going to secondary school in a positive way. Projects like this are really needed. Going to secondary school is such a huge step, it's important we prepare and support them as best as we can."

(Year 6 Teacher)





# YHF Summary

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We were amazed at the breadth and diversity of the offers funded through this programme. The number of children and young people engaging overall is impressive and we feel that these relatively small organisations worked hard to target the most disadvantaged communities and engage those not normally interested in or given access to the arts.

The connection between community based groups and schools increased and has developed as a result of taking these funded programmes to the schools. YHF continues to develop partnerships with local schools across all of the funded programmes we manage and to facilitate a yearly conference bringing the two sectors together.

Five of the seven funded engaged and continue to, with the Forum, one was already affiliated and the other two organisations, one from outside the borough do not have the capacity to devote time to this.

We are looking forward to awarding more grants in Round 2 planned for early 2024.



# Acknowledgement

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We owe thanks to the lack of ARTS in Harrow being cited at the Philanthropy Committee, for the commitment to change this by both The John Lyon School and Harrow School, leading to the funding support from John Lyon's Charity with funding over two years to support the development of arts based projects locally.

The plan is to showcase the projects at the end of the second year of funding in a celebration event.



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