

YOUTH VOICE

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Definitions

Accessibility - Ensuring that everyone can access, engage, and participate with a resource, opportunity, or event, and eliminating barriers that might otherwise prevent a person from doing so. Accessibility is important to consider in all spaces, online and offline.

CEP - Acronym for Cultural Education Partnership.

SCEP - Southampton Cultural Education Partnership.

Creativity - Creativity, as defined by us as three young people, is participating in any activity or experience that allows a person to create something or express themselves.

Culture - Culture itself is hard to define as it differs for every individual and place. To us, 'culture' encompasses a wide variety of practices, arts, customs, and other facets that make up the identity of an individual, groups, and places. 'Culture' includes traditionally-defined arts, religious practices, and food, to more recent and modern examples such as gaming and virtual reality. We believe that today's culture is the future's history, and thus ensuring that people's voices are being heard today is important to shaping our future.

CYP (Children and Young People) - There are slight variations in the way organisations and groups define CYP, but for the purposes of this project, we have chosen to define young people as anyone under 25 up to the age of 30.

Engagement - Any form of involvement or experience involving arts and culture, whether that's creating something, working in the field, attending an event, or browsing an arts website.

Value Exchange - Practice of giving back something valuable in turn for receiving value from a consultation or relationship, so that the relationship or consultation is

beneficial to both parties. For example, ensuring that young people are compensated and made to feel appreciated in exchange for their contributions to an organisation, whether this is of material value (such as financial contributions, or free tickets) or developmental value (such as a qualification, mentoring, or workshops).

Introduction

Welcome to our Zine! We have created this as a guide to best practice for working with young people in arts and culture. Through a series of case studies and analysis we have detailed the best ways to engage with young people. Our main focus has been on youth boards, value exchange and youth accessibility. Many arts organisations provide exciting and genuinely beneficial development to the careers and creative practice of young people, and as the future curators and leaders, it's important to nurture this. We feel that Southampton CEP, with its diverse partners and members, could really gain a lot from imbedding youth voice in the organisation, and with this zine we hope to explain how and why.

Why a Zine?

We chose to present our research project as a zine because we want to show SCEP that with the inclusion of youth voices comes new and creative ways of doing things, and to emphasise that in order to successfully include young voices, an organisation needs to be open to and accommodating of this.

With its deep recent history rooted in punk scenes, feminism, and activism, the zine has long been an accessible way of learning and sharing information. We believe that its DIY style and format allows for immediacy and authenticity, and challenges

the gatekeeping and elitism sometimes encountered within creative industries. We consider the zine a good format to present our findings, as it is approachable to the age range at the focus of our research.

As young people ourselves, we believe it is an engaging and inspiring way to represent the voices of children and young people within arts and culture. With this zine having been created by young people, we hope that it gives you an insight into the ways people like us communicate, and challenges you to think about the ways you might respond and communicate in turn. We also hope that as well as being food for thought for the CEP itself, it will also be useful to the individual member organisations in some way.

Value Exchange

When initially thinking about how Southampton CEP can encourage more young people to get involved in its work, one of the key areas of importance that came up many times within our discussion was the idea of 'Value Exchange' and how this can be used as a tool to encourage youth involvement.

Why Value Exchange Matters

We believe that value exchange is really important to consider if you intend to involve young people in the decision making and leadership of your organisation. Outlining what support, opportunities, and guidance you can offer to the children and young people who take on the responsibility of working with you will give them an incentive to get involved, and therefore increase their engagement throughout their time with you. This sort of value exchange can sometimes be the difference between a young person being able to participate or not being able to, especially when this comes to considering factors such as financial circumstances.

It's truly important that children and young people feel valued for their contributions, and that what they are doing is genuinely beneficial to their future and their growth as an individual. Our research and experience tells us that it's when young people can see real change happening from their ideas that they are most motivated to continue sharing their voice. This is a fundamental part of feeling valued and heard, and unless you plan on listening to what they share with your organisation and truly using it to inform your actions, then there is no point to involving young people in the first place.

Forms of Value Exchange

We have identified two main ways that organisations can offer value exchange, through monetary or developmental value.

Monetary value exchange is fairly straightforward, it means paying or reimbursing young people for their time. This could be done by giving them a wage, offering an honorarium or covering the expenses they incur while working with your organisation. Monetary value exchange can also include incentives. For example:

- ★ Free Tickets
- ★ Payment for their services
- ★ Discounts
- ★ Free Events
- ★ Financial Support for arts and cultural education

Developmental value is a bit more complex. It includes any kind of value exchange that benefits a young person's career and personal development. Below is a list of common forms of developmental value exchange:

- ★ Mentorships
- ★ Work experience
- ★ Awards and qualifications
 - Digital Badges
 - Arts Awards
 - Professional Development Courses

- ★ Networking opportunities
- ★ Access to job opportunities

There are pros and cons to each form of value exchange.

Monetary forms of value exchange require a budget. They may attract applications from people whose interest is focused on the financial incentive, however with a creative and open application process this can be easily avoided. Putting a budget aside for your youth board or young trustees can improve accessibility and consequently the diversity of voices that are able to be involved.

Developmental forms of value exchange require commitment. It is important that it doesn't become a 'tick-box' exercise, for example only offering one mentoring session or one piece of training. It is best if the support is ongoing and from a place of genuine enthusiasm from your organisation.

It's important to find the right kind of value exchange for your organisation as a CEP. Think about what you can offer young people, if it's something unique to SCEP, even better! Having a unique opportunity may bring in a higher number of enthusiastic young people who want to help guide you while they benefit from what you're offering.

Our research tells us that a good balance between monetary and developmental value exchange is often the best way forward. Giving a young person some kind of monetary contribution, whether this is paid travel, an honorarium, or something else, lets them know that you value their time. It allows a young person to feel as though their work has legitimate value. This is an especially great feeling to foster in young people with career goals in the arts, often they are made to feel that their efforts aren't worth being paid for and that the arts is not a financially viable career path. Young people should be made to feel that their time is worth money and that they can ask to be paid. This is especially relevant and crucial in a climate where

the arts are underfunded and statistically lacking in socioeconomic diversity with people of working class origins hugely underrepresented.

Case Studies: An Introduction

We have conducted a series of case studies focusing on a diverse range of Cultural Education Partnerships and other artistic and cultural organisations across the UK. Our primary focus was on researching the different ways these organisations have embedded Youth Voice and Youth Leadership into the structure of their organisation, reflecting on examples of best practice, and also considering the challenges potentially involved in getting this process right. We feel that there is a lot that can be learned from these CEPs and cultural organisations.

Youth Participation Theory

Before engaging with children and young people, it is important to consider what level of participation your organisation has the capacity for, as well as what level of participation would be suitable. Youth Participation Theory can help you to analyse commitments and priorities.

Roger Hart's model 'Ladder of Participation' was first published in 1992. It is presented as a metaphorical ladder with eight rungs. Each ascending step represents an increase in the agency, control, and power of the children and young people within this participation. This however is a hierarchical structure, and therefore is not without its flaws, as it positions different levels of participation as above or better than others, when arguably all participation that is genuine is deeply valuable.

Phil Treseder adapted this model into a non-hierarchical structure, reflecting on criticisms of Hart's theory. It considers how in reality, participation just doesn't often happen in an ordered sequence. Some levels are not necessarily better than others, but best applied for different circumstances. For example, if the young people involved have little experience or confidence, they may need more guidance and an adult-led approach to be able to engage in leadership or decision making, while in other cases this may be inappropriate or unnecessary. Throughout our exploration of case studies, we may reference these models, and we encourage you to consider them throughout.

Barnet & Culture for Youth

Barnet & Culture for Youth is the CEP for the London Borough of Barnet. It is hosted within artsdepot, a cultural centre for Barnet based in North Finchley.

Barnet & Culture for Youth Advocates

Barnet & Culture for Youth includes youth voice through its Youth Advocates Panel 'Barnet & Culture for Youth Advocates'. This Panel was launched in 2019 to work alongside Barnet & Culture's existing steering group. At this stage, Barnet & Culture for Youth was known as 'Barnet & Culture Education Partnership' which they acknowledged wasn't an easily understandable name. For this reason, they worked with a group of young people to think about their logo, branding and design. This led to a rebrand as 'Barnet & Culture for Youth'.

The youth advocates group members are aged between the ages of 14 and 21 years old. The group currently meets every three weeks either at artsdepot or virtually. They received feedback in the early stages that young people prefer more engagement and being able to meet up with the other young people more regularly, so made adjustments to accommodate this.

The intention of the youth panel is to offer the young people taking part opportunities to develop their skills, as well as the opportunity to have their voices listened to. They were conscious that although some CYP are confident in traditional governance spaces; many aren't, so they felt it was necessary to do things differently in order to engage with and accommodate for the young people. They also decided that if they were going to benefit from hearing young people's voices, that they needed to give something back in return to ensure the CYP are also gaining and benefiting from the experience.

In light of this, they have developed a programme of workshops for the panel which offer different opportunities to work with or hear from artists, and to gain a deeper understanding of the arts industry, as well as the opportunity to work on their own creative projects through the skills they learn. This development of the programme also ensures the young people are better equipped to develop ideas and projects for the panel. The programme covers areas such as access to the arts, advocacy and activism, arts education, creative careers, diverse arts curriculum, and young trustees. The young members also have time to work with their peers on their own creative projects and things they are passionate about.

Our Observations

There are many aspects of Barnet & Culture's youth panel which stand out to us as best practice. One of these is their development of workshops for the panel, and how this acts as a form of 'value exchange' by upskilling and training their young members, giving them access to artists with whom they can create connections and network with. The organisation also give the young people the responsibility and freedom to lead and develop on their own projects, which are personally important to them. This would appear to be an example of 'child-initiated, shared decisions with adults' if referring to Treseder's 'Degrees of Participation'. It also gives the young people agency in the cultural identity of Barnet, having a positive impact on their local area.

Another important aspect of Barnet & Culture's youth engagement is its focus on ensuring accessibility. In order to make sure that young people are able to access Barnet & Culture, they have implemented a Youth Access Fund, a small grant of up to £500. Its purpose is to support youth access to cultural education opportunities. While it's not specifically for the young people joining the panel, it is used by the CEP's members to fund programmes for children and young people. There is more info on this linked on the [Access Fund page at Artsdepot](#).

Key Takeaways

Francesca Cross, artsdepot's creative producer for talent and development, who has been working closely with Barnet & Culture's youth advocates shared some important observations in her interview with Amplify and Voice Magazine.

She acknowledged that it is important to keep a constant dialogue open with the young people, and that it can take a lot of time to work with them. That it is important to not make assumptions on what is best for the young people, but to keep coming back and asking them what they want and being able to offer them something creative in return. She also shared that being able to consult with the young people from the beginning, listening to their opinions on what they would want to gain from being part of a youth panel and what it would mean to them, before the youth panel is set up can be an opportunity to co-create the panel together. {[Board & Governance | Amplify \(amplify-voice.uk\)](#)}

[Future Creators \(Brighton CEP\)](#)

Background

When initially researching CEP organisations in the South-East of England, we found a lot of parallels between Southampton and Brighton as coastal cities. Therefore, there is a lot of transferable knowledge from Brighton's CEP, Future Creators.

Both cities are urban areas, and with that comes significant areas of economic deprivation. Brighton and Southampton are also both university cities, which means an increased young population during term times. However, Southampton retains less of its student population long-term compared to Brighton.

Brighton Background:

- ★ The average salary in the area is fairly low, but the cost of living is high, similar to London's.
- ★ Pre-pandemic, the area had one of the highest home-working populations in the UK.
- ★ There are lots of small start-ups in industries such as creative IT.
- ★ The young population there, much of which consists of university students, is significant and reshaping the city, but Brighton CEP acknowledges there needs to be a change in how young people are involved in the cultural success story of Brighton.
- ★ Rates of alcohol and other substance abuse are high in young people.

When looking at the website for Future Creators, Brighton's CEP, we were initially impressed with how accessible it felt for young people, with understandable language, fresh visuals and a concise vision. We were interested to find out if this is a true reflection of their youth participation. So, we spoke with Richard Beale at Artwork, who sits on the board of Future Creators as its Strategic Manager. Richard talked us through the history of Brighton's CEP and its journey to include youth voice.

Youth Voice Best Practice

From 2015, Brighton CEP was previously known as 'Our Future City'. This was part of a 10 year plan, developed through a 10 month process of consultation and pilot programmes. During their consultation period, they worked with schools and other educational settings, conducting surveys and holding events such as young enterprise days with local businesses.

From this period of consultation, they decided 'Our Future City' would focus on creativity as an everyday skill, as a focus on art could be inaccessible to some young audiences due to their pre-conceptions of what 'art' is. They developed a test program which involved going into schools and running taster sessions from diverse creative backgrounds. This included a 'Time Capsule' project in which artists in collaboration with Photoworks worked with pupils from Queens Park Primary School to creatively use photography as a tool to develop stronger relationships and teamwork skills, build resilience, and reduce conflict.

Part way through this 10 year strategy, the CEP re-evaluated their progress. They received feedback from CYP that 'Our Future City' sounded like a good idea in principle, but it also had the feeling of a 'school project'. This began conversation around creating more dynamic and engaging branding. They then held focus groups with young people which led to a new relaunch as 'Future Creators' in June 2020, to represent the creative ideas and opinions that were shared.

Future Creators became an employer on the Kickstart Scheme, and has managed around 70 placements across Brighton for young people aged 16-24. They also invested money in digital badges with [Badge Nation](#), and have implemented this tool into their Kickstart placements and member organisations as a method of value exchange, but also to ensure CYP have evidence of their work and skills that can help them in the future of their careers.

Moving forward with Future Creators, they have plans to develop a youth advisory group, recruiting about 12 young people of varying ages so that they can feed youth voices directly into the organisation's planning.

Our Observations

It is clear to us that Brighton's CEP, Future Creators, has come a long way and evolved a lot. Its original iteration, Our Future City was about place, not culture and art, and we think that was really significant. We also feel that the journey they

made to become Future Creators really speaks to the level of commitment to taking young voices on board.

Key Takeaways

- ★ Learning from young people helps to build a brand that is more engaging for young people.
 - ★ If something isn't working then changing your organisation for the better can be done and should be done if it benefits the community you work for.
 - ★ Digital badges are an excellent way to reward young people for their engagement and create new ways for young people to receive recognition for specific areas of their chosen industry.
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ChalleNGe Nottingham

Background

ChalleNGe Nottingham is the identity of Nottingham's CEP. Their mission is to ensure children and young people in Nottingham have access to arts and culture by working across sectors to champion creativity within education and communities. The CEP has over 30 operational partners who meet quarterly, along with 12 education representatives.

When researching ChalleNGe Nottingham, we felt they had a really strong vision and we were interested to learn more about their youth voice practice having come across the 'Connecting Notts' feature on their website. Connecting Notts is the name of ChalleNGe's Youth Cultural Partnership, and we were particularly impressed that within the page dedicated to the youth board, each of the young members has their own profile highlight, with a photo of them and a statement about their creative background and interests, and the partner organisation they represent.

We spoke with Emrys Green, business and projects manager from Upstart Projects who support and facilitate the youth board as an organisational partner of ChalleNGe Nottingham. Upstart is a charity, and acts in a way which is similar to a bridge organisation to coordinate national youth voice.

Connecting Notts

Connecting Notts is a group of 16-24 year olds, each young person is from one of ChalleNGe's arts partners and acts as a representative for youth voice from that organisation. Once ChalleNGe Nottingham decided they wanted to set up a youth board, the first thing they did was to set aside funding that would make this possible and ensure that the opportunity could be made accessible. Within their budget, they can pay for transport and financially support young carers and young parents so that they are able to attend the meetings. They also have the capacity to commission young artists and organise workshops. This is something that has been made possible by their partnership with Upstart Projects.

For the recruitment process, ChalleNGe invited its partners to nominate up to two young individuals or to share the application form with the young people they are engaged with.

The youth board was first established in September 2020 and is already planned to continue beyond 2023, with members able to join the board for up to two years. They meet once a month, with occasional extra meetings when there are events. The youth board sits alongside ChalleNGe's existing steering group, and is encouraged to have two-way communication with the steering group in an informal way, with the opportunity for the young members to take it in turns attending the ChalleNGe's partnership meetings and steering group as and when they are able to. ChalleNGe's manager, Cathy Mahmood, has also been working closely with the youth board in order to champion their views and really hear what they have to say.

Connecting Notts also has a Slack forum which acts as a 24/7 digital space in which its members can connect, debate, and share opportunities. This has been a vital

way for the partnership to stay engaged and connected whilst meeting remotely. As they were meeting remotely throughout lockdowns, they have now moved into a hybrid of remote and in-person access to their meetings which they feel has been best for the accessibility of the group. Some members are based an hour or more outside of the city centre, so having the options to join the meetings via zoom not only makes it easier for those who live further away, but it means young people can fit the meetings into their schedule with more flexibility.

In terms of what Connecting Notts have been up to, the youth board has been planning a series of open access, workshop style events, its young members are planning the programming and will be facilitating some of the workshops. They now have their own [website](#) which has information about their purpose and the events they are hosting.

Our Observations

Throughout our research and conversations with ChalleNGe Nottingham, we were very impressed by the commitment and thought that goes into what they offer to young people in exchange for their time and effort. ChalleNGe Nottingham pays young artists for their creative input. They commissioned a young graphic designer to create their logo and imagery, and young people led the process of deciding on branding. When we spoke with Emrys, he emphasised to us the importance of supporting a young person in the right way rather than tokenistically appearing to do so. The opportunities to learn, develop, make connections, make decisions, and network are as valuable as any other form of value exchange.

Returning to the Connecting Notts member profiles on ChalleNGe's website, this platform gives the young members a level of recognition for the work they are doing and also places them on an equal level to older members within the organisation, as it is common for board members/chairs to have their picture and a statement about them featured on the website of their organisation. It also puts their name in the public eye, opening them up to opportunities and connections.

Key Takeaways

- ★ Having flexibility in how meetings are held and who gets to attend a steering group meeting makes opportunities more accessible!
 - ★ If a youth board exists remotely, it is important to find ways for the young people to stay connected and engaged.
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Creative County (West Sussex)

Background

Creative County is the CEP for West Sussex. Creative County began embedding Youth Voice into their organisation by introducing two young members onto their board. We spoke with Elspeth Barron, Creative County's CEP Development Coordinator about this process.

Youth Voice Best Practice

To begin with, Elspeth used the CEP's connection with West Sussex County Council, sharing the role and application process with its Youth Cabinet, as they were looking for young people who hadn't had an opportunity within an arts setting to use their voice. Through this process, they recruited two young members onto their board, one of them however has no longer been able to attend, but the other young person has continued in the role and has been an amazing advocate for youth voice within the CEP. The current young member was 14 at the time of being appointed, and is now 15 years of age.

In order to support the young board member, Elspeth has been having frequent one-to-one meetings with them, so that they can ask her questions about anything within the meetings that they may not understand. Elspeth has also been encouraging the young member(s) to speak up within the meetings when they need clarification or an explanation on something, as this challenges the experienced

board members to be more accommodating of youth presence, and to reframe their thoughts and phrases so that they are accessible and understandable for all.

Elspeth has also been working directly on a project with the young member(s) to create a survey aimed at young people which can inform the CEP's decision making and allow them to hear from a wider range of young voices. They have also been focusing on improving the CEP's use of social media, as they are aware this is a platform through which they can reach more young people.

Creative County have been embedding youth voice one step at a time, but they do have future plans to continue on the journey of embedding youth voice. Their plan is to establish a Youth Advisory Board which will sit alongside the original board, and allow them to filter in even more youth voice and leadership by having the young board member(s) on the original board work closely with the Youth Advisory Board. They are also looking to broaden their recruitment process next time and get a more diverse range of applicants.

Our Observations

When speaking with Elspeth Barron, she shared how much of a positive experience having young board members has been, and how it has challenged the experienced, older members of the board to readdress their thinking and ways of working.

We asked her to reflect on what she had learnt from this process and if there is anything she would have done differently. She shared that in order to make the transition of introducing young board members easier, she would recommend starting with a young person who is slightly older (than 14/15 years old) with more experience, as this would make the adjustment process more comfortable due to the young person having more confidence and a more developed understanding of the industry. Being the first young board member within an organisation is particularly tricky, as you don't know what dynamics may arise within the meetings, and there may be some resistance to change. It's important that a young person feels comfortable and confident enough to challenge existing dynamics and ask

provoking questions, so starting the process with CYP from the older end of the bracket can make this easier.

- [Life as a Young Board Member - Creative County West Sussex](#)
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Stoke-on-Trent & North Staffordshire CEP

Background

Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire CEP is a Cultural Education Partnership that stood out to us. There are many arts education providers across the city who are delivering youth groups and opportunities, so Stoke CEP decided to partner with these organisations and work with them to develop youth voice collaboratively. They now have around 70 partners within their network who are contributing to creating out-reach opportunities.

Youth Voice

Stoke-on-Trent and North-Staffordshire CEP approached creating a Youth Panel in quite a different way to other examples we have seen. Their panel 'Creative Youth Voices Project' was created to aid the CEP in co-designing arts opportunities across the city and its differing sectors, to ensure that the needs and interests of young people are being met. It has been designed to be a programme of engaging opportunities and projects which allow the young members to really develop their knowledge, skills and identity within the creative industry.

At first, the group consisted of 24 young people, who were students from years 6-9. The plan was to have the group develop as 'cultural explorers' focusing their exploration on what art and culture is when you move away from the generalised idea of it. To do this, the CEP used its connections with local & further afield cultural

organisations to arrange insightful and interactive workshops and trips for the young members. This consisted of career talks, tours, and training events around being 'cultural explorers' across different venues within the city and nationally. The first of these opportunities was a visit to New Vic Theatre to watch a production of *The Prince and The Pauper*. From this experience, it became clear to the CEP that these opportunities were really needed for the young members as many shared that they had never been to a performance before. Reflecting on this feedback, they used the opportunity to return to New Vic Theatre for a backstage tour at the venue and a talk surrounding how the venue has developed, along with receiving career talks from the staff.

With the impact of COVID-19, the creative youth voices programme had to be re-imagined as they could no longer do the in-person opportunities they had planned for its members. This led to the CEP producing 'Creative Youth Voice Challenge Packs' which consisted of digital experiences such as video workshops from local artists so that the young members could try out a range of art skills and activities; gaining experience of different disciplines. They also decided to move away from the idea of 'Cultural Explorers' instead to encourage the young members to be 'Creative Activists' who will make the changes that they want to see within the arts. They invited the young members to take-over some of the CEP conferences, leading activities and the end section of the meetings by proposing questions for the arts and education professionals within the 'room'.

Our Observations

Stoke-on-Trent and North-Staffordshire CEP's way of doing things feels co-created in that they tailor their opportunities from young peoples' feedback. For example, learning that many of the young members had never been to a theatre or similar performance before, and then building opportunities around this. This consideration about the needs and wants of the young people involved, the prioritisation of their feedback, and tailoring experiences to them demonstrates a deeply embedded youth voice. It is clear that this CEP has put a lot of thought and care into what

they can do with and for young people, and have truly listened to and appreciated their ideas and input.

An interview with ART31

ART31, funded by Arts Council England and Kent County Council, is an organisation created by and for young people within Kent to ensure more opportunities and access to arts and culture is available for children and young people from the area. They do this by creating connections and partnerships between arts/cultural organisations and young people, and creating space for CYP to be involved in decision making. We were lucky to be able to connect with Rebecca Lees and get an insight into how ART31's Youth Board operates and the importance it has within the organisation and for the young people involved.

1. What is the structure of your youth board and how does it sit within the wider organisation?

Our Youth Board is called ART31 Generate and is made up of approx. 20 young people aged 13-25 from across Kent. They meet on a monthly basis although with some meetings in between for sub-groups or when planning an event requiring more meetings. ART31 Generate is facilitated by Gulbenkian's Creative Engagement team although with young people from the group chairing the meetings.

Meetings might include discussions around ART31 strategy/policy/budget/future planning for youth arts activity across Kent, event planning (e.g. the annual ART31 Youth Takeover Festival) and lobbying decision makers around arts for young people e.g. from Arts Council or KCC. There are also plenty of games, food and trips for the group – the idea of trips is to inspire the group to bring creative work and activity back to young people in Kent. ICCI/Gulbenkian has an Advisory Board as

well which has members of ART31 Generate sitting on it and reporting on ART31 activity.

2. How has it been working with an age group that runs from 13-25 years old, and has this been a positive or challenging dynamic? How did you decide on the age range?

We wanted the group to represent young people across Kent from secondary school through to college and university (if they choose to go) and onto next steps beyond education. It has been a really positive dynamic bringing young people together at different stages but all in the teenage/young adult phase of life, making key decisions about their futures whether at schools, college, uni or in/seeking employment.

The challenges are generally just other pressures at that stage of life (exams, deadlines) meaning coordinating availability for meetings can be tricky but other than that it seems to work well. I think it was felt that bringing 11 and 12 year olds in with up to 25 year olds would be a bit too different in terms of needs and interests but from 13 and up it seems to work well.

3. Have you found ways to ensure that your youth board is made up of a diverse group of young people and/or represents the voices of young people who aren't on the board?

This is an ongoing process for us and I certainly don't think we're 100% there! We try to work with schools, community groups and local partners to reach a diverse range of young people – for example through our partnership with Square Pegs Arts (charity working with young people with learning difficulties, disabilities, autism etc) we have a member of the Youth Board with learning difficulties who attends with a support worker from Square Pegs and they can also feed in the views from other Square Pegs members.

The annual youth takeover festival aims to work with a broad range of young people from across Kent via schools, partners, community groups so that's a way young people can have their voices heard even if they're not on the board – they can also find out about ART31 and potentially join the youth board the following year if they wanted to. Our current Youth Board group has a mix of ages, ethnicities and social/economic backgrounds so it does feel relatively diverse but there's always more to be done to improve in this area. We try as much as possible to listen to our members to ensure spaces/groups/meetings/events etc are as welcoming as possible to anyone who is new so they feel a sense of belonging and inclusion regardless of background or circumstance – the ART31 manifesto which was developed when the group was founded includes statements about equality, inclusion and respect so the project is very much built on this ethos.

We also try to ensure we have a diverse range of young people represented in marketing materials etc as much as possible to encourage diversity of people joining. For the first time this year we made the recruitment process open access rather than having a more formal application process, and so far it feels like that has helped involve a more diverse group.

4. Could you tell us about how you might be embedding value exchange into your youth board?

Being on the board is voluntary but the feedback from the young people involved is they get a lot out of it including valuable experience, skills building, working with professionals and networking, as well as funding for projects and funded tickets/travel for trips.

5. What accessibility measures do you have put in place for your Youth Board?

Again this is something we're constantly reflecting on and trying to improve on. Our partnership with Square Pegs helps with this and they support with ensuring the group is accessible e.g. they will proofread call outs before they go out to ensure language and/or any application processes are as accessible as possible. We also fund a support worker to attend the Youth Board meetings with our member who has learning difficulties. We have an Access budget line in the ART31 budget to ensure any events we organise with the group are accessible e.g. captioning. Again it's a flexible process but essentially it's about having an open dialogue and the flexibility/budget to put things into place as and when they might be needed/advised.

6. Are there any difficulties you have encountered in ensuring that your Youth Board's voice is listened to and that their input is used to directly impact change, and how have you addressed these challenges?

We think of the young people as being equal partners in the decision making process – we don't expect them to take on the full responsibility of solving every problem for young people and organising every event by themselves, but aim to support them, empower them with the skills and offer them professionals to work with to make the decisions and make things happen together. Of course sometimes when making decisions as a group it won't always be unanimous but the group are keen to represent democracy so have processes in place to ensure all are listened to but the majority opinion is taken forward, and there is a degree of needing to be flexible within parameters that may be set by the professionals.

Some of the feedback over the years has been that we spend a lot of time talking about things but they also want to see things actually happen – following this feedback we brought in the youth takeover festival as a tangible project for the group to work on over the course of the year, to input ideas and plans into and actually see it come to fruition and involve young people from across Kent in a real way.

Blaze Arts

Background

Blaze Arts first began in 2012 as an arts and cultural festival which was organised and programmed by 30 young producers as part of the North West's cultural legacy program for the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games. Following on from the success of the festival, with support from Lancashire County Council, the young producers were able to secure funding to deliver a series of festivals across the county. They gained support from Curious Minds, the bridge organisation representing the North West, in 2016 and later succeeded in becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in 2018. They were also the first charity in the UK at the time to write into its constitution that 51% of trustees would be 30 years of age or under at the time of their appointment.

Youth Voice

Blaze has a board of trustees, made up of majority young trustees who sit alongside more experienced professionals. They chose this dynamic as they were aware that having a board with a majority of older, more experienced professionals can mean younger voices are 'drowned out' due to the nature of the setting. Their young trustees include people up to the age of 30; experienced trustee Charlie Morrison acknowledges it is important to include them *"because they represent a whole decade of relevance to what needs to happen through the arts and what needs to develop and improve in culture and in the world of production. The younger arts professionals are often excluded from conversations, where actually they're at the core of what's going on, and really that doesn't make any sense."*

Blaze also has a co-chair model for their board of trustees, in which an experienced trustee chairs the board, but is accompanied by a younger member who acts as the deputy chair. They work together to plan the agenda and manage the meetings, and the deputy-chair has a shared responsibility in delivering the board meetings and leading sessions. This aids the dynamic of the board meetings in allowing the young members to have a voice and feel comfortable.

As a form of value exchange, Blaze introduced a 'buddy system' to their board in which young board members are paired with a board member over 30 years of age, so that they can have one-to-one and learn from each other. However, one young board member mentioned that although this is a great idea, it was not implemented well and therefore has not been as beneficial as they had hoped. It has still been an important learning curve for Blaze, and the young board member recognises that the reasons this idea was not initially successful are down to members' existing commitments becoming a barrier, and because the criteria of what a 'buddy' is was not properly defined before the idea was tested.

Blaze Arts are also in the process of developing a new Youth Advisory Group, for young people aged 16-25. The group will engage in monthly meetings with Blaze's director where they will be able to discuss and plan new projects, as well as partaking in creative activities. As a form of value exchange, they are emphasising that becoming part of the advisory group would give young people the opportunity to improve the prospect of creative opportunities for CYP in Lancashire by having a say in the projects that Blaze delivers. They also highlight that being part of the advisory group will enable young people to develop skills and experience that will support their career going forward. Blaze are also committing to paying each member of the group £30 for every meeting attended, and have set aside a budget which will allow them to support the members by paying for any other accommodations needed during the meetings, such as childcare, transport to and from the meetings, translation or anything else that is a potential barrier from them attending.

Our Observations

Blaze's experience of setting up a 'buddy system' is a really interesting example of the importance of having everyone involved in the board and the set-up of the value exchange on offer to really understand how that process is going to work and to check that they have the capacity for it. Luckily, as Blaze has worked with young people from its inception, it appears this has been an opportunity for learning rather than something which has halted Blaze's progress altogether.

We particularly like the co-chair model Blaze has developed and believe it is a powerful way to ensure a board equally listens to both its more experienced members and younger members. Having an experienced chair and a young chair co-create that space and structure the meetings should mean that the board is designed with accessibility of its young members in mind.

Key takeaways

It is important to follow the lead of the young people, and create an open and meaningful space for dialogue.

Young people can't come in and 'fix everything'. But they can offer a lot of potential and answers you may not have even expected. Be open to what young people have to offer, our ideas, imaginations, perspectives, experience and lack thereof.

Chichester Festival Theatre

Background

Chichester Festival Theatre (CFT) is a production house theatre in West Sussex. They have a long history of producing critically acclaimed shows that debut at CFT and go on to tour the country and perform in London. They are deeply committed to working with and supporting young people and have several opportunities open to youth in the area and beyond.

Youth Voice

CFT created its Youth Advisory Board about a year ago. The board may be new but nonetheless it is thriving. The board was set up after the addition of two young trustees to CFT's board of trustees. After placing the young trustees on the board, to ease the board into working with young people, CFT created their youth advisory board.

They recruited members with an application process that was open to creative interpretation, and some people chose to create songs, collages, or other creative works. This allowed young people who weren't confident with literacy to apply in a way that was comfortable for them. They also made their application questions open and thought-provoking. One was 'What is important to you in 2020?' This allowed them to discuss their thoughts without too much restriction.

To spread word about their advisory board CFT used social media, promoted it to schools and tried to reach as many young people as possible, including those who had never interacted with CFT. The result of this was that 28% of their applicants had never come in contact with the theatre before. To make sure that they had new voices contributing to the advisory board, CFT put a limit on how many people they would accept from their youth theatre. In the end, they ensured that four or the twelve advisory board members were members of their youth theatre. The age bracket that CFT decided on was 16-25 for safeguarding and communication reasons.

The structure of the advisory board was created so that the young trustees could chair the meetings and take the ideas discussed back to the existing board. The first meeting was a session where the young people set their intentions for the year and made decisions about what needed to be discussed. They were also able to tour the theatre, meet with the theatre's directors and feel welcomed into the CFT family.

The advisory board has five to six meetings a year; these include general meetings and a creative workshop at the midpoint of the year. General meetings are broken up into two sections. During the first half the members discuss questions given to them by senior management, then a staff member from the theatre will come in to discuss their role and pose another question for the board to discuss. The second half of the meeting is time for the board to discuss questions they have asked themselves and share their achievements and any news.

CFT offers a few forms of value exchange to their youth advisory board members, one of which is a mentoring programme that they set up for the member's career development. The mentors were handpicked to match the career aspirations of each member, mentors included staff from CFT and some people outside of the industry for members who had aspirations outside of theatre. The mentoring scheme has already helped one member to find their first job in the creative industry.

CFT also offers free tickets to press nights, gala nights and special events as part of their value exchange. In addition, members receive staff lanyards that give them access to discounts on site.

Our Observations

It is clear to us that Chichester Festival Theatre have really dedicated themselves to nurturing and supporting the young people on their Youth Advisory Board. It's obvious that their tailored mentoring scheme has been really successful, allowing the young people involved to grow confidence, find their own pathways into employability, develop their interests, and develop new connections and networking skills.

It feels like CFT has gone into this process without expectations or preconceived ideas of what young people want and need. This has allowed the young people on their youth advisory board to flourish and grow in their own way.

CFT has also obviously put a lot into their value exchange and thought deeply about what young people can get out of this experience, and clearly value this relationship.

Key Takeaways

- ★ A more creative and open application process can make the role more accessible to young people.
 - ★ Implementing youth trustees into an existing board is a good first step to getting older trustees to value the opinions of young people.
 - ★ Making young people feel valued and a part of your organisation builds trust and loyalty that will keep young people wanting to engage with you.
 - ★ Mentorships can be an incredibly effective form of value exchange and can lead to huge career progression for mentees.
-

Roundhouse

Background

Roundhouse is a renowned arts organisation and music venue in Camden Borough, London. This organisation has been recruiting young trustees since 2005 and currently has a youth advisory board, as well as a wide range of programmes and opportunities for young creatives aged 11-30 years old. As a result it is well-known for its deeply embedded youth voice.

Youth Voice Best Practice

Roundhouse Youth Advisory Board (RYAB)

The RYAB consists of approximately 20 members, a figure similar to others such as Chichester Festival Theatre's youth board. Its members are aged between the ages

of 16 and 25, which means that despite the diversity of ages involved, there is a certain level of maturity that makes communicating and working together easier. This age range also means that there are fewer safeguarding concerns than with younger children.

To the members of the youth advisory board, Roundhouse offers a variety of development opportunities as value exchange. These include free training, invitations to internal and external events and workshops, being involved in interview panels, and a variety of networking opportunities.

Our Observations

Again, the importance of value exchange is very clear in our research of this organisation. Roundhouse highlights the importance of this with what they offer. In terms of value exchange, they give a lot to the young people they work with, and this in turn benefits everybody involved. We highly recommend reading [Roundhouse's Guided By Young Voices Youth Governance Guide](#), a highly informative document they produced with a lot of great guidance on youth voice. Examples of incentives and value exchange Roundhouse use and recommend are:

Material:

- ★ Expenses to cover travel costs.
- ★ Free access to concerts, shows, or events.

Developmental:

- ★ Assets to a young person's CV, like qualifications.
- ★ Free governance mentoring.

Overall, our observations on Roundhouse are that it's arguably one of the best industry examples of best practice. It was actually recommended to us to look at as a case study by various other organisations we have researched and had contact with, and it's clear that they are a prime example of an organisation that is leading the way in terms of youth voice. They have an excellent balance of material and

developmental offerings to the young people they involve, and have had a lot of success in engaging diverse young voices.

Key Takeaways

During our research phase of this zine, we learned a lot from [Roundhouse's Guided By Young Voices Youth Governance Guide](#). A lot of the tips and information in this document are highly transferable. On page 17, it discusses how they find and nurture potential young trustees. This process is broken down into four steps.

1. **Build networks, reach out to young people in the community.**
Roundhouse's outreach activity involves working with schools and community groups, as well as recruitment and raising awareness through marketing channels that engage many young people such as social media.
2. **Offer opportunities to get involved.** Roundhouse's participatory opportunities for young people are incredible and very extensive, including projects for media, music, performing arts, and more. You can find further information on these participatory opportunities on their website's [Young Creatives page](#).
3. **Create opportunities that enable young people to develop decision-making skills.** The Roundhouse Youth Advisory Board provides this and gives young people opportunities to give feedback and hear from staff.
4. **Select trustees from this young talent pool.**

We think that this process is a fairly simple and very logical way to start more deeply embedding youth voice. It allows both the organisation and the young people the opportunity to ease into the experience of working together, and benefits both in the search for trustees. While not a CEP, there is a lot that can be learned from Roundhouse's successes in youth voice and engagement.

[Young Norfolk Arts \(YNA\)](#)

Background

Young Norfolk Arts (YNA) started as the Young Norfolk Arts Partnership between local organisations, committed to providing creative opportunities to young people. It then developed into the charitable organisation the Young Norfolk Arts Trust.

Every July since 2013, the trust has held an event called Young Norfolk Arts Festival (YNAF). They describe this as 'a celebration of creativity and performance by and for young people in Norfolk'.

We have included YNA in our case studies because of their ongoing youth voice project, Young Norfolk Arts Collective, which we think is a really inspiring and exciting way of highlighting young people's voices and creativity.

[Young Norfolk Arts Collective](#)

The Young Norfolk Arts Collective is a voluntary group made up of 16-25 year olds living in Norfolk, who have an interest in arts and creative industries. They have regular online meetings, training sessions, and creative workshops. They work as a collective to produce exhibitions and events that come from their own experiences as young people living in Norfolk, and also uplift the voices of others. They work closely with YNAF, who also create a zine for each festival which the collective contributes to. The collective also has its own [blog](#) documenting interviews, opinion pieces and experiences.

Some of the projects YNA Collective have worked on include:

[Queer Norfolk Stories](#)

Produced as part of 2021 YNAF and in collaboration with Norwich Pride Inspired, this project manifested as an audio trail through Norwich City Centre which detailed first person stories of local LGBTQ+ people. The audio trail used innovative software 'Echoes' and QR codes to sound map the stories to their locations.

[ReConnect, ReEngage, ReDiscover](#)

This is an exhibition curated by YNA Collective. It explores the experiences of the collective and of young people in Norfolk as Covid lockdown eased and they were able to begin returning to the city, friends, family, community & nature. The Collective commissioned four emerging artists aged 18-25 from across the county to create work inspired by the theme, and also selected works by local artists aged 11 to 25 as part of an open call.

Our Observations

As you can see, the collective is given a really visible platform by YNA to explore new opportunities and learn new skills. They have creative freedom and also the responsibility and agency to lead on projects, which feed from their own experiences as young people, and are projects that they believe in and relate to. From an outside perspective, if we are to consider Phil Treseder's Degrees of Participation, the collective would likely cover three areas: *adult-initiated, shared decision with children; child-initiated, shared decision with adults; child-initiated & directed.*

The support, trust, and space held for the collective by YNA is a really significant example of how **value exchange** can be embedded when including CYP. The collective are able to be curators and project managers, and many other roles, that they wouldn't otherwise have had the opportunity or platform to be able to explore at such a young age.

The work of the collective is heavily evidenced and celebrated on YNA's website, which gives them recognition and evidence of what they have created.

The collective is not separated from the rest of YNA's work, but integrated with many crossovers where the collective's voice, opinions, and ideas clearly impact the larger work of YNA. They also focus a lot on current topics and political issues, which is generally very important to CYP today, therefore allowing them the space to do this where they will be listened to is of huge value.

Another aspect of best practice that we would like to highlight and discuss is the transparency with which YNA advertise the role of the collective on their website. They outline each of the skills and opportunities that will be available to those who join the collective, in turn giving them reason to do so. This also sets a parameter which can be reflected on if the young people don't feel they are getting out of the role what they expected. It ensures the expectations and benefits are clear from the outset.

Young Vic

Background

The Young Vic is a performing arts venue and organisation located in South London with many notable productions. We have featured the Young Vic because of their variety of youth projects and support for young and early career creatives. They offer many opportunities for young people to get involved in theatre, leadership, mentoring and more.

Youth Voice Best Practice

One of these opportunities is their Young Mentors Programme. It is an example of reverse mentoring, where the younger, more inexperienced individual is the mentor and the older industry professional is the mentee.

The programme structure is that the young mentors receive training, are paired with a mentee within their industry and become part of an intergenerational conversation. The Young Mentors give their mentees advice and share their opinions as young people in the industry. In return the mentors receive a contact in the industry, confidence in sharing their opinions and the Young Vic also pay their young mentors for both their training and their time with the mentees.

Though the Young Vic does this as a separate programme we think that this form of mentoring would work well as a form of value exchange for Southampton CEP to consider. It's a more personal and in depth way to gain knowledge and views from young people and give them a chance to make a good impression on someone who can help with career progression and give guidance and advice.

Our Observations

It's important to note that if you wish to do some form of reverse mentoring that all those involved should be aware of exactly what that entails and what is expected of them. There might be a tendency for sessions between mentors and mentees to fall back into the stereotypical pattern of mentorship where the older, more experienced individual is the one mentoring, however the older individual can learn just as much from a young person. That said, this form of reverse mentoring can be very beneficial to both parties, and gives the young person what might be their first ever networking opportunities.

Other Things to Consider

Following on from the wisdom shared within our case studies, there are a few other aspects that we would encourage you to consider if you want to embed youth voice in your organisation. This includes web accessibility, branding, making board rooms accessible, the barriers CYP may have, and youth voice training. Your organisation needs to reach and be accessible to young people before you can begin to embed their voices.

Web Accessibility

A Few Statistics:

- ★ There are 14.1 million disabled people in the UK, 1 in 5 of the population - [The Big Hack by Scope](#).
- ★ Over 97% of the top million website home pages have Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) failures. - [WebAIM, 2021](#).
- ★ "71% of individuals with disabilities will abandon a website that's difficult to use." - [Forbes Magazine, 2019](#).
- ★ "[Only 27% of websites have accessible forms.](#)" - 10to8.com.
- ★ Over 60% of screen reader users surveyed in [WebAIM's May-July 2021 Screen Reader survey](#) said that web accessibility is either not improving or is actually getting worse.

The arts are a powerful tool for self-expression and wellbeing, and we must ensure inclusion for those with disabilities. One key aspect of this nowadays is online. Having accessibility in mind can make a website an approachable place, especially to the young people we seek to engage, meaning more and diverse young voices are heard.

The main principles of web accessibility make up the acronym POUR. It stands for Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust.

For a website to be truly accessible, it must be:

- ★ **Perceivable:** Content must be presented in a way users can perceive with their senses, for example seeing, reading or hearing.
- ★ **Operable:** This involves ensuring that interactive elements and interfaces can be operated by everybody.

- ★ **Understandable:** This means ensuring that content is predictable, consistent and easily navigable, and language and interface are simple and as easy as possible to comprehend.
- ★ **Robust:** The site must be able to reliably function on a variety of browsers, devices (mobile, tablet, or PC), and with assistive technologies such as screen readers.

From our research browsing the site, we found that SCEP's website is already quite accessible. Its layout is clean, predictable, and easy to follow, and most images are captioned. In order to gauge Southampton CEP's web accessibility, we tested it using the same assistive devices that those with disabilities use, as well as a variety of other resources.

We have produced handouts available in PDF format to coincide with this Zine:

- ★ Table of Web Accessibility Resources
- ★ Accessibility Observations of SCEP Website

A few recommendations we have:

- ★ Sans serif fonts are proven to improve readability. This is especially significant for people who are dyslexic, and many sources such as FIND A SOURCE and Dyslexia-Reading-Well.com suggest that many dyslexic people find it easier to read fonts without serifs such as Arial, Verdana, and Helvetica. These sorts of fonts are more accessible generally, especially for those who are younger. They also lack academic and serious connotations of a serif font, potentially making the overall feel more approachable for young people.
- ★ For similar reasons, we suggest having a plain English option available. Some words might be unfamiliar to some users. Simpler terms might be reassuring to those less familiar with the arts, those who aren't fluent English speakers, and younger audiences. The Plain English Campaign website provides great tips on writing any kind of content in an accessible way in their free guide: ['How to write plain English'](#).

- ★ Some images currently lack alt text. Adding this would improve accessibility for screen reader users, as well as if images don't load due to connection issues.
 - ★ In-built customisation features could allow users to change text size, spacing, font, or colour. Whether this is for accessibility or simple preference, it means better user experience.
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Youth Accessible Branding

One of the first ways that many children and young people will interact with you is through your online presence. This means that the branding you use should make your website look like an accessible and friendly place for them. The use of more official language, fonts and graphics may make a young person feel as if it is not a space for them or more likely that it isn't something they want to engage with.

Many people are visual learners, and particularly online, younger people are often more receptive to visual content. Arguably, how something looks is now more important than ever. If you want to engage more deeply with young people, create a board and hear their voice then you have to first draw them to your organisation.

We also recommend using our general web accessibility suggestions in considering branding for a youth audience. An accessible website provides a better user experience for everybody, and the same alterations that can make a site more usable for those with disabilities can also make it feel overall more approachable, friendly, and understandable for everybody - especially for younger people and those less familiar with the arts.

Making Board Rooms Accessible

Young people often find it hard to engage in a traditional board room setting, this is because the dynamics have been established traditionally for older, white, men and have very formal connotations. To make it a more comfortable place for them to freely participate fully in, you can try out different methods of discussion and feedback, such as breakout room workshops and digital software for feedback.

One of the most important aspects of ensuring youth accessibility is to be open to new ideas and ways of working. You can do everything to invite children and young people into the space, but unless they feel safe enough to share their ideas and experiences, their presence will not count. Interaction needs to be genuine for both parties to benefit, and it is key to avoid being tokenistic and to continuously consider outcomes not only for the organisation but the young voices involved.

Having young people on an organisation's board shows the young community that organisation wants to engage with that they are committed to listening to their ideas. Jasleen Kaur, a trustee at Blaze Arts, in an interview with Amplify on 'board and governance' shared: *"From a young person's perspective, if I know young people are on the board, young people are in the decisions that are impacting the organisation then I'm going to be more inclined to want to get involved because I'm being represented. Even if it's not necessarily my opinion, I know that they care more."*

{<https://www.amplify-voice.uk/episodes/board-and-governance>}

A few aspects of participation to consider:

- ★ Is the meeting accessible, both online or offline? Is the arranged time and venue suitable and accessible?
- ★ Can the young people afford to attend? If not, can the organisation cover the costs?
- ★ What are their confidence levels? Will they need extra support to feel comfortable?

- ★ Can board papers be supplied in alternative formats for accessibility?
 - ★ If there is a particular etiquette to be followed in meetings, make the participants aware of this beforehand.
-

Future Steps

Branding

Think about how your branding can be more appealing to children and young people. As we know from Brighton CEP's experience prior to their rebrand, if something doesn't look or feel like it is talking directly to them, children and young people will tend to lose interest or feel alienated. The arts and culture industry can be an exciting, vibrant place for young people and the branding of websites involved in the industry should reflect that creativity. It's important for SCEP to always consider the audience and ensure understanding and accessibility.

Value Exchange (what SCEP could do)

Southampton CEP has a lot to offer, and providing valuable things and experiences to the young people involved with your organisation is as important as what they provide to you. A few suggestions for forms of value exchange that you could potentially offer are:

- ★ Paid opportunities for young and emerging artists, graphic designers, or other creative practitioners.
- ★ Bursaries or other accommodations to remove barriers to participation such as travel costs.
- ★ Free tickets or opportunities to go to SCEP partner member organisation events.
- ★ Networking opportunities with experienced professionals.
- ★ Digital Badges, Arts Awards, or other similar qualifications and CV-relevant development.

Accessibility

Ensuring accessibility of your content improves experience for everyone. Websites are an important facet of this: but they are only one small aspect of making things accessible. A lot of concepts that are important in web accessibility are very transferable to other aspects, like other written content, physical and virtual spaces, and meetings.

We suggest using forms of value exchange that improve accessibility, in order to ensure inclusion and a diverse range of young voices. This often means providing things that can help eliminate barriers, such as paying for travel and paying a young person for their time so they can afford to participate.

Accessibility encompasses a lot of things, and nothing can achieve 100% accessibility. Improving it is about eliminating the barriers that we can, and providing accommodations and different ways of doing things so everyone can be involved.

Youth Board

When wanting to engage with young people, establishing a youth board is one of the best practises for doing this. How an organisation chooses to structure their youth board is dependent on what works for them, but the first step is always to start with a conversation with young people. This could be through young consultants, surveys, research, and more. Our findings have led us to the conclusion that boards set up with young people involved from the get go are the most successful. These boards consider what young people want to talk about and how they want to talk about it from the very start.

The next step is to think about structure and what works for your organisation. We have detailed many youth board structures in this zine, all of which we consider to be best practice, however not all of them will work for every organisation. Southampton CEP is an organisation with many members, so a youth board that is made up of young people nominated by their members that feeds into their steering

group is a structure that the SCEP may want to consider. There is also the possibility for an outside organisation to facilitate the group for the SCEP, this would take the pressure off of the steering group to organise it, and the facilitators should be able to implement safeguarding for the young people. These aren't the only options for SCEP, and we suggest considering all best practice methods and deciding which elements fit best with your structure and ideals.

Recommended Reading

- ★ [National Producers Taskforce Report, June 2021 , Poet in the City \(Why the cultural sector should be investing in young, diverse producing talent\)](#)
 - ★ [Youth Voice and Participation Handbook, soundconnections](#)
 - ★ [Guided by Youth Voices Youth Governance Guide, Roundhouse](#)
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References:

- ★ [10to8, 11 Little-Known Accessibility Statistics All Business Owners Should Know](#)
- ★ [Amplify, Board & Governance](#)
- ★ [Amplify, 5 Reflections on Changemakers with Stoke CEP](#)
- ★ [Arts Depot, Barnet & Culture for Youth Advocates](#)
- ★ [Arts Depot, Barnet & Culture for Youth: Access Fund](#)
- ★ [The Big Hack: Accessibility and disability: facts and figures](#)
- ★ [Chichester Festival Theatre](#)
- ★ [Creative County West Sussex: Life as a Young Board Member](#)
- ★ [The Dyslexia Well, Dyslexia Font and Style Guide](#)
- ★ [Forbes: How Website Accessibility Affects Online Businesses In 2019 And How To Respond](#)
- ★ [Future Creators, ourfuturecity Project Outcomes](#)

- ★ [Plain English Campaign, How to Write in Plain English](#)
- ★ [Real Ideas, Badge Nation](#)
- ★ [Roundhouse, Guided by Youth Voices Youth Governance Guide](#)
- ★ [WebAIM: Screen Reader User Survey #9 Results](#)
- ★ [WebAIM: The WebAIM Million](#)
- ★ [Young Norfolk Arts](#)
- ★ [Young Norfolk Arts, Queek Norfolk Stories](#)
- ★ [Young Norfolk Arts ReConnect, ReDiscover, ReEngage](#)
- ★ [Young Norfolk Arts, YNA Collective](#)

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