



The Agency

makers of **change**



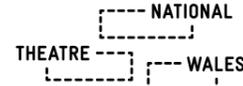
2019 REPORT

Report written by: Meg Peterson
 Special thanks to: Chrissie Tiller and Sara Rizzo



The Agency gave me belief in myself. I joined it when I was young and from a young age knowing that I can do whatever I put my mind to is powerful. I realised that everything I need is actually around me. I just have to look hard and dig deep into myself and believe in what I can do. Being young and being from this area, having something that helps you believe in yourself is important

SESHIE LONDON AGENT



MAYOR OF LONDON



CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN FOUNDATION



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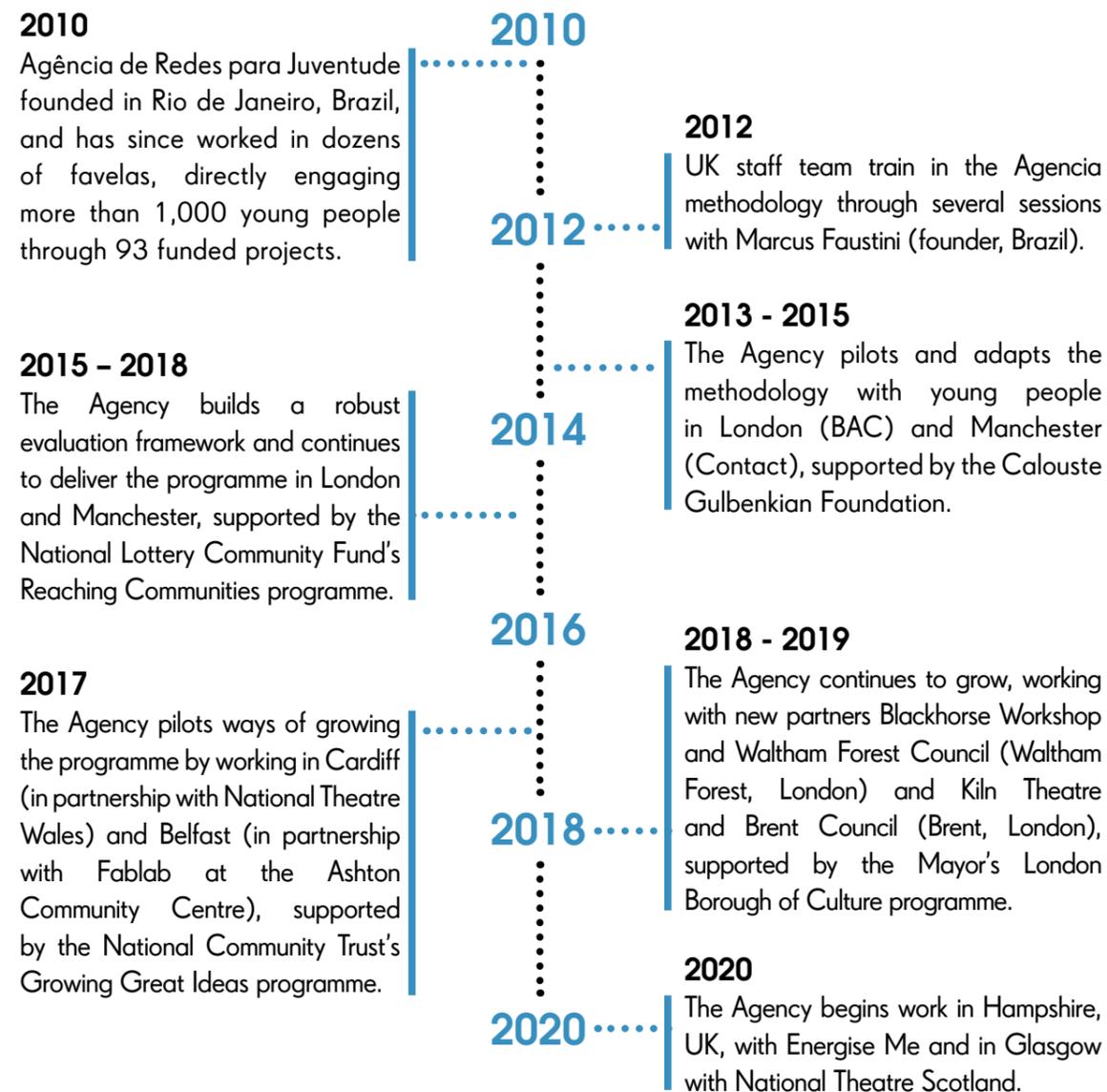
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WHAT IS THE AGENCY?

The Agency is a creative entrepreneurship programme enabling young people aged 15 to 25 from some of the most deprived areas in the UK to create social change projects based on the needs they identify in their own communities. The programme began in 2013 in the UK through a partnership between Battersea Arts Centre (BAC), Contact and People's Palace Projects (PPP). Since the pilot year in 2013, it has had a significant impact not only on the young people who have taken part but also the organisations and communities that enable them to realise their ideas. We aim to be truly representative of the local area, working with young people who are driven and ambitious with lots of ideas, as well as those who may not think they have anything to contribute to their local area, in order to drive social innovation from the ground up. The Agency is not only a tool for individual empowerment and social mobility, but has the potential to provide an emancipatory education to drive social innovation and solve systemic social problems. The programme does this through constructing a safe space for young people to think critically about the world and their place in it while devising ways they can turn their ideas and dreams for change into a reality.

A SUMMARY OF THE AGENCY JOURNEY SO FAR



WHAT SETS THE AGENCY APART?

- 1** The Agency methodology puts young people from some of the most deprived areas of the UK at the centre of social change, using an asset-based approach to achieve sustainable, local change through young peoples' life experience, community resources, culture and passion.
- 2** The Agency supports young people on an individual level to improve their opportunities but also creates a collective force for systematic change, mobilising young people around social issues they care about.
- 3** The Agency changes the way cultural and community organisations work with young people by adopting more inclusive, co-created, collaborative working practices across their organisations
- 4** The Agency uses creativity as its key currency to unlock innovation, helping young people to achieve their potential and achieve future success in education, employment and enterprise.
- 5** The Agency is a tool to create robust networks within a locality where young people, cultural organisations and communities work together around shared goals and values.



Anything that encourages and nurtures the entrepreneurial spirit in young people is to be applauded. The feeling of launching your own project and turning it into a success is incredibly empowering. I fully endorse the work The Agency is doing in supporting young people from Battersea and helping them fulfill their potential.

MARSHA DE CORDOVA

LABOUR MP FOR BATTERSEA, SHADOW MINISTER FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

If you don't consider yourself to be creative, The Agency helps you to be bold, to imagine what you want. The Agency brings it out of you.

CHRISTINA, LONDON AGENT



KEY OUTPUTS* (2013—2019)

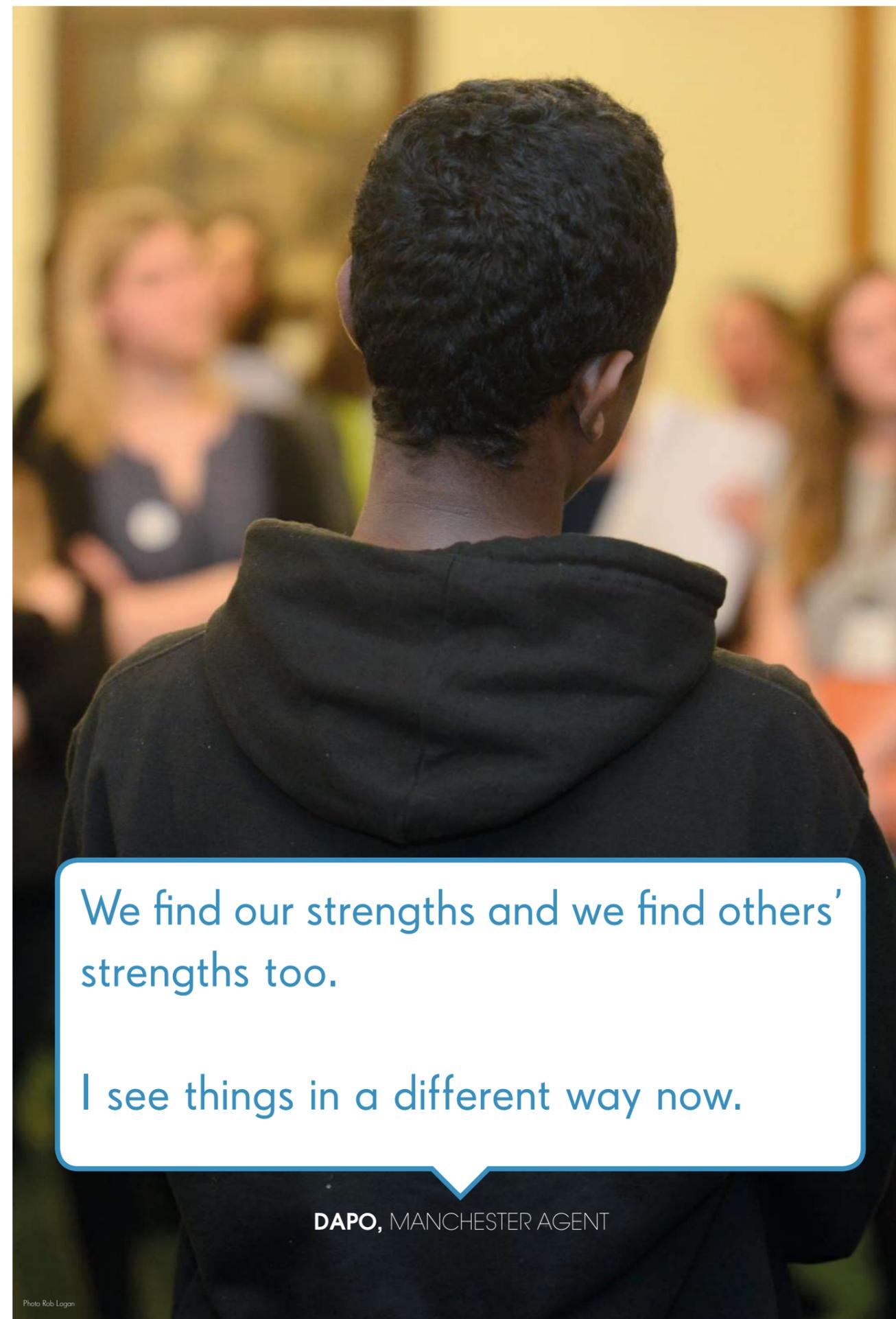
266 Total number of Agents	£118,547 Funding raised by Agents to run projects
77 Total number of Agents who took part in funded projects	893 Number of in-kind hours of mentoring support from industry leaders
45 Total funded projects	1,290 Number of workshop participants
41,546 hours Total hours of support for Cycle 1 (Years 1-6) (average of 263 hours/young person)	17,166 Audiences at events
17,374 hours Total hours of support for Cycle 2 (Years 1-6) (average of 316 hours/young person)	127 Number of jobs created
34 Funded projects still running	546 Number of performance opportunities
	19,064 Total community members engaged

These figures are our best estimates of outputs of The Agency since 2013 (years 1-6 in London Battersea and Manchester and Year 1 in Cardiff and Belfast). As many of the Agents run their projects autonomously or with community partners once they complete the formal programme, these numbers are based on estimates and interviews from ongoing relationships with past Agents.



The Agency made me realise my potential. Before I wanted to make a change, but I didn't know how to go about doing that. It made me realise how I could articulate my ideas and make them happen.

PHILLIPA LONDON AGENT



We find our strengths and we find others' strengths too.

I see things in a different way now.

DAPO, MANCHESTER AGENT

WHAT DOES THE MONEY SUPPORT?

INPUTS

- £30 weekly stipend
- 316 hours of creative training sessions
- 20 hours of mentoring time with industry professionals
- 128 hours of producing support to help realise their projects
- Attend an annual national gathering of young change makers
- Access to high-profile networks

YOUNG PEOPLE

OUTPUTS

- Improved local and professional networks
- Project that benefits their communities
- Hard and soft skill development to improve their employment, education and enterprise opportunities after the programme
- Increased sense of agency in what they are able to achieve and what is open and accessible to them
- Shift in perception about their communities as places of opportunity for them

- 3-day intensive training for staff
- A training toolkit
- Weekly mentoring calls
- Twice yearly CPD days with national network

ORGANISATIONS

- New partnerships developed with local organisations
- Facilitated training and experience in co-creation practice
- Improved connection to community needs in the local area
- New methods and experience gained for working with local communities

- £6,000 commissioning investment from Agents' projects
- £1,000 investment to improve local infrastructure

COMMUNITIES

- Develops culture of investment into local economy, encouraging Agents to support local goods and services
- New community leaders
- 3 new community projects each year
- 3 new training and employment opportunities



Photo Via FabLab

SOCIAL IMPACT

The cost of The Agency per head is relatively high compared to other more traditional programmes led by cultural organisations because the programme recognises young people from low-income backgrounds need financial support to take part in time-intensive development opportunities. The programme is also tailored to support each individual's interests and needs rather than a 'one size fits all' approach. As a result, it is a longer, more in-depth and intensive process that generates long-term successes for young people and has a profound and transformative impact on them as well as on the communities and the organisations involved.

The following outlines key changes from our social impact evaluation:

NETWORKS

100% of Agents improved their networks by an average of **three times the number of contacts** listed at the beginning of the project. This includes new networks and people they may have known before but did not realise could be helpful to their projects.

NETWORKING SKILLS

78% of Agents improved their networking skills by an overall **average of 10%**.

MANAGEMENT

75% of Agents improved their project management skills by an overall **average of 16%**.

AGENCY/SELF-EFFICACY

87% had an increased sense of agency which improved by an overall **average of 10%**.

FACILITATOR-ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION SKILLS

87% of Agents improved their presentation skills according to facilitator perceptions by an overall **average of 50%**.

CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

82% of Agents improved their creative problem-solving skills by an overall **average of 14%**.

SELF-ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION SKILLS

81% of Agents improved their presentation skills by an overall average of **37%**.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When we started The Agency in 2013 it was against the backdrop of the worst economic crisis in three generations, with half a million 16 to 24-year-olds unemployed. This environment has not improved during the subsequent years of austerity, and existing inequalities have only widened and deepened.

Young people have had to wait for over a year to access much needed mental health services; families have been devastated by an increase in fatal stabbings; and studies have shown there is an increased reliance on food banks across all the neighbourhoods we are working in. Many of the services we worked alongside in 2012 are no longer in operation. Put simply, there is no safety net. We know that these times demand brave, new and creative ideas for transformation. And that any genuine movement for change needs to be inclusive, representative and to bring everyone with it.

The Agency recognises that youth are disproportionately affected by the relentless everyday challenges that poverty, inequality and environmental crisis bring. Because of this, they are the ones who most keenly understand them. It also recognises that youth, especially those who have grown up in poverty, have a huge capacity for experimentation and innovation, as they've always had to make something out of nothing. Time and time again young people have proven their capacity to mobilize change - from Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg to uprisings across the globe, youth have often been at the heart of social movements.

The Agency seizes this potential and charges these young people – the ones who are often seen as the problem or needing help – with driving much-

Thoughtful, articulate, confident, passionate and caring. A lot of nerves but the conviction to overcome them. Some brilliant proposals some of which we should see in action before too long. All with something to offer, and all with a bright future, and all with the ability not only to make a good life for themselves, but also a better life for the city.

SIR RICHARD LEESE

LEADER OF MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL



needed transformation in their own lives and communities. By developing their creative voice, The Agency encourages them to think critically about their place in the world whilst giving them strategies to act upon their dreams for a better future.

It is a human-centred, personalised model which begins with each and every young person's desire and follows their lead. This approach is radical in a context where the subsidised cultural sector's offer can sometimes be narrow and prescriptive and where mainstream education's 'one size fits all' approach doesn't always work.

The Agency has been adapted from a concept born in Brazil and rolled out across the UK through a partnership model between organisations who have, or are building, strong roots in local communities. It's been rigorously tested and evaluated across England, Wales and Northern Ireland by Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) and small businesses, national theatres and community centres, building and non-building based organisations, theatres and makers' spaces. The model has brought together communities from warring favelas; built connections in Belfast across community lines; and started to rebuild communities damaged by gang crime, far right groups and post-industrial decline.

Because The Agency is a methodology for developing local ideas and is delivered and adapted by local organisations, it can work everywhere.

As well as supporting young people to lead change within their communities, The Agency also offers a model for change for the arts and cultural sector to unlock, deepen and accelerate social impact in the sector. Running The Agency has enabled us to truly listen to our communities, to support their ideas and forge genuine partnerships with the people who live on our doorsteps.

As The Agency continues to grow in the UK and in Brazil, an international youth-led movement is starting to brew. We are developing a global network – which connects young people who are usually not afforded the opportunities to travel, learn, think and share – to work together to address to global sustainable development goals.

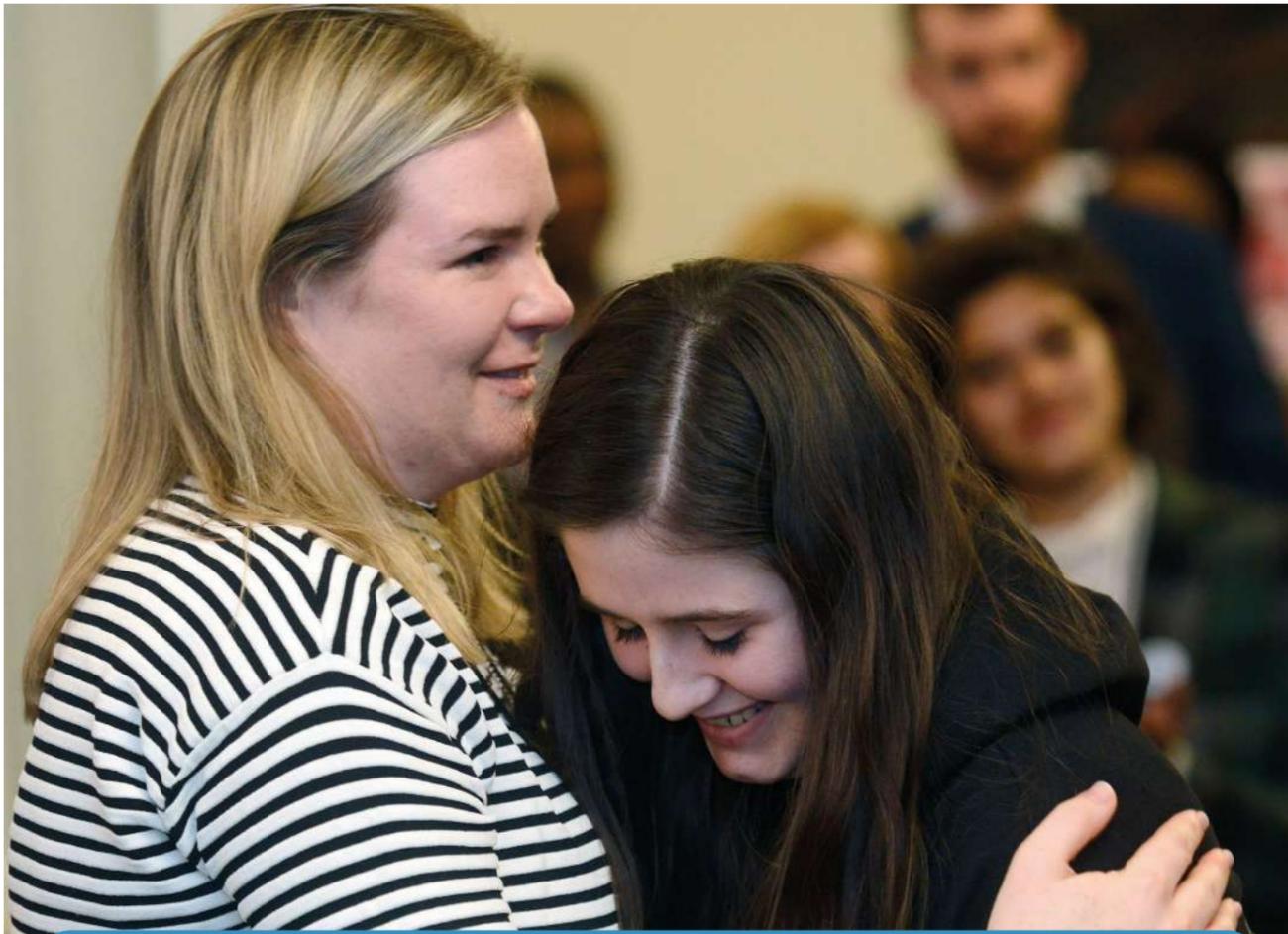
We want this international network of young change-makers to come together, share ideas and develop practical solutions for long-lasting change. These solutions are born from lived experience; developed with local communities; and have the power to make lasting, global impact.

Be a change-maker. Join us.

LIZ MORETON
DIRECTOR OF CREATIVITY
AND SOCIAL CHANGE
BATTERSEA ARTS CENTRE

SUZIE HENDERSON
HEAD OF CREATIVE
DEVELOPMENT
CONTACT

Liz and Suzie have worked with Marcus Faustini since 2012 to translate the methodology from Brazil to the UK.



I could not have had a more stimulating and rewarding morning than the one I spent in the company of all those talented young people on Panel day. I shall long remember the experience. Simply one of the best and one that reminds me what young people can achieve when given an opportunity that demonstrates a confidence in their ability to think beyond their immediate horizons.

SIR NICK SEROTA
CEO OF ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Photo: Rob Logan

WHO WE ARE

The programme is based on Agência de Redes para Juventude, founded by Marcus Faustini in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2011, and has been running in the UK by Battersea Arts Centre (BAC), Contact and People's Palace Projects (PPP) since 2013. Since 2018 the programme has expanded to three new locations across the UK: Cardiff, Wales, through National Theatre Wales (NTW); Belfast, Northern Ireland, with FabLab Belfast in the Ashton Community Centre; and in Walthamstow, North London, through Blackhorse Workshop. Though the programme is expanding geographically, every Agency location works closely with specific territories, further outlined in the 'Our Territories' section. The programme will begin in Brent with the Kiln Theatre; in Southampton with Energise Me in January 2020 and National Theatre Scotland in 2020.

Both BAC and Contact have innovative leadership models that are about enabling others to lead through the work of their organisations, celebrated by their local communities, national funders, and by the wider cultural sector. A partnership model enables BAC and Contact to support other organisations who take on the programme through training, mentoring and development support. BAC and Contact worked with NTW and FabLab, two organisations with an outstanding track record of community engagement, for a year prior to implementing the programme in their locations to help lay the foundation for delivering the programme. The partnership that runs The Agency in the UK also includes a third organisation, People's Palace Projects (PPP). PPP builds practice-based research projects that create new narratives about the impact of the arts to address urgent questions of socio-economic development in Brazil and the UK.

The relationship between the three companies is close, collaborative and creative, and a very positive relationship has always been maintained with Agência de Redes para Juventude, who devised the original programme. This has had the added benefit of opportunities for young people on housing estates in the UK and favelas in Brazil to meet, work together and share experiences, forming the foundation of an international network.

The real freedom The Agency offers is that young people can start their journey even without an idea in mind, just a spark to make change. During the process we bring the spark to light, which is really exciting. It's easy to say you can have that business idea, but this is about focusing on the issues first. It doesn't just favour the ones who have ideas, drive and ambition: the process helps all of them.

MATT FARIS BELFAST FACILITATOR

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT?

Our aim is for young people to have the self-confidence, networks, skills and creative mindset they need to become protagonists in their lives and the world around them. Through our detailed Theory of Change and robust evaluation framework, tested, implemented and refined over the past four years, we have built a strong evidence base that continues to prove its power but also helps us to continue to improve year after year. This report outlines this evidence base, provides an introduction to The Agency and its methodology, outlines key updates since our last report, and presents its long-lasting impact on the young people, organisations and communities involved, along with our vision for the future.

Translating Faustini requires a certain reckless bravado and very deep, almost dangerous breathing. There is not so much a flow as an irrepressible urgency - an insurgency - to his ideas which takes no hostages. I can't be distracted by my own fascination for his ideas as they fly out in Portuguese because they emerge impatient to be armed and become dangerous in English. The role of People's Palace Projects in The Agency UK partnership remains a permanent act of translation in action which asks not 'what do I understand?' but 'what can I do?'. Concepts and methodologies forged by young people in peripheral territories in Rio de Janeiro will not and should not stay in place as they seek to find meaning in Belfast, Cardiff, London and Manchester. It is our job at PPP to tune the dynamics of cultural exchanges between the UK and Brazil to go beyond translation towards a fusion that produces new, irresistible energies.

PAUL HERITAGE
DIRECTOR, PPP

WHAT IS THE NEED?

The following outlines the need both generally in the UK as well as focus areas for Agency programmes.

764,000 young people, or 11%, of 16 to 24-year-olds **are NEET (not in education, employment or training)** as of March 2019. ⁽¹⁾

Research for The Prince's Trust 2019 Macquarie Youth Index ⁽²⁾ report has shown that **young people from underserved communities are much more likely to have lower aspirations**. The report further reveals:

73% of young people said **their generation is less certain about future employment** than their parents'

53% worry they will never be financially stable or be able to plan ahead financially

61% say the current and upcoming political events have made them **feel anxious about their future**

36% do not feel in control of their lives

Overall, **happiness and well-being are at an all-time low** since the Youth Index started in 2009.

All of **these numbers increase significantly** for young people from **disadvantaged or NEET** backgrounds. ⁽¹⁾

Research has shown, however, that there is a desire from young people to have greater agency over their lives. "Lacking decent educational, employment and cultural opportunities, globally, generations of young people struggle to cultivate their potential and act upon their dreams for a better future. Those living amidst poverty and violence are particularly exposed to vulnerabilities that limit their ability to escape from exclusion and move up the social ladder. Generally, youth facing marginalization are approached either as a problem to be dealt with through repressive policies or passive objects of social action, rather than subjects, rights-holders, and creators of innovative solutions to contemporary societal challenges" ⁽³⁾.

As part of The Agency, these 'practical tools for capacity building, protagonism and participation - which draw on youth's social history and knowledge - provide an illustration of how young people take part in social action, exercise their agency, and promote their cultural identities, while creating new platforms to challenge exclusion and advance practices of positive social regeneration.' ⁽³⁾

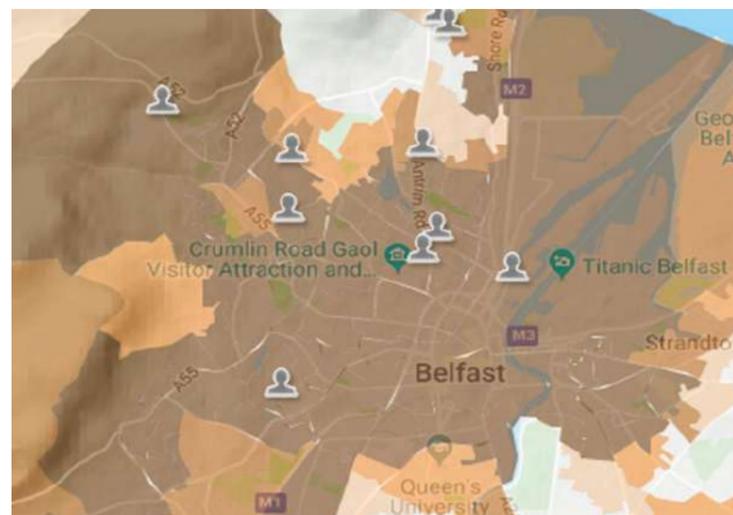
WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE FOR AGENTS?

The entrepreneurial focus of the programme provides young people with the self-esteem and organisational, interpersonal and business skills needed to devise and execute projects based on their desire, daily life, interests and skills. Success in The Agency is as much about the personal development of the young person and their territory as having a project that is ongoing beyond the end of the programme. One form of success is a project that continues beyond the life and support of The Agency. Another form of success is for young people to feel an improved sense of agency, changing their perception of their place in the city and their ability to identify and access the opportunities within it. From this shift, young people can pursue continued education, jobs, continuing their projects, etc. all included equally as elements of what success means for them and for The Agency itself.

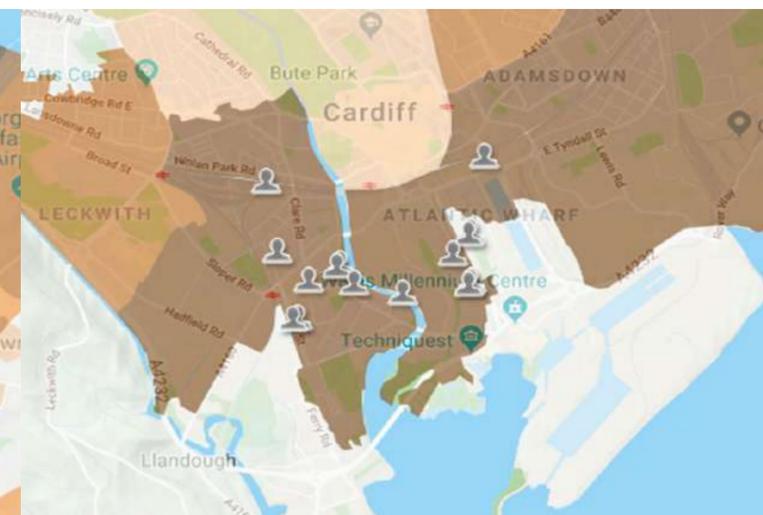
SNAPSHOT OF AGENCY TERRITORIES

The Agency methodology describes the communities where the projects take place as 'territories', or areas of focus for each project, and are some of the most deprived areas in the UK. The following outlines further information about some of the territories we've worked in: North Belfast; Moston and Harpurhey in Manchester; Grangetown and Butetown in Cardiff; and Battersea in London.

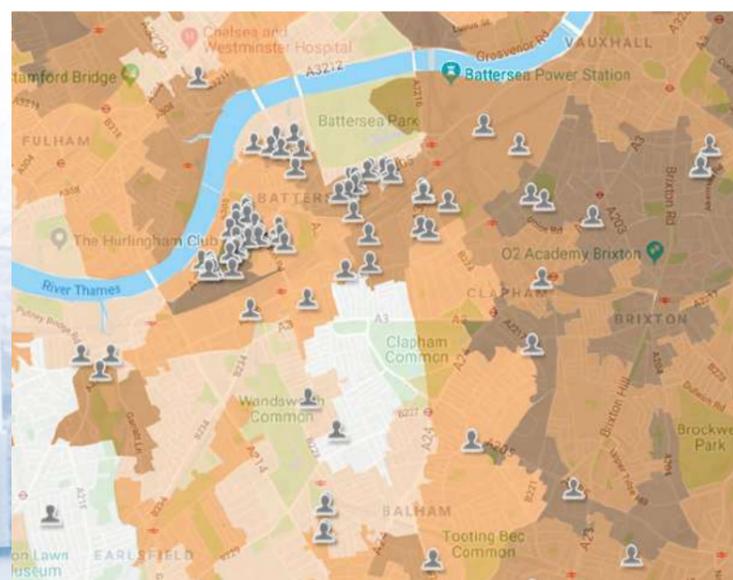
BELFAST



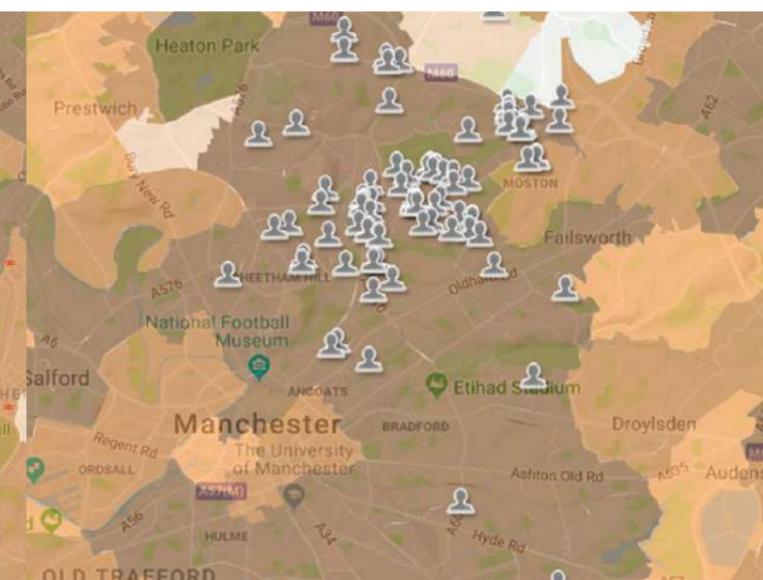
CARDIFF



LONDON



MANCHESTER



KEY

Areas mapped by index of multiple deprivation overall

Agent postcode

Most deprived

0% - 20%

20% - 39%

40% - 59%

60% - 79%

80% - 100%

Least deprived



NORTH BELFAST'S COMMUNITY

Fablab is based in the New Lodge area of North Belfast, delivered by the Ashton Community Trust. Young people in this locality are experiencing some of the worst health and life outcomes in Northern Ireland, ranging from high levels of deprivation, poverty, unemployment, and death to suicide, alcohol related deaths and issues around drug misuse. Poor educational attainment coupled with high economic inactivity means that the area has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in Northern Ireland. Young people in particular face conflict on a regular basis: tensions in the area are exacerbated by racism, homophobia, religious differences and economic status.

The geographical area targeted by The Agency in North Belfast is also divided along sectarian lines, as sectarian violence between Catholics and Protestants remains a serious problem. There are 99 peace barriers in Belfast, 44 of them in North Belfast (4). 'Segregated living' is hence part of the spatial and social fabric of the area, and there is a lack of understanding and consequential mistrust of 'the other community'. Whilst interface neighbourhoods are often associated with inter-community conflict, wider risk factors can negatively impact on a young person's development, coping skills, emotional well-being, anxiety, sectarian behaviour and adjustment problems (5). This causes young people living in interface areas to be at risk of alcohol and drug use, mental health problems, aggression, self-harm, and behavioural problems including antisocial behaviour and problems with authority figures.

Compared to Northern Ireland as a whole, the area has:

The second highest crime rate

49% of young people 16+ claiming benefits

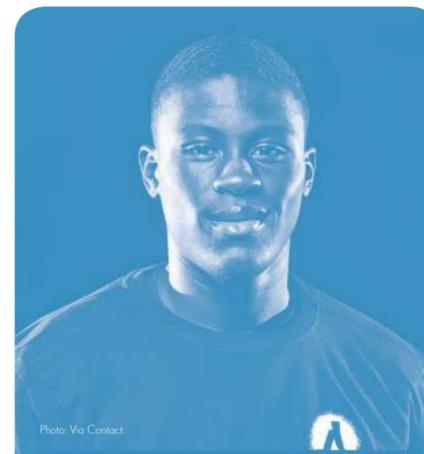
20.9% of young people are NEET

The highest proportion of hospital admissions resulting from self-harm

The highest proportion of people estimated to be on prescribed mood and anxiety disorder drugs

It's important to have an outlet because this community can be quite hostile. That's why projects like this are so important. They can be, and more importantly see themselves as part of the solution.

KATRINA NEWELL
HEAD OF ARTS AND YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT, THE ASHTON
COMMUNITY TRUST



My area isn't very nice. I've seen how it's changed over the years. I used to be able to play outside but now I won't go to Moston Lane anymore. My friends have been killed on Moston Lane. No one is directing them in the right way. It's because they think the youth are the problem.

ADE
MANCHESTER AGENT

MANCHESTER'S MOSTON AND HARPURHEY COMMUNITIES

Contact works in the Moston and Harpurhey areas of Manchester where there is very little provision for young people in terms of youth activity and social enterprise. Historically, Moston and Harpurhey was a vibrant area of Manchester with busy markets, a strong sense of community and of considerable importance to the city as a whole. Since the 1980s, however, with the loss of the mining industry the area has seen a steep decline and is ranked among the top 10% of the most deprived areas in the country, according to a 2015 government report⁽⁶⁾. Social housing, unemployment, immigration and crime are now all acute issues in the territory. According to government statistics Harpurhey remains in the highest category for reported crime, numbers of individuals claiming Universal Credit, and children in low-income families throughout Greater Manchester.

Over two-fifths of the housing in the area is in the social rented sector and three-quarters of that is owned by the City Council; the quality of the housing and general environment in some of the local authority housing estates is poor. Estates in central Harpurhey experience concentrations of deprivation and high levels of antisocial behaviour, crime and poverty. In recent years it has experienced a major shift in demographics, with a large influx of immigrant families from East Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, in tandem with a spike in hate crime and division in the community. These tensions predominantly arise among the white working-class community who have in some cases lived in the area for decades, with numerous reports of racial abuse and attacks.

High levels of unemployment - particularly amongst the 16 to 24-year-old age group. In some areas, less than 40% of residents of working age are in employment

28% of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants are long-term unemployed, The ward has 27.5% of working age claiming out-of-work benefits and a NEET figure of 9.1%

Low educational attainment levels, with qualifications in English, Maths and Science below average, and 50% of adults without GCSE or higher education qualifications

60.8% of the population are unlikely to have internet access

CARDIFF'S BUTETOWN AND GRANGETOWN COMMUNITIES

In Cardiff, NTW runs the project with young people living in the Butetown and Grangetown areas of Cardiff, two diverse, interconnected communities with high levels of social deprivation. Historically, the Butetown area was one of the first multicultural communities, with people from 50 countries settling here just before the First World War where they worked in the docks and in allied industries. Grangetown was named the most diverse community in Cardiff, with high numbers of Somali and South Asian residents. Today, the area experiences tensions from wealthy Cardiff Bay citizens and extensive regeneration happening close by juxtaposed to the many estates that encompass much of Butetown and Grangetown, leading to feelings of exclusion. ⁽⁷⁾ While there are substantial developments in areas close by, many residents feel the opportunities created there are not for them, adding to tensions in the area. ⁽⁸⁾ Though not lacking in ambition, young people in particular bear the brunt of difficulties in gaining employment in these areas.

The increase of homelessness and the close proximity of homeless shelters/accommodation has sparked further tension between the community, service providers and homeless people in Grangetown and Butetown. ⁽⁹⁾ Reduced resources for support services means that Class A drug-taking in public in daylight is not uncommon, and it is also common to see discarded needles in the street alongside the following statistics.

46% of children in Butetown and Grangetown live in poverty

32% of crime in the area relates to drugs ⁽¹⁰⁾

100 to 180 people seeking asylum in the UK arrive in Cardiff every month ⁽¹¹⁾

There is a high proportion of immigrant families in these areas, and some young women in these communities are using the Agency as a way to give women from the Muslim community (among them a high percentage of Pakistani descent) a voice to talk about issues important to them.

All of The Agency staff in Cardiff come from the area where the young people live, creating an interconnectedness and sense of purpose for their facilitators and project manager.



Our communities need help and The Agency helps us to be part of the solution - how we can get involved and talk to people and figure out how we can help.

AYESHA
CARDIFF AGENT



The Agency gave me more satisfaction with myself in the sense that I can produce something on my own; I am capable of doing something in life. Just the fact that I can do something, not just for myself, but for people, is such a great feeling.

OSMOND
LONDON AGENT

LONDON'S BATTERSEA COMMUNITY

BAC is located in the middle of a number of areas of significant deprivation in the Wandsworth area, where poverty, poor housing and low levels of adult employment have resulted in a significant lack of positive activities for young people. The area is surrounded by expensive homes and areas of wealth, creating tensions. Historically, this area was the hub of social movements with Battersea, such as those for women's rights, and it was the home of London's first black mayor. The area is now home to both extreme wealth as well as many housing estates, including Winstanley where many Agents reside. Winstanley is among the most diverse places in the UK, with 68% of its residents being not English ⁽¹²⁾.

The following statistics are from Latchmere, the ward in Battersea where The Agency works most directly:

31% unemployment rate, one of the highest in the borough

20% of children live in a family dependent on income-related or housing benefit

27% of children live in out of work households

40% of the population is from a BAME (black, Asian, minority, ethnic) background who are more at risk for mental health issues and prejudice. ⁽¹³⁾

Gang crime including gun and knife crime is on the rise across London, with regular stabbings of under 25s, often unreported by the national press ⁽¹⁴⁾. The regeneration of Winstanley Estate and Nine Elms, where many of the young people live, is a catalyst for displacement, prompting huge changes in the area. Many of the young people who come into contact with The Agency are not in education, employment or training, and have never engaged with the organisation or set foot in the building before. While London as a whole offers many opportunities for young people, many do not access them because of social isolation, poverty and other complex issues.

OVERVIEW OF DELIVERY



RECRUITMENT

The Agency targets a diverse mix of young people that is representative of the demographics of each territory, not only the most driven and ambitious ones. The Agency goes to places where the young people are and it asks them to be a solution in their community. They are asked if they have an idea for their community, what they are passionate about, or what they would like to change about where they live. From their very first contact with the programme, they are spoken to as young people with ideas, potential and agency over their lives. The Agency employs local young people who have engaged in other projects or those who have previously engaged in the programme to recruit new Agents, using them as a resource to identify the places in the community where the young people are.

The Agency takes a street-level approach to actively seek out young people who are not engaging in other programmes, reaching out to the community as much as possible. We go to young people in the streets, parks, chip shops, churches, mosques, at bus stops, and outside train stations, for example. The process lasts between four and six weeks in the lead-up to the start of the programme. The team works closely with referral partners to identify those most in need and is also promoted through the usual outreach channels such as community centres, youth clubs, churches, presentations at schools, social media, flyering, and putting up posters in local businesses and takeaways.



We ask two questions: who is the most talented young person you know who should be in this project? And who are the ones who are not engaged at all, who you imagine won't have any ideas? Because we want both of them.

MARCUS FAUSTINI AGENCY FOUNDER

CYCLE 1 SESSIONS INCLUDE:

INNOVATIVE IDEA GENERATION

Developing ideas and expanding their notions of what's possible through creative workshops

SOCIAL IMPACT

Each project needs to highlight and address a specified need identified by young people in their communities

RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION

with communities - every project needs to consult with communities and obtain 50 signatures before it is pitched for funding from the Panel.

NETWORKING

Identifying and opening up local networks, using creativity to build networking skills

DEVELOPING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

Key to success in resourcefulness running their own projects but also in future careers and education.



CYCLE 1 THE CYCLE OF STIMULUS

The first 12 week cycle uses a theatre-based, creative methodology to help young people develop their ideas starting from their desire for change in their local areas and using specific tools developed by Agency founder Marcus Faustini, adapted to a UK context. They focus on cognitive skill- building through developing the logistics of the ideas with support from facilitators and community groups they aim to work with, whilst also developing the non-cognitive, social and emotional capabilities necessary to bring these projects to fruition. These 'soft skills' such as agency, communication, and creativity have been linked to improved longer-term employment and educational success.⁽¹⁵⁾

The aim of this cycle is to enable Agents to take an idea based on a need they identify in their community; articulate it; defend it; find support for it through different networks; and pitch it alongside other young people's ideas, host organisations and industry professionals on the day of the Panel. Each Saturday through the first cycle the agents are introduced to a new tool designed to help them to generate, develop and strengthen their idea, while in the Saturday sessions these tools are explored using creative tools and practices. Agents receive a stipend for taking part which helps to counterbalance hidden privileges of being able to take part in unpaid work, helps

with travel and food, and provides disposable income for them to spend on themselves and their projects.

At the end of this cycle, young people pitch their ideas to a panel of industry experts who decide upon three projects which will be awarded £2,000 of seed funding and move on to Cycle 2. Agents who are not awarded funding for their projects are encouraged to join other successful projects to stay engaged with the programme.

CYCLE 2 SESSIONS INCLUDE:

COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Through community partnerships, 1-on-1 mentorship and professional networking meetings

BECOMING LEADERS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

working with other young people, partners and local groups to implement their ideas

SOFT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Self-confidence, self-efficacy, perseverance, motivation, creativity and resilience: just a few of the skills necessary to deliver projects. Some of the specific skills sessions include:

- BUSINESS PLANNING AND SCALING
- BRANDING AND MARKETING
- BUDGET SPEND AND BEST PRACTICE
- EVALUATION AND IMPACT
- FACILITATION

ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Practical skills in resource building, developing networks and being creative in approaching them

MAKING PROJECTS COME TO LIFE

becoming skilled producers and project managers to make their projects happen

CYCLE 2 THE INCUBATOR

The aim of the 16 week Cycle 2 is to teach practical project management, planning and business skills alongside bespoke support with an individual producer who guides the Agents in building their projects and piloting them in the local area.

This is the cycle where the agents turn their ideas into projects, laying the foundation for a potential long-term intervention implemented within the community. Agents develop their ideas into social enterprises with the support of lead organisations, industry experts, local people and businesses. Through piloting their projects, by the end of this phase agents also learn to evaluate their projects through gathering integral feedback that then impacts the future development of their projects.

Young people who complete Cycle 2 have the continued support of organisations if they choose to continue running their projects beyond the specified length of the programme.

THE LEGACY TRANSFORMED BY THE AGENCY

After the structured sessions end, The Legacy Network of The Agency offers bespoke support to young people who wish to continue running their projects beyond the initial 28 weeks of the programme. This support can include assistance with fundraising, business development, network building and community partnerships, both from staff at Contact, BAC, NTW, Fablab and from external partners.

Of the 45 projects that have been funded since 2013, 34 are still running in some form with this legacy support. See case studies on page 61- 72 for more information on a few of these projects.

Photos: (numbered left to right) 1. Via Contact, 2. Via Fablab, 3. Via Fablab, 4. Via contact, 5. Rob Logan, 6. Via BAC, 7. Via NTW, 8. Via BAC, 9. Via NTW, 10. Via BAC, 11. Joyce Nicholls



SNAPSHOT OF 2019 AGENTS

BELFAST

WALK AND TALK LIAM & NATHAN

Walk and Talk creates a safe space for young men aged 14 to 18 from North Belfast to come together and share issues that they are facing in their own personal lives. The project has four walks, each increasing in length and difficulty, culminating in the final walk to the top of the highest peak in Northern Ireland. The project promotes positive physical and mental health, providing young men with the opportunity to forge new friendships, listen to each other and share personal experiences to reduce suicide and anti-social behaviour.

Now I understand it. I now know how to set up my own thing.

LIAM

YOUR WAY SEANA & CLAIRE

Your Way is a mental health project that includes sports and art, tackling the stigma around mental health and giving young people a voice to tell their stories. The project has life coaching to guide participants to a better mindset and to let them know that it's OK to talk. Sports and arts activities are designed to get participants to think creatively about their mental health. Your Way has had three very successful sessions to date, with up to 70 young people involved.

This has given us a window into what we can do after school is out. We have the skills now to do so many things.

SEANA

INSIDE OUT BEAUTY GARY, AOIFE & THOMAS

Inside Out Beauty is a beauty therapy / body image project consisting of a series of workshops for young people focusing on self-love and acceptance. Gary, Aoife and Thomas are all make-up enthusiasts who have experienced body image issues, so they were inspired to change the narrative around this issue. Working with young people aged 13 to 18, they delivered workshops demonstrating make-up techniques while facilitating real conversations about image, mental health and self-love.

If the money was there, I know I could now set up something on my own. It was a really good experience because nothing like this ever happens around here.

THOMAS



MANCHESTER

CLAY HELP DESTINY

Clay Help delivers clay workshops for young people aged 8 to 18 based in Moston experiencing mental health issues, creating a safe space for young people to tell their stories and talk about their problems in partnership with local organisations and mental health professionals.

There are a lot of stereotypes here. I wanted to create a safe space where people can be themselves.

DESTINY

SOMETHING TO SAY ADE & ALEX

Something to Say is a book that shares positive and inspirational stories aimed at challenging perceptions of what black people in the community can achieve, telling stories of success and how they negotiate society as persons of colour.

Alex and I realised we both like books and black boys' voices need to be heard, so together we created Something to Say. We did interviews with well-known people: poets, footballers, etc. to build positive stories.

ADE

EMPOWHERR FAIDAT

EmPOWherr is a project that wants to liberate females to participate in sport and competition, with a campaign to highlight current inequality in sport and empower young women to take part.

When it comes to this area, no one thinks of sport, so female sport is out of the question. So I had a responsibility to bring that back.

FAIDAT

CARDIFF

GREEN PLUG

AYESHA, KEO & CHEBE

Ayesha, Keo and Chebe are developing a social enterprise that uses hydroponic technology to find creative ways to grow food in an urban environment and teach the community about healthy lifestyle choices.

Being here you meet new friends. I got to meet and become friends with people in my area I would have never connected with.

AYESHA

FILM FIRM

SHANE

Film Firm is a film competition for local young people teaching low-cost film skills on mobile phones that are less than six minutes long, culminating in a screening of all the films entered and an award ceremony. The project targets those new to film, currently under-represented in the industry.

It gave me a realistic view of what's achievable. It's really a pilot to take it forward from here. I now know what thought processes I need to go through before realising my ideas.

SHANE

#GLISTENUP

AFIFA & NABILAH

#GlistenUp is a bi-weekly event that invites young women, predominantly from the Muslim communities of Butetown and Grangetown, to share in conversations around social issues in a safe space while they learn about inner and outer beauty.

The project I've chosen will help loads of girls around me in my community.

AFIFA



LONDON

Not only am I a role model for my little sisters but for all these other little girls too.

ANGELINA

WORKING OUT THE KINKS

ANGELINA & PHILLIPPA

Working Out the Kinks put on fun events and activities for BAME girls aged 7 to 11 which celebrate black culture and black heritage. Events include hair braiding and practical ways to care for natural hair to help young girls feel proud of who they are and how they look.

I want to contact the councils in the local area and make it a compulsory thing that everyone has to do. After doing it yesterday, I don't know why there hasn't been anything like it yet.

KYLE

THE GLOW UP

KYLE

The Glow Up promotes positive body image for secondary school students with skin conditions, delivering workshops and events to increase confidence and mental wellbeing in addition to natural skincare education.

Before The Agency, when I had ideas I couldn't really make them come to life. Going through The Agency really helped me and I realise I can actually make things happen.

ZAFIR

STREETS GOT TALENT

ZAFIR

Streets Got Talent is a music event made by and for young people from the Alton Estate in Roehampton - an area of South London affected by gang, drug, knife and firearm violence. Zafir, the founder, leads on delivering motivational, music-based events to start a movement in an area where young people feel they have few options outside of a criminal life.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A. AIMS OF EVALUATION & EVALUATION DESIGN

At the start of the third year of The Agency in the UK, we embarked on a more social impact-focused approach to evaluation. We completed a theory of change that was tested through a detailed evaluation plan put into place when the programme commenced. There were a total of 18 outcomes (15 intermediate and 3 long-term) with the overall aim that “young people from underserved communities should have the self-confidence, networks, skills and creative mindset needed to be protagonists in their lives and the world around them.”

The evaluation was designed to be as collaborative as possible, with project managers, senior management, programme facilitators and the young people themselves all contributing to the development of the evaluation framework. Tools were designed to measure six of the 18 outcomes, all adapted from previous research using Likert scales.

The tools we created were used to measure improvements in the following categories:

1. Networking and building relationships
2. Project management skills
3. Presentation
4. Creative problem solving
5. Agency/self-efficacy
6. Organisational & Community impact

The evaluation focused on young people self-reporting of their own personal progress at the baseline, midpoint and endpoints, triangulated with facilitator assessment tools and as much qualitative feedback as possible.

Outcomes measuring organisational impact were collected anecdotally through interviews with senior management of the four lead delivery organisations. Outcomes measuring larger community impact were collected mostly through output figures of attendees, participants and people engaged both in the programme and interviews, and through the youth enterprises and initiatives that carry on in Cycle 3.

The way that this project is framed, as a social entrepreneurship opportunity that happens to use creative means, seems to have enabled connections and had impact with young people that have reached farther than previous outreach or participatory work.

ROSIE HUNTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PPP

B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

We chose to examine the following questions:

What is the impact of The Agency on the lives of young people who participate in the programme?

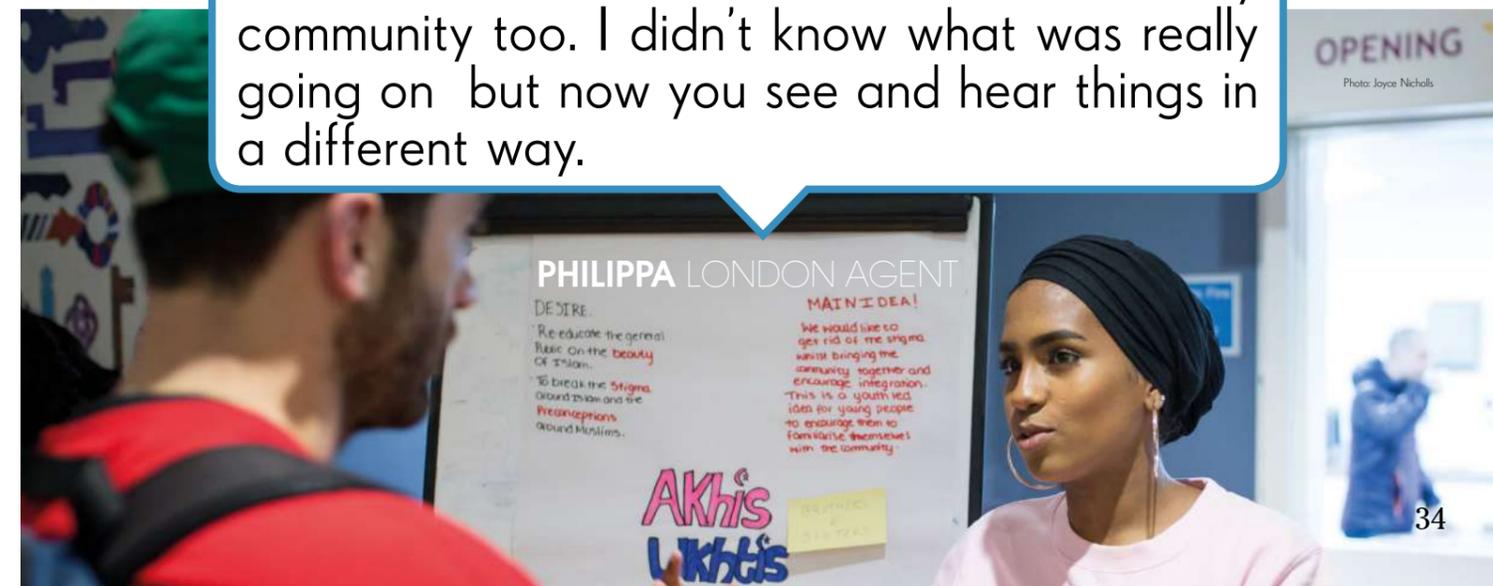
What is the impact of The Agency on the organisations who lead in delivering the project?

What is the wider impact on the local community from having the young people's projects delivered in their locations?

C. SAMPLING

The number of participants in The Agency is relatively small, with approximately 20 young people going through Cycle 1 and 6 going onto complete Cycle 2 each year per location, so our evaluation incorporates the data from every young person who took part in our analysis. Due to human error, there were a few instances when data was not collected or was collected incorrectly, in which case average scores were used to determine approximations for missing data. As we have not used a comparison or control group to gauge impact, our findings demonstrate correlational links but do not show causality at this stage of the programme.

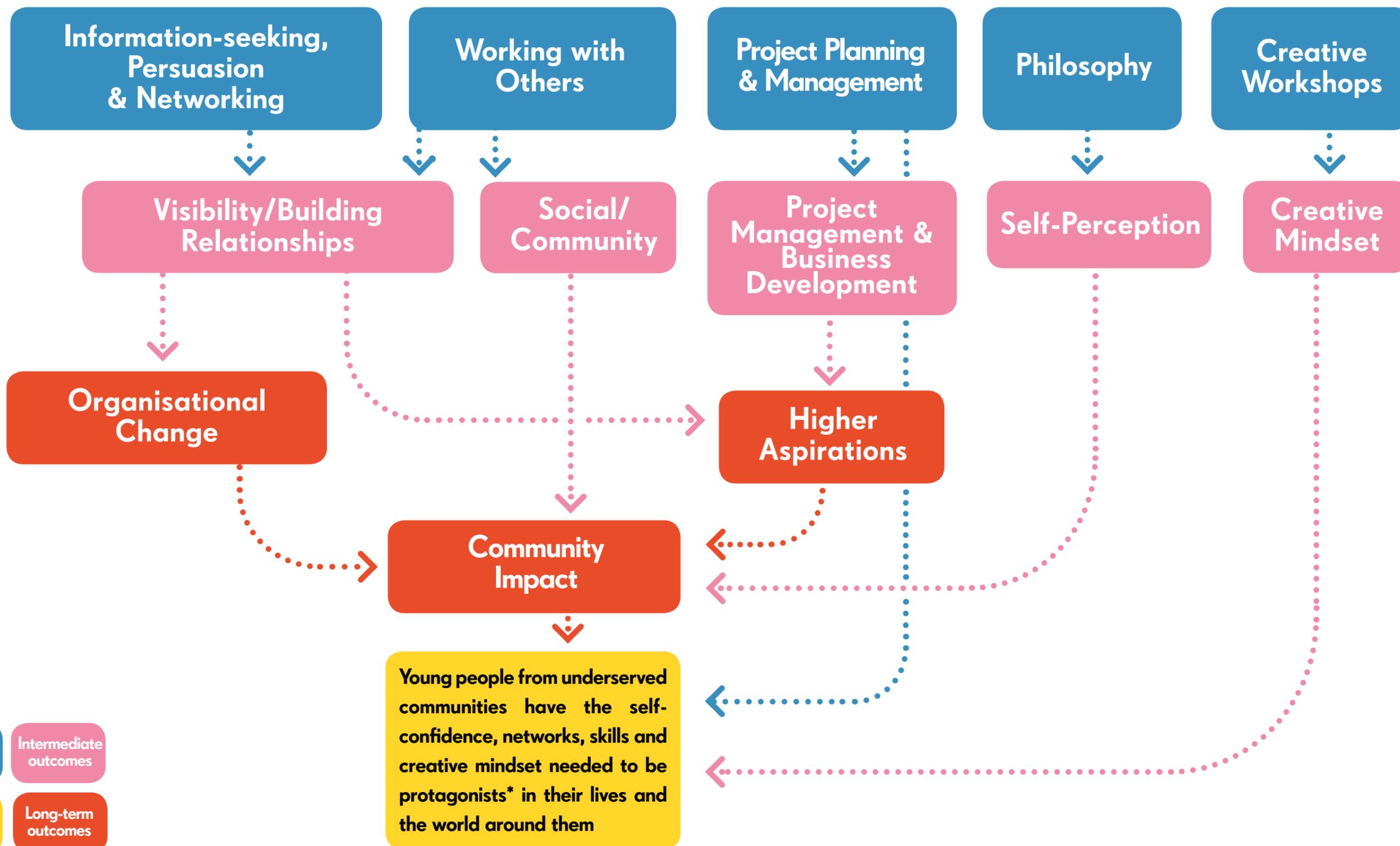
It's made me more aware of what's in my community too. I didn't know what was really going on but now you see and hear things in a different way.



THEORY OF CHANGE

*WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A PROTAGONIST IN A CITY?

1. Young people are more part of the economic life of the city by seeking employment, having an entrepreneurial mindset and building resources in their communities
2. Young people develop their creative abilities through a culture of creativity embedded in the programme, giving them the tools and mindset to find solutions in other areas of their lives
3. Young people are more included in the social life of their city, breaking down stereotypes they have about their community and negative perceptions communities have about young people



Key

Activities	Intermediate outcomes
Aim	Long-term outcomes

OUR IMPACT

So, you have to be political- fight to influence public policy because we need people like you having strong voices. It's not about joining a party- it's about making your organisation strong and making your voice known. It's defending your community, the rights of young people. So, it's not just about your project. You have to help other projects realise they have a right too.

MARCUS FAUSTINI AGENCY FOUNDER

The Agency uses entrepreneurship as a tool to work towards an emancipatory education, one that is based on the young people's desires and rooted in practical skills they can use in creating the future they want for themselves, benefiting their communities in the process. The programme not only supports young people's development but also has a profound impact on the organisations that deliver it and the communities they work in, driving social innovation from the inside out. Our evaluation reflects this, outlining three key areas of impact: young people, organisations and communities. Impact on young people is shown through quantitative, social impact data supported by qualitative evidence to triangulate these findings while organisational and community impact are measured through qualitative, anecdotal evidence further described below.

The following are key impact findings since The Agency began in the UK in 2013:

1. The Agency methodology puts young people from some of the most deprived areas of the UK at the centre of social change, using an asset-based approach to achieve sustainable, local change through young people's life experience, community resources, culture and passion.

The Agency works primarily with young people who live on local housing estates, in social housing or in areas of low socio-economic status to focus our energy on those that are most in need of support. This also ensures that the business ideas that develop through The Agency are impacting on some of the UK's most deprived communities using an asset-based approach. By an asset-based approach, we think of each community not as a place devoid of resources, ideas and creativity but as one where there is rich culture and potential that just needs to be tapped into. These communities are increasingly invisible in the mainstream economic and political life of the UK and The Agency seeks to empower young people within these communities to reimagine themselves through positive projects, businesses and initiatives that connect them with leaders in local government, business and other leading organisations in the third sector. Research has shown that young people from underserved communities have lower expectations and aspirations (Prince Macquarie Report, 2019), making The Agency even more pivotal in raising ambitions and motivations for what young people can achieve in their lives and doing the same for young people and others are around them.

I used to get in a lot of trouble in school- I got kicked out and went to two behaviour schools where we were only there for an hour a day and we weren't allowed to talk. Through the Agency I reflected on those bad experiences and realised that if I was able to tell someone at the time what I was going through it never would have happened.

ADE MANCHESTER AGENT



Photo: Rob Logan



Photo: Via BAC

2.
The Agency supports young people on an individual level to improve their opportunities but also creates a collective force for systemic change, mobilising young people around social issues they care about

The Agency is not a standard training or skills development opportunity. It is a creative approach to developing social entrepreneurs for the future, shaping their own business ideas to be an active part of the solution to social problems in their communities. The approach of The Agency is to focus on young people’s desires first, then putting them in positions to be activists effecting change in their local areas. Each young Agent sets his or her own path, defining their ideas for change through the programme, supported by the lead cultural or community organisation and its networks. However, The Agency also requires them to test their ideas against the desires and needs of their own community, ensuring their ideas are rigorously user-tested. The programme taps into their creativity using an iterative approach that understands the value of mistakes, helping to strengthen them as leaders and active Agents for change, proactive about making an impact through their projects.

You are all leaders in this community now. This community needs leaders and you are the ones who other young people can go to and who can look after people- signpost them and encourage them- because we all know that it’s OK not to be OK. This community always needs new, fresh leaders, different thinking leaders, with new ideas. It’s amazing to see how much more confident you all are since the first time I met you and the bond and the friendships you’ve made with each other and the bond I’ve made with you.

J.J. MAGEE LOCAL POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVE IN NORTH BELFAST

3.
The programme changes the way cultural and community organisations work with young people by adopting more inclusive, co-created, collaborative working practices across their organisations

Stemming from research showing that arts and cultural organisations are underserving citizens from different cultural backgrounds, ages and socio-economic status, there is a wider movement in the cultural sector for organisations to connect more profoundly with young people and their communities. Arts Council England and the Arts Councils of Wales and Northern Ireland are behind this move; however, there is a shortage of tried and tested, co-created approaches that enable arts organisations to both play to their creative strengths whilst putting young people from all different backgrounds in the lead. The cultural sector’s offer to young people is often limited to young people with access to creative education offered by arts organisations. This offer is likely to be based on an invitation to participate in existing activities: a youth theatre, orchestra, or similar. If they are not currently interested in the work of the cultural organisation, then it’s difficult and often undesirable to get involved. Rather than expecting young people from underserved areas to come join our theatre programmes, The Agency is shaped around young people’s desires, opening up access to a creative education to a wide range of young people, many of whom are, initially, not even interested in the arts and don’t think of themselves as creative.

It has become a signature project for us and is a hugely useful reference point to demonstrate the value of collaborative, creative processes to effect change in young lives and communities. It has given Contact a sense of confidence and ambition to push beyond the normal structures and outcomes of engagement, community or outreach work, and increasingly to make these activities the central driving force of the organisation.

MATT FENTON
 ARTISTIC DIRECTOR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CONTACT

space between quotes and text



4.
The Agency uses creativity as its key currency to unlock innovation- helping young people to achieve their potential and achieve future success in education, employment and enterprise

'What I do believe is in the framework's potential to continue strengthening our faith in the liberating power of education to change lives and communities, and its fundamental role in helping create a more just and democratic society.' (3) Creative education and access to the arts have shown to be diminished in these communities (16), and the arts and creativity as a whole are being stripped from the curriculum across the UK. Hence, in these areas it is even more critical that programmes like this employ intensive, co-created approaches that help to develop skills not only among the young people who need it most but in their communities, too. The programme uses a creative approach but the projects the young people create are not necessarily based in the arts. They encompass bike repair, basketball tournaments, boxing clubs, fitness programmes, skin care products and more, but they still benefit from a creative process to get to the heart of their desires and implement something that has a genuine impact on the people taking part. This creative mindset sets them up for long-term success in enterprise and employment.

In many ways, it's like we are trying to undo the education system that relies on memorisation over original thoughts. Their minds are so fixed in right or wrong, exams determine their future in school, so they have to constantly be challenged to think outside the box.

MATT FARIS BELFAST FACILITATOR

5.
The Agency is a tool to create robust networks within a locality where young people, cultural organisations and communities work together around shared goals and values.

The Agency is a tool to activate networks around shared values in line with community development. The activation of networks changes young people's mindset that their local areas are somewhere that offers them the opportunity and resources to make their ideas come to life. This mindset shift includes building new networks but also seeing pre-existing contacts in a nuanced way- as someone who can help their project come to life. The Agency helps organisations, young people and communities build and improve these networks and also gives them the mechanisms to then implement them together. This also provides opportunities for partner organisations built through networks to continue to drive the projects after the first two cycles have taken place to make sustainable change happen.

In school, you're taught it's OK to have an opinion but that's all it is - an opinion. We aren't superheroes but with the funding we have, it allows you the potential to actually change something. It makes you be a better person and makes you feel like you can make things possible for other people. I've met people who make things happen for themselves, but they leave their communities behind. I don't want to be like that.

FAIDAT MANCHESTER AGENT

IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR OWN WORDS

The Agency gives young people the skills and networks to have more agency in their lives and in their communities.

Through The Agency I learned how to build networks. I had never really known about how to make networks before, I didn't know I could email people to ask for support. It taught me to be a leader, going out and finding opportunities. I had never really learned how to build networks before, and I think it's a very important skill, come and talk to people about what my ideas are, what my plans and what my business is.

DIVINE LONDON AGENT

Social and political action are fostered and encouraged on the programme.

When taking part in the course, I realised that there were the same issues and needs with everybody else in the course, we all kinda realise that there need to be a change in our community, and the biggest change is that a lot of youth clubs are closing, so me and my other friend we both like music and we wanted to create a safe space for everybody that likes music and have a hidden talent, and they can come to this space and show their talent and be happy while they are doing it.

JERIAH LONDON AGENT

The Agency helps young people to capitalise on issues they've faced in their past.

When I came to England at 12, I didn't speak English and I got bullied a lot. By taking part in the Agency it made me realise that if I had someone to talk to during that time maybe my perspective about the area would have changed.

ALEX MANCHESTER AGENT

I did The Agency six years ago and since then I took it from The Agency to the next step - how to grow a business from a social project.

SESHIE LONDON AGENT

We're all from the same community but we never would have met otherwise.

AFIFA CARDIFF AGENT

Being able to know that I can become someone without having the best grades, so not being an A-star student, but still having the same drive for work of an A-star student, but not per se doing the book work, I was more in the field, doing something outside and for the people.

OSMOND LONDON AGENT

Most people would have said that we couldn't be trusted with this money and know how to spend it, but it has a good impact on the community, and we can manage it.

SEANA BELFAST AGENT

The creative, entrepreneurial mindset that The Agency develops in young people is applicable in all areas of their lives in whatever field they choose to go into.

The Agency highlights disparities and societal difference that unites young people to address these issues together rather than separately, as is common in society.

The programme develops both cognitive and non-cognitive skills, essential to future success in education, enterprise and employment.

Young people are seen from the beginning as part of the solution to solving social issues in their territories, reframing their minds away from thinking that they are part of the problem.



SOCIAL IMPACT DATA

In the following we outline each outcome we measured using a social impact approach as listed in the Theory of Change, a brief description, and the overall impact of each outcome in numerical form. The social impact approach we employ uses a 'tool' or questionnaire based upon previous research related to each outcome, filled in by young people at three points throughout their Agency journey: baseline, midpoint and endpoint. The baseline is completed at the beginning of Cycle 1, the midline at the very end of Cycle 1 on the day of the Panel, and the endpoint questionnaire at the end of Cycle 2, only by Cycle 2 agents.

In the data, numbers given under Cycle 1 are for the young people who completed the first 12 weeks and under Cycle 2 for the young people who completed the full, 28-week programme. In total, Cycle 1 incorporates data from 158 young people (as some dropped out in the first cycle) and Cycle 2 data relates to 55 young people.

If there was a recurring theme in these ten presentations, it was how young people pick up on messages - spoken or not - about the value placed upon them by wider society, and their aspiration to connect to this wider community from which they so often feel a sense of being excluded.

PAUL MARTIN

HEAD OF WANDSWORTH COUNCIL

They connect you with people who are perfect for you and your project.

FAIDAT MANCHESTER AGENT

1. NETWORKING AND BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Young people are more able to identify new and existing networks

Building networks is about identifying new people to connect with and also being able to see people who they may have known previously in a new light- as those who might be able to support them with their projects. This score was measured by the number of contacts listed who young people felt very comfortable contacting for support with their projects (17). This includes new networks and people they may have known before but did not realise they could be helpful to their projects. This is the greatest impact in the programme and demonstrates the capacity The Agency has to expand young people's network of those who can help them to realise their ideas.

Since the previous report, we have also begun to measure networking skills – the skills necessary to build networks – and this is included in this data set. This tool was adapted from a questionnaire used by a recruitment agency to measure networking skills in potential employees.

When I meet new people, I can instantly tell them about who I am and what I'm about. It built my skills in so many different ways. I didn't know how to email people properly before this and now I email people like it's no fear. My network has expanded a lot since joining The Agency.

ANIKA MANCHESTER AGENT

GROWING THEIR NETWORKS

100% of Agents improved their networks by an average of **three times** the number of contacts listed at the beginning of the project.

Baseline mean score (all agents)
4.2 CONTACTS USED

Midpoint mean score (all agents)
6.5 CONTACTS USED

Endpoint mean score (cycle 2 Agents only)
12.1 CONTACTS LISTED

Young people are more able to network and build relationships

NETWORKING SKILLS

78 % of Agents improved their networking skills by an **overall average of 10%**

Baseline mean score (all agents)
58.5/80

Midpoint mean score (all agents)
64/80

Endpoint mean score (cycle 2 Agents only)
64.5/80

2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Young people have increased their hard skills in setting up and running a project: project planning, marketing and budgeting

Through business development activities, such as project planning, marketing plans and budget development, young people increase the harder business skills needed to set up and run their projects.

This score was gathered through a questionnaire with young people based on research into project management skills needed to run a business as well as GCSE business course assessment criteria ⁽¹⁸⁾. Building these skills is an ongoing process and the reason for the decrease in Cycle 2 is most likely due to the fact that young people did not understand what skills were needed to manage a project at the outset and were overoptimistic about their baseline reporting capabilities.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS IMPACT

75% of Agents improved their project management skills by an overall **average of 16%**

Baseline mean score (all agents)
38.5/55

Midpoint mean score (all agents)
41.4/55

Endpoint mean score (cycle 2 Agents only)
44.7/55

3. PRESENTATION SKILLS

Young people have the ability to confidently communicate, defend and support their ideas.

Through the multiple opportunities given for presenting their ideas and projects both formally in presentations and informally through conversations with diverse groups of people as part of gathering feedback and building their networks, young people become more comfortable and confident about expressing what their projects are about and why they are fulfilling a need within their communities.

These scores were gathered from a questionnaire based on a study conducted on improving presentation skills in young people (19). The scores where young people measured their own presentations skills was triangulated by the facilitators taking the same test about the young people they worked with to provide a different perspective on the data.

SELF-ASSESSED PRESENTATION SKILLS IMPACT

81% of Agents improved their presentation skills by an overall **average of 37%**

Baseline mean score (all agents)
13.2/21

Midpoint mean score (all agents)
16.5/21

Endpoint mean score (cycle 2 Agents only)
17.5/21

FACILITATOR-ASSESSED PRESENTATION SKILLS IMPACT

87% of Agents improved their presentation skills according to facilitator perceptions, by an overall **average of 50%**

Baseline mean score (all agents)
11/21

Midpoint mean score (all agents)
13/21

Endpoint mean score (cycle 2 Agents only)
16/21

I learned organisational and time management; how to run my own project; and who else in the community is into the same thing. Before when you saw people set up selling something, I thought, oh that's easy, they just booked a table but it's so much more work and you don't see that initially when you look at it.

AOIFE BELFAST AGENT

Through The Agency I realised I have talents I didn't know I had before. I used to hate public speaking. Now I do it for fun.

FAIDAT MANCHESTER AGENT

4. CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Young people are more able to solve problems creatively.

Through the methodology delivered in the creative workshop activities, young people combine the knowledge they already have and the knowledge they develop through the programme to find creative approaches to solve problems related to their projects, thereby increasing their capacity to also solve problems outside of their projects.

This score is modelled on a questionnaire based on Ruth Noller's formula for creative problem solving ⁽²⁰⁾. The formula measures creativity as: knowledge of a subject plus imagination, or divergence from conventional thinking, to determine how respondents use knowledge in a creative way to solve a problem.

5. AGENCY/ SELF-EFFICACY

Young people have increased agency.

Self-efficacy is 'the belief that you can effectively reach the goals you have, whether that is solving a puzzle, successfully preparing for and succeeding in your exam, or dealing with hardships'. Self-efficacy is connected to increased confidence and one's potential to effect change. The goal is for young people to feel that they have agency to act upon their ideas with a sense of passion and purpose.

This score is based upon a validated questionnaire to measure self-efficacy ⁽²¹⁾. We felt it was important to use a validated tool, which means that the tool itself has been designed and tested for reliability in measuring a particular outcome, in this case self-efficacy.

CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS IMPACT

82% of Agents improved their creative problem solving skills by an overall **average of 14%**

Baseline mean score (all agents)

33.6/48

Midpoint mean score (all agents)

37/48

Endpoint mean score (cycle 2 Agents only)

38.4/48

SELF-EFFICACY IMPACT

87% had an increased sense of agency, which improved by an overall **average of 10%**

Baseline mean score (all agents)

25/32

Midpoint mean score (all agents)

26.5/32

Endpoint mean score (cycle 2 Agents only)

27.5/32

I didn't think I was a creative person, but they pull it out of you.

DAPO MANCHESTER AGENT

It's boosted our confidence in ourselves. Now we know what it means to be role models because we have done something that will make a change that we're proud of.

PHILIPPA LONDON AGENT

IMPACT ON OUR ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITIES

The Agency is a methodology which transforms arts organisations. The Agency has profoundly changed the organisations who are already employing it in the UK- it has changed their purpose, their position within their local communities, how they are seen by local people and organisations, what people think they are for, and the way they interact with their neighbours. The Agency has built our capacity as arts organisations to activate our local area and agitate for social change at both local and national level.

With regard to the theory of change, our outcome related to organisational change is as follows:



Cultural organisations engage in increased dialogue with the local community to create ideas and programmes for social change

We found in our last report was that this outcome is not sufficient to describe the impact the programme has had on lead organisations. There are benefits much more far-reaching than simply increasing dialogue. This breadth and depth of organisational impact was not anticipated at the outset of the programme in 2013 and is further expanded upon below. Since the last report, we have grown the programme to encompass new locations, which has helped us to expand our understanding of the programme and how the project as a whole can be scaled up even further than it is today. As part of this process we have created a training programme for new facilitators and project managers.

Qualitative data was gathered from leaders at BAC, Contact, NTW, Fablab Belfast at the Ashton Community Centre, and PPP and key members of the communities and partner organisations who have taken part. The following points outline some of the ways that The Agency has affected the lead organisations and their relationships with their local communities, young people, other organisations and policy makers.

The first section sketches the organisational impact while the second details the benefits for the communities where Agents' projects were implemented.



It has helped organisations to influence funding and policy decisions, not the other way around

We have opened up new relationships with people of influence. The Agency has enabled us to realise the breadth of our influence across local and global communities, policy makers, and the corporate world as we frame our activity against agendas outside of the arts. The Agency has enabled our organisations to “find their voice” on social issues beyond the arts. We have recognised our role in representing our community concerns to policy makers and to government.

Organisations are now actively encouraging Agents to go out and speak publicly about their experience on The Agency, and they are part of national boards and networks which helps to have them have a voice in political and social change.

- This year, Henrietta has spoken about her work in The Agency at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation’s Civic Role of Arts Organisations: Relevance, Risk and Rewards Conference, and the Northeast Cultural Partnership in Sunderland.
- Panellists have included members of Wandsworth Council and Manchester Council’s Chair of The National Lottery’s Community Fund’s board; the Chief Executive of Manchester Business School; Battersea’s local MP; CEOs of local businesses and the Chief Executive of Arts Council England.
- In April 2016, Fiona Mactaggart (Labour MP for Slough) and Jane Ellison (Conservative MP for Battersea, Balham and Wandsworth), with Ed Vaizey (Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, 2010-2016), gave a presentation about the impact on policy of programmes like The Agency.
- BAC now sits on the steering group for crime prevention in Wandsworth and Richmond councils.
- Manchester Agent Faidat spoke on BBC Radio Manchester about the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport report on the Social Impact of Culture and Sport.

As you developed the project we then funded, we thought more deeply about participatory practice, about the value of international inspiration, how practice can inform organisational development and how an organisation like ours might support it. That led to the Inquiry into the Civic Role of Arts Organisations of which BAC is a prime example: inspiring others with initiatives like The Agency, working generously to spread projects such as this that are replicable, and showing how they can in turn impact your wider thinking.

ANDREW BARNETT

DIRECTOR OF CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN FOUNDATION
(UK BRANCH)

The Agency helps organisations to better understand the issues and needs of its communities through its young people and community partnerships and offers new pathways into the arts

The Agency is a model which has shown us how we can work closely with other organisations to support the delivery of our work and be able to trace the impact of our involvement, without being ourselves responsible for the direct delivery of participation sessions. It has provided a very useful model for supporting the knowledge and skills transfer around methodologies without requiring the staff and facilities that would be needed to deliver the work on the ground.

- As a direct result of our relationship with the community through The Agency, Steve Vickers (former Agency Project Manager, Contact) was approached by Manchester City Council Community cohesion team and PREVENT to work alongside them to tackle far-right radicalisation of young people in Moston and Harpurhey.
- The Agency has offered paid employment to 127 young people in their local areas, both for recruitment and as more permanent members of staff, opening up new pathways into the arts.
- The Agency has re-activated local community spaces through support of Christian, 21, of Talent Scene (a project providing production, photography and film support for other young artists) to fundraise £20,000 to build and run a music studio in the local community hub Providence House, Wandsworth.
- Joshua, a Year 3 Agent in Manchester, is now on Contact's Board of Trustees and was hired last year as a Producer in Cycle 2.

I'd love to continue working in the arts and now I'm more confident to approach these types of organisations.

AYESHA
CARDIFF AGENT

The Agency has had a profound impact on Contact, shifting our sense of what kind of organisation we are, what change we can effect and who we can reach. As a theatre, The Agency has taken us into areas such as sport, fashion, broadcasting, cookery and activism, and has changed the lives of many of its participants.

MATT FENTON
CONTACT'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Working on The Agency is a dream job for me; I get to work in my community, working with young people who walk past my house every day. The Agency is a combination of creativity and community impact and that feels really important, timely and relevant when you consider the stresses that young people, particularly from varying cultural backgrounds, face today.

GAVIN PORTER
CARDIFF PROJECT MANAGER

The programme helps organisations to engage those they would normally not be able to, creating a safe space where a wide range of young people and communities can come together, share ideas and work hand in hand

Young people need spaces outside of their homes where they can feel safe and supported, particularly in communities with the hostility, discrimination and violence so common in many of the communities we work in. The Agency provides a neutral, non-judgemental space where a wide range of young people- often from different cultural and religious backgrounds- can share spaces, ideas and commonalities, slowly shifting behaviours and mindsets. As a result, it also serves as a means for community and cultural organisations to engage with young people they would not normally be able to, fostering greater awareness and understanding of difference.

- North Belfast has very serious problems with bullying, homophobia and racism, compounded by the legacy conflict, making it difficult to young people on both sides to interact. The programme there has offered a safe space where these young people can come and work together.
- Grangetown and Butetown in Cardiff are diverse but often groups there don't make friends with people from different backgrounds. The Agency here has helped young people to forge new connections and collaborations with young people from these different groups.
- Manchester Youth Zone has continued to fund some Agency projects for years beyond Cycle 2.

Ordinarily these groups of young people never would have interacted. This area is very homophobic and many other young people would never have engaged with them on any level.

MATT FARRIS
BELFAST FACILITATOR

The Agency provides NTW the perfect opportunity to engage with young people who may not have even heard of the company, to engage with young people from communities that, historically, don't access theatre.

DEVINDA DE SILVA
HEAD OF COLLABORATION, NTW

The Agency helps organisations to find new models of co-creation and deeper engagement with young people and communities, local and national initiatives

We are now working with, rather than just for, our communities. Our role has shifted from the provider model (creating theatre and then encouraging local people to come and get involved) to a co-creator model, where we start by asking local people what they are interested in and how we can help them achieve their ideas. As organisations, we have been much more open to different ways of working since running The Agency. Instead of asking ourselves how we can help young people through the arts, we think about how we can pool our resources, knowledge and expertise to foster change based on their desires.

- In 2018, BAC embarked as the lead organisation on an ambitious project called Co-Creating Change that brings together organisations big and small across the country to commission work, gather methodologies and share ideas, as a result of running The Agency since 2013.
- The Agency has also inspired BAC to launch its Scratch Hub, which launched in September 2018. In addition to helping Agents to continue to run their projects beyond the programme, the Hub also supports local organisations and entrepreneurs. The Hub has received £550,000 from the Mayor of London's Fund to develop the space and £300,000 from the Battersea Power Station Fund to support future projects and programmes for years to come.
- BAC is working on a model "inspired by The Agency", adapting the methodology to a work with young people in Feltham Young Offender Institut
- As part of Contact's Year Out programme during their capital development, they developed a circus piece, "Tipping Point", with Ockham's Razor at the Manchester Youth Zone with local young people which was then performed in the city centre.
- Stemming from working at the Miner's in Harpurhey and raising the profile of the venue other arts organisations in the city, they have begun to host arts activities there, such as Manchester International Festival.

A lot of what youth work has been about in Northern Ireland has been participation and engaging in activity. This takes it to the next level. Other projects are used as a way to bring Catholics and Protestants together; to tackle poverty; or to raise confidence, but don't have outcomes like this - becoming a successful business person and becoming active, local leaders. This is a mix of art, youth work and social enterprise. As an organisation, it's helped us think about an additional journey we can help young people go on. From the street, going to engaging them and helping young people to take part and then looking to where they can have employability options. This has given us a different view on that.

KATRINA NEWELL

HEAD OF ARTS AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT,
THE ASHTON COMMUNITY TRUST



It's a tool to build genuine, sustainable partnerships with local people and organisations both inside and outside of the cultural sector

The Agency is a tool which has transformed our local community relationships as well as cross-sector partnerships. The ideas which are developed through The Agency are as diverse in form (boxing, fashion, food) as the communities they tap in to (young carers, young offenders, communities at risk). Part of The Agency's methodology opens up the young people's networks to arts organisations and vice versa, impelling both to develop new relationships and partnerships to ensure the project ideas are realised in the best way. As a result, all participating organisations are now much better networked with other people and organisations outside of the arts and are working much more effectively with them to achieve shared social change goals.

- The Agency has opened up new ideas for social change between unlikely community partnerships. Through Agents delivering their projects at Carney's Boxing Community, BAC has since collaborated on a £50,000 project (funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund) to explore the boxing history of the borough and create a theatre show with young people which has been shown at Carney's boxing gym and on BAC's main stage.
- Mathilde, the facilitator in Cardiff, says The Agency has benefited her as an artist through her work with non-artists, helping her to be creative outside of the echo chamber of artists.
- Assistant Facilitator in London, poet Amina Jama, also pointed out: 'as well as supporting the young people, I feel like I learned so much about my own practice through The Agency. Learning about how to create and measure tangible impact with your social projects helped me gain funding for my new programme, and the confidence to use the tools The Agency offers.'

The Agency has enabled BAC to work as a catalyst for change in the community, bringing together young people, businesses, council, youth and community services. The relationship between arts organisations and communities can tend to be rather linear – the arts organisation 'puts something on' and then 'invites the community.' The Agency means that we are working in a different way, with different parts of our community to create something together. Our role has shifted, we have become facilitators and developers, rather than deliverers and providers.

DAVID JUBB

FORMER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND CEO OF BAC

HOW DO WE MEASURE COMMUNITY IMPACT?

Through the Agency I feel like I can do something in my community.

ZAFIR LONDON AGENT

Community impact is an essential part of The Agency methodology. Projects are designed around social issues that young people identify in their local areas and hence have an incalculable impact on every project's target community. As causal community impact is difficult to measure and attribute to Agency projects alone, we measure community impact through the number of people that Agents engage with their projects, which has exceeded 20,000. They have had a significant, wider community impact through the new relationships organisations have built over the years and in the way that Agents projects have addressed particular needs.

Young people also learn about evaluation, so they can reflect on how they are addressing a need and how to measure it. In Cycle 2, they are given a session on evaluation where they think about:

What is the need you are addressing in your project?

How do you know it's a need? (Research, consultation, etc.)

How will you know your project has addressed that need?

This gets them thinking in greater depth about the need they are trying to address, the impact of their projects and how they might measure that impact.

Each location works closely with partners in the local community, to refer young people to the programme and to foster successful delivery: this not only benefits young people's projects but also enables the host organisation to feel more embedded in the local area.

For example, The Agency in Battersea works closely with Child Services in Wandsworth both to refer care-experienced young people to take part in the programme and to support projects that work directly with these groups.

The Agency has been a life-changing experience for our care leavers. This programme hugely raises both self-esteem and aspiration, in a safe and inclusive environment. It can be difficult to find opportunities that are accessible and engaging for care leavers to participate from start to finish. But The Agency puts the voice of the young person at the centre, enabling them to realise their potential as well as gain invaluable insight and experience into their chosen field.

AMELIA WILLIS WANDSWORTH CARE LEAVING TEAM

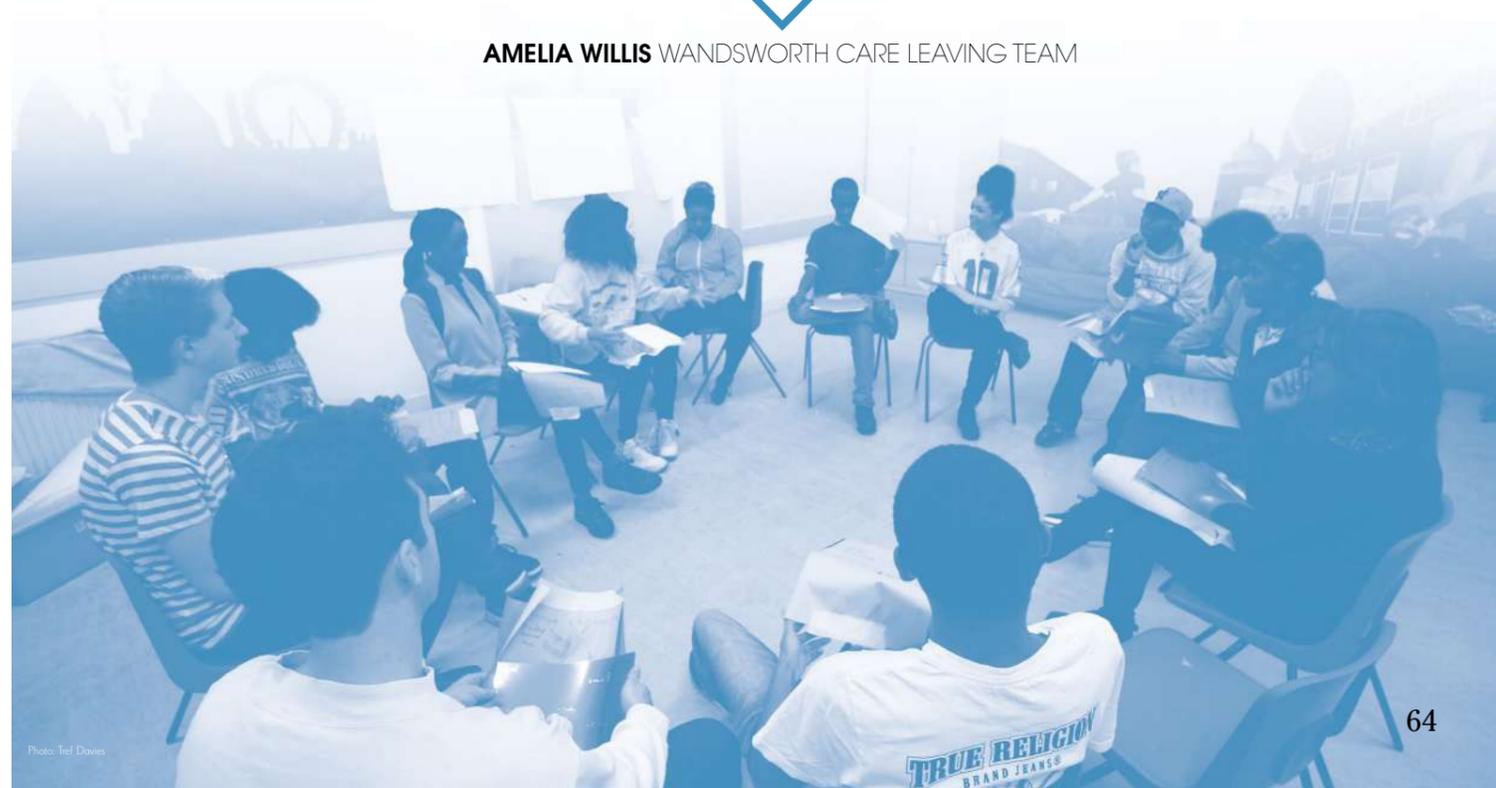


Photo: Ted Davies

Another referral and delivery partner, Carney's Community, has been delivering an Agency project, Get Fit Fast, independently for the last five years. George, who runs the centre, says:

The Agency has meant young people we work with can bring the skills they develop in the programme back to their community and support their peers. It is not in competition with other youth services that run in the local area, but supports them to be better and empowers them to then give back to their peers. Arnold had been a participant with us for years, and since The Agency he now teaches boxing here twice a week. Actually all of our work with under 11-year-olds comes under the umbrella of 'Get Fit Fast', Arnold's business.

Young people then work directly with delivery partners such as schools, community centres, sports centres and youth clubs, to name just a few.

One project from this year, The Glow Up, ran body positivity workshops in local schools which impacted both the teacher and the students involved. As Jane Ashrafi-Tari, the lead teacher said: "The Glow Up Project is something really needed and important, especially for their mental well-being." Students agreed: "They should do this more. It has been the best thing to do in school!" One student pointed out: "the project has helped me learn more about myself and know I can succeed with what I want to do in the future."

In Moston and Harpurhey, Agency sessions are not held at Contact, because the organisation is not based in the territory but are delivered through local partnerships so they can be more embedded in the place where the Agents live. Dale, who works for Harpurhey Neighbourhood Project where the project runs workshops and events, says: "The Agency is fantastic, and exactly what the young

people need in Moston and Harpurhey. It gets them off the street, gets them educated, and makes them realise they can make a change. We need some new community leaders to take over as I'm getting too old!"

In Moston, Miner's Community Arts and Music Centre run by Lou Beckett has seen an incredible transformation with both the centre and the community it is located in:

The Agency has had such a huge impact in both the community and at the centre. It has been phenomenal at bringing young people into the centre, helping them explore their creative side and empowering them to build projects which have had a huge impact in the area. I've seen queues outside my door of young people trying to access an Agency project. It has brought different cultures together and helped young people to make long-term friendships.



Photo: Rob Logan



Photo: Tref Davies

YEARS 1-6 TOTALS

- 266** Total number of Agents
- 77** Total number of Agents who took part in funded projects
- 45** Total funded projects
- 41,546 HOURS** Total hours of support for Cycle 1 (Years 1-6) (average of 263 hours/young person)
- 17,374 HOURS** Total hours of support for Cycle 2 (Years 1-6) (average of 316 hours/young person)
- 34** Funded projects still running
- £118,547** Funding raised by Agents to run projects
- 893** Number of in-kind hours of mentoring support from industry leaders
- 1,290** Number of workshop participants
- 17,166** Audiences at events
- 127** Number of jobs created
- 546** Number of performance opportunities
- 19,064** Total community members engaged

OUTPUTS

102 HOURS
Cycle 1 sessions

238 HOURS
Cycle 1 & 2 sessions

12
projects funded
per year (4 locations)

£2,000
initial funding received
by each project

80
Average number of
Cycle 1 participants
per year (4 locations)

20
Average number of
Cycle 2 participants
per year (4 locations)



Photo: James Allan

HENRIETTA
LONDON
YEAR 4 AGENT
REDEFINE



Henrietta is from the local Wandsworth area, and through the Agency she set up a theatre company for care leavers called 'Redefine' when she was 21.

The project is based on personal experience, as when I was 14, my little brother and I were taken into care. Shortly after, I was expelled from school for carrying a knife. Over the next few years I went to 8 different foster homes and attended a Pupil Referral Unit as I couldn't maintain mainstream education.

When she started the Agency, she had just started living in her own flat after having lived in a severely underfunded and unsafe hostel for four years, and was already on route to being evicted. It was a very daunting time for her.

She always knew she wanted to give back to care leavers but did not know how to do this, when her mentor persuaded her to do The Agency. At first, she didn't take it seriously – it was just to pass the time. But, over the weeks there was a shift.

The Agency made me think creatively about my whole life. The process started with me and my desire and was shaped around what I wanted to do. It's made me who I am today.

The biggest shift happened when she was awarded the money from the Panel. It was a huge boost for her self-esteem; sense of identity; and belonging. The Panel believed in her idea - and that is huge for a young person who has just come out of care.

For the first time in my life I felt proud of myself. The experience of setting up 'Redefine' was the most amazing feeling anyone can feel. For the

first time in my life, I felt autonomy, responsibility and a sense of agency. I've always had external agencies – be it a teacher, a social worker, a sexual advisor, a councillor, a mental health therapist– talking for me, but this time I could talk for myself.

When she went to social services and asked them to refer ten young people for the programme that she was running and had sourced funding for - she could feel their awe and surprise about what she was able to accomplish. She could feel the power shift in the room.

She cried when they staged their first show, realising that what started as a small idea has had such a massive impact.

When I saw the young people on stage – I could tell they had changed: they had confidence, were strong and proud. None of them had work or are in education. Before 'Redefine', some of them wouldn't even leave the house, but through the process they came to rehearsals every time. When we performed our show at City Hall for politicians, policy makers and people of influence – after the performance I thought they would be nervous and sit straight back down in the audience. But they didn't – they started talking about their experiences and what 'Redefine' had unlocked for them. My aim was never to expose their stories and narratives for sympathy, but they felt so strong within their identity that they decided they wanted to talk about it and educate the policy makers.



Since The Agency, she has worked as an assistant facilitator on the programme and Outreach Coordinator at BAC. She now works for Ernst & Young, one of the largest companies in the world, as Careers Consultant for Young People in Care. She has also set up her own children's party business, 'Happy Henry', that brings joy through drama to children. The business has been running for four years and now makes about £10,000 per year.

She is also on the board of trustees for Agenda, a charity that supports women and girls at risk of abuse, poverty and homelessness and is leading meetings with a range of influential people including the Chief Executive of Barnardo's and the Head of Children's Services and Leaving Care Services in councils across London.

If you had asked me to lead these meetings two years ago, I would have been crippled. I wouldn't have known what to say, but The Agency has helped me gain ownership over my own story. I now don't feel nervous or triggered by telling my story. Yes, I've been in care - but look what I am doing now! I can hold my head up high in those meetings. I am amazing and I knew that from the moment my idea was validated by the panel.

I feel like I can make change now. The state has an obligation to look after young people in care and it's failing them. My experience is still fresh. I now don't have time to coast. I have big plans.

HENRIETTA

STATS

APRIL 2017

PROJECT LAUNCHED

20 YOUNG PEOPLE

LEAVING CARE SERVICES FROM WANDSWORTH

ENGAGED 160

AUDIENCES

£6,780

ADDITIONAL FUNDING RAISED

ADVOCACY

Sits on Board of Trustees for Agenda- an alliance for women at risk of social exclusion

Advisory panel for Esmee Fairbairn's 'Care Leavers 2020'

Presented at City Hall for BAME Care Leavers Network

Presented in Brazil and Argentina at the Fondo Nacional de las Artes Conference

Presented at Local Trust's Creative Civic Change

Presented to Sussex Police about working with young people in care

Presented at Creative Scotland's Sharing the Power event



Photo: Joyce Nichols

AARON
 MANCHESTER
 YEAR 4 AGENT
 CONSOLE.CODE



Aaron moved to Moston from Nigeria aged 10. He initially wanted to support homeless individuals into employment, and although this was a great idea and is still something he addresses in his spare time, it was clear in the beginning of The Agency that his desire was more around tech and coding.

So, Aaron and fellow Agent Bayo Adetunde developed Console.Code. Console.Code delivers a series of workshops in the local community, teaching young people aged 8-13 coding and computer skills. The project engages individuals who would not normally work in the tech sector, such as young people from low economic backgrounds; BAME individuals; and young women. In the pilot process, they delivered a series of 8 workshops with a full group of 15 young people where participants learned how to code games in various formats. This culminated in a celebration and awards event for the participants, friends and family at Contact in April 2017.

Since completing their pilot process, Console.Code have continued to deliver workshops in the area, securing funding from HIVE MCR, Manchester City Council and the Co-Op to allow them to deliver four additional series of

Contact and The Agency has taught me to stick with my passion, I've always wanted to do something like this and with the support from Contact and The Agency they've shown me that it is possible to develop an idea and make it successful.

AARON

BY NUMBERS

MARCH 2017
 PROJECT LAUNCHED

60 YOUNG PEOPLE
 ENGAGED OVER 4 CYCLES
 OF CONSOLE.CODE

£3,500
 ADDITIONAL FUNDING
 SECURED FROM MCC,
 HIVE MCR & THE CO-OP

ADVOCACY

Delivered a workshop at Creative Scotland event on The Agency

Sat on various youth interview panels for Contact

Employed as an Agency street team member 2017 and 2018

workshops in August 2017, January 2018, May 2018 and August 2018. They worked with a full group of young people every time and demand for the project was so great that they have a waiting list of young people wanting to take part. His relationship with the community has definitely changed as a result of The Agency, and he has built strong ties with community centres where Console.Code is delivered, one of which (Harpurhey Neighbourhood Project) started a fund to buy books for his university studies.

In addition to Console.Code, he has represented Contact and The Agency at various events and conferences, most notably delivering a speech and workshop for The Agency for Creative Scotland as well as being nominated as young leader of the year for the Youth Buzz Awards.

In September 2018, surmounting a myriad of barriers around his immigration status and economic background, he secured a place at Oxford University to study Computer Science. He is still committed to delivering Console.Code in the community and is planning another series of workshops for summer 2019.



SESHIE
YEAR 1 AGENT, LONDON
IAMNEXT

Seshie grew up in Battersea, and from a young age he wanted to work in the music industry. In September 2013, he started The Agency when he was 17. He's always enjoyed listening to music and recognised there were other local people with talents he wanted to showcase, so he decided to produce.

He met people in leadership roles at BAC and saw that they didn't have to be onstage, but they could still inspire the masses:

Kids are inspired by people who actually care about what they do and are generous with their time, showing they have best interests in people they don't even know. That was key for me.

He really impressed the panel with his idea for a music platform showcasing local talent, and IAMNEXT officially launched in March 2014. After Cycle 2 of the project, he then received an additional £5,000 of project funding from the Wandsworth Youth Opportunity Fund. He ran his first large-scale event in July 2014, programming then underground grime artist Stormzy as a headliner.

He initially struggled to develop a leadership style, but came to the conclusion that the work is more important in the end. It's not about ego.

I felt like influencers were just talking about Grenfell, but they don't do anything with the power they have. I'm not an influencer but I want to do something for a good cause. If you have power, use it for something other than just self-gain

SESHIE

There are a lot of egos in the music industry but he now knows that if you focus on the work and not on personalities, you get farther.

Now he's developed strong enough networks to produce large-scale IAMNEXT events all over London, showcasing some of the UK's finest underground talent at such prestigious venues as the Roundhouse, Electric Brixton, RichMix, The O2 Kentish Town, The Yard and XOYO.

The Agency gave me belief in myself. I joined it when I was young and from a young age knowing that I can do whatever I put my mind to is powerful. I realised that everything I need is actually around me. I just have to look hard and dig deep into myself and believe in what I can do. Being young and being from this area, having something that helps you believe in yourself is important.

He has also travelled to do IAMNEXT internationally and has hosted music nights in Stockholm, The Netherlands, Glasgow, Dublin and Paris, as well as at Glastonbury festival 2019. In June 2017, following the Grenfell tower tragedy, he led a fundraiser in a nearby skate park, reaching thousands of lives audiences and making Channel 4 national news.

ADVOCACY

Presented about his project at "Encounters" at City Hall alongside PPP Interviewed on Brazilian TV Globo (the fifth largest TV channel in the world).

Presented at the Houses of Parliament in May 2016, with Andrew Barnett, Director of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and alongside then Minister for Culture, Media and Sport, Ed Vaizey

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

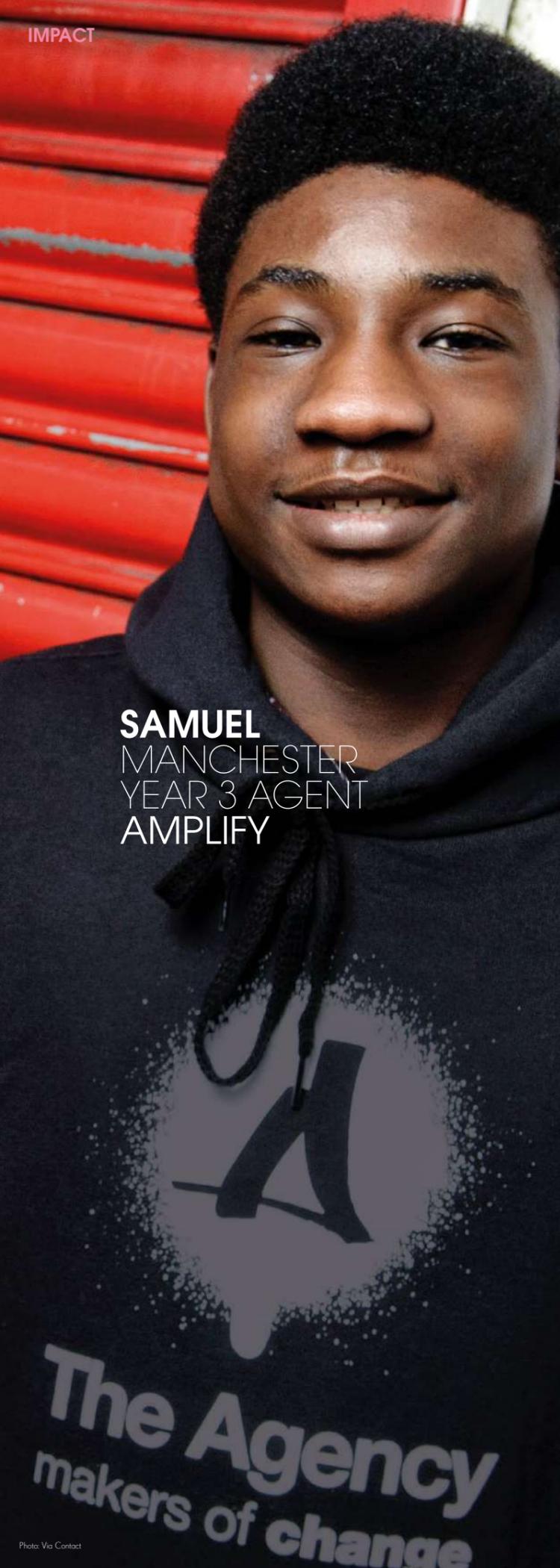
PROJECT RUNNING FROM MARCH 2014 - PRESENT

100,000
LIVE AUDIENCE MEMBERS REACHED

10,794
SUBSCRIBERS TO YOUTUBE CHANNEL

7,000
INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

KEY PARTNERSHIPS WITH DICE, METROPOLIS, DOLLOP DOLLOP AND LIVITY



SAMUEL
MANCHESTER
YEAR 3 AGENT
AMPLIFY

Sam's journey with The Agency began when he was 15. From the beginning, he had a grand idea. He initially wasn't open to the creative methodology, but his goal was to create something that would change the world, starting with young people in Manchester. After letting go and allowing the methodology to guide him, he reached the conclusion that his desire was to offer young people a platform to express themselves creatively. He called this platform Amplify.

He pitched his idea at Panel with fellow Agent Andrew, and they were successful. So, in January 2016 they embarked on a pilot of Amplify which comprised 8 workshops and recording sessions and culminated in the production of an EP and a launch event. Through The Agency, he began to understand that young people are capable of building structures that cater to their needs and the needs of their peers. He also developed his organisational skills and learned to respond positively to a variety of obstacles that arose throughout the process.

Since the first pilot of Amplify, he has obtained further funding to grow the idea and offer opportunities to more local artists. In February 2017, Amplify 2.0 began over a longer period of 8 weeks to compose an album recorded at

The Agency has been a massive stepping stone in my life, it has inspired and empowered me to make a change within my community, they've given me the skills, knowledge and the power to do it.

SAMUEL

Manchester's prestigious Blueprint Studios. He has also represented Contact and The Agency on youth panels at Contact's international exchange project Contacting the World in 2016; as a guest speaker when The Agency visited Parliament; and has been employed as part of The Agency recruitment team in 2016 and 2017. In 2018, Amplify were commissioned to deliver a series of workshops at The Factory Youth Zone in Harpurhey where he was employed as both project manager and assistant facilitator.

Through working with The Agency, he has gained a deeper connection with his community and is also now a participant in Contact's "Future Fires" programme, developing a media strand to Amplify's work. Over the last year, he has engaged in another Contact programme, SAPASS, a European youth exchange project which tries to develop creative dialogues with young people from Rennes, Bologna and Manchester as a way of understanding better routes of engaging young people in culture, and attended meetings in Bologna and Rennes. He has also gained employment as a project coordinator for Young Manchester and hopes to head to university soon to study politics and economics.

STATS

MARCH 2016
PROJECT LAUNCHED

26 YOUNG PEOPLE
ENGAGED OVER 2
CYCLES OF AMPLIFY

£3,000
ADDITIONAL FUNDING
SECURED FROM UNLTD

OVER 100 PEOPLE
HAVE ATTENDED AMPLIFY EVENTS

ADVOCACY

Appeared on a panel for young voices at Contacting the World 2016

Attended meetings in Rennes and Bologna as part of SAPASS

Represented at The Agency at Parliament event

Employed as an Agency street team member 2016 & 2017



Photo: Rob Logan

ABDI AND DJIBRIL
 YEAR 3 & YEAR 4
 AGENTS
 UNIVERSAL
 LANGUAGE



Photo: On the

Universal Language is a football and learning group for young people who have English as their second language. It was first developed by Agent Abdi in 2016 and joined by Djibril. Abdi came to the UK when he was ten from Somalia and Djibril arrived in the UK aged 17 from Ivory Coast.

Abdi wanted to play football when he arrived but was excluded from local projects as he was struggling with English. His desire for change came from feeling isolated as a young person learning English in a new environment and wanting other young kids to have a better experience than he had. The following year, Djibril had a similar idea, using football to connect young people, promote confidence in language and reduce isolation for migrants, refugees and newly-arrived young people, so Djibril joined Abdi so they could deliver the project together.

Since the project's start, the two have established links with South London Refugee Association, Football Beyond Borders, Katherine Lowe Settlement, and Amnesty International, and now have a partnership with Chelsea Football Club Foundation. As Djibril says: 'I never thought that would happen. The best thing is that it means we can help more people'.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

Long-term partnership with Chelsea Football Club Foundation

Led on Battersea Arts Centre's refugee week in 2017

Took part in Football Welcomes weekend, travelling to Leicester to enter a tournament with other refugee teams

Developed an AQA accreditation for participants on the project

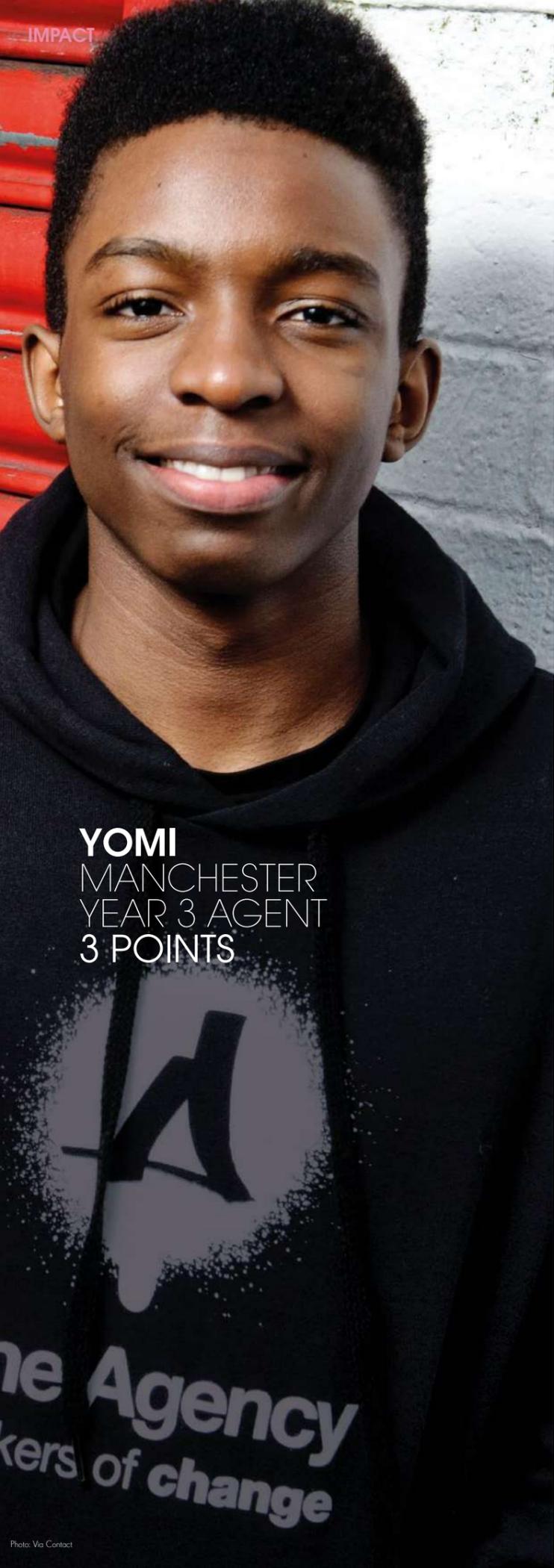
£14,472 raised in additional funding

When I got to London it was tough at first, but Football made me feel home again. It helped me to feel more at home, and I wanted to help others in a similar situation. It doesn't matter where you come from, or what language you speak, when people say 'come, play!' you feel like you belong. It only takes a few sessions before you can say 'pass the ball' and talk about your favourite players.

DJIBRIL

Through The Agency I've improved my communication skills, through talking to people older than me and gaining new skills from them, and also learning from them. I've learnt how to manage a project including recruiting participants, working with teachers to create fun sessions, supporting young people in sessions and managing the budget. It is great to see young people (at Universal Language) being more encouraged and determined on a Saturday morning, taking part in something they are passionate about and making new friends.

ABDI



YOMI
MANCHESTER
YEAR 3 AGENT
3 POINTS

Yomi moved to Moston at a young age and lived with his three brothers and his mum. When he started The Agency, he didn't have a clear idea of what to develop in the programme, but through mapping the territory in week three, he saw that there was a massive lack of organised sport in the area. So he decided to start a basketball project, 3 Points. 3 Points is a sporting project designed to use team sports tournaments to bring young people from different regions, backgrounds and ethnicities together. The team runs 5-on-5 basketball tournaments for young people aged 15-21 with randomised teams, which encourages young people from different areas of Manchester to come together, socialize and ultimately learn from each other.

After being successful at Panel stage, he delivered his first pilot of the programme with the help of his producer, which consisted of a series of open court days at public basketball courts in the community. This helped to grow the name of the project before they hosted a tournament at a local community centre which attracted 40 people in April 2016. Following the initial tournament, 3 Points has continued to develop and grow not just in his home territory of Moston and Harpurhey but to other areas of Greater Manchester. They have successfully secured an additional £2500 from UnLtd which allowed them to deliver a further

The Agency has taught me so much in terms of not just my confidence to deliver something and make it successful but also how to tap into different networks and utilise the skills around me

YOMI

two tournaments. In these, their attendance doubled from the first iteration and engaged young people from all over Manchester to come to Harpurhey and compete.

The 3 Points team has now grown, too, and now has 8 key members who come together 3 times a year to host tournaments across Manchester. With equipment bought from additional funding and networks built with local businesses to offer tournament prizes, they now have a sustainable model of delivery that is not reliant on public funds. Because this project is so rooted in his territory, his relationship with and understanding of his community has grown immensely with support from The Agency. He has had to develop positive, long-term relationships not just with participants and audiences who attend, but also with the organisations that host them.

Since completing The Agency, he has worked at Contact sitting on youth interview panels, as a member of the Front of House Team and on The Agency Street Team. With two tournaments planned for summer 2019, he is currently applying to Goldsmiths University of London to study Business with the hope of developing 3 Points into a full time job.

BY NUMBERS

MARCH 2016
PROJECT LAUNCHED

320 YOUNG PEOPLE
HAVE COMPETED IN 3
POINTS TOURNAMENTS

£2,500
IN ADDITIONAL FUNDING
SECURED FROM UNLTD

ADVOCACY

Represented at The Agency at Parliament event

Presented and delivered a workshop at Creative Scotland event on The Agency

Employed as an Agency street team member

THE FUTURE OF THE AGENCY

A robust evidence base for the programme has been building since 2015.

We decided to grow the programme through a partnership model after assessing our options with the International Centre for Social Franchising. Our chosen partnership model sees us growing the programme in partnership with organisations from across the UK who already have, or are committed to developing, strong links with a specific local community / territory. This model ensures that deep local knowledge and long-lasting relationships are built and are able to exist beyond the delivery of the programme itself.

We have stress-tested this partnership model since 2015 by working with a range of different organisations from Arts Council England's NPOs to small businesses; from small community organisations to large theatres; from building-based organisations to those without a building; from national and city-wide funders to local authorities.

We have developed a range of documents and policies which have underpinned this successful partnership model:

- A document which outlines what makes a partner suitable for The Agency
- Recruitment and due-diligence process for partners
- Partnership Agreements and Contracts including clauses for IP, crediting and licensing
- Three-day practical face-to-face training programme for delivery staff
- Methodology toolkit – values, ethos, example exercises, job descriptions and more
- Buddy system between organisations for regular support and guidance
- Twice yearly whole network gatherings – for shared learning, shared opportunities and continuing professional development

AGENCY FUTURE PLANS

We now have an adaptable model which can be run by local partner organisations across the UK. Current partners are keen to continue running the programme and there is demand from new organisational partners and funders too.

BAC and Contact will continue to lead an expanding National Network of organisations who are committed to deepening and exploring their civic role and who are interested in not just 'delivering activity to' young people but who are interested in empowering them to lead and create.

The network will not only provide the training and support as detailed above but will capitalise on the opportunities a growing national movement affords. Including:

- A National Comms and PR campaign giving visibility to young people's creative ideas for change
- High-profile platforms for young people's ideas in places of power – Parliament; City Hall; BBC
- A National Festival to celebrate young people's ideas for change
- International Young People's Exchanges with Agency partners in Brazil and beyond

I am delighted that young people from across Waltham Forest can now apply to take part in The Agency – a brilliant project that will help their creative business idea take shape, build their skills and provide crucial seed funding. London is full of creative talent and Waltham Forest, London's first Borough of Culture, is no exception. This innovative project will enable young Londoners from all backgrounds to realise their ambitions and become the creative entrepreneurs of the future.

JUSTINE SIMONS

DEPUTY MAYOR FOR CULTURE AND THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

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National Theatre Wales | Cardiff | nationaltheatrewales.org

Ashton Community Trust | Belfast | ashtoncentre.com



The Agency
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