

# Bradford Producing Hub

## Year 2 Evaluation Report

April 2022



Bradford  
Producing  
Hub



RMR

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# Summary

*"I was brand new to the arts sector having never made any work; if I hadn't had the funding I may have never entered the sector or made anything. It was absolutely crucial to give me the opportunity to take an idea and make it a reality. I have been stretched beyond my elastic limit."*

Make Work, Interviewee

*"Making important decisions about funding has allowed me to see how much creativity is present in Bradford and the district. I am a huge advocate for Bradford and its creative journey, the future is bright."*

Creativity Council Member

**This report evaluates Year 2 of Bradford Producing Hub (BPH), an innovative 4-year Arts Council-funded project which aims to make sure Bradford is a creative city where lots of amazing live performance is happening all the time.**

Year 2 of BPH's Arts Council England funding ran from September 2020 to August 2021.

This report covers this period, although due to its delayed production, it references events from 2022 in the narrative sections.

## BPH in Year 2

In Year 2, BPH has

- Offered crucial support and structure, and been a lifeline for practising and emerging artists in the local sector.

- Remodelled traditional systems, processes and hierarchies with evidence-based principles which has produced a robust series of models of practice that could be valuable to other cities.
- Shown progress towards a fairer and more inclusive arts ecology, resilient arts infrastructure and long-term sustained investment – but more robust evidence is needed.
- Demonstrated good progress against (or completion of) many shorter-term aims from the Story of Change (see Appendix 1). BPH must now take care to streamline, focus and support team wellbeing.

## A diverse and wide-reaching programme

**Despite the continuing Covid-19 restrictions, BPH has provided a wealth of high-quality events and training sessions, as well as received amazing feedback in its second year towards its aims in the Story of Change.**

- 96 events including talent development, Front Room Poetry and Play Days.
- 4,211 participants across BPH events.
- Over 3,000 subscribers on social media.
- Data sources show increasingly diverse participants, although the figures in this report underrepresent what the team observes out in the field.
- BPH is reaching and supporting artists at all stages of their careers, and those with and without formal arts training.

- More people than before feel the art being made is representative of their local community, but there is room for improvement.

## A more skilled and confident workforce

**BPH has supported artists with a variety of existing skills and knowledge, enabling a rich environment for skills sharing and development.**

- 43 training sessions delivered.
- 543 trainees across all sessions.
- Over 110 hours of training.
- Artists feel more skilled and have better understanding of the sector, leading to more confidence in themselves and their role in the arts, new career paths and a renewed sense of pride in Bradford as a creative city.

## A wider range of work and opportunities

- £61,000 in 7 awards for Make Work grants (plus wrap around).
- 20 mentors with 22 mentees.
- 152 hours of mentoring with an additional 192 hours allocated.
- 22 trainers.
- 41 artists and companies helped formally to apply for funding through training, 1-2-1 sessions, feedback reviews, letters of support and partnership applications.
- By connecting artists, new support systems and skill sharing has generated new progression routes, career opportunities and

increased investment into Bradford artists and BPH programmes.

- Of the applications we know 28 were successful (= over £534k), 5 were unsuccessful, and 8 decided not to apply / have not yet applied.

## Shifting the Bradford Cultural Ecosystem

**BPH is a key player in the cultural sector in Bradford.**

- BPH is well integrated and influencing important partnerships – this includes the Cultural Place Partnership, having strong links with Bradford 2025, holding regular meetings with Bradford Council, and being a named partner in Bradford Council’s 10-year Cultural Strategy.
- There are early indicators of Bradford becoming known for its ground-breaking, socially engaged live art that resonates with diverse audiences.
- BPH is supporting the sector to better share digital guidance and advice.
- BPH has been instrumental in opening up new, non-traditional performance spaces across the city.
- The ambition for streamlined back-office functions and shared bookings and ‘What’s on’ systems are yet to be reached.

## The BPH approach

**Core to BPH’s ethos is to ‘do things differently’. This is reflected in the feedback.**

We find:

- Overwhelming appreciation for BPH, with the team continuously described as supportive, welcoming, fun and inclusive.
- 95% of attendees rated events and training as very good or excellent.
- 86% of attendees were likely or very likely to attend again.
- Artists reported that BPH funding support improved their confidence, organisational skills and career prospects.
- Most applicants were happy with feedback, even when they weren't successful in their application.

## Conclusions and recommendations

**BPH has seen real progress in Year 2. There are also areas to focus on going forward. This section outlines our key conclusions and recommendations for BPH in Year 3.**

- BPH has been a lifeline to local artists as they continue to deal with the consequences of Covid-19, especially those hit with financial insecurity from loss of income.
- The programme of events has been consistently rated highly, but the range of support on offer has been a challenge on resources and capacity at times.
- BPH's dynamic radical approach has emerged as one of most successful factors of the programme. Other principles noted in the Story of Change have also been instrumental in the success.
- BPH has supported artists to help themselves, but there is still some concern that some artists are becoming reliant on this help, which the team continue to work on. There is also a

common theme in the feedback about the scale of work to be undertaken.

- Being 'ideas-led' has allowed projects to be nurtured that would not traditionally be supported – resulting in positive impacts for both audiences and the team.
- Artists are very appreciative of BPH for the lack of red tape in the process of applying for funding.
- Creating a digital space for artists during the pandemic has been seen as invaluable.
- The implementation of new internal processes such as quick and easy payment systems and application processes has been an important part of the success of the programme.
- BPH have also been key advocates for fair pay in the sector, despite the team themselves not being paid a fair wage in line with the strategic responsibility in the city, or in line with similar roles elsewhere.
- This evaluation will be crucial in validating the social impact that this project has alongside The Leap.
- The team are highly regarded as approachable and resilient amongst artists and others they engage with.
- The complicated relationship with the Consortium must be addressed to remove the barrier to delivery.

## We recommend

### A focus on strategic development

1. An updated JCNA or similar.
2. Mapping out stakeholders and wider partners.
3. Creating and sharing a clear identity.
4. Developing shared resources and learning.
5. Enhancing and broadening partnerships in the education sector.
6. Creating additional capacity within the team to enable the Project Director to work strategically.

### Continued high-quality approach to delivery

7. Maintaining the objective to 'do things differently'.
8. Continue reflecting on and challenging practice within and beyond BPH to build progression in thinking and practice.
9. Do more projects that are less reliant on partners.
10. Build in a longer response time for call outs.
11. Developing bespoke opportunities and support for emerging leaders, work on balancing dependence on the BPH.
12. Within every programme, consider the responsibility to challenge but also encourage growth.
13. Increasing marketing presence and promotion of opportunities.

14. Reviewing representation to plan targeted audience development.
15. Continuing to explore the possibility of a creative people directory
16. Develop a map of live events across Bradford to create a city-wide 'What's On'.
17. Clarifying marketing guidelines.
18. Modelling risk within the Creative Council for others by documenting decision-making process.
19. Exploring ways to open up bookings and access for local and freelance artists to larger venue/performance spaces.

### A focus on future development

20. Working through the Creative Council and Consortium to do long term planning around the future of BPH.
21. Making time and space for reflection and challenge sessions to explore how to build the sector of the future – stronger, more diverse and less hierarchical.
22. Researching and planning delivery scenarios to take into account different potential risks.
23. Implementing recommendations from forthcoming Consortium review.
24. Enhancing and formalising plans for staff development.
25. Exploring potential for regular or long-term programme participants to act as sounding board for future programming.



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 About the evaluation

The evaluation is based on a Story of Change that explores the differences Bradford Producing Hub (BPH) are trying to make and to whom. It will look at what approaches and principles are followed and how they affect the outcomes.

The focus will be on collaborative and embedded approaches – building in data collection to the delivery, regular informal feedback and reflection sessions, developing evaluation and thinking skills within the team and the programme as a whole.

This report evaluates Year 2 of the 4 years of Bradford Producing Hub operation.

Data was drawn from the following sources:

- The annual BPH survey, sent out by email to 859 creative practitioners in October 2021. There were 82 responses to the survey
- A series of 12 strategic interviews with partners and key stakeholders
- Team reflection meetings and wider programme meetings
- Anecdotal quotes and observations captured at events, performances and meetings
- Project specific evaluation data

It is delivered by Ruth Melville Research Ltd, an innovative and forward-thinking research and evaluation agency, with in-depth experience of working with arts and cultural organisations.

## 1.2 About BPH

BPH is an exciting four-year project that aims to make sure Bradford is a creative city where lots of amazing live performance is happening all the time.

It is a pilot project that will test radical new approaches to producing live arts, supporting creative talent, developing a local arts workforce, and partnering with communities across Bradford to reimagine the city as a thriving hub for performance.

BPH began with a Joint Cultural Needs assessment (JCNA) – a 6-month research period to understand the needs, barriers and desires of Bradford's creative sector and audiences. The first 2-years of BPH activity have been designed to directly respond to the needs identified at that point, and a process of ongoing needs analysis and response.

BPH is led by a consortium of Bradford organisations and artists: Theatre in the Mill (lead), Mind the Gap, Kala Sangam and Displace Yourself Theatre. 2021 saw founding partners 154 Collective and Common Wealth Theatre step down from the Consortium and recruitment is underway for 3 independent artists to join.

In September 2019 the project was awarded £1.5 million from Arts Council England.



## The impact of 2021

BPH was never designed to be delivered during a pandemic, but pretty much has been from the start. There are a number of issues arising from this, for example the JCNA which assessed needs BPH should respond to was carried out pre-pandemic, and that this now requires review. As a live arts development project, the extreme impact of Covid on the sector has significantly impacted the work of BPH, much work has had to be delivered online and much-needed opportunities for networking and increasing collaboration have been difficult to deliver.

Our report on 2020 showed how much the sector valued the work of BPH during lockdown, and across 2021 there are positive examples of how BPH has been able to support the sector where others could not: Make Work continued when ACE, CBMDC, Esmee Fairburn, and other funders all closed their doors. Spare Bob was created specifically to provide easy access micro-grants to support the sector during lockdown - this has been so successful the programme is continuing.

Despite ongoing pandemic related and socio-political challenges, more artists are positive about their year than during 2020.

The many positives focus on additional time to reflect and opportunities for growth, a change of direction, expansion and better networking. This has included movement to digital participation and engagement for some, for example, one person mentioned employing a digital director.

For others, some work avenues initially closed down, presenting major income challenges and a knock-on impact on mental health and wellbeing, which are still enduring. For some the need to work for survival often eclipsed creative practice. In the second half of the

year things started to pick up as bigger venues opened up and more resilience funding streams were launched.

## 1.3 The programme

This section details the programme and participant profiles.

The BPH programme is made up of 8 strands of work:

### 1. Need assessment

Gathering and understanding the needs that BPH should address, to support the creation of more Live Art in Bradford.

- **Creativity Council**, a group of 14 people from a range of experiences, skills and knowledge. They and have been instrumental in giving advice, guidance and support to the BPH team and reviewing grant applications.

### 2. Talent development

Providing a structured and responsive strand of training and development opportunities for all artists at any point of their career, that will support the creation of more Live Art in, and coming out of, Bradford.

- **Extracurricular**, a series of online discussion including: Fearless Finance, Introduction to Q Lab, Introduction to Outdoor Working and Introduction to Outdoor Intensive, Embracing Neurodiversity, Ignition, Planning and Caring for Audiences, Getting Familiar with Self-Assessment, Getting Back to the Rehearsal Room and Introduction to scenario Planning
- **Introduction to Fundraising**: aiming to increase fundraising knowledge for the live arts sector in Bradford

- **Fundraising Working Group Sessions:** Practical sessions to support fundraising application writing for, PRS Foundation, National Lottery Awards for All and The National Lottery Heritage Fund
- **DYCP session with Hannah Bentley:** Information session on applications for developing your creative practice (ACE funding programme)
- **Get it Done: New Producer Training:** Supporting more people who want to be producers to start their career, and people already producing to keep developing
- **Get it Done: Production Management Training:** Understanding how to bring together lighting, sound, staging, special effects, event management and creative vision to make things happen
- **Outdoor Arts Residency:** An opportunity for artists with a Bradford outdoor performance idea to think about how to make it happen
- **Spare Bob:** £500 micro-grants programme for artists and creatives
- **Mentoring:** A programme pairing organisations or individuals with mentors and experts to help support development and growth
- **Culture 101:** A development programme for ethnically diverse women in Bradford
- **NPO Call Out:** A series of conversations supporting organisations developing to NPO status
- **BPH Sharing Sessions:** Sharing the expertise from the team with audiences online via zoom in informal meetings

### 3. Reaching people

Ensuring that work is relevant and reaches audiences. Improving the ways audiences find out about and engage in live arts.

- **Black Artists Network**
- **Front Room Poetry:** A series on online poetry evenings with a headliner and an open mic including: Amerah Saleh, Isaiah Hull, Shareefa Energy, Festivities with Kate Fox, M'Rabty, LGBTQ+ History Month, Debris Stevenson, Mike Garry, Louise Fazackerley, Victory McNulty.
- **Front Room Poetry on the Road**
- **Buskival:** A new 'busking' festival providing paid performance opportunities for musicians across the District.
- **Let's have a Brew:** online meeting for artists to connect over lockdown.
- **Plays Days:** A series of 3 workshops for artists led by: Tyrrel Jones and Jan Blake, Cultural Comedy Tours and Ella Tighe, Frantic Assembly and Beccy Durham.

### 4. New work

Providing Research & Development funding, Commissions and creative support to enable more and better Live Art in Bradford and by Bradford artists.

- **Make Work 2020:** 4 strands:
  - **Playing Out:** A Compendium of Mythical Beasts, Hidden Winter and The Bull and the Moon
  - **Your Idea, Your Way:** Khooghi and Full English

- **Test it, R&D:** Destination Bradford and Intercultured
- **Just R&D it:** A Love Story on Leeds Road and Thyme Cafe
- **Make Work 2021:** 3 strands:
  - **Your Idea, Your Way:** Tale of 2 Estates, Dancing with Colours and AJAYU Transitorio
  - **Test it R&D:** Santa Must Die! And Fishing Net Soul
  - **Just R&D it:** Love in a Northern Town and Bradford Psychogeographical Synthesiser

## 5. Transforming Spaces fund

BPH has a small amount of funding available each year to help people and organisations in Bradford to develop new spaces that will support the live arts sector.

## 6. Shared resources

A selection of practical resources available on the BPH website, including, The Outdoors Arts Guide, People with Power and Purses, a series of videos from Extracurricular and documentation on everything from Health and Safety to Budget Management to working outdoors, applying for funding, and research.

## 7. Management and delivery

Ensuring the programme is well managed and supported, while creating new routes into the arts sector.

## 8. Evaluation, learning & legacy

Evaluating and sharing the successes and failures of the project, proving need, and having a constant eye to the future.

### 1.4 About the BPH artists

This section focuses on the artists and creative practitioners that have participated in the programme. Data for this section is drawn from the 82 responses to the annual BPH survey (sent to 859 creative practitioners who attended any BPH course), and from monitoring data including postcodes collected at events.

The majority of participants come from across the Bradford area, most of them work some or all of the time in Bradford. Participants on in-depth programmes have to demonstrate a connection to Bradford, so while they may not have a BD postcode they may have grown up there or work there. Individual project data sources show increasingly diverse participation figures in terms of ethnicity and disability (as compared to last year's figures). Data shows that the programme is supporting people at all stages in their careers, both with and without formal arts 'training'.

### Where people are based

Of those who gave postcodes (1176 responses), 45% (505) were from the Bradford District. Participation was concentrated in Bradford, then the North of England but there was wider participation from across the UK.

The data shows that slightly more Bradford based creatives took part in the more in-depth training offered (51%) and significantly more local people accessed BPH funding through Make Work (61%) and Spare Bob (71%) programmes.

Figure 1 and 2 below show maps of a sample of 46 participating creatives who provided post codes and were from the Bradford District.

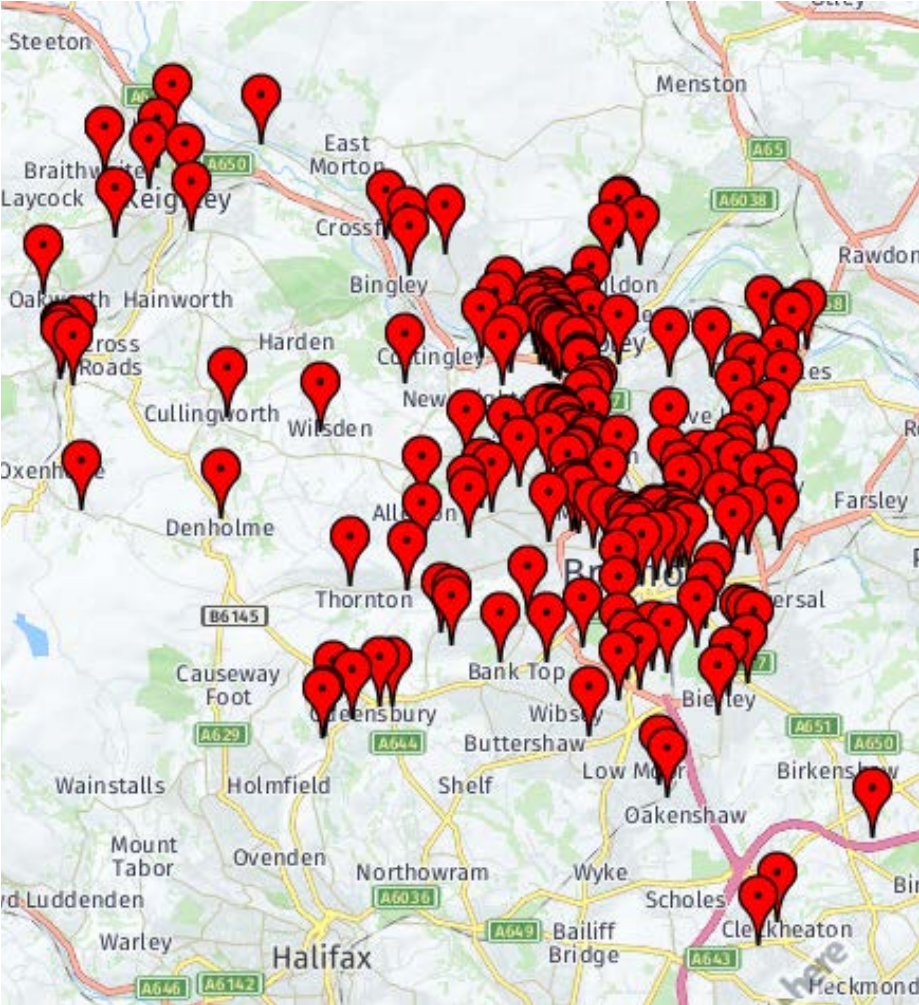


Figure 1: Map of Bradford based participants



Figure 2: Postcodes of participants in the whole of the UK, red markers show Bradford

## How people identify

Where possible we have drawn this data from in programme monitoring. We also asked annual survey respondents, but they are not as likely to be a balanced sample.

People attending training, in person sessions (excluding one-off sessions) or applying for funding were asked to self-describe their demographics as they chose, using an open question: *"Please state below how you self-identify, in as many of the following areas as you feel comfortable: age; gender; ethnicity, class, education and disabilities. Please note you have the option to not answer if you feel uncomfortable. Answers to this question will not affect your chances of success"*.

This was carried out on a trial basis and has had interesting results in terms of level of detail given. This approach allowed people to self-report any or all of their characteristics. It was then assessed to see what proportion reported any of the key characteristics BPH wanted to focus on.

This is only the proportion that reported these in response to an open question about how they defined, so the number who might answer 'yes' to a direct question could well be higher.

Of the people this data was gathered from (365), 30% reported diverse ethnicities, 9% LGBTQIA+, 12% disability, and 21% working class.

However, when looking at only those who responded with Bradford postcodes, this revealed a more diverse reach, with 45% diverse ethnicities, 14% LGBTQIA+, 15% disability and 38% working class, showing that BPH are successfully reaching diverse local artists as per the core aims. These figures are summarised in the table below.

	Number of responses	Diverse Ethnicity	LGBTQIA+	Disability	Working Class
All responses	365	30%	9%	12%	21%
Bradford Only	148	45%	14%	15%	38%

*Table 1: Comparison of diversity markers between all responses and only Bradford based responses*

In addition to these figures, we also asked the 82 people who completed the annual survey. Of these:

- 65% women, 2 non-binary. (9% less female ,1 more non-binary than last year)
- 9% with some form of disability, 12% didn't want to answer. (9% less than last year)
- 63% straight, 34% LGBTQIA+, 3% didn't want to say. (11% more LGBTQIA+)

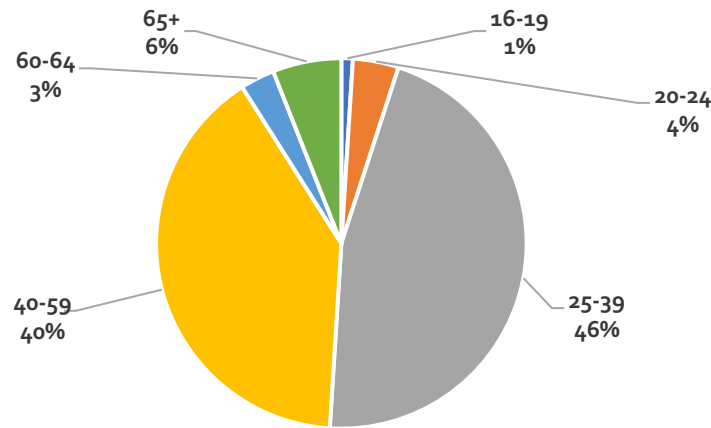


Figure 3: Age range of survey respondents

Data from the survey shows that the largest ethnic groups were 79% white and 13% Asian.

What is clear is the level of bias in the results from the survey, particularly around diversity (people who define as other than white are less likely to complete the survey) and LGBTQIA+ (people who define as LGBTQIA+ are more likely to complete the survey – or report as such within a survey setting vs self-definition). This might be down to bias in who responds to a survey, but it might also represent the difference between the more local audience who completed the monitoring question, and the wider audience for one off training events who would have been sent the survey and wouldn't have been asked the monitoring question.

This requires more investigation next year.

In terms of reach into diverse socio-economic groups, we have mapped postcodes of all participants against the Indices of

Deprivation, to explore relative deprivation as a proxy. This finds that for Bradford District based participants, it is more likely that they live in a more deprived neighbourhood than the overall population of Bradford. With 39% of BPH participants living in among the 10% most deprived streets in England (compared to 35% of Bradford's population). This continues up through the levels of deprivation with 71% among the poorest third in England (compared to 64% of Bradford).

This is unusual reach for a programme focussed on artists and shows BPH is really reaching creatives who would typically have been underrepresented in other development programmes.

Groups		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
BPH artists	%	39	17	15	5	6	49	5	4	1	4
Bradford Local Pop	%	35	14	14	7	6	6	5	5	3	5

Table 2: IMD comparing BPH artists to the local Bradford population

## What previous creative training people have had

The majority of respondents have also had some form of creative training or development outside BPH. 22% have only had support from BPH.

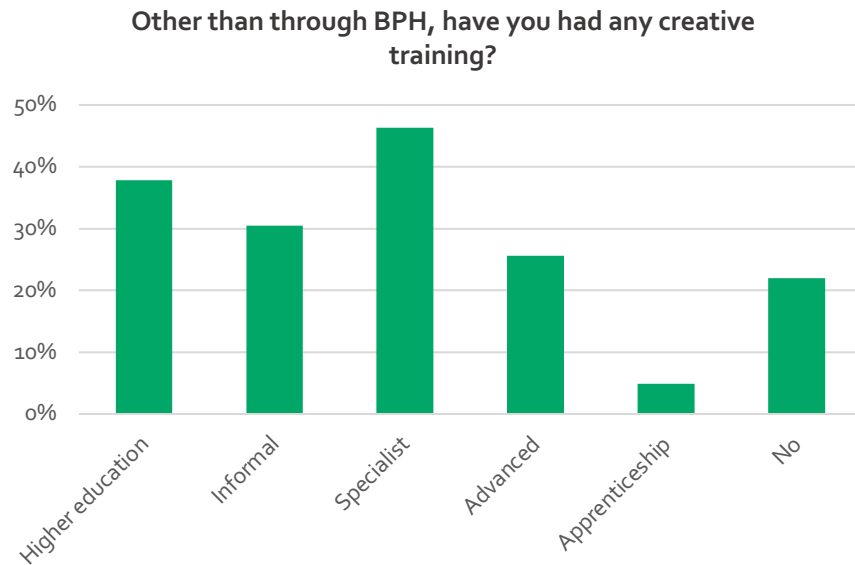


Figure 4: Other training

## Where people work

The majority work in Bradford at least some of the time, with 23% making work in Bradford all of the time, 26% most of the time, 27% some of the time (more in all cases than last year). 19% live and work elsewhere (8% less than last year).

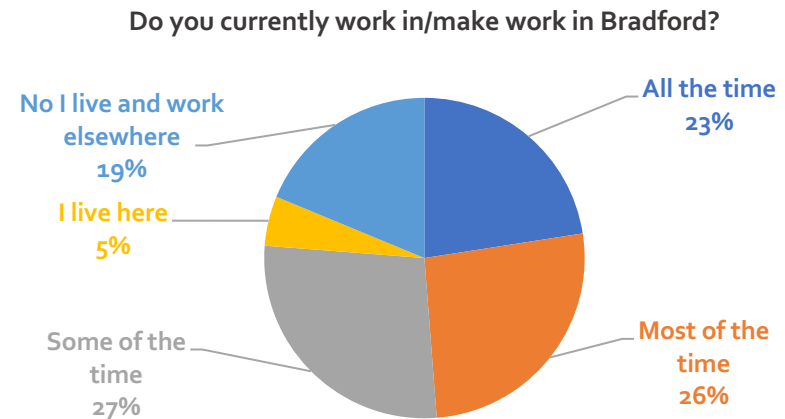


Figure 5: Where people work

## Barriers to work

45% of BPH participants said they had no personal barriers, 53% have some form of caring responsibility (children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents). 18% had some additional caring role beyond being a parent.

- The most significant personal barriers to work were identified as (most impactful first):
  - Caring responsibilities and mental health
  - Physical health and personal wellbeing
  - Financial and time pressure, e.g. having to work full time to support children

Over a quarter of survey responses indicated that mental health was a barrier to them working (26%). This was the most prominent

barrier stated in the survey. The figure has risen from 14% in the 2020 survey which is a positive indicator that BPH is reaching people who really need this support. These changes are interesting, but without further research and a larger sample size they can't be confirmed as significant.

Overall population studies reveal a significant increase in mental health issues as a result of isolation and anxieties because of Covid 19. It is likely that the increase seen in this survey is also due to the multiple challenges presented by the pandemic.

*"It's more a personal flaw than a barrier, but when fulfilling a freelance commission, I appreciated the gentle encouragement to do less and the permission for that to be enough."*

Survey Respondent

## How people describe themselves as a creative

People described themselves in multiple categories. Music specialists are the smallest group represented:

- 54% describe themselves as an artist
- 79% as a creative (44%) or creative practitioner (35%)
- 26% identify as a leader
- 11% as a trainee or learner
- 1% as a Tutor, DJ or Music Producer

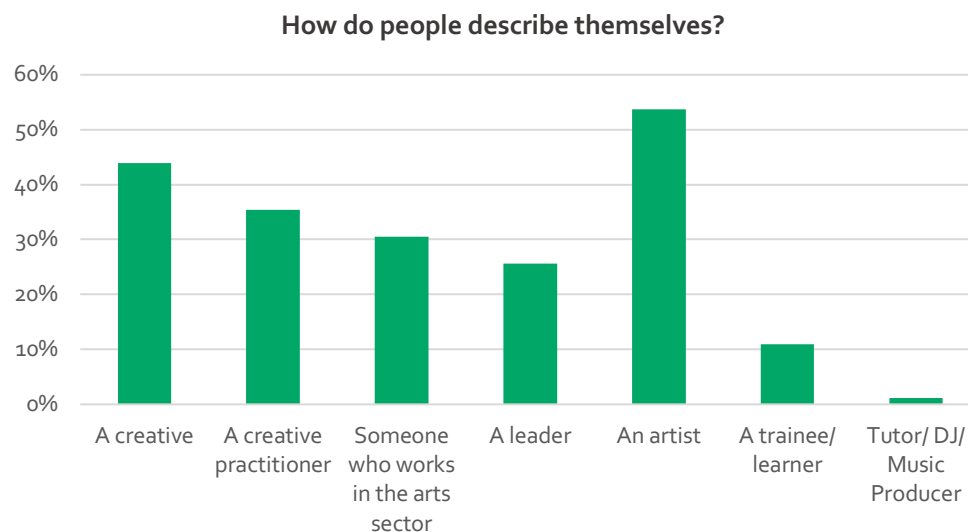


Figure 6: How people describe themselves

The majority of respondents worked across ages with the most common specialisms in working with young people, low income, traditionally disengaged and LGBTQ+ groups.

Artists specialised least in working with people with health issues although health and wellbeing is of growing concern in the general population, and this presents a potential growth audience area.



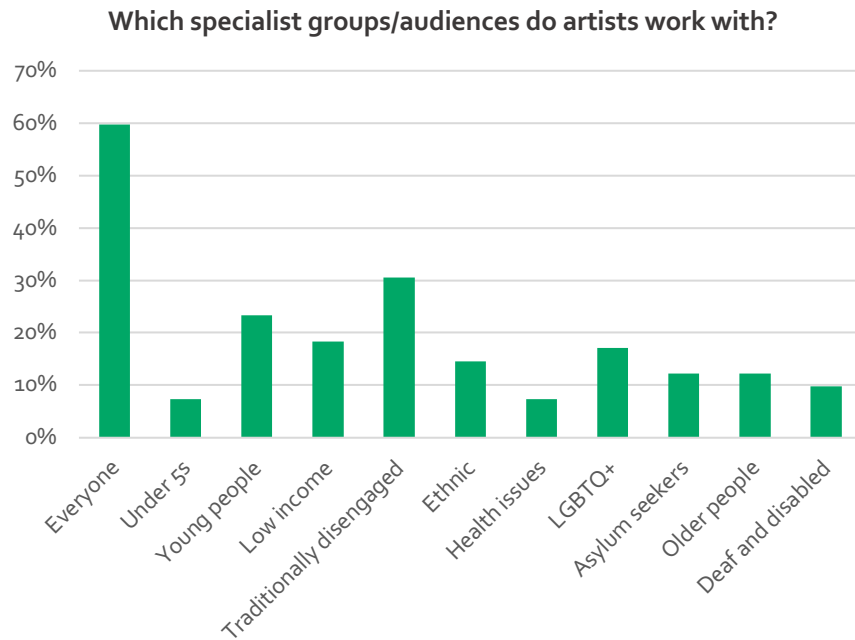


Figure 7: Who people work with

## How long people have been working in the creative sector

Overall, over half the respondents had been doing paid work in the creative sector for up to 14 years. The most frequent time period was for 5 – 9 years, accounting for a quarter of total responses.

A further quarter of respondents had been doing paid work in the sector for 20 years or more. There is clearly still scope for recruiting early career professionals and those who may be midcareer or emerging leaders.

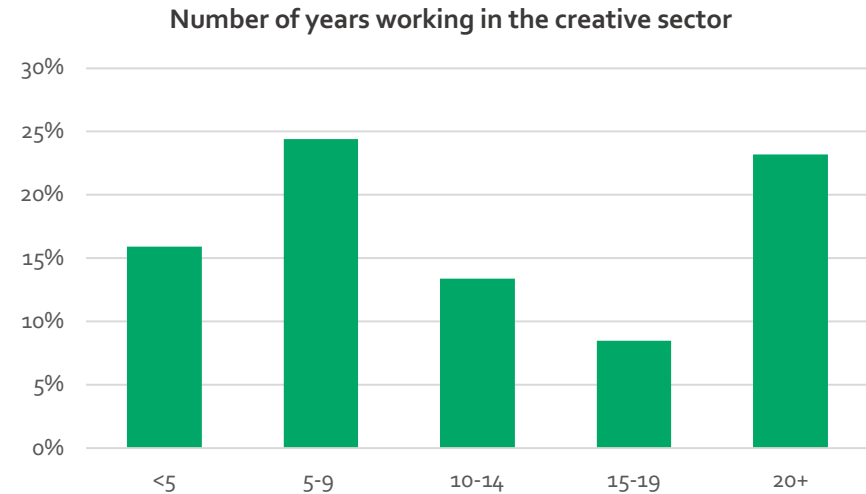


Figure 8: How long people have worked in the sector



## 2. A more skilled and confident workforce

This section outlines the changes in artist skills, confidence, knowledge and understanding of the arts sector in Bradford.

BPH has supported artists with a variety of existing skills and knowledge, enabling a rich environment for skills sharing and development. Participating artists say that they are more skilled, understand the arts and cultural sector better and as a result are more confident in themselves, their art and their role as arts and cultural practitioners.

For many this has manifested itself into new work and new career paths, and there is evidence of renewed pride in Bradford as a creative city. Several of the people we interviewed have been on a significant learning journey to develop their own skills and confidence and now feel the need for support to step up to the next level.

### 2.1 Professional skills

Bradford creatives are a skilled community. The survey shows that artists in Bradford have a range of qualifications with over a third having studied a creative subject at degree level or above and only 13% having no formal training in a creative subject.

All the artists and partners we spoke directly to talked of the invaluable support that BPH has offered, and some say they wouldn't be where they are now without that support which has ranged from mentoring, to funding, to training and networking:

*"I don't think I would have developed Vital Culture without them."*

Interviewee

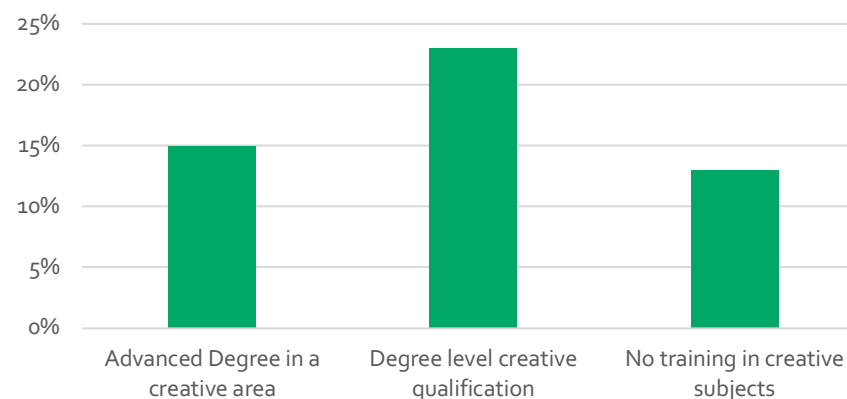


Figure 9: Qualification level

Much of the training offered by BPH this year focused on developing key skills for organisational and freelance sustainability. 50% of survey respondents felt better equipped to develop their professional profile or business as a result of BPH support. Basic business support is an area that several respondents to our survey felt they needed more of.

The range of existing qualifications that participants have makes for a rich environment for skills and knowledge exchange. An emerging theme for survey respondents was the learning gained from other participants.

The Creative Producer for BPH is keen to evolve programmes that support progression and greater independence.

## Case Study: Professional development

### Production Managers Programme

The New Producers Programme involved a cohort of 13 people in Bradford and 4 people from The Leeds 2023 Year of Culture programme. BPH have connected with the 2023 programme and are supporting local, very early career producers and self-producing artists.

Production Managers Programmes was originally intended to be similar to the New Producers programme but turned out to be quite different based on participation levels and fluctuating commitment to online delivery. The 10 online sessions had been designed for a fixed cohort but, based on feedback from participants, became a series of standalone sessions. This enabled participation from a much larger group overall including those who couldn't commit to all workshops. There was a core of 10 people who regularly attended but a total of 37 altogether. There were at least 12 people at each session which focused on different elements of production management.

Online training was followed with two full day hands-on lighting and sound workshops and then a 'Go and See' visit to see *Imitating the Dog* at the Leeds Playhouse attended by **X Number**. The Q&A that followed between the Production Team and the participants demonstrated how visits like this enable valuable real-world exploration and application of learning.

*"It was like no Q&A I've ever seen detailed technical stuff."*

Lisa Mallaghan, BPH Director

*"All of the practical producing tools I have learnt, I have started to implement too across my practice, which has enabled me to create a solid foundation to work from, as a self-producing artist. It has also made me consider working with and as a producer in the near future. ..."*

Production Management Training participant

## 2.2 Understanding the landscape

There are some explicit indications that artists taking part are developing a better understanding of the arts and cultural landscape in Bradford. Programmes offering one to one, mentoring, and wrap around or informal support, like Make Work and Play Days, gave artists a greater understanding of the arts ecosystem and the 'scene' in Bradford. This in turn has given some a 'step up' in developing their careers. The longer-term impacts of understanding the landscape are yet to be evidenced but likely to emerge over the next few years.

*"The Playday was great.... I learnt new skills and got an insight into the intensity and standard that a world class organisation have as part of their work ethic and ethos."*

Survey Respondent

Having paid work within the Creativity Council has exposed 14 early career practitioners to the rich and diverse creative potential in Bradford. And is likely to be an early indicator of shifting the demographic of emerging practitioners in Bradford.

*"Being part of the Creativity Council has been a privilege. Making important decisions about funding has allowed me to see how much creativity is present in Bradford and the district. I am a huge advocate for Bradford and it's creative journey, the future is bright."*

Creativity Council member

## 2.3 Confidence

Improved self-confidence, personal pride and wellbeing were frequently mentioned in our research overall, and there is strong evidence (68% of respondents) that creatives feel more empowered

to create boundary pushing work as a result of their engagement with BPH.

45% of survey respondents feel that they are an important part of their community, a likely impact of feeling more self-confident and valued as an artist. The director of The Leap noted that civic pride is starting to be evident within communities and feels very much that BPH and The Leap are instrumental in this.

BPH has been particularly successful in supporting emerging artists or those who are not at the forefront of the sector/scene and has certainly encouraged artists who would never have had the courage to apply for funding before to do so successfully.

There is some evidence that mid-career practitioners who find themselves elevated to a leading position within their community, art form or networks, may not be as confident in their leadership abilities as others perceive they are. It was clear from our research that those at this stage in their careers were less well represented in training sessions and our interviewees suggested there was less on offer to support the needs of this group, in particular leadership and peer networking opportunities.

*"When you become a flag bearer you are expected to have all the answers there is a big responsibility on my head so I need support too. BPH is supporting me in this role... but I almost feel like there could be more training programmes for people in the middle, like me."*

Interviewee

## Case Study – Liberty Arts

Liberty Arts first opened its doors in 2019 as a performing arts organisation providing classes and holiday clubs for children and adults and children and opportunities for children to develop their skills. The team had successfully been providing accessible classes for people who couldn't traditionally afford them and targeting those with the least access to the arts. Everything was going well when lockdown happened, and their doors had to close to the public.

Director of Liberty Arts, Louise Hodgson was at a loss of how to keep going with no venue and no option of face-to-face work when she met one of the BPH team members who suggested she got involved in an emerging network of Bradford artists. At the same time Bradford Council launched their pandemic response fund. Louise was encouraged to apply and was successful in getting funding for some much-needed non-internet-based home learning activity kits for kids in Bradford. Despite the challenges of lockdown, Louise was keen for the organisation to progress and become a CIC.

Having had such a positive and encouraging experience of the BPH team previously, Louise got in touch for help. BPH were able to provide the exact support Louise needed, offering mentoring sessions that supported her in deciding whether becoming a CIC was the right direction, signposting her to their residential course where she made lifelong friends and professional connections, and signing her up to 'Let's have a brew' designed to give artists informal opportunities to support one another during lockdown, from their own homes. As a result, Liberty Arts has taken a new direction and broadened its offer to include community and school-based work, training and online and residential development sessions.

*"It was BPH that made me realise I have a business brain as well as an artist brain and through their advice and mentoring, Liberty Arts took a different direction... Without BPH support Liberty Arts wouldn't be as much of a success as it is now..."*

Louise Hodgson, Liberty Arts



## 3. A wider range of work and opportunities

**This section outlines the development of new networks and the enhanced connectivity generated by BPH, including how this has affected progression routes within the sector.**

BPH has been successful in connecting what was a disconnected and dislocated arts and cultural sector in Bradford. Not only has this led to lifelong connections, support systems and skill sharing, it is helping to generate new progression routes, open up new career and work opportunities, and has attracted increased investment into Bradford artists as well as BPH programmes. The ripple effect is being seen in these artists sharing practice beyond the local area to enrich the arts more widely. Longer term this will aid the sector in becoming fairer, more sustainable and resilient.

### 3.1 Networking

BPH programmes have been structured to encourage networking and partnership development. And there are strong indicators that the training and residential offers and the informal nature of projects like 'Let's have a brew' for example, have helped to create valuable connections and relationships as well as seeded the beginnings on new collaborative projects.

There were many references to the fact that BPH is supportive of the whole arts infrastructure including producers and directors and supportive in networking these people to strengthen the arts infrastructure. There are several examples of new networks being created based on local needs either relating to artform, social change or demographics. And participants say that without BPH these networks would not exist at this stage.

*"...At the beginning of pandemic when BLM protests happened, a lot of things were happening in our city ... I raised that there were not a lot of black artists being commissioned so BPH supported me to develop a Black Artists Network."*

Interviewee

56% of survey respondents reported feeling more connected to creative people, companies and venues in Bradford but this is not reflective of the significant number of comments regarding life changing connections made through the BPH programme.

A smaller number of artists say they are more connected elsewhere, demonstrating that Bradford artists are likely to be sharing their new skills outside of the area as well as within. This included references to producing work in Leeds, Bury St Edmunds, Manchester, Rochdale and wider North West region. Those not feeling more connected said this was because they were continuing to work with existing rather than new partners.

*"I feel like I have become part of the Bradford 'scene' which is a joy. I look forward to becoming more a part of the furniture."*

*"The Playday was great... It was a great opportunity to meet other creative types from in and around Bradford."*

Survey Respondents

The Make Work wrap around budget has also led to new connections between artists. One team member suggested this presents an additional return on investment beyond the output of new live art.

### 3.1 Progression routes

The majority (65%) of survey respondents demonstrate progression in their thinking and practice and feel inspired to work towards new goals and ambitions. 10% did not feel inspired towards new goals – again there is further work to unpick the reasons for this which may include not needing or wanting to create new goals.

Data from the annual survey shows that almost all participants at training events are using all or some of what they learned either in day-to-day practice or to develop their own careers. Several respondents note a slight change of career direction or expansion of career thinking as a result of their engagement with BPH. Of those who said they are not using new learning, the training has refreshed and professionalised existing knowledge and practice.

*"Yes, I have managed to use my mentoring scheme time by writing a funding application to ACE with the help of my mentor. I have been awarded a grant by ACE to develop my creative skills."*

Survey Respondent

68% of survey respondent feel that BPH has increased the number of creative opportunities in Bradford, and two thirds of those are 'strongly agree'. Only 6% disagree with the remaining 17% unsure. However only 23% felt that this has translated into more employment opportunities, unsurprising given at the time many venues were closed or offering significantly reduced activity.

19% felt that there were more employment opportunities.

49% of respondents have either been successful with new funding bids, acquired new work or secured a new job following BPH training. Furthermore, through tracking the outcomes of fundraising advice and support provided by the BPH team, there is evidence of in excess of £700,000 of additional funding being received by artists in Bradford over the past 2 years.

*"I was advised my idea was a little difficult to understand, which is fair as it was a complicated idea! However I successfully received Arts Council funding for a two week R&D and have been supported by Kala Sangam who gave me a cash bursary and space in kind. My project has another year to go I think and I will undoubtedly receive further support from BPH!"*

*"I was encouraged to apply for Spare Bob which I did and was successful. I took the idea to another festival and I'm currently working on it."*

*"The mentoring that you funded for me with Anna Franks were just fantastic. The work we did together has resulted in a significant increase in my earnings."*

Survey Respondents

Several have developed new collaborations and partnerships. Some programmes have been seen as so successful that they are now being funded directly by other funders including Front Room Poetry funding from Bradford Council and Producer training funding from Leeds 2023.





## 4. Shifting the Bradford Cultural Ecosystem

**This section maps BPH’s strategic influence across the city and beyond, including partnership development, development of ground breaking work and actions to increase diversity within the arts.**

BPH was specifically set up with the aim of fundamentally shifting the cultural eco-system of Bradford to increase diversity, particularly among leadership, and to enhance the voice of freelance creatives with the power structures of the city and district.

Thus it is important that BPH can operate at the top level within the district eco-systems, and is able to influence strategic plans for the future. We find that the project, particularly through the leadership of the Director, is well integrated and influencing partnerships around the Bradford 2025 City of Culture bid, with Bradford Council and is a named partner in Culture is Our Plan, Bradford’s new 10 year cultural strategy.

There are early indicators of Bradford becoming known for its ground-breaking, socially engaged live art that is reflective of, and resonates with diverse audiences and this is very much put down to the work that BPH is doing.

BPH is supporting the sector to better share digital guidance and advice and has been instrumental in opening up new, non-traditional performance spaces across the city. The ambition for streamlined back-office functions and shared bookings and ‘What’s on’ systems are yet to be reached.

BPH is improving the diversity of artists and generating a new pipeline of local practitioners, particularly early career artists. The figures in this report underrepresent what the team observes out in the field, where diversity is seen to be even better. More people than previously, feel that the art being made by BPH is representative of the local community but there is still room for improvement. BPH supported events have very diverse audiences but the general perception from interviewees is that this has not generated an overall shift in the demographics of general arts audiences.

The sector is currently very reliant on BPH for support, as the only organisation of its kind in the area.

### 4.1 Bradford’s cultural leadership

Bradford Producing Hub is one of three ambitious development programmes in Bradford, set to help reimagine and reposition art and culture in the city. Alongside Bradford Producing Hub are The Leap – Bradford’s Creative People and Places programme – and Bradford 2025 City of Culture Bid, all part of the independent Bradford Cultural Place Partnership.

It is clear that BPH is well integrated and influencing partnerships within the sphere of Bradford 2025 developments as well as with Bradford Council. Culture is our Plan is Bradford Council’s new 10 year cultural strategy setting out ten ambitions and ten targets for 2031, as well as ten actions to deliver by 2023. Bradford Producing Hub is mentioned 7 times as an integral and critical part of the success of this strategy and of the cultural ecology in Bradford.

## Case Study: Extract from Culture is Our Plan

"Something exciting is happening in Bradford District. We are experiencing a cultural renaissance and facing the future with new-found confidence and hope.

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council believes culture is important in everyone's lives. We believe it can make a sustainable contribution to the prosperity and happiness of everyone in the District and it is vital as we recover from COVID-19 and strive to level up with the rest of the UK.

Culture Is Our Plan was commissioned by the independent Bradford Cultural Place Partnership with funds from Bradford Council and Arts Council England. The Partnership is chaired by Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe and membership includes leaders of the major strategic cultural initiatives in the District alongside representatives of the independent arts, culture and heritage sector. The plan has been co-created by the people of the district and the cultural sector itself and will act as a guide to activity between 2021 and 2031.

We are the fifth biggest local authority in England and, while we are rightly proud of our many famous cultural attractions, we don't yet have the range of cultural activity a place this size demands.

We have historically underperformed in attracting national investment and our existing arts, culture and heritage organisations lack the power to engage all our diverse communities.

We are determined to change this situation by working in partnership with national agencies and by enabling the independent arts, culture and heritage sector in the district to grow and to realise its full potential.

Culture is our Plan sets out a bold vision in which Bradford will offer a new definition of art, culture and heritage that reimagines our District as a place that is knowingly different and radically alternative. A place to realise new ideas, where creativity is celebrated in every home and on every street corner and where we will prove the positive impact of culture in everyone's lives.

Halfway along our journey we aim to become the UK City of Culture 2025. Winning this designation would put rocket fuel in our tank and accelerate our

journey to a better future. But whether we win that accolade or not, Culture Is Our Plan will stand, and will be our guide to a better, more creative, inclusive and successful Bradford District for everyone."

Beyond being initially written into the plan, BPH continues to play an extremely active and vital role in the strategic setting. The Director attends regular strategic meetings and is seen as a good partner for change making by the council and other key players. This role is particularly important for shifting whose voice matters within the city, offering the chance for the voice of creatives, particularly freelancers and others often excluded from power to be represented at this level.

The level of respect in which she is held has helped shift assumptions about who can speak on strategic matters:

*"BPH is one of the most outstanding things I have ever seen happening in a district, it is agile, well lead and active"*

Interviewee – Richard Shaw, 2025 Bid Director

Through getting into these circles, and gaining their respect, BPH now has the opportunity to introduce more voices into the mix.

Our interviewees and the team are very positive about the value that the council places on the value of art and culture in placemaking. The new council structure is set to provide staffing support, there are new arts focused funding streams and the council is represented on all strategic development programmes including BPH, The Leap, Bradford 2025.

BPH is consistently referred to within the Council's Culture is Our Plan strategy as previously detailed. This support is seen as authentic recognition of the impact that organisations like BPH are making in the city.

*"...the signals are there that the city is convinced that arts and culture can be transformative and is of benefit - Culture is our Plan talks about the social and economic benefits of art and culture. HLF and LEPs are being brought into the conversation too now."*

Interviewee

*"Winning 2025 would be a rocket launch booster, it's not the only thing it's about... The fact that they [Bradford Council] have appointed Nic and that her team is evidence of the fact that A&C is important in making the place and BPH is really ... central to that."*

Interviewee

## 4.2 Catalysing new partnerships in the district

Interviewees gave an average score of 9 / 10 for difference BPH is making to the cultural ecosystem in Bradford. There is a strong consensus that BPH has brought a coherence and central Hub of artistic support to Bradford, something that did not exist previously. BPH is seen to be very well-connected, adding value to the support it offers to artists and other organisations and enabling effective signposting to further support it can't provide itself. BPH is seen as a catalyst within the sector, driving change and challenging bad culture or perceptions of the value of the arts.

*"Living in other cities you realise that other cities have so many artist resources and before BPH we had nothing and now it feels like we have a central hub..., there is one focus and we know where to go for resources and help, and it's spurred on other organisations to develop."*

Interviewee

BPH is very successful in building effective partnerships at a strategic and delivery levels. Relationships with funders are positive as are those with the council, Bradford 2025 and Leeds 2023, The Leap, Transform, NQOTB amongst others.

Partnerships with education providers are in their early stages but proving to be positive already. Bradford University is now promoting BPH as part of the local offer for arts students and working with the team on a programme of shared events. Also, Bradford College is now fully engaged following BPH delivery of creative sector workshops with students, support for student placements in the cultural sector and an arts students' Play Day.

The visibility and positivity of these partnerships, many feel, is testament to the continued work and influence of BPH.

Local media is also favourably reporting on the impact of BPH. Coverage from the Yorkshire Post and the Telegraph and Argus show that the arts are seen as part of the solution to improving life in Bradford.

*"I think the uniqueness of Bradford means that for a number of reasons ... arts and culture is our only way out of the mud. Arts and culture is what we do really well."*

Interviewee

Zulfiqar Ahmed, Director of The Leap makes an important point about positioning BPH in this evolving ecosystem when talking to strategic partners

*"...if you position BPH as a grower of skills for the creative economy it would be better... They need to talk more about career development and building and matching development, demand and*

*opportunity...making case for BPH delivering skills, training and employability agenda."*

Whilst this is exactly what BPH is doing, the team don't tend to use terms like creative economy, social entrepreneurship, social enterprise and economic growth because they recognise that artists and creatives generally don't either. These terms can present major barriers to access but at the same time are the terms commonly used by funders and strategic partners.

This presents a communication challenge for the team in retaining its culture of accessibility whilst also helping strategic partners and funders to recognise that their work is addressing these priority areas.

There were frequent references to the scale of the job at hand and recognition that BPH can't 'do it all',

*"I don't think they can do any more than they are doing. When we had conversations about Culture is Our Plan we realise that it will take 10 years to change perceptions and make real change."*

Interviewee

At the moment partners and artists can't see a successful future for themselves without the support of BPH. Whilst this is positive it is a reminder about the independence/reliance dilemma previously mentioned and a note for the continued reflection on the legacy of BPH. There is certainly a need for an organisation to play a role in developing skills and talent development and most we spoke to talked of BPH as critical to the current cultural ecology of Bradford:

*"I quite passionately believe that the role that they play is crucial."*

Interviewee

*Bradford needs a cultural development agency... BPH should support in the run up to 2025, but we also need something to sustain the legacy of the year into the future*

Interviewee

Some feel that there should be a permanent visible and open door presence in the form of a Hub that can be a model for other cities.

*"I want other cities coming to Bradford and asking for help and consultation"*

Interviewee

There are already leading indicators that models developed by BPH are being recognised and adopted outside of Bradford.

*"... Even down here in Brighton I'm aware of the growing reputation and vibrancy of Bradford - you don't get collaboration like that down here! Lucky and clever people of Bradford to be able to come together and make progress in this way."*

Partner, CoAD - The Centre of Applied Dramaturgy

Transform and The Lowry have asked about the BPH commissions process due to positive feedback, the Peace Museum has changed the way it deals with applications to mirrors BPH successful processes, Bradford Council is now creating BPH style 'Instigator' posts similar and has restructured its team, funding and support offer for the arts sector. This includes new funding for Buskerville, Hadi Hedayati (a BPH New Producer trainee), and Front Room Poetry on the Road. More widely, BPH has contributed to place-based funding models that ACE are integrating in its new strategy.

And these messages are reaching other artists, some of whom are returning to Bradford and feeling excited, inspired and 'shocked' that there is actually a Bradford scene.

*"I have had people contact me outside of Bradford, who have found out about the BPH and say 'this is amazing' why can't we do this in our city?"*

Interviewee

One recommendation is to continue to reinforce the message of BPH having an 'open door'.

### 4.3 Shared resources and knowledge cross-sector

We find that BPH is sharing resources, advice and guidance on its own website and these resources were much valued. There was little evidence of core partners developing shared back-office functions or the much discussed shared 'what's on' platform or resource. It is likely that this is because these discussions are still underway rather than being explicitly and openly discussed. Whilst this idea is welcomed by most there is caution against the potential exclusivity created by a directory of artists,

*"The problem could be if you're not on the directory are you less of an artist? - does it make it exclusive and might create exclusions and divides between the sector?"*

Interviewee

Examples were cited where BPH has supported other organisations to develop and share resources, for example The Bradford Cultural Collective and Fringe Festival which shared, again much valued,

templates for ACE bids and risk assessment, exemplar policies and practice amongst other things. Generally interviewees felt that it was a good idea to develop this model further, in particular offering more self-help resources for emerging artists.

BPH is not aiming to create new buildings but to test how you support a sector and create a 'hub' *without* needing four walls. Investment in opening up new spaces has focussed on reuse and repurpose - trying to help non-arts spaces become arts spaces.

Stakeholder interviews reveal that there is still work to be done in sharing this work - little is known about the current plans or successes through the Transforming Spaces funding offered by BPH and there are some frustrations with the lack of space available for artists at the larger venues. BPH Transforming Spaces has so far provided £2.5k seed funding each for the development of:

- Major expansion at Kala Sangam
- Common Space, a new meanwhile space for creatives
- FUSE, a feasibility study on a new premises
- Spin Arts, making the Thornbury Centre a new centre for creative development.

There are infinite opportunities in this area and feedback over the past 2 year and through our research demonstrates much need for more and bespoke spaces or buildings to make, share, present, stage. One interviewee mentioned the opportunity to become part of the plans to develop a Bradford Arena for live work, something which should be followed up. Strategic partnership working will be the way to continue to address this need.

## 4.4 Sector diversity

BPH is implementing strategies to broaden diversity and inclusion in the programme, in their network of artists, in projects and within the team.

The core team is 56% white British, 11% white other, 11% South Asian (Pakistani) and 22% mixed race; The Creativity Council is 50% white British, 23% South Asian (Pakistani), 14% South Asian (Indian), 7% Asian (other) and 7% Black / Black British (African).

Generally interviewees noted the way that BPH talks and presents itself in an accessible way, demystifying arts language and encouraging wider participation through inclusive imagery in marketing and comms,

*"You can see yourself in the images there [website]."*

Interviewee

Programmes have specifically targeted underrepresented participants and audiences including for example, those experiencing health and wellbeing challenges, through the one-to-one and mentoring support.

The team feel that focusing models on the needs of artists with disabilities, parents of young children, ethnically diverse women, and those with mental health issues has opened up access to a wider group of participants to BPH programmes. And offering childcare within programmes has allowed new parents to return to work.

However, our interviews revealed that, as might be expected with any new programme, there is always work to be done in building

inclusivity and diverse participation and engaging with underrepresented communities.

### Representative art

Our survey results show that 44% of respondents feel that the art being created in Bradford is representative of them or their communities. 37% were unsure and the remaining 16% did not feel represented. This mixed picture was further substantiated in interviews.

*"Full English was incredible. Fantastic production, a story truly about Bradford."*

*"Front room poetry in the field by youth centre in Holme wood - unique, inspiring and proper Bradford!"*

*"No real work is being done to encourage Muslim women who outwardly are Muslim i.e. like me they wear the veil."*

*"Despite living and working here for 30 years I still feel like I don't fit and am not valued as much here as I am when I'm working further afield. That's partly because I'm queer and neurodivergent..."*

Survey Respondents

### Diversity of artists

There is evidence of more diverse artists being commissioned to deliver work including neuro-diverse, black and Asian artists. Several people talked about being more aware of a diverse range of artists now in the sector in Bradford and newly supported

programmes like Culture 101<sup>1</sup> are responding to this need to diversify the sector.

*"They are diverse and inclusive in terms of delivery and workshops and ... And they have a diverse Board."*

*"I'm seeing different languages and different faiths represented in work created."*

Interviewees

All of our interviewees felt that there was a noticeable increase in emerging or early career artists, put down to BPH, and that some of these artists were more representative of diverse communities in Bradford.

*"BPH is really helpful with emerging artists and those that need a foot up."*

Interviewee

However, there is work to do to increase commissions for black and other ethnic minority groups, and in fully engaging with and understanding the specific needs of underrepresented communities. Ethnic minority females and working mothers were mentioned specifically by interviewees as groups needing more of a voice.

*"The intentionality with both of our programmes is to find and support people that wouldn't normally step forward ... Lisa works hard on this*

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<sup>1</sup> Culture 101 is a 6-month arts administration and management training programme of masterclasses, mentoring and work experience for 15 Bradford-

*and consequently the portfolio of people they support are diverse. It's been pretty mono culture before and we are both changing this."*

Zulfiqar Ahmed, The Leap

## Wider arts audiences

BPH events, performances and shows have attracted unusually diverse audiences, and anecdotal evidence, heard during events or performances indicate that public audiences also feel increased civic pride.

There is no concrete evidence to suggest a subsequent effect on the demographics of general arts and cultural audiences. And several of our interviewees feel that the same audiences are consuming more, although there is recognition that the use of more and unusual and outdoor spaces has the potential to really shift this.

Outdoor events like Bradford Fringe Festival, supported by BPH, are seen to be really successful in broadening audiences.

*"I counted at least 15 different nationalities in the park - outdoor spaces makes this possible. During the Fringe and big stuff in the park, we had some really good art, created by communities so people were seeing some amazing stuff... that surprised and delighted [them]".*

Interviewee

The suggestion is that if BPH becomes a known provider of accessible quality arts then more diverse audiences follow but that

based women from ethnically diverse backgrounds who want to work in the creative industries.



there is a long way to go for some of the bigger organisations to be fully accessible and inclusive.

*"I think audiences are changing because of the content that is coming out of the work that BPH is producing..."*

Interviewee

*"What they did with front room poetry was really interesting... Kirsty [producer] ... has built this following of a certain crowd that will turn up to poetry events ...bringing people together who wouldn't normally... This is massive work to bring in different audiences... You're invited into someone's living room and there is a grandma hosting it, or a bunch of Asian lads coming in because they are curious as to what was going on. This is the essence of Bradford"*

Interviewee

## 4.5 New work

There are early indicators of Bradford becoming known for its ground-breaking, socially engaged live art that is reflective of, and resonates with diverse audiences.

The most successful work cited by the team include:

- Front Room poetry (growing)
- Black Artists Network
- Individual, one-to-one and mentoring support in response to need.
- Make Work, Spare Bob, Transforming Spaces funding rounds
- Unconscious Bias and Gender Awareness training
- Production Management Training

- Regular updates on opportunities & jobs
- Payments, grants and bursaries– smooth, quick and efficient
- Online sessions promoted access to a wider audience

Make Work and Spare Bob applicants have shown a propensity to push artistic boundaries, partly because of the way the programme has encouraged ideas led applications. We find that there is greater confidence amongst artists to apply for funding through BPH than other funds for unusual or 'risky' work.

And the team corroborate this, outlining how these funds have helped artists feel empowered to create vital, new and ambitious work. For example, Vince Virr's Big Aerial Plan, funded through Spare Bob, to get the skills, knowledge and rigging licenses he needs in order to achieve his vision of creating a large-scale aerial performance. Vince attended the BPH Outdoor Arts Residency and attended the Out There Art Festival in Great Yarmouth to network with other Outdoor arts makers, programmers and festivals and start to generate interest in the work. Kala Sangam have now partnered with Vince to support him to R&D next year and Bradford 2025 are including his vision into the bid for City of Culture.

Several survey respondents receiving Make Work funding refer to being more experimental, taking risks and generating new and innovative work. Khooghi and Front Room Poetry are good examples of socially engaged new work that is reflective of and resonates with diverse local audiences.

*"It's also just amazing to know I have an organisation like BPH in my corner, access to the support makes me more confident and allows me to make bolder work."*

Survey Respondent

## Case Study – Khooghi

### Funding: £10,000 Make Work Round 1: Your Idea Your Way

The 'Your Idea Your Way' strand of funding supported those great ideas that had been waiting for the right opportunity; the ideas that don't fit in other funding opportunities because maybe they are too radical, too unusual or don't meet the restrictive match funding expectations. The ideas that have bubbled away and need someone to believe in them to make them happen.

Kauser Mukhtar's autobiographical family friendly show, set within a beautiful toy theatre stage, used puppetry, music and song to explore heritage, culture, identity by visualising, Khooghi, a song about a Red collared dove from 160 year old Kashmiri Sufi folk tale, Saif ul Mulooq (The journey of Love). The script was written in both Punjabi and English and encompassed humour, tragedy, faith and hope transporting the audience from 1830's to 2021 from Halifax to Kashmir.

Kauser wanted to particularly target south Asian family audiences and re-worked this song to perform to new generations and new audiences in a new format. This was the first time Khooghi was performed by a female artist in the UK and for Kauser a new direction in her career.

Kauser has an academic scientific background and has had no formal arts training or performance experience although has always enjoyed Punjabi Sufi poetry and written and sung in an informal way since being a teenager. She applied for the Make Work funding, committed to transmitting her culture and heritage to her children, who do not speak fluent Punjabi. Lockdown proved to be a positive experience, giving her respite from her hectic schedule to focus on developing Khooghi.

Khooghi attracted an intergenerational and multicultural audience. The feedback from audiences was very positive and many had an emotional response. There was evidence of increased appetite for more that represents the culture, heritage and identity of Azad Kashmiri/ Pakistani community of Bradford, which despite its size and being present in Bradford since the 1950's, does not have a clear cultural presence or identity in Bradford or West Yorkshire.

*"Spent the hour laughing, crying + enjoying one of my favourite artists. Thank you for sharing and reminding us of the beauty of culture + heritage."*

*"Fantastic, need more of this. This has been a unique experience it took me back to my childhood loved every bit. Great 4 our children."*

*"The story telling was beautiful, My little girl was captivated! I enjoyed all the different sets and puppets."*

### Audience Feedback

Kauser's experience has transformed her career aspirations, sparking the emergence of a new artist on the Bradford scene, who can produce work that is particularly resonant with local communities. She notes that this transformation would not have happened without the support and trust of BPH. And points out the value of the bespoke and needs-based support provided to her, in enabling non-traditional practitioners to enter into the arts and reach into underrepresented communities.

*"The funding has allowed me to create my first play giving me confidence about my artistic ideas and that culture and heritage has to be renewed, retold, reshaped, re-presented to be kept alive."*

*I am keen to continue in creative journey and to call myself an artist, a word I would not have used to describe myself at the start of this journey. I am hoping to tour Khooghi and have other ideas that I would like to develop. I am continuing to develop my singing and song writing as well as hoping to produce live theatre on a much bigger scale."*

*I have learnt new skills and understanding of the creative process and how much work it takes to create a piece of work from an idea. I have made new creative collaborations with amazing artists, directors, producers..."*

*I am so grateful they [BPH] took a risk and so is the audience particularly from the Azad Kashmiri community whose cultural needs have been neglected, ignored not understood and definitely not catered for before."*

Kauser Mukhtar, Artist



## 5. The BPH Approach

This section looks at the way that people have engaged with the BPH team and programme and highlights what has worked well and what has been a challenge this year.

*"Absolutely brilliant. I've had all the support I could have wished for and more. It's wonderful to have BPH in Bradford. You really are there for all of us - no matter what stage we are at with our development."*

Survey Respondent

There is overwhelming appreciation for BPH and the team is continuously described as supportive, welcoming, fun, inclusive and supportive of people whatever their stage of development. There were many comments alluding to the critical role BPH has played in advocating for the sector, democratising the arts and highlighting and challenging unhelpful policy and strategy models that devalue the impact of the arts.

The team has created a wide ranging and impactful programme of events and training which have been transformative for many on a personal and professional level.

Feedback was almost entirely positive even from those who had not accessed this support.

*"There aren't any politics in BPH, as one encounters and notices with other arts organizations..."*

*"Support has been personalised and bespoke, informal and approachable yet highly professional."*

*"A great team of people behind it all. The energy, care and passion for developing local talent is apparent."*

*"The amount of support and the team's friendly nature has really changed my life."*

*"Honest, open, dialogue – I had some of the best, thought-provoking conversations last year."*

Survey Respondents

### 5.1 How did people engage with BPH?

#### Open events and training opportunities

- 100% went to at least one event or training opportunity.
- The majority went to two or three events or trainings, but several went to 10 or more.
- 95% of attendees rated events and training as very good or excellent.
- 86% were likely or very likely to attend again, 65% of which was very likely, a decrease from the last report of 8%.
- Front Room Poetry was most popular as an event with 39% attending, followed by Make Work with 20% attending.
- Extracurricular, Play Days and Fundraising training were attended most by survey respondents.

#### Application for training courses

- 30% of respondents had applied for training places (slightly up from last report, by 3%).

- 15% of respondents were successful; 5% were unsuccessful. However, some had applied for multiple training opportunities. Response numbers to this question were very low and it is difficult to confidently conclude here without more information

### One-to-one support

- 27% of respondents received one-to-one support through BPH in the form of conversation (s) (down from 37% last survey). A further 27% of respondents had not had one-to-one support.
- The second most popular form of one-to-one support was mentoring at 14% (down very slightly from 16% last survey).
- Development advice was accessed by 10% and production advice and fundraising advice both by a little under that.

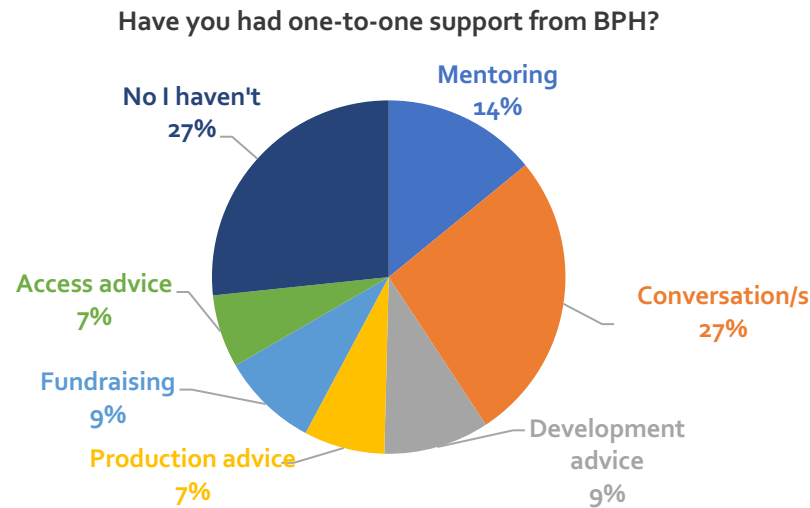


Figure 10: Access to one-to-one support

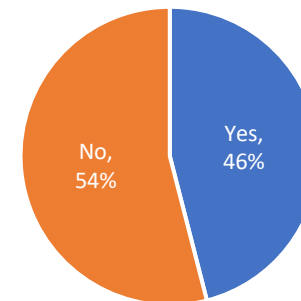
*"Although we were unsuccessful in our application for funding we were still offered a zoom chat with one of BPH's Creative instigators. Our meeting with Kirsty was incredibly helpful and gave us many more ideas ..."*

*Survey Respondent*

### Funding support

- From the 82 people who completed the annual survey, 46% applied for funding and 63% of these had been successful. There were 2% less applications than last year but 5% more were successful.
- Around 30% of respondents had applied for BPH funding this year through Make Work, and 23% of respondents applied through Spare Bob, with other forms of funding making up 7%. More than half, 54%, had not applied. Last year 62% said they hadn't applied for any of the funding.

Have you applied for any funding from BPH this year?



If yes, which one(s)?

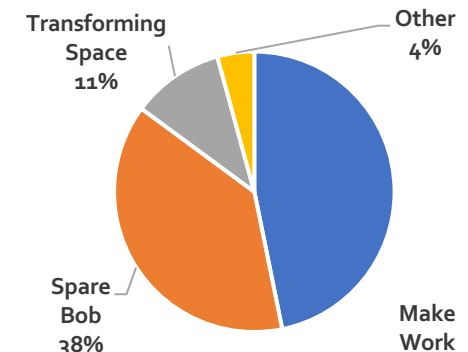


Figure 11: Access to BPH funding

## 5.2 What was the impact of support?

Survey respondents noted that funding support had mainly impacted on the following areas.

- Time and 'headspace' to be able to reflect on practice, career, growth, etc.

*"The funding allowed me to have some alone time and to talk through with my artistic mentors to think about my own career, journey, growth and allowed some space to think through next steps...invaluable."*

- New and more ground-breaking practice and projects

*"The funding is massively helping my practice to grow, and it's allowing me to make new art work that is more experimental in brand new ways."*

- Broadening career portfolio or art form

*"You helped me change my focus from exclusively a conducting career to a conducting and composing career. I now make 30% of my income from composing and your support was central to that."*

- Organisational development

*"It has enabled myself and my organisation to become robust and sustainable, putting us in a better position when it comes to funding and resources."*

- Opening up to the public

*"The funding is essentially the difference between us being able to open safely, fully above board and now with the ability to trade effectively. Within the next couple of months we should be able to fully open our doors to the creative community ..."*

- Confidence to seek further funding and support

*"Making me more confident in applying for funding and developing as an early career artist. I am also sign posting others to BPH."*

*"absolutely excellent - the only organisation in Bradford to give thorough support that considered what I needed, my mental health as an artist and [that act] with kindness and the support has been consistent."*

## Applying to work with BPH

Out of the 82 survey respondents, 14 people had applied for paid work with BPH.

## 5.3 What were their experiences of BPH?

Comments were overwhelming positive about all events and training, application process and funding support, and a common theme was that artists wanted more of the same.

Responses to the training were again overwhelmingly positive with participants citing memorable experiences and significant personal, professional and organisational impacts.

*"The fundraising workshops for the advice, and the productions, Full English, Khoogi and The Bull and the Moon for their beauty!"*

*"I did really enjoy the playday workshops. As a performance artist it was nice to be in a room with other professionals. It was run so well - people were made to feel comfortable including tunes playing on arrival, friendly smiles and a bursary provided to attend to boot - I'm pretty sure this is unique to Bradford"*

*"The support and training that came with the Make Work commissions was incredibly useful for all members of our company who are all at different stages of their careers."*

Survey Respondents

In line with the previous report, the majority of responses indicated that their needs were met (77%) and that BPH had worked to address individual barriers to participation and working including adapting programmes and processes.

Artists feel that BPH listens well to sector needs and facilitates rich and progressive dialogue between individuals, partnerships and organisations. The terms 'understanding', 'support', 'clarity' and 'flexibility' were often used.

*"Oh yes! BPH understands the intricacies of being a solo artist and the need to be enabled, to be able to grow in your practice."*

Only 6% of survey respondents said their needs were not met. There were a small number of people who indicated that mental health needs were not met but were not aware that they could access support in this area.

*"I know they listen. You are heard when you engage them."*

*"Every possible action has been taken by BPH to ensure barriers are removed or reduced to embark access to a range of events, meetings and training."*

Survey Respondents

## 5.4 What training worked well?

The most popular courses were Production Management and Outdoor Arts, with almost a tenth of respondents applying to each of these. New Producer was next with 7% of respondents applying, and then Culture 101 at 4%.

*"...everything I have attended has been massively beneficial not just for myself but my whole organisation has intelligence filtered through."*

Survey Respondent

Front Room Poetry was most frequently mentioned as particularly memorable and impactful. It inspired and moved people, many mentioning the lead artist very positively.

*"Front Room Poetry - Holmewood. Fantastic event with so much thought around access and engagement with and for the community. Couldn't stop thinking about it after the event."*

*"Front Room Poetry live events because of the way Kirsty works and includes. It's artist led, supportive and radical all at the same time."*

Survey Respondents

BPH funding application processes are seen to be accessible and easy, with generally clear instruction and the offer of wrap around support sessions. Ensuring the process clearly values people's ideas as well as being proportionate to the funding available, is a big improvement on 'traditional' application models often encountered.

*"As a disabled person I found the BPH application process to be the most accessible application process I've ever completed. Allowing applications in alternative forms is so helpful."*

*"It was super simple which is rare with funding bids and lots of info and help provided. Also the fact you don't need match funding is a game changer."*

Survey Respondents

Most valued the ideas led approach, although some needed more structure and guidance.

*"I enjoyed the freedom to express my ideas and then have specific questions asked of me regarding those ideas, rather than having to fill in a formal form."*

Survey Respondent

And most were happy with feedback, even when they were unsuccessful.

*"BPH team is very supportive. It was a great help to receive feedback on an unsuccessful application...Special thanks for funding childcare costs."*

Survey Respondent

Some of the unsuccessful applicants felt that the feedback was not as helpful as it could have been whilst others noted the depth of feedback received. This suggests some inconsistency in the feedback process for different funding streams that needs to be ironed out. It must be noted that one respondent had a particularly bad experience, feeling that their feedback was 'insulting', although this was the only really negative response. Further investigation is needed here.

Experiences of working with the team were again very positive, with respondents regularly referring to 'equality', 'fairness' and 'uplifting' experiences that challenge systemic low pay and low

value of artists. It should be noted that there were a small number of issues around navigating laborious University financial procedures, which has been addressed with new simpler BPH led systems and processes.

Comments from Creativity Council members were particularly positive:

*"Being part of the Creativity Council is a real honour. I feel like I am playing a part in shaping live arts in Bradford and building the foundations for even more work and cultural activity in the future."*

*"Being part of the Creativity Council has been a privilege. Making important decisions about funding has allowed me to see how much creativity is present in Bradford and the district. I am a huge advocate for Bradford and its creative journey, the future is bright."*

Creativity Council Members

## 5.5 What improvements could be made

### Open events and training

The message here echoes last year's report i.e. 'do more' and in particular offer more networking opportunities.

Survey respondents want:

- More opportunities that bring business and arts partners together
- Continued offer of access bursaries for attendance
- More hybrid or inclusive events that offer Zoom participation as an option



- More discipline-specific offers – e.g. how to pitch to theatres, e.g. FRP but for different disciplines
- Wider early and targeted marketing and publicity
- Offers for early morning as well as daytime, evening and weekend events, to accommodate those with caring responsibilities or other work commitments that take priority in the day
- Links to associated resources or lists of performers to find out more about their work
- Connections with artists from outside the region to share more widely and bring different skills in
- Business skills development and training offers
- And one very relevant subject specific request for a workshop on eco-art production, which feels very relevant to the current climate challenge

### **Training application process**

- Suggestions were constructive recommendations and included:
- Giving unsuccessful applicants clearer feedback
- Offering unsuccessful applicants places on other similar training
- Accommodating different learning styles - Ensuring conceptual or theoretical aspects of training are still accessible for all and reinforcing learning through provision of accompanying hard copy information for processing at a later date
- Better access for people with disabilities such as dyslexia or for those in caring roles

- Follow up consolidation of learning sessions, to check progress and offer peer support as a cohort

### **One to one support**

- More structured support with tasks to complete in between
- Shared online templates including CVs and introduction letters to reduce the number of email requests

### **Funding application process**

- Clearer criteria outlining the definition of 'live' art offered prior to bidding
- Longer lead in time
- Some applicants struggled with the idea of having personal contacts on the selection panel (Creativity Council) which might be compromised through the process
- There were some applicants who felt that the criteria for funding wasn't completely clear meaning that there were some unsuitable proposals
- Consistency of feedback needs to be addressed



## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

### 6.1 Conclusions

Bradford Producing Hub is a gem of an organisation, offering crucial support and some structure to a distributed and dislocated local sector. For many practising and emerging artists it has been a lifeline and a transformative programme of support and development.

At the heart of this BPH has started to remodel traditional systems, processes and hierarchies and has programmed with a set of evidenced principles including: artist and ideas led practice, empathy, commitment to co creation, innovation and risk taking, connecting diverse people and communities, and nurturing health and wellbeing.

Smaller arts organisations and freelance artists, in particular, have experienced some of the worst effects of the pandemic, in terms of loss of income, lost opportunity to perform live, lack of emergency support funding, and these organisations and individuals are really feeling the benefit of BPH.

Although the wider sector has some way to go in achieving the goal of being fair and inclusive to all, our research shows that the progress towards this is positively influenced by the presence of BPH. Attribution and causality are hard to unpick, with a number of other high profile programmes developing at the same time as BPH, including Bradford 2025 and The Leap.

What is clear is that BPH have been present and active within the right strategic networks and meetings and have been at the heart of this triumvirate of leading cultural initiatives in the city. And the city

is starting to be known for its ground breaking live arts practice. BPH has been both a catalyst and driver for change at delivery and strategy levels across Bradford. BPH is now integral to the Cultural Place Partnership Board, to The Leap plans, to the Bradford 2025 bid and to Culture is Our Plan. And all of this represents a sustained investment in and commitment to arts and culture in Bradford.

The breadth of work and support that BPH offers is huge and clearly making the difference needed at the moment. However, BPH cannot be the 'only answer' in the city and building on the already strong partnerships will be an urgent focus moving forwards. Additional capacity within the team would release more time for Lisa to focus on strategic development.

However, each team member must still retain their own personal connection with individual creatives and organisations in order to maintain the personalised support that is so crucial to success.

Some feel that BPH is in good stead for passing the baton over to others to lead this work in the future. However, the majority of people we spoke to felt very much that BPH is needed for a long time yet. When we asked the team what values and strengths they wanted to keep, within their team culture, there was consensus on the following:

- Don't lose the commitment to "doing things differently", taking a risk and learning from mistakes
- Keep listening and responding to need
- Keep challenging ourselves, develop our models and not just roll out the same projects

- Maintain a commitment to doing and seeing real 'live' art in person as well as providing online opportunities
- Keep the amazing diverse team and continue to develop fair systems and processes
- And most of all "Keep going!"

These will be the focus of the team culture moving forwards.

## 6.2 Which approaches work – what has been a challenge

### The programme

The range of support offered through the programme strand has been much valued and recognised as the only support of its kind for artists. From training to informal chat, to mentoring and one-to-one support to residential development courses to funding support that is ideas led. These have all been mentioned positively by interviewees and by survey respondents.

*"The residential was amazing I have made really good connections and friends. BPH supporting people like me whose businesses might have failed without it. Projects starting to take hold now and this is down to BPH."*

Interviewee

Front Room Poetry, Production Management training, the residencies, Black Artists Network and the Unconscious Bias and Gender Awareness training were all cited more than once as game changing programmes.

But the sheer range and depth of support on offer, and being 'the only answer in town' for an entire sector has created a real challenge for the team, in terms of capacity to respond effectively.

*They have been active beyond anyone's expectations... delivery way beyond what I could imagine in this climate*

Strategic sector interviewee

The phrase 'doing things differently' (or similar) emerged many times during discussions, reflections and individual meetings with the team as a key strength. The team recognise their strength in not being afraid of making mistakes and learning from them – they fully utilise the opportunity provided through being a pilot project to test and experiment with different approaches. But this is also a drain on the energy of the team and needs careful management.

*"Doing things differently can be hard – practically, emotionally, confidently"*

BPH Team Member

### Radical

This year BPH's ambitions, to be participative, dynamic, radical and social, to reduce red tape and maximise opportunity, have all emerged as some of most successful factors of the programme. That is not to say that the other principles by which BPH operates,

noted in the Story of Change<sup>2</sup> have not been important in delivering the impacts outlined in this report.

## Talent development

BPH is working towards helping artists to help themselves, but because of the incredibly low starting point in the sector there is a long way to go. A common theme in our research relates to the vast scale of work required.

The variety of support on offer puts emphasis on giving artists the responsibility to create change in their own lives. However, there is concern that some creative practitioners have been overly reliant on that support, rather than progressing on to independence.

This presents a dilemma that the team continue to reflect on, focusing on generating more progression routes and longer-term development programmes. The term 'hand-holding' was used in both positive and negative contexts, sometimes seen as essential by participating artists, sometimes seen as creating over reliance on the team.

"Servicing the entire sector" is also a big responsibility and drain for the team. This needs careful management moving forwards.

At times the team have struggled with wider requests and the desire to support 'everyone'. They must continue to be focused and feel able to signpost to other organisations. For example, creatives from non-live art practice have occasionally requested support.

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix 1

Increasingly, people who are not writing for live performance, visual artists, and increasingly people who wish to enter the film and screen industries are contacting BPH. Other than effective signposting and email introductions non-live artists have been supported through Spare Bob, if they can demonstrate that they will develop relevant skills that could be used within live arts in the future.

*"Ideally we need a Film Producing Hub, a Visual Arts Producing Hub, and a Music Producing Hub! BPH is only scratching the surface with music, but the sector really needs a lot more investment and bespoke support."*

Interviewee

*"Thank you BPH for Spare Bob and funding workshops which indirectly helped the production of Mushy Peas to Green Tea Kulfi via Make:Film and resulted in it being Top 6 Best UK Short at Raindance 2021 and selected for UNESCO showings worldwide."*

Michael Forrest, Artist

## Creative potential is everywhere

Interviewees and team often reflect on the way that BPH has been 'ideas led' in funding projects that some might have considered 'high risk' projects. But the 'risk' has been far outweighed by the impact of these projects on the artist and on audiences detailed in this report.

Lisa Mallaghan says:

*"We're not assessing whether it will be an effective project – that's kind of the point! We're assessing whether it's a great idea, whether it represents Bradford, whether it opens a door to something new creatively, or culturally – then it becomes BPH and our Wrap Around support's job to support the person with the idea to make it an effective project, even if they've never done anything like this before".*

Being ideas led has enabled many traditionally 'non-fundable' projects and emerging artists to deliver viable and impactful projects. Being able to see the potential and spark of a good idea is a skill that the team and the Creativity Council have been developing. A strong assessment of need and readiness has helped BPH reduce the 'risk' of such early arts practitioners failing because of lack of skills and experience. This is a model worth sharing and shouting about.

*"I was brand new to the arts sector having never made any work if I hadn't had the funding I may have never entered the sector or made anything. It was absolutely crucial to give me the opportunity to take an idea and make it a reality. I have been stretched beyond my elastic limit."*

Make Work, Interviewee

## Minimising red tape

There were frequent references to the ease with which artists and arts organisations could apply for funding, moot their ideas or ask questions without feeling like they must fit into a particular arts model.

*"Their USP is about turning that on its head... I am supported to create something not using existing models or trying to fit into*

*something that doesn't work for me...when they launched their grants programme it was about how people wanted to write or present their own idea in a way that works for artists."*

Interviewees

In this way BPH have been successful in dismantling hierarchies that are often the barrier to less confident artists.

*"It was coming down to a completely different level - down to earth, radical progressive and different has meant that people can approach them that wouldn't normally have done."*

Interviewee

Part of this is about the way that BPH continually scrutinises its own approaches and methods including how decision-making within the team and within the Creativity Council happens. Every round of Make Work funding is closely analysed, and improvements are identified and implemented – ranging from clarifying and amending criteria to try and reduce the number of ineligible applications, creating new focus areas to target gaps (e.g. African & Caribbean and Disabled artists focus in Round 2), simplifying the application process, providing more time to the Creativity Council to review applications and ensuring the review team had received Unconscious Bias training.

## Digital inclusivity

Being a live arts organisation without any opportunity to produce live arts was a real challenge during lockdown. But the organisation kept going despite the continuing challenges and pivoted to providing online support and resources immediately. And this was greatly valued by creatives.

*"It was really valuable to have CPD sessions and other content run digitally during the pandemic. Very much appreciated."*

Survey Respondent

Digital programming enabled BPH and participating artists to reach audiences they would never have reached in a physical venue, providing a welcome lifeline for many, who would not have participated in in-person events for health, personal or access reasons.

*"They had a definite 'don't panic we are here' - there was always something on for digital audiences... and the tiny pot of funding I had went on audience development for my Christmas show and we had 1000 viewers between for 18-65+years."*

Interviewee

At the same time the proliferation of online engagement presented challenges for others. The team says:

*"not being able to deliver practically has stunted creativity in many ways."*

For future years this means creating a hybrid approach to training to enable virtual participation as well as offering what some feel is the crucial opportunity to meet and apply learning in a live situation. The team must consider the longer-term impacts of potential further lockdowns and what this means for BPH as an organisation.

Digital engagement and communication channels were also welcomed, including the use of a BPH artists Facebook page as an informal networking and development tool. Team members are also included and active on the Bradford Artists WhatsApp group –

a space that people feel is democratic, egalitarian and responsive to need. Artists want more of this.

## **Better management and delivery**

An important part of the success of the programme is the development of new internal processes and systems. Of particular mention were swift and easy payment systems, easier and accessible grant application processes and bursary systems with no paperwork involved meaning that the systems required are proportionate to the level of investment.

Campaigning for fair contracts and fair pay is also seen as a key role for BPH and crucial to a resilient sector. Whilst advocating this for the wider sector, the team itself is not paid in line with its strategic responsibility in the city or in comparison with other similar programmes. This must be addressed immediately to retain this talented team.

## **Evaluation, learning and legacy**

This evaluation will be crucial in validating the social impact that this project has alongside The Leap.

*"What we don't have in city is enough evidence about the sorts of impact that this is making. Born in Bradford looking at health benefits. Lots emerging that is adding to the idea that the city is convinced of value of A&C"*

Zulfiqar Ahmed, The Leap

## The team culture

BPH has created a strong, resilient, authentic and committed team and progressive culture. The most frequently mentioned success factor is the approachable, supportive, passionate and friendly nature of the team. Artists and partners were unequivocal in their praise for the team.

*"There isn't a member of the team who won't help out. I never feel silly asking any of the team anything, often something that is a barrier for emerging artists, so the team are invaluable."*

Interviewee

This has enabled BPH to remain responsive to the health and wellbeing needs, identified by survey respondents in response to the stress of isolation, homeworking, loss of income and lack of opportunity for live work.

The success of the team is not just about individuals, it's about the culture of the organisation and good leadership.

*"Everyone that works there is amazing and so the team is really strong. Artists really feel like they are saying 'we are you, you are us we are not some gatekeeping organisation'."*

Interviewee

Recent developments in early 2022 have led to a huge amount of team turnover, with nearly all staff leaving. In most cases this was for development reasons, as producers used the skills and experience they had developed at BPH to move forward in their careers. However in at least two cases this was due to paperwork and structural reasons with challenges in how the jobs were structured within the University of Bradford system as lead

organisation and employer. This shows the importance of considering the mental wellbeing of the team as they carry a huge burden of being present for others, and giving time and energy. If the underlying systems aren't supportive then this can lead to real strains.

Cost benefit analysis of the relative value of giving time, in making the fundamental shifts which BPH is aiming for would almost certainly show that it is worth investing in this time. The team's generosity with time, knowledge and funds is a strength that should not be dismissed as luxury but as a crucial success factor at this early stage of development.

However this investment needs to come from the project as a whole, rather than from individual team members, including the Director, working and giving beyond their own capacity and without sufficient support networks.

As recommended in our snapshot report from February 2021 support for the health and wellbeing of the team and of the creative sector is demonstrated consistently, with space given for discussing personal and professional challenges and collective solutions at all meetings.

## The Consortium and Lead Organisation

There have been major challenges within the BPH Consortium and between the Consortium and Lead Organisation during this last year, partly leading to staff loss and increasingly acting as a barrier to consistent delivery. This must be resolved to generate mutually supportive and progressive relationships and clarifying roles and responsibilities across key organisations and individuals. The Consortium and Lead Organisation are working on this, alongside



the Director, with a commitment from all sides to move forward to solve these issues.

In particular there is commitment to address the employer role and challenges and also to diversify the Consortium to include freelancers and more people from diverse ethnicities, which will help with the BPH aim of shifting hierarchies and structures within the cultural ecosystem.

## 6.3 We recommend

### Strategic developments

1. Update the JCNA or carry out another updated strategic needs analysis, ideally in partnership with 2025 planning and development.
2. Map out stakeholders and wider partners, level of influence and investment to identify the gaps and prioritise development.
3. Create a clear identity and share this. Redefining, reemphasising and recommunicating BPH's role and place within the city will lead to more realistic expectations by partners and audiences and recognition from funders and strategic partners.
4. Develop a partnership agreement that includes shared resources, programming and clear expectations – ensure this is shared across the teams at partner organisations.
5. Enhance and broaden education sector partnerships.
6. As the team is refreshed, review needs and roles to ensure adequate project management time and time for Lisa to work strategically.

### Approaches to delivery

7. Continue to focus on “doing things differently” recognising the value of being a pilot project and approaching this differently, moving away from traditional structural, support and delivery models.
8. Continue to reflect and challenge practice within and beyond BPH, ensuring that projects are not just ‘rolled out’ but evolve to stretch participants and build progression in thinking and practice internally and externally.
9. Do more projects that are less dependent on partners e.g. Extra Curricular, FRP, Buskival but that offer a model for others..
10. Build in a longer response time for call outs to allow busy artists the time to develop their proposal.
11. Develop bespoke opportunities, better targeting strategic support for emerging leaders.
12. Consider the responsibility to challenge and encourage growth within every programme - balancing independence with overdependence, focusing on progression in business and leadership skills.
13. Accessible and more frequent and ‘obvious’ marketing that promotes opportunities to work with BPH.
14. Review representation across the programme to plan targeted audience development with underrepresented/ marginalised groups.
15. Continue to explore the opportunity to create a directory of creative people.

16. Continue to explore the opportunity to map live events across the city, creating a city What's On.
17. Clarify marketing guidelines and responsibilities for funded projects and outline what BPH can and can't offer in terms of marketing support.
18. Explore and document the evolving decision-making processes within the Creativity Council as a model for others to embrace 'risk'.
19. Explore ways to open up bookings and access for local and freelance artists to larger venue/performance spaces.
22. Research and plan for how BPH can deliver through potential future challenges such as economic crash and severe financial hardships, or return to lockdown and future similar disruptions, e.g. exploring more live arts models for Covid safe performance including for example Slung Low's new approaches.
23. Review the forthcoming Consortium Review and implement the recommendations.
24. Enhance and formalise plans for staff development.
25. Explore the potential for regular/ long term programme participants, to act as a sounding board for future programming.

### **Future focus**

20. Work through the Creative Council and Consortium to do long term planning around the future of BPH, particularly thinking about models which ensure continuation of the flexible and radical approach it has taken so far.
21. Explicitly make time and space for reflection and challenge sessions bringing in people from across the sector to explore how to build the sector of the future: stronger, more diverse and less hierarchical.



# Appendix – Bradford Producing Hub Story of Change

