



# INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Open Theatre Co. Wantok Rehearsals (Image credit: Visually Rich)

EXPLORING PROJECTS THAT HAVE DELIVERED INTERNATIONAL  
COLLABORATIONS AS PART OF THE BIRMINGHAM 2022 FESTIVAL



# INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

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@ The Audience Agency

November 2022

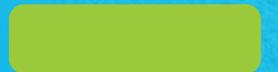
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A group of people at a festival, some wearing costumes like a toucan and a toucan, with a banner in the background.

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INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS AS PART  
OF THE BIRMINGHAM 2022 FESTIVAL**

Wantok - Image credit: Wantok



# CONTENTS



# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>OUTPUTS SUMMARY</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>PROGRAMME OVERVIEW</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>84</b>
Introduction to International Commissioning	11	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>EVALUATION METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>96</b>
Birmingham 2022 Evaluation Programme Overview	21	Appendix i: Programme Overview	97
Evaluation Methodology	22	Appendix ii: Online Resources for Case Studies	103
<b>CASE STUDIES</b>	<b>24</b>	Outcomes Framework/Aims and Objectives	103
Anthem Anthem Revolution	26		
As We Speak	34		
Remembrances	42		
Where are You?	48		
Wantok	56		
Traveller	64		



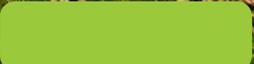
Wantok - (Image credit: Wantok)



Where Are You? - (Image credit: Anand Chhabra)



Imagine Bamboo (Image credit: Andrew Moore)



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# INTRODUCTION



# INTRODUCTION

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games took place from 28th July to 8th August 2022. It was the most significant event staged in the UK since the London 2012 Olympic Games and Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and the biggest ever in the Birmingham and West Midlands area.

## BIRMINGHAM 2022 FESTIVAL

As a central part of the Games, a major festival was designed, taking place over six months from March to September 2022 to highlight the region's cultural and heritage sectors and to provide an entertaining and engaging cultural offer for residents and visitors to the city and the region. As well as shining a spotlight on the region's arts and culture, the programme also included a strong element of international collaboration between artists and arts organisations based in the West Midlands and in a range of Commonwealth and other countries.

## INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Central to the Birmingham 2022 Festival were several creative projects that focused on international collaboration. These revolved around the development of innovative artistic partnerships and included several different types of activity. Most also provided opportunities for audiences and participants to experience work from another culture or to have familiar themes re-interpreted.

The UK part of the programme took place in Birmingham and the West Midlands, during a summer when the Commonwealth Games gave it global attention. Many of the projects drew on the diverse population and international connections of the area, to give the Birmingham 2022 Festival added relevance and interest for local and regional audiences. This evaluation focuses on the international collaboration elements of the Birmingham 2022 Festival using specific projects as examples. These are:

- Beatfreaks: As We Speak
- Open Theatre Company, Mama Dojo and Enspire: Wantok
- Black Country Touring and Accra Theatre Workshop: Where Are You?
- Ava Dance Company, Border Crossings and Brian Solomon: Remembrances
- Eastside Projects and Rajni Perera: Traveller
- Terrapin Puppet Theatre: Anthem Anthem Revolution

This report outlines these case studies in detail, as well as providing a broader overview of the festival overall.



As We Speak - UK Exhibition (Image credit: Hayley Salter)

REMEMBRANCES  
(Image credit: Paul Stringer)

# PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



# PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

There were 29 projects in the Birmingham 22 Festival which were based on or included international partnerships and co-operation. These took place within the wider context of the Birmingham 2022 Festival which was a six-month celebration of creativity with a programme of over 200 events in the West Midlands area.

Given the international scope of the Games and the Festival, the organisers ensured that global partnerships were an integral part of the programme as described in the following statement by the Senior Producer of the Birmingham 2022 Festival.

## INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL COMMISSIONING

*by Louisa Davies, Senior Producer, Birmingham 2022 Festival*

Right at the beginning of our planning for Birmingham 2022 Festival we made a commitment to work internationally. One of our 8 principles, the building blocks that described how and with whom the festival would be curated, stated:

**“COMMONWEALTH  
COLLABORATION: IT  
WILL ENCOURAGE  
RELATIONSHIPS  
WITH ARTISTS FROM  
COMMONWEALTH  
COUNTRIES,  
DEVELOPED THROUGH  
ESTABLISHING LONG-  
TERM PARTNERSHIPS AND  
EXCHANGE.”**

Early on, we established that our primary interest in working with international artists was rooted in establishing new and contemporary collaborations between artists from Birmingham and the West Midlands and artists from Commonwealth nations and territories. These collaborations would emerge through relationships of parity, with power and agency shared equitably, actively not centring in the UK. They would be about what could be discovered through the coming together of artists of different cultural forms and backgrounds.

We didn't want to showcase, out of context, the cultural forms and traditions of other Commonwealth nations and territories, further othering those narratives. In conversations with artists and organisations interested in engaging with the festival, we said things along the lines of 'we never want to be saying...and this is what dance in Barbados looks like'. We didn't want to

**‘WE NEVER WANT TO  
BE SAYING...AND THIS  
IS WHAT DANCE IN  
BARBADOS LOOKS LIKE’.**

oversimplify the complexities of identity and intersectionality. Whilst the pandemic-induced explosion in virtual meetings became an unexpected opportunity to engage internationally, we were limited in terms of research capacity for identifying international collaborators. We therefore looked for opportunities to piggyback on the existing international research plans of regionally-based creatives. Two of these opportunities came in the form of Aaron Wright's (Artistic Director, Fierce Festival) trip to Australia and New Zealand and Johnny Autin's (Autin Dance Theatre) to Rwanda, Tanzania and Kenya.

We funded the extension of both of their visits and in turn they returned with proposals of artists and projects they felt might be of interest for our programming. This led to the start of some of our conversations with international artists. In the case of Aaron Wright's visit, a number of artists and organisations whose work he experienced were subsequently included in the programming for Healing Gardens of Bab, including Rosanna Raymond whose work SaVAge K'lub was presented at BMAG. Prior to the commissioning period we met with organisations across the sector and region, many of which had ambitions for international collaborative projects. This included, but wasn't limited to, Birmingham International Dance Festival, Black Country Touring, Imagineer, Beatfreaks and Eastside Projects. Some had already identified potential collaborators; others were seeking support in finding the right partner to work with. In the case of Open Theatre Company and Mama Dojo, they first met at an online roundtable we hosted focussing on work for children and young people.

Mindful of the tendency for artists from wealthier nations, such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, to feature more often in international festivals, it felt important to include artists from a wide spectrum of Commonwealth nations and territories. Artists from all three of these nations feature, enabled by funding partnerships with Canada Council for the Arts, The High Commissioner of Canada in the UK, Creative New Zealand and the UK Australia Season (postponed due to Covid 19). As a result of these partnerships, we were able to commission Remembrances (Ava Dance Company and Border Crossings) and Anthem Anthem Revolution (Terrapin) both of which explored and engaged with First Nations artistic practice and considered the impacts of colonisation, which was a significant area of focus for those bodies. These funding relationships also enabled a significant international dimension to the Healing Gardens of Bab, Birmingham International Dance Festival and Supersonic Festival.

Our ambition to work with artists from beyond these wealthier nations was greatly enabled and strengthened through our partnership with the British Council. Alongside a number of other colleagues at the Games, from the Learning Programme and Queen's Baton Relay, and UNBOXED, we began regular conversations with British Council. In October 2020 we were offered an initial grant for Research and Development projects, to facilitate digital creative collaborations between artists and cultural organisations from Birmingham and the West Midlands and Commonwealth nations in receipt of ODA (Official Development Assistance). This R&D aimed to support projects that would manifest in the festival, whilst laying foundations for

longer-term exchange and collaboration.

We looked for proposals to demonstrate alignment with our curatorial lines whilst simultaneously ensuring the primary benefit would flow through the local or regional organisation to ODA countries, organisations and participants. This would be demonstrated by a fair and mutually beneficial approach to payments, access and artistic agency. Our desire to achieve parity and to decentralise the UK in these international collaborations was also vital for the British Council.

The grant was distributed through a solicited call out, where we invited a group of seventeen artists and organisations to apply



for this opportunity based on our knowledge of their existing plans and ambitions. Of the seven R&D commissions, six were then supported to take their project to production stage through a second British Council grant to the Festival. This contributed significantly to the international dimension of the programme. For many of the projects, the Festival has helped initiate that longer term collaboration and exchange that felt so critical to us at the beginning of the journey. This includes Beatfreaks, whose project *As We Speak* tested a new model of no-strings-attached funding for a cohort of young artists; Imagineer, whose international journey into the creative and climate possibilities of harnessing bamboo is only just beginning; and Open Theatre, Mama Dojo and Enspire who already have a firm commitment to continue to work together, radically shifting their practice and plans for the future.

A full description of projects which included international collaboration can be found in appendix i.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE KEY FINDINGS FROM THIS REPORT

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Birmingham 2022 Festival was successful in hosting, supporting and implementing a wide range of creative and cultural projects with international collaboration at their heart. It included 29 projects with an international component, working across 42 countries including 30 Commonwealth countries and territories.

Those who worked on the project as artists, staff and freelancers as well as audiences and participants reported a high degree of satisfaction with the individual projects and of the wider Birmingham 2022 Festival in general.

## KEY FINDINGS

Survey data taken from international collaboration projects supplied by The Indigo Consortium included the following findings.

- 29 projects with international collaborations
- Projects worked across 42 countries and territories, 30 of which are in the Commonwealth
- 667 artists employed through these projects
- 374 new partnerships formed as part of these projects
- 86% of projects said they plan on continuing to develop new relationships as a result

## AUDIENCES:

- When asked how far they agree with a number of statements, audiences of these group of projects were most likely to say that their experience was different to things they've experienced before; that it made them feel proud of their local area; and that it had a positive impact on their physical health and wellbeing.
- 25% of audiences were aged 36-45 years
- 15% were born overseas
- 61% self-identified as White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British, 10% White: Other White background, 6% Asian or Asian British: Indian, 5% Asian or Asian British: Pakistani, 4% Black or Black British: Caribbean and 3% Black or Black British: African. Other ethnic origins or cultural backgrounds made up 12%
- 21% attended with children under the age of 14
- 66% usually live in Birmingham and its surrounds, 21% in the West Midlands, 10% elsewhere in England, 2% outside of the UK and 1% Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

# 44%

**SAID THAT BIRMINGHAM  
2022 FESTIVAL INFLUENCED  
THEIR DECISION TO TRAVEL  
TO THE AREA**

## FREELANCERS AND STAFF

Freelancers and staff were asked to pick multiple options to describe their role. In order of the most popular descriptions, and the percentage of the target population that selected it are as follows:

- 31% artist/performer
- 22% producer/manager
- 18% production
- 18% support (e.g. admin, marketing)
- 16% creative/design
- 2% community leader
- 33% of freelancers and staff were aged 26-35 years

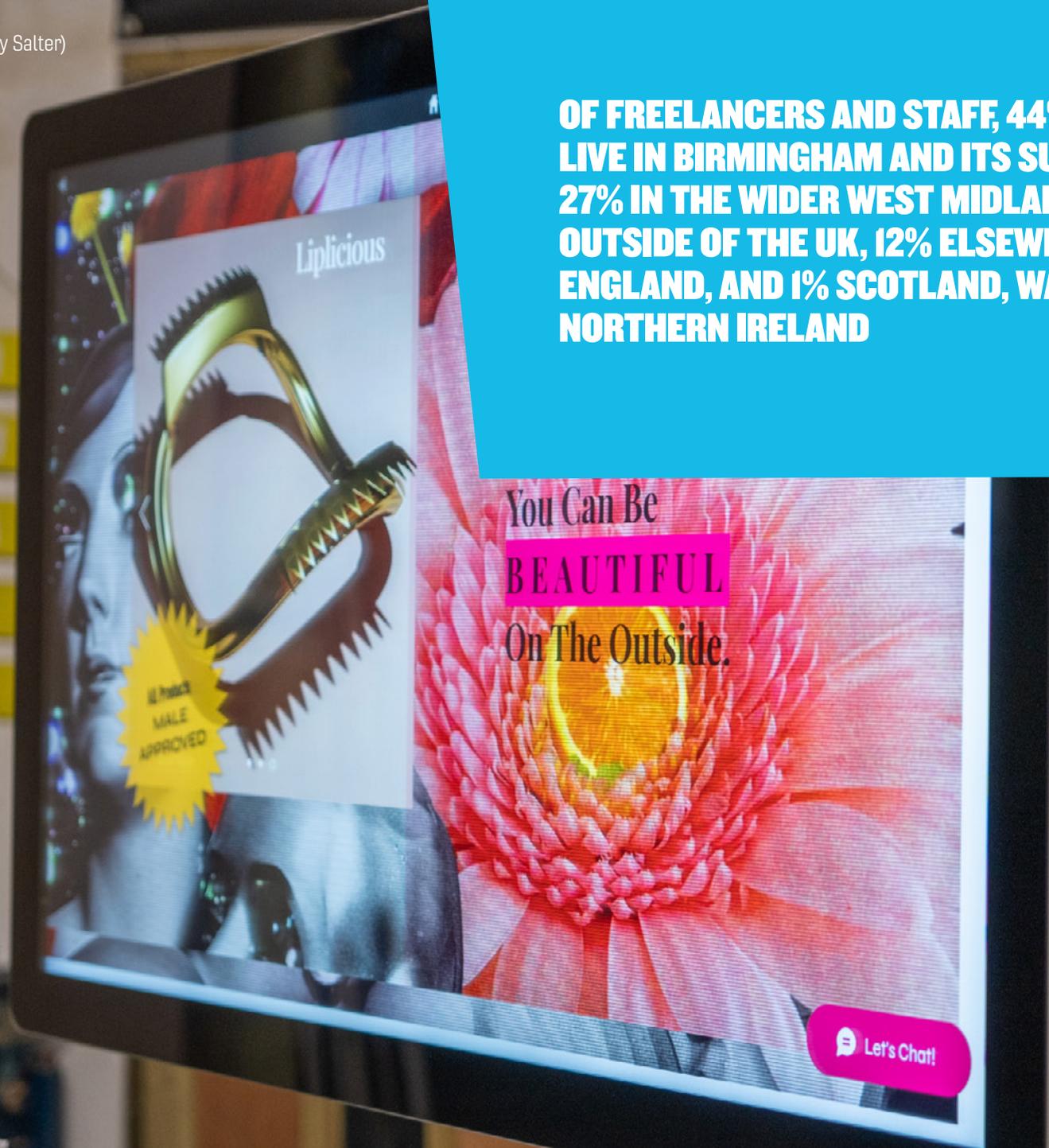
The ethnic diversity of freelancers and staff:

- 9% Asian or Asian British
- 11% Black or Black British
- 0% Middle Eastern/Arabic
- 7% Mixed Heritage
- 68% White Backgrounds
- 5% A range of other backgrounds
- 17% self-identified as disabled, neurodiverse, or having a long-term health condition
- 43% usually live in Birmingham and its surrounds, 26% in the wider West Midlands, 15% outside of the UK, 12% elsewhere in England, 3% outside of the UK and 1% Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

**55%**

**OF FREELANCERS AND STAFF  
RATED THEIR OVERALL  
EXPERIENCE AS 'EXCELLENT'**

**OF FREELANCERS AND STAFF, 44% USUALLY LIVE IN BIRMINGHAM AND ITS SURROUNDS, 27% IN THE WIDER WEST MIDLANDS, 16% OUTSIDE OF THE UK, 12% ELSEWHERE IN ENGLAND, AND 1% SCOTLAND, WALES OR NORTHERN IRELAND**





## INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

The Cambridge Dictionary defines collaboration as **“the act of working together with other people or organisations to create or achieve something”**.<sup>1</sup> At a time when our global connections are under significant scrutiny, the concept of international collaboration has an even greater relevance.

International collaboration meant different things in this festival:

- Producing artistic work made for an audience living in a different country either physically in-situ or streamed live and/or recorded online.
- Cultural organisations commissioning artists/creatives from another country to produce work to be presented as part of the festival.
- Artists or companies collaborating creatively between countries in order to co-create work together.
- Artists and cultural organisations working together internationally with participants from particular communities or audiences to produce work which has a collective output.
- International artists included as part of a wider creative team within a project where the majority of artists were UK-based.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/collaboration>



- Artists or companies performing and exhibiting in a country other than their own. This could mean presenting something already developed in the originating country and then working with a host to put it before an audience.

Each has its own value within a festival such as this, though it appears that the more ambitious the collaboration, the more rewarding the outcome. Furthermore, those with the most active co-creative partnerships are those that display the most promising legacies.

- Different ideas and perspectives: the introduction of different ideas and perspectives that come from working with other countries, cultures and sectors. This can include artistic or creative conceptualisation or wider cultural or political ideas, including those about the place of the UK in the world in 2022.

- Different practices: by being able to partner with a range of creatives and organisations, other ways of creating or implementing work become possible. The case studies in this report demonstrate a sense of innovation in practice which comes from working collaboratively.

- Raised profile and status: this is possible both by being able to share with partners and networks in other countries as well as being part of a wider initiative (such as Birmingham 2022 Festival). This can be especially valuable for smaller or lesser-known organisations.

- New connections, partnerships and networks: collaboration by its very nature implies partnership working. This provides the opportunity for those partnerships to exist over a longer time period as a legacy leading on to further developments and opportunities.

- Reduced risk: Although working together can bring its own difficulties, it does also provide opportunity to reduce risk by sharing resources, jointly applying for funding and sharing responsibility.

- Joint research and evaluation: as this project has shown, evaluation and iterative learning can be more organic in the context of partnership work. With the addition of combining research and evaluation methods it enables comparisons and benchmarking to be undertaken.

In the report that follows, the enterprising approaches that were taken by the projects, using the opportunity to work with other people and organisations in the UK and around the world, is outlined. They demonstrate how creative projects are not only interesting in their working methods, but also provide fascinating and relevant experiences for audiences, participants and the wider public at large.

**“THE ACT OF WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHER PEOPLE OR ORGANISATIONS TO CREATE OR ACHIEVE SOMETHING”.**

– CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY DEFINITION OF ‘COLLABORATION’

# EVALUATION METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND ON HOW WE CONDUCTED THIS EVALUATION

Imagine Bamboo (Image credit: Andrew Moore)

# EVALUATION METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

The Audience Agency was commissioned by Birmingham 2022 Festival to undertake the evaluation of its international collaborations between artists and arts organisations based in the West Midlands and those in a range of Commonwealth and other nations and territories.

This takes place within a wider range of evaluation as outlined below by the Festival.

## BIRMINGHAM 2022 EVALUATION PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

As part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival, we have commissioned nine evaluative reports. These are as follows:

- Birmingham 2022 Festival Evaluation – Indigo-Ltd Consortium
- Untold Stories: Case Studies – Indigo-Ltd Consortium
- Skills Development: Case Studies - Indigo-Ltd Consortium
- Inclusive Practise: Case Studies - Indigo-Ltd Consortium
- International Collaboration – The Audience Agency
- Critical Mass – The Audience Agency
- LGBTQ+ Space – Dr Roz Stewart-Hall
- Creative City Grants Programme - M·E·L Research
- Route 34: North Birmingham Alliance – Earthen Lamp

Suppliers for eight of these reports have collected qualitative data against bespoke evaluation methodologies, specific to the projects (or collection of projects) they are working with. This has totalled qualitative engagement with 52 projects across the programme. The consortium of our overarching report, the Birmingham 2022 Festival Evaluation Report, have focused on collecting quantitative data. This has totalled quantitative engagement with 203 projects across the region. Qualitative-focused suppliers have then used quantitative data in their respective reports.

We have chosen to publish our evaluation as nine reports to adequately represent a large, broad, and diverse set of projects that make up the Birmingham 2022 Festival. Whilst these reports come together to present the unified, collective narrative (outlined in the Birmingham 2022 Festival Evaluation Report) they individually display tangible and nuanced learnings and impacts. We hope that in the combined reading of the macro and the micro the Cultural Sector and its wider stakeholders will seek to take forward these learnings from our practise and impact.

Fabio Thomas, **Monitoring and Evaluation Manager**  
*Birmingham 2022 Festival*

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The methodology used by The Audience Agency for this part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival was mainly qualitative, supported by quantitative data collected by others delivering evaluation as outlined above.

This was undertaken through a series of interviews and group discussions with the main creatives, partners and participants of the six case studies. These took place towards the beginning and at the end of each of the projects. In addition, the evaluators also attended or engaged with many of the performances, showings and exhibitions during the course of the festival in order to gain a more rounded appreciation of the way activity happened in practice.

Through this process, the evaluators sought to understand how these projects delivered their work, looking with depth at the experiences provided and reflecting on the working methods used. Whilst this covered a wide range of areas, exploring all aspects of the development of the projects, the evaluation focused on international collaboration as outlined in the Outcomes Framework.

In general, there was generous commitment and enthusiasm from all involved. Occasionally it was difficult to follow up some creatives and partners from outside the UK and one project was unable to secure the co-operation of the creatives from abroad to participate in the evaluation and therefore their views could not be included.

The quantitative data collected across all the projects provided useful background for the project and there is a summary of their findings above. These were well-developed and collected, though were not necessarily themed around international collaboration, so are valuable more for context than being central to this evaluation report.

All research was undertaken with the full agreement of those involved and in order to ensure useful and honest feedback, the anonymity of the recipients has been maintained as far as possible throughout.



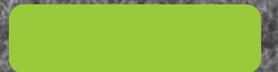
Imagine Bamboo (Image credit: Andrew Moore)



**“COMMONWEALTH  
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THROUGH ESTABLISHING  
LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS  
AND EXCHANGE.”**

– BIRMINGHAM 2022 FESTIVAL BUSINESS  
CASE

# CASE STUDIES



01 **ANTHEM ANTHEM  
REVOLUTION**

02 **AS WE SPEAK**

03 **REMEMBRANCES**

04 **WHERE ARE YOU?**

05 **WANTOK**

06 **TRAVELLER**



Anthem Anthem Revolution at Smithfield Festival Site (Image credit: Ross Jukes)

01

**COMMISSIONED ORGANISATION**

TERRAPIN PUPPET THEATRE (TASMANIA)

**PARTNER ORGANISATION**

SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL (UK)

**SECTOR / ARTFORM**

DIGITAL / MULTIMEDIA

**THEMES**

SPORT, GAMES AND MUSIC; COMMONWEALTH AND IMPERIALISM; FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS; CONNECTING WITH THE WIDER FESTIVAL AND GAMES

# ANTHEM ANTHEM REVOLUTION

## KEY FINDINGS



WHEN ASKED IF THEIR EXPERIENCE HAD A “POSITIVE IMPACT ON MY PHYSICAL HEALTH AND MENTAL WELLBEING”, ON AVERAGE AUDIENCES SCORED THIS AN

**8.6/10**



**13**

ARTISTS EMPLOYED TO DELIVER THE PROJECT



**29%**

OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS WERE AGED 16-25



**67%**

OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS SAID THAT THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES WAS THE MAIN REASON FOR THEM TRAVELLING TO THE AREA THAT DAY



**62%**

OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS SELF-IDENTIFIED AS MALE

## PROJECT

Anthem Anthem Revolution combines sport, games and music by offering people the chance to battle a table tennis-playing robot to replace Australia's national anthem with a newly devised piece. The participatory installation was designed by Terrapin in collaboration with a Tasmanian Aboriginal (Pakana) rapper, who worked with a group of Tasmanian school children to develop a brand-new national anthem. The resulting composition can only be heard by participants by scoring points against the table tennis playing-robot.

As the ball is served to the participant, they must play it back to the robot. The more they do this, the more of the song they unlock and the more difficult the serves become. Ultimately, not everyone will unlock the full anthem and, in this context, the resulting piece that was played was ultimately shaped by the participant taking part.

Terrapin had prior experience of working in the UK, having previously been commissioned by the RSC. Anthem Anthem Revolution originally came about through a connection Terrapin made with Fierce Festival in Birmingham when they met at APAM - Australian Performing Arts Market. It was through this connection that Terrapin were then approached by the Birmingham 2022 Festival team<sup>2</sup>. From these early conversations, Terrapin started to toy with the central concepts of sport, commonwealth, participation and anthems and devised a project that they felt could tour to the UK in time for the festival.



(Image credit Terrapin/Peter Mathew)

Over two weeks, from late July to early August 2022, Anthem Anthem Revolution was installed at three locations: Mell Square in Solihull Town Centre, Lavender Hall Park in Solihull and the Smithfield Festival Site in Birmingham. From the artistic director's perspective, the piece worked best at Smithfield as it benefitted from the framing of the Festival Site atmosphere and steady footfall. The marketing manager too, described their presence at Smithfield as **"transformative for our audience numbers"**. This is confirmed from audience data collected at this event showing that 67% of people said that the Commonwealth Games was the main reason for them travelling to the area that day. Interestingly, of the 19 international collaboration events where ten or more audience members were surveyed, Anthem Anthem Revolution had the most respondents identifying as male (62%) and was one of only three projects to have a male majority. The results of the audience survey should only be treated as indicative but its noteworthy that an installation so tied with sport successfully engaged an underrepresented demographic for Birmingham 2022 Festival (on average, across all international collaboration projects, 35% of audiences identified as male).

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<sup>2</sup>Terrapin were also known by the Birmingham 2022 Festival team due to the Senior Producer's prior employment at the RSC.



**ANTHEM ANTHEM, THIS A REVOLUTION**

**STOP THE DIVISION AND START THE INCLUSION**

**WORK OUT THE PROBLEMS, FIND THE SOLUTION**

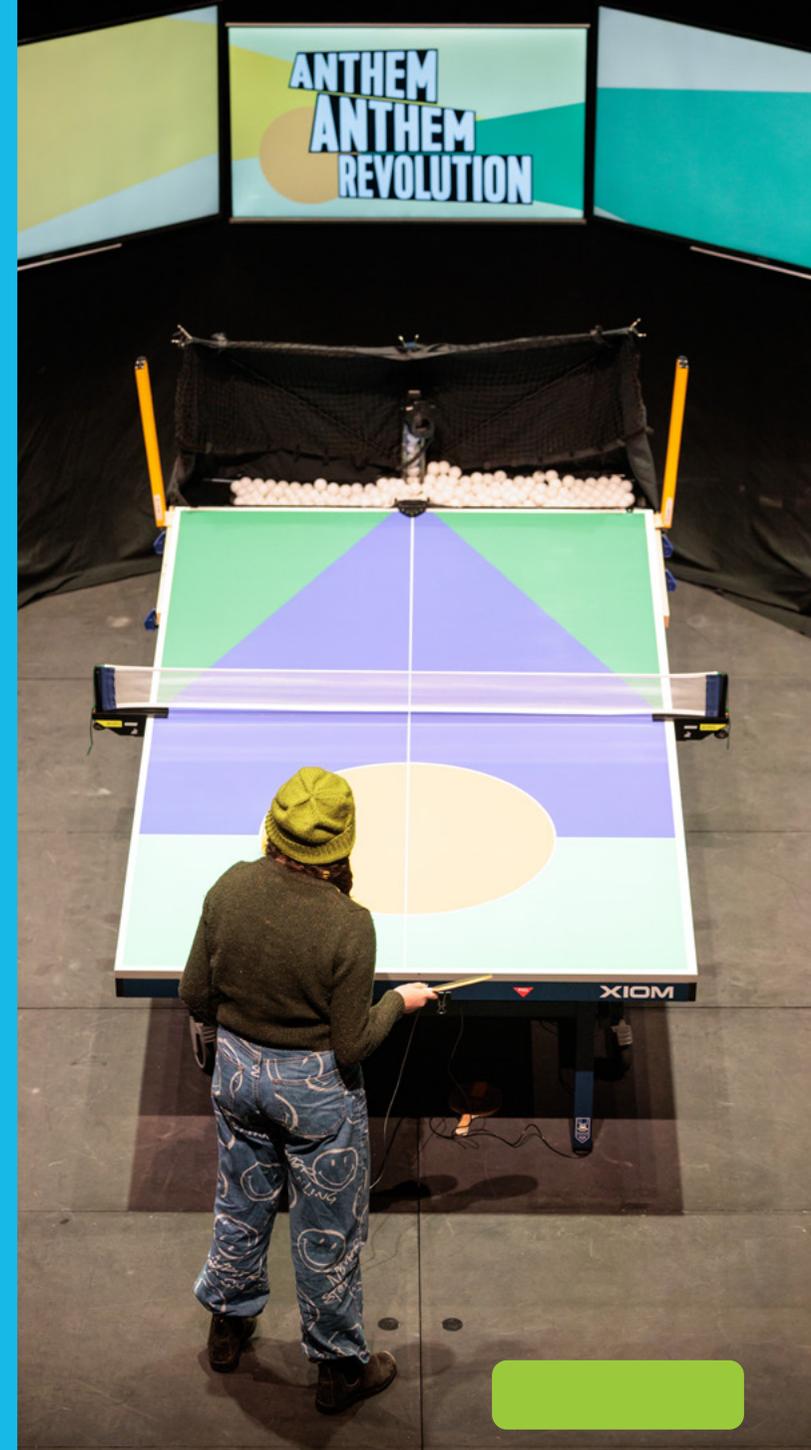
**FROM CHANGING THE CLIMATE AND CAUSING POLLUTION**

**WORKING TOGETHER TO STOP THE CONFUSION**

**IT'S ANTHEM ANTHEM, IT'S A REVOLUTION."**

– LYRICS FROM ANTHEM ANTHEM REVOLUTION

(Image credit: Terrapin/Peter Mathew)



## KEY LEARNING

### ADDRESSING THE COMMONWEALTH AND IMPERIALISM

Cultural variances were really well accommodated in this project. Of the six case studies, the history of the commonwealth and imperialism was a strong theme that sat on the surface of Remembrances, Traveller and Anthem Anthem Revolution. For the Terrapin team from Tasmania, this was palpable at times, with their lead artist explaining their views prior to arriving in the UK like so: **“in all honesty, the UK is sort of the enemy to my community. And so, I’ve had to come over here with an open mind and an open heart.”**

**“IT CAN ONLY BE GOOD FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM, AND ESPECIALLY ENGLAND, TO BE ENGAGED DEEPLY IN CONVERSATIONS ABOUT WHAT IT’S DONE IN THE PAST. I THINK THAT’S EXTREMELY COURAGEOUS, BUT I ALSO THINK IT’S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.”**

– ARTISTIC DIRECTOR (TASMANIA)

They found that exposure to culture and people in the UK was helpful in gaining perspective on this, continuing: **“you can hate something better if it’s not in your face all the time and you can imagine it to be a monster, and it’s very much not like that.”** Alongside this contemporary pilgrimage, there was also a need for restitution among other members of the Terrapin team. The artistic director opened up about how they felt like a ‘settler’, so it was a good feeling for them to be able to provide a platform for a First Nations artist to speak with their voice about the dark history of colonialism. Importantly though, this work was also about looking forward at what a better future might look like. Anthem Anthem Revolution wasn’t the only project to address the UK’s history of colonisation. In all cases, it was observed that the projects felt immensely supported by the Birmingham 2022 Festival team in not shying away from exploring this difficult and often upsetting subject matter. What’s more, it has become apparent through our interviews that the very act of welcoming this national self-reflection is a powerful tool in promoting a positive view of the UK. As said by Terrapin’s artistic director: **“It can only be good for the United Kingdom, and especially England, to be engaged deeply in conversations about what it’s done in the past. I think that’s extremely courageous, but I also think it’s the right thing to do.”**

### GLOBAL ATTENTION FOR FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS

The project received positive media attention and was promoted widely. The Marketing and Partnerships Manager from Terrapin said that the project received really strong media coverage. The highlight for the team was the coverage in Tasmania on ABC, the



national broadcaster for Australia, but they were also featured in a substantial segment on the SBS News, another government funded news channel. People were particularly interested in the role of the First Nations artist. This level of exposure is not inconsequential in the opinion of the artistic director who proclaimed that it provided **“a significant opportunity for First Nations artists [of Australia] to be able to present their work internationally and then to be able to be in the United Kingdom as it’s being presented. I can’t overstate the importance of that”.**

(Image credit: Terrapin/Peter Mathew)

## CONNECTION WITH THE WIDER FESTIVAL

Ongoing connections between Terrapin and the UK were pre-established, but it was felt that more could have been done to extend these relationships. Amongst the Terrapin team, there was a feeling of disconnection with the wider festival. It should be noted here that they were one of a very few commissions that didn't have a designated UK collaborator, however this feeling of disconnection was also echoed by Remembrances and Wantok who did have UK collaborators.

Terrapin was interested in the decision making of not having a concentrated period of activity around the games itself. Although there were mixers that they were invited to, international artists are often only in the UK for a focussed period of time so there wasn't an opportunity to take part more fully. Terrapin's artistic director provided an insight into what a more concentrated cultural festival could offer: **"from an artist or an artistic director's perspective, what those festivals provide, if we imagine that there's a period of cultural activity that is of a similar scale to the games itself, and it's concentrated around the games, that provides an enormous opportunity... to network and seek further opportunities... Could we pitch this work to others?"**



(Image credit: Terrapin/Peter Mathew)

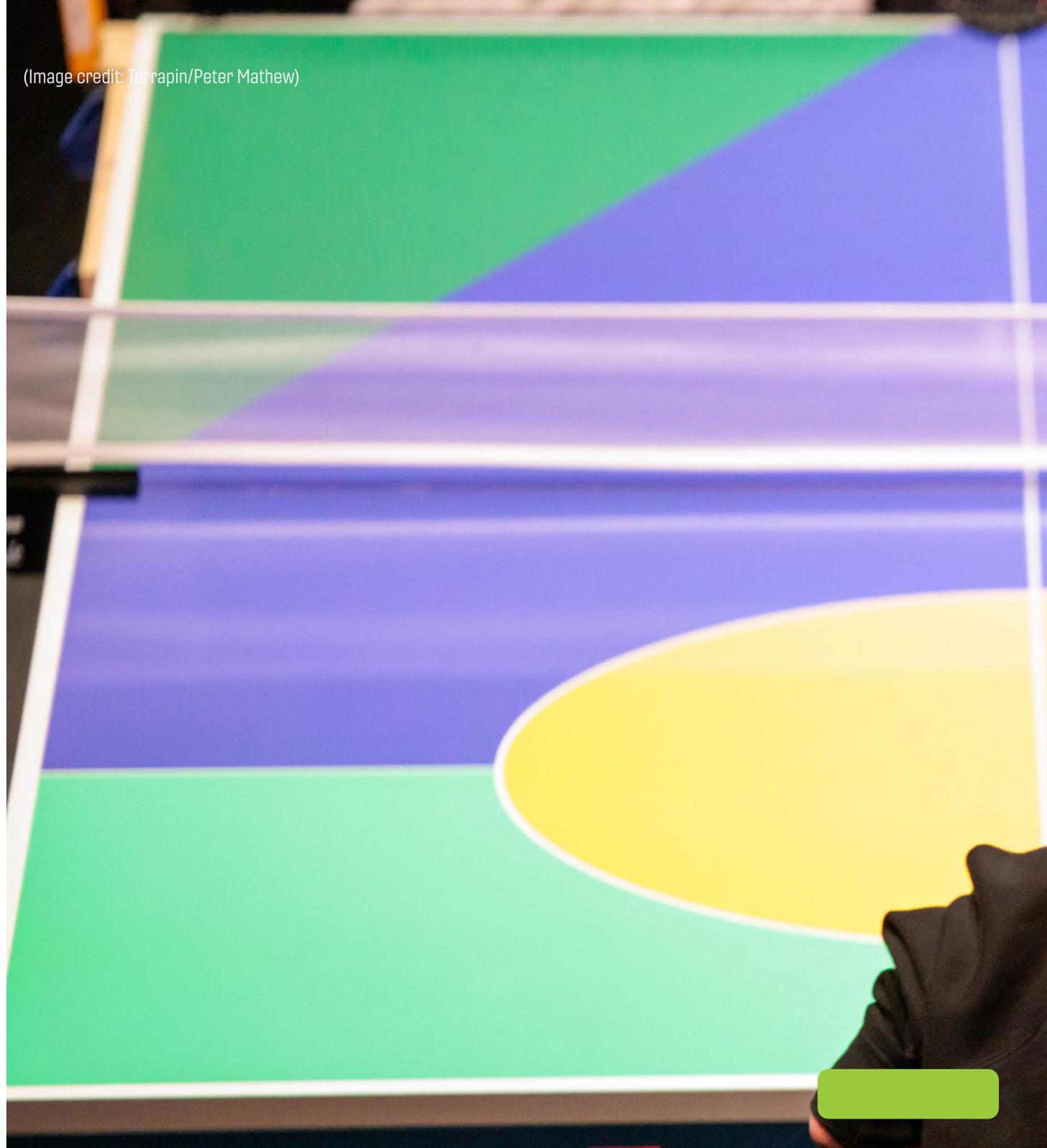
Anthem Anthem Revolution originated from a chance meeting with a Birmingham-based contact at a networking event (APAM – Australian Performing Arts Market). This exemplifies how vital these meeting points are to the international cultural ecosystem. To rectify this, more could have been done to formalise and encourage interaction between creatives specifically during the period of the Games, in order to allow for greater inclusion of organisations and individuals only visiting during that period.

## LEGACY

Follow-ups have been identified to improve inclusivity and accessibility of the project.

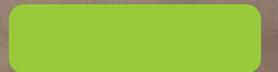
**“we want to put our work in places where people who the Australian Council might refer to as “non-traditional audiences”: people who would never step inside a gallery or a theatre. And we wanted to be able to provide them with a cultural experience, because everyone has an equal right to art and culture.”** – Terrapin artistic director

Terrapin is interested in working with the UK again but this decision making is influenced by practical, economic and political factors. The recent trade agreement between the UK and Australia has added impetus and renewed focus for future work between the two countries which could provide more opportunities than previously offered.



**“YOU CAN HATE SOMETHING BETTER IF IT’S  
NOT IN YOUR FACE ALL THE TIME AND YOU  
CAN IMAGINE IT TO BE A MONSTER, AND IT’S  
VERY MUCH NOT LIKE THAT.”**

– LEAD ARTIST (TASMANIA)



**COMMISSIONED ORGANISATION**

BEATFREEKS (UK)

**DELIVERY PARTNER ORGANISATION**

EIGHT ARTISTS FROM INDIA, MALAYSIA, PAKISTAN, RWANDA, TRINIDAD & TOBAGO, UGANDA, VIRGIN ISLANDS AND THE UK

**SECTOR / ARTFORM**

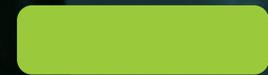
POETRY/STORY TELLING

**THEMES**

FUNDING PRACTICES; BASIC INCOME; TRUST-BASED MODEL; REMOTE PARTICIPATION; CONFIDENCE BUILDING

02

# AS WE SPEAK



## KEY FINDINGS



**78%**

**OF FREELANCERS  
(UK AND INTERNATIONAL)  
WHO WORKED ON THE  
PROJECT RATED THEIR  
OVERALL EXPERIENCE AS  
'EXCELLENT'**



**8**

**ARTISTS IN 8 COMMONWEALTH  
COUNTRIES**



**50%**

**OF FREELANCERS WHO  
WORKED ON THE PROJECT  
WERE AGED 16-25.**



**38%**

**OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS  
WERE AGED 16-25**



**160**

**PARTICIPANTS ENGAGED  
WITH THE PROJECT**

## PROJECT

Beatfreeks set out to deliver a worldwide funding and storytelling initiative based on the simple premise that people who have built their lives around creativity and community already know best what they need. Eight young artists and organisers from Uganda, Malaysia, the British Virgin Islands, India, Pakistan, Rwanda, Trinidad and Tobago and the UK were each given a no-strings-attached grant by Birmingham-based Beatfreeks, to continue and deepen their existing work. The artists each received a basic living wage for three months.

The artists are all new collaborators who were identified after a pilot of the project conducted by Beatfreeks using a Research and Development commission from Birmingham 2022 Festival, funded by the British Council. Those selected were at different points in their careers. Some were early on in their careers such as emerging artist Sakshi Kumar – a multimedia visual artist exploring themes of representation, identity and femininity in Pakistan. Whereas others, like performer, choreographer, dance teacher and peer educator, The Urbansong from Uganda, are relatively well established with 12.9K Instagram followers and having appeared on national television on East Africa's Got Talent. For ease of management, the eight artists were split into two groups of four and their start times staggered (i.e. the moment they signed a contract with Beatfreeks and received funding).

A key decision made by Beatfreeks was how much funding each artist should receive. Beatfreeks originally considered the idea of calculating this based on the real living wage for each artist's host country. However, as the creative producer said, it was **"quickly decided that under a veneer of fairness this was actually a hugely unfair way to approach it"**. All artists therefore received the same funding based on the UK's real living wage. The dilemma exemplifies the intrinsic economic inequalities that exist in international cultural relations, which projects such as this have to work hard to overcome.

The Beatfreeks project organisers creatively documented the project by inviting all participating artists to donate work or thought pieces for a final exhibition – though it is important to note that this was entirely voluntary and not subject to the financial support received. Likewise, there was an opportunity to join two virtual discussions hosted by Beatfreeks on the British Council website to reflect on their participation in *As We Speak*. The combination of in-person and virtual talks, performances and final exhibitions showcased the talent of the commissioned artists and the communities with which they worked.

### KEY LEARNINGS

#### CHANGE HOW FUNDING WORKS

Project leads were clear about their ambitions from the outset: **"the thinking originally was to try and change how arts funding works. Just that. Nothing more than that."** In interviews, the existing models of funding that expect artists to

pivot to meet pre-determined guidelines was discussed. These, however sensitively managed, are inevitably top-down and require recipients to conform to the requirements of funders and policy makers.

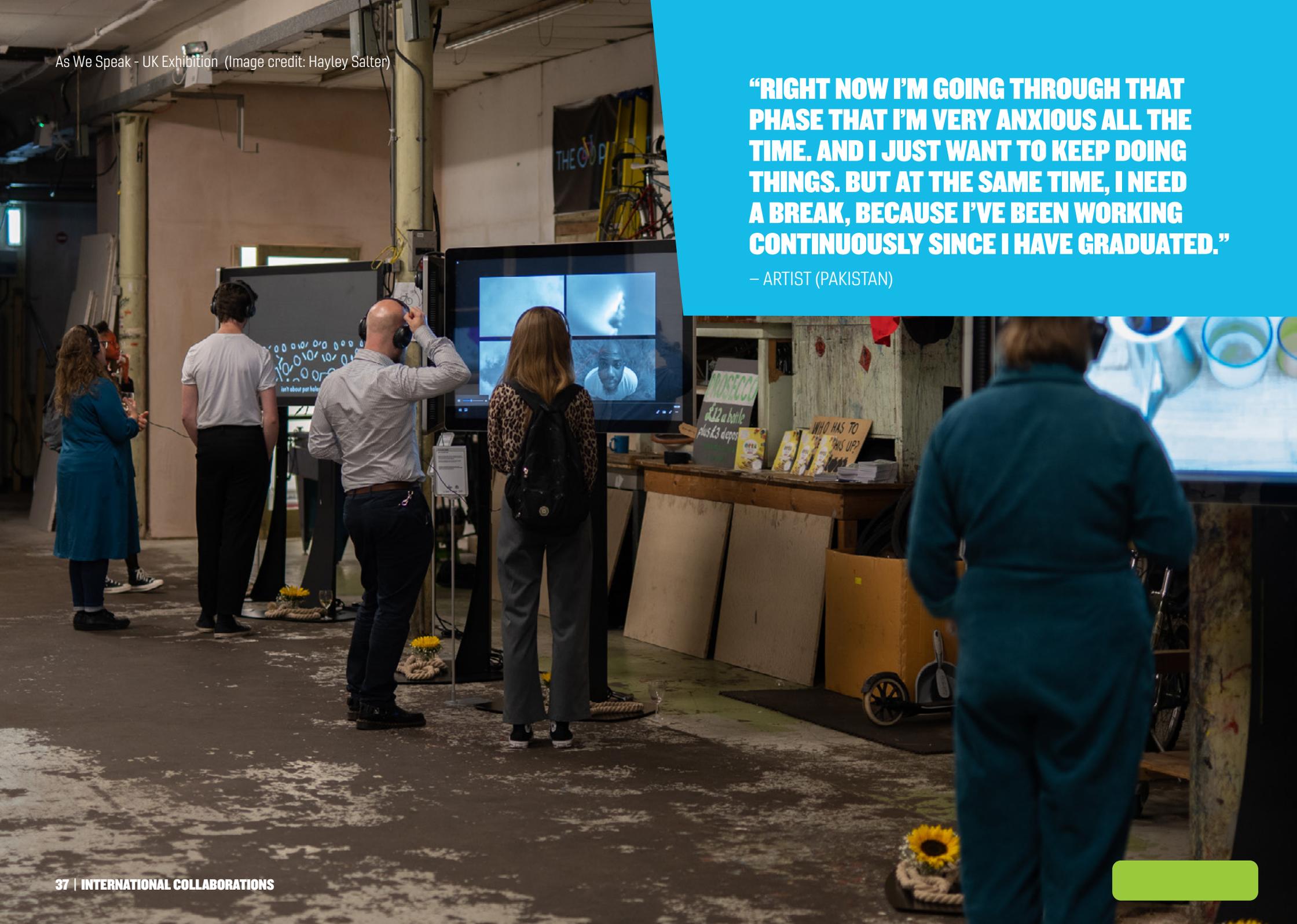
However often the project reiterated the full autonomy granted to participating artists, they sometimes remained hesitant, often asking project leads for permission despite receiving the same response each time: **"Yes, whatever you're asking for, it's a resounding yes, you can do it exactly like you want, you can do it."** In the pilot programme, supported by the British Council, there was arguably more variety in artist responses, with one artist choosing to use their funding to take a step back, rest and reflect. For this project, all artists decided to create new work. There were personal reasons for this, as one of the artists explained: **"Right now I'm going through that phase that I'm very anxious all the time. And I just want to keep doing things. But at the same time, I need a break, because I've been working continuously since I have graduated."**

#### BASIC INCOME FOR ARTISTS

The central premise of the project, supporting artists with a no-strings attached basic income, makes the project a timely intervention and politically intriguing experiment in trust-based support. Interest in Universal Basic Income in the arts world has increased in recent years – possibly due to the impacts of Covid-19. Evidence gathered on the effects of Covid-19 has found that self-employed people working in the arts were disproportionately disadvantaged by the impact of Covid-19 and

**“RIGHT NOW I’M GOING THROUGH THAT PHASE THAT I’M VERY ANXIOUS ALL THE TIME. AND I JUST WANT TO KEEP DOING THINGS. BUT AT THE SAME TIME, I NEED A BREAK, BECAUSE I’VE BEEN WORKING CONTINUOUSLY SINCE I HAVE GRADUATED.”**

– ARTIST (PAKISTAN)



the sector failed sufficiently to protect many freelancers from economic shocks. This appears as a theme in reports such as 'Taking the temperature' (British Council, 2021)<sup>3</sup>, a first-of-its-kind, landmark report on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on India's creative economy and 'Culture in Crisis' (Centre for Cultural Value, 2022)<sup>4</sup>, the world's largest investigation into the impacts of Covid-19 on the UK's cultural industries. To support their recovery from the unprecedented damage caused by the pandemic, the Republic of Ireland has begun its roll out a basic income for the arts scheme – supporting 2,000 artists with a weekly income of £280<sup>5</sup>. In a similar vein, there have been recent pilots launched in the US states of California, Minnesota and New York that support artists through guaranteed incomes<sup>6</sup>. In this context, As We Speak makes a vital contribution to

**IT'S NOT A COLLABORATION IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE. IT'S MORE CREATING A SHARED SPACE FOR THE STORIES TO COEXIST. AND THEN FACILITATING CONTACT AND COLLABORATION IF IT COMES OUT ORGANICALLY."**

– CREATIVE PRODUCER (UK)

research in this area. The project works with artists from a range of economic conditions including highly developed countries (UK), high-income developing countries (Trinidad & Tobago), middle-income developing countries (India and Malaysia), low-income developing countries (Pakistan), some of the world's least developed countries (Rwanda and Uganda) and small island developing states (British Virgin Islands). Further research, outside of the scope of this report, is recommended to understand the impact of freeing artists from financial concerns to focus on the work that they would like to do.

This could hold important policy implications for the future. Further research will inevitably come from the previously cited large scale experiments in the Republic of Ireland and the USA, but projects such as As We Speak will provide insights for how smaller devolved schemes can work in non-Western contexts.

#### A TRUST-BASED MODEL: NOT A COLLABORATION IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE

Given what we know on basic income for artists, this project presented a new and unique concept of working internationally. As remarked by the creative producer, **"it's not a collaboration in the traditional sense. It's more creating a shared space for the stories to coexist. And then facilitating contact and collaboration if it comes out organically."** This is arguably innovative in and of itself, in that it didn't really matter to the project leads what the primary artistic outputs (if any) of the project were, as long as the artists taking part felt freed from financial constraints. The one requirement from Birmingham 2022 Festival was that the process was documented - both by

the selected cohort and by a documentary crew. As one of the artists from the India poetry collective put it when asked to encapsulate what it felt like to be part of this project: **"over the last three months, we had the means to do so many things that we wanted to"**.

As noted frequently by project leads, this work relies on a trust-based model – as opposed to one which is accountability-based – and, as such, required a mature relationship and understanding between the British Council as well as core Festival funders and the delivery partner (Beatfreeks). To this end, the delivery team agreed with the views of the project manager who claimed that the **"festival team were there with us, and just said: 'you get stuck, you get in touch' so they were very supportive. And then in other ways, for the panel discussions, I would say the British Council team were absolutely brilliant and really went above and beyond to support us"**. Finally, it's also worth noting that the trust-based model also extends to the relationship with the artists themselves as the offer of no-strings attached support could be construed as 'too good to be true'. The creative producer reasoned that Beatfreek's online presence and track record may have helped reassure artists who felt unsure at first: **"something I've had to do a lot of at the start was trust building because it absolutely feels like a scam. When you reach out to an artist and tell them: 'Hey, I'm going to give you this much money for nothing. For the stuff you want to do anyway.' So, I know we were all very assiduously googled and researched."** - Creative Producer (UK).

#### CHALLENGES OF REMOTE PARTICIPATION

<sup>3</sup> British Council (2021) Taking the temperature: [https://www.britishcouncil.in/sites/default/files/final\\_ttt3\\_report\\_web.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.in/sites/default/files/final_ttt3_report_web.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Centre for Cultural Value (2022) Culture in Crisis: <https://www.culturehive.co.uk/CV/resources/culture-in-crisis-impacts-of-covid-19/>

“I think the only thing that we considered and then decided not to do and then some artists kind of independently brought up would be an element to the project where they all get to meet face to face. I would love that. Some of my favourite work I’ve done involves putting artists in a big box and shaking it to see what will come out. But I don’t know, I don’t have an answer right now on how to do this safely and sustainably, in a green way, and so on. So, I think that’s something worth keeping in mind and considering for future iterations. But I don’t know exactly how to do it in a way that’s justifiable.” – Creative Producer (UK)

As We Speak was nearly entirely produced online, with none of the eight artists ever meeting each other in-person. Digital engagement is a feature of all of these case studies to a certain degree, but As We Speak and Where Are You were outliers in that neither brought the international partners physically together at any point. The theme of digital cultural relations is further considered in the Wantok case study but it should be recognised that, even though As We Speak successfully utilised digital technologies to bring people together, there was still a desire from all parties to meet in-person.

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<sup>5</sup> BBC (2022) Covid-19: Irish government pays ‘basic income’ to artists  
[www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-62839585](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-62839585)

<sup>6</sup> Financial Times (2022) A universal basic income for artists? US cities are trying it: <https://www.ft.com/content/03574a31-27fa-4402-baac-8a512d8a98cd>



As We Speak - UK Exhibition (Image credit: Hayley Salter)

**“I THINK THE ONLY THING THAT WE CONSIDERED AND THEN DECIDED NOT TO DO AND THEN SOME ARTISTS KIND OF INDEPENDENTLY BROUGHT UP WOULD BE AN ELEMENT TO THE PROJECT WHERE THEY ALL GET TO MEET FACE TO FACE. I WOULD LOVE THAT.”**

– CREATIVE PRODUCER (UK)







**“THE THINKING ORIGINALLY WAS TO TRY AND CHANGE HOW ARTS FUNDING WORKS. JUST THAT. NOTHING MORE THAN THAT.”**

– CREATIVE PRODUCER (UK)

from lullabies to vows to eulogies.



03

# REMEMBRANCES

## COMMISSIONED ORGANISATION

BORDER CROSSINGS (UK)

## DELIVERY PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

AVA DANCE COMPANY (UK), BRIAN SOLOMON / ELECTRIC MOOSE (CANADA) AND MATTHEW JAMES WEIGEL (CANADA)

## PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

BIDF (UK)

## SECTOR / ARTFORM

CONTEMPORARY DANCE

## THEMES

HYBRID WORKING; EQUALITY; GENUINE MUTUAL EXCHANGE; PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES

## KEY FINDINGS



**86%**

**OF FREELANCERS WHO WORKED ON THE PROJECT AGREED THAT THE WORD 'COLLABORATION' DESCRIBED THEIR EXPERIENCE ON THE PROJECT WELL.**



**91%**

**OF FREELANCERS WHO WORKED ON THE PROJECT USUALLY LIVE IN ENGLAND OR THE WIDER WEST MIDLANDS. NONE USUALLY LIVE IN BIRMINGHAM AND ITS SURROUNDS.**



**81%**

**OF FREELANCERS WHO WORKED ON THE PROJECT AGREED THAT FESTIVAL 2022 PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN PROMOTING THE CULTURAL LIFE OF THE AREA.**



**31**

**FREELANCERS WORKED ON THIS PROJECT**

## REMEMBRANCES

(Image credit: Paul Stringer)

### PROJECT

Remembrances is a new collaborative dance work exploring the central question of 'Who are we now to welcome you?' It has been made by contemporary theatre-makers, dance artists and poets from the Midlands in the UK and Canada. The partnership drew across:

- Border Crossings is an intercultural theatre company, and has produced the ORIGINS Festival since 2009, offering a space for Indigenous people to share their cultures in Britain.
- Ava Dance Company creates high-quality contemporary dance works, with a cast of female dancers and collaborators from a range of cultures and artistic disciplines.
- Brian Solomon / Electric Moose is a First Nations contemporary dance artist of Anishinaabe and Irish heritage, from Ontario Canada.
- Matthew James Weigel is an award winning Dënësųkinë language and Métis writer from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

The project emerged from a meeting between Border Crossings and Ava Dance Company at the 2019 Origins Festival. Their shared interest in indigenous culture led to a discussion around it being really important that Birmingham 2022 Festival acknowledge that there would be indigenous people from the Commonwealth coming to the games and to the city.

The team reflected on indigenous protocols that could help shape their work; some of which they had observed in the ceremonial aspects of previous Games in Australia and Canada. Given the absence of similar marginalised indigenous relationships in the UK, the partnership instead decided to design something that reflected the indigenous protocols they'd learnt. Namely, they were drawn to the Maori model of call-and-response (the pōwhiri).

The call-and-response model framed the final production, where the UK dance organisation offered a welcome, and invited the First Nations choreographer and dancers to respond. The two halves of this performance were produced separately, in their own countries, then brought together physically in the days leading up to the performance.

The performance was delivered to audiences as part of Birmingham International Dance Festival.

### KEY LEARNINGS

#### NEW WAYS OF HYBRID WORKING

The call-and-response concept was arguably made possible due to the hybrid development process that the project undertook. Namely, that international collaboration leading up to the production largely took place online. Concepts and plans were co-developed through regular virtual meetings. However, the choreographed dance routines were largely developed independently. This new way of working together was reflected

on by the UK choreographer who said that **“Sometimes we think collaboration is always very tight together, but there might be other collaborations that have other formats and you need to be very open minded, flexible and respectful of that type of collaborative process”**. This approach meant that there was a lack of certainty around what the final piece would look like leading up to the performance dates. In fact, the two pieces produced by each respective partner were only exposed to one another a week before the first performance when the artists from Canada arrived in the UK. As a contingency, Ava Dance Company developed a lot of extra material for their performance that they ended up discarding. This method of co-production was largely experimental and untested. The UK partners were pleased with the results, with the artistic director exclaiming that **“there is something in the potential of bringing together work, which is actually made separately, and just a melding it in that last week. It’s not going to work for everything, but it’s surprisingly potent.”** Likewise, the choreographer explained **“that’s a very different type of collaboration from what we might understand. So, from that point of view, I loved having that experience, because I hadn’t had that type of collaboration.”** This new confidence found in remote-working was an important theme that was also explored in *Where Are You?*, *Wantok* and *Traveller*.

**“THERE IS SOMETHING IN THE POTENTIAL OF BRINGING TOGETHER WORK, WHICH IS ACTUALLY MADE SEPARATELY, AND JUST A MELDING IT IN THAT LAST WEEK. IT’S NOT GOING TO WORK FOR EVERYTHING, BUT IT’S SURPRISINGLY POTENT.”**

– ARTISTIC DIRECTOR (UK)

REMEMBERANCES (Image credit: Paul Stringer)

## EQUALITY

It was frequently stressed by UK partners that an equal stake for all project partners was sought from the very beginning. The UK choreographer and artistic director were both very conscious of the history of imperialism that originally brought the commonwealth together and how this had impacted First Nations people. As summarised by the choreographer: **“there’s been a lot of knowledge we all have acquired in terms of history, indigenous communities, our role, our nation’s role (the British Empire)... at the core of it was questioning absolutely everything of your identity, and how you move from there”**

**“IT WOULD’VE BEEN VERY EASY TO HAVE A HIERARCHY IN OUR PROJECT. BECAUSE AFTER ALL, WE DID ENVISAGE IT. SO, WE ACTUALLY HAD TO OVERCOMPENSATE TO MAKE SURE THAT THE CANADIAN ELEMENT WAS EQUAL. AND THAT WASN’T AN EASY THING TO DO.”**

– ARTISTIC DIRECTOR (UK)

## GENUINE MUTUAL EXCHANGE

As previously mentioned, being the commissioned organisation and host for their Canadian partners, the UK partners were keen to be proactive in pre-empting and addressing any imbalances that could be perceived in their relationship. The UK artistic director explained that **“It would’ve been very easy to have a hierarchy in our project. Because after all, we did envisage it. So, we actually had to overcompensate to make sure that the Canadian element was equal. And that wasn’t an easy thing to do.”** The type of leadership demonstrated here is arguably similar to what some refer to as ‘steward leadership’. Robinson (2020) summarises this as a deliberate move away from control to stewardship: anti-patriarchal, decolonised models of leadership. Being both humble, confident, inclusive and accountable is a difficult balancing act that appears to have driven Remembrances forward. The choreographer demonstrates this kind of leadership style in the lesson that they’ve taken from this experience: **“What I’ve learned with any collaboration, but especially internationally, is that things always go differently to what you expect. Not right. Not wrong. Differently. Always.”** The words “collaboration” (26) and “people” (43) were the two most popular words spoken during the final reflection session with UK partners after all stop words were filtered out. This also appears to have filtered throughout all members of the team. When freelancers who worked on the project were surveyed, 86% agreed that **“It provided opportunities for collaboration”**. This indicates that genuine mutual exchange was achieved through this project.



REMEMBRANCES (Image credit: Paul Stringer)

## PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES

The international partnership was fruitful, with both UK and Canadian partners expressing gratitude and mutuality to one another. That being said, it wasn’t without its challenges. Time zone differences were an anticipated barrier for communication with partners in Canada. However, a further disruption to communications was that international partners appeared to have their own rhythms and wouldn’t prioritise and commit to activities or meetings that are typically expected of funded arts organisations in the UK. TAA witnessed this first hand when trying to organise interviews with the artists so that this case study could have an international voice on the record. Despite repeated attempts, we were unsuccessful in arranging any such meeting. Difficulties notwithstanding, UK partners reported that the collaboration remained positive and productive throughout.

This possibly demonstrates the importance of patience and humility in negotiating cultural differences and refraining from viewing working relationships from an entirely UK-centric perspective.

When it came to UK partnerships, there was also some disagreement. The artistic director and the choreographer felt that the performance location and promotion they received were disappointing. In order to gain further exposure after receiving lower than expected audience numbers, the project partners are looking at setting up a streamed online video of their performance to reach a wider audience. An interesting dynamic to the project is that it seeks to find its home in virtual settings. Digital engagement seems to have become the normative model of partnership working.

#### LEGACY

From the UK partners, it's felt that there is a strong possibility of reigniting this partnership again in the future. However, it was stressed by the choreographer that these **"relationships might happen in different moments"**. It was conveyed that the relationship that had been built had a warmth that extended beyond a purely contractual, transactional partnership and, just how old friends drift apart and come back together again, there was an openness to explore new opportunities when the time is right.



**“FOLLOW THE PRINCIPLE OF  
EQUALITY, EVEN IF IT KILLS YOU”**

- ARTISTIC DIRECTOR (UK)

REMEMBERANCES (Image credit: Paul Stringer)

Where Are You? - (Image credit: Anand Chhabra)

**COMMISSIONED ORGANISATION**

BLACK COUNTRY TOURING (UK)

**DELIVERY PARTNER ORGANISATION**

ACCRA THEATRE WORKSHOP (GHANA)

**SECTOR / ARTFORM**

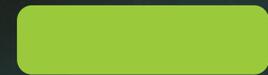
THEATRE

**THEMES**

PARTNERSHIP BUILDING; TRUST; RECIPROCITY OF SKILLS; ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS; NEW STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

04

# WHERE ARE YOU?



## KEY FINDINGS



**89%**

OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS  
RATED THEIR OVERALL  
EXPERIENCE OF THE PROJECT  
AS 'EXCELLENT'



**78%**

OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS  
ATTENDED WITH CHILDREN  
UNDER 14



WHEN ASKED IF THEIR EXPERIENCE  
WAS "DIFFERENT FROM THINGS THEY'D  
EXPERIENCED BEFORE", ON AVERAGE  
AUDIENCES SCORED THIS

**9/10**



**2,148**

LIVE AUDIENCES



**761**

DIGITAL AUDIENCES

## PROJECT

Where Are You? Is a hybrid theatre production for families and young people that tells the story of two pen pals, Rochi in Bearwood (UK) and Abena in Dzorwulu (Ghana), who embark on a perilous journey across land, mountains, sea, and bridges, courting danger and adventure in order to meet each other in the middle.

The production was jointly conceived and co-developed by Black Country Touring and Accra Theatre Workshop:

- Accra Theatre Workshop seeks to present Ghanaian stories in new and interesting ways by putting special emphasis on new work and new voices. It exists to support artists at different stages of their careers by providing opportunities for training, experimentation, showcasing and performance.

- Black Country Touring is a creative arts charity working in Sandwell, Wolverhampton, Dudley and Walsall. As well as programming professional touring shows in community venues with local partners, Black Country Touring also produces its own creative projects often born out of conversations with Black Country communities.

The partnership originally received an R&D commission from Birmingham 2022 Festival, funded by the British Council, in Spring 2021 to test out new ways of working. Following receipt of additional funding from the British Council, Birmingham 2022 Festival then commissioned partners to bring their ideas to life in the summer of 2022.

The show took place on 17th and 18th June 2022 as a part of Black Country Touring's local high street arts festival: What's In Store, and was staged simultaneously in Bear Bookshop, Bearwood, UK and J-CLU School of Arts, Accra, Ghana. It was connected through a live stream and featured a mix of live performance, pre-recorded performance and animation. The show was accompanied by a beautifully illustrated children's book written by the creative team and a standalone film based on the book was also produced and made available online. For the performances, Black Country Touring estimate that a total of 425 audience members attended across performance locations in both countries.

## KEY LEARNINGS

### BROKERING THE PARTNERSHIP: RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME?

The production was co-designed by Black Country Touring and Accra Theatre Workshop. The partnership was initiated by Black Country Touring after they originally approached the Birmingham 2022 Festival team at the beginning of 2020. They were given guidance by the British Council and Farnham Maltings who had done research into the cultural sector in sub-Saharan Africa. Through this, they shortlisted organisations they'd like to work with. Important to this decision making wasn't only finding an organisation with a similar purpose and artform but also where they were positioned across geographic time zones. The UK artistic director explained how they followed the Greenwich Mean/Meridian division on a world map to locate

possible countries to work with as they wanted to work in real time. Contact was made in Winter 2020 and from Accra Theatre Workshop's perspective, this came at a really great time. In the grip of the Covid-19 pandemic, there wasn't a lot happening on the Ghanaian side, so to collaborate and work in a new way was a big draw for Accra's artistic director who said: **"because of Covid, we couldn't travel and be in the same place, but to have the opportunity to explore a new way of working was really what we needed at that time."**

Clearly, a lot of effort went in to securing the right partnership and environmental factors such as time zones and the pandemic had an influence on how relationships formed and the project evolved. These are important considerations when brokering international partnerships. Where Are You? also benefited from a Birmingham 22 Festival R&D commission to stress test the partnership. This was a common occurrence across the case studies we reviewed: As We Speak, Wantok and Traveller also had a period of commissioned R&D to scope out their work. The UK artistic director for Where Are You? summarises that their experience of the R&D phase proved **"invaluable going forward because we all had working relationships. It's fair to say the second half of the project has been phenomenally more complicated"**. R&D funding can play a vital role in strengthening bonds, building understanding and mutuality between international organisations so that they can push on and work on more complex and challenging work.

**“BECAUSE OF COVID, WE COULDN’T TRAVEL AND BE IN THE SAME PLACE, BUT TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE A NEW WAY OF WORKING WAS REALLY WHAT WE NEEDED AT THAT TIME.”**

– ARTISTIC DIRECTOR (GHANA)



## TRUST

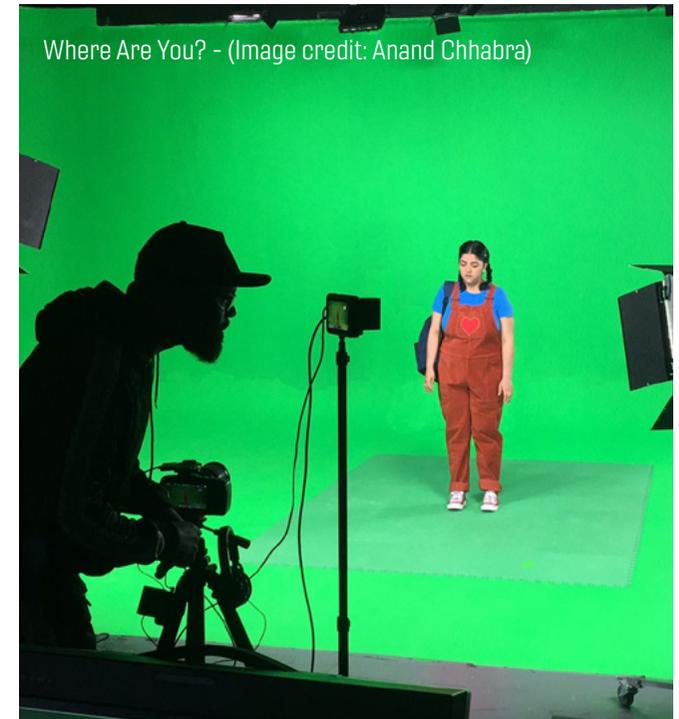
Trust was a feature of this project, articulated by the UK artistic director, who said that the **“one thing that comes across to me is you have to trust the people you’re working with. And I don’t mean that in an abstract sense. I mean, you have to trust that the people you’re working with will deliver and if you trust people to deliver, they do deliver.”** They went on to explain that they’re not a company that are into micro-management; what they did worked because it was based on individual responsibility. This distributed and democratic leadership style was apparent in both countries. One of the artists from Ghana spoke directly to Accra’s artistic director during the reflection session to tell them: **“you’re very open to suggestions in terms of how we went about displaying the images... we had to figure out creative ways to put those images together. So, I think it goes back to the team being open to creativity from the artist’s side.”**

**“FORCING MY BRAIN INTO CONVEYING INFORMATION IN A CLEAR AND SIMPLE WAY.”**

– PRODUCTION DESIGNER (UK)

## RECIPROCITY OF SKILLS

We saw that the trust placed in the creatives of both countries paid dividends, as the UK artistic director explains: **“We needed everybody to work at their best to deliver what we’re trying to do. And everybody did that... in Ghana, and various different places, the skill levels are just incredible. Incredible. Humbling, a lot of the time”.** The UK partners in the project were very open with what they’d learnt from their peers in Ghana. A couple of respondents recalled occasions when the sound artist from Ghana was able to improvise and think creatively in order to ensure continuity across the two countries’ outputs. Asked about this, the sound artist explained that they frequently collaborated online so was comfortable in coordinating recordings over multiple locations and was able to bring this experience to the team. On the other hand, the filmmaker from Ghana had a steep learning curve to contend with as the file sizes the two projects were sending each other put strain on their technical infrastructure: **“it required that I had to learn some new skills. And that was really helpful, because I didn’t know I could do that with the software. And things like looping animation and all of that.”** Likewise, the UK production designer had to adapt the way they communicate to partners by **“forcing my brain into conveying information in a clear and simple way.”** They went on to say that their new method of concisely listing information and relaying this to others has since been useful in other projects they have worked on.



Where Are You? - (Image credit: Anand Chhabra)

The trust-based relationship the two partners built meant they put faith in artists to find creative and powerful solutions to problems they were facing. When freelancers who worked on the project were asked whether they felt like their contribution mattered or that it provided opportunities for collaboration, they gave an average score of 9.5 out of 10.

## ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS

The one issue that the teams flagged in their reflection session was the slow payment processes. They weren't the only project to flag this. Remembrances, Anthem Anthem Revolution and Wantok also found that they received payment near the end of their project. All such projects explained to us that they were fortunate to have the reserves needed to pay for the work upfront but that other organisations in different financial positions would have found this an impossible barrier to entry.

Moreover, they pointed out that the international organisations and freelance artists they worked with are in even more precarious positions. Many of their business arrangements operate on a hand-to-mouth basis and it simply isn't sustainable to expect or rely on lead organisations to fund projects upfront.



Where Are You? - ( Image credit: Anand Chhabra)

**“WE NEEDED EVERYBODY TO WORK AT THEIR BEST TO DELIVER WHAT WE’RE TRYING TO DO. AND EVERYBODY DID THAT... IN GHANA, AND VARIOUS DIFFERENT PLACES, THE SKILL LEVELS ARE JUST INCREDIBLE. INCREDIBLE. HUMBLING, A LOT OF THE TIME”**

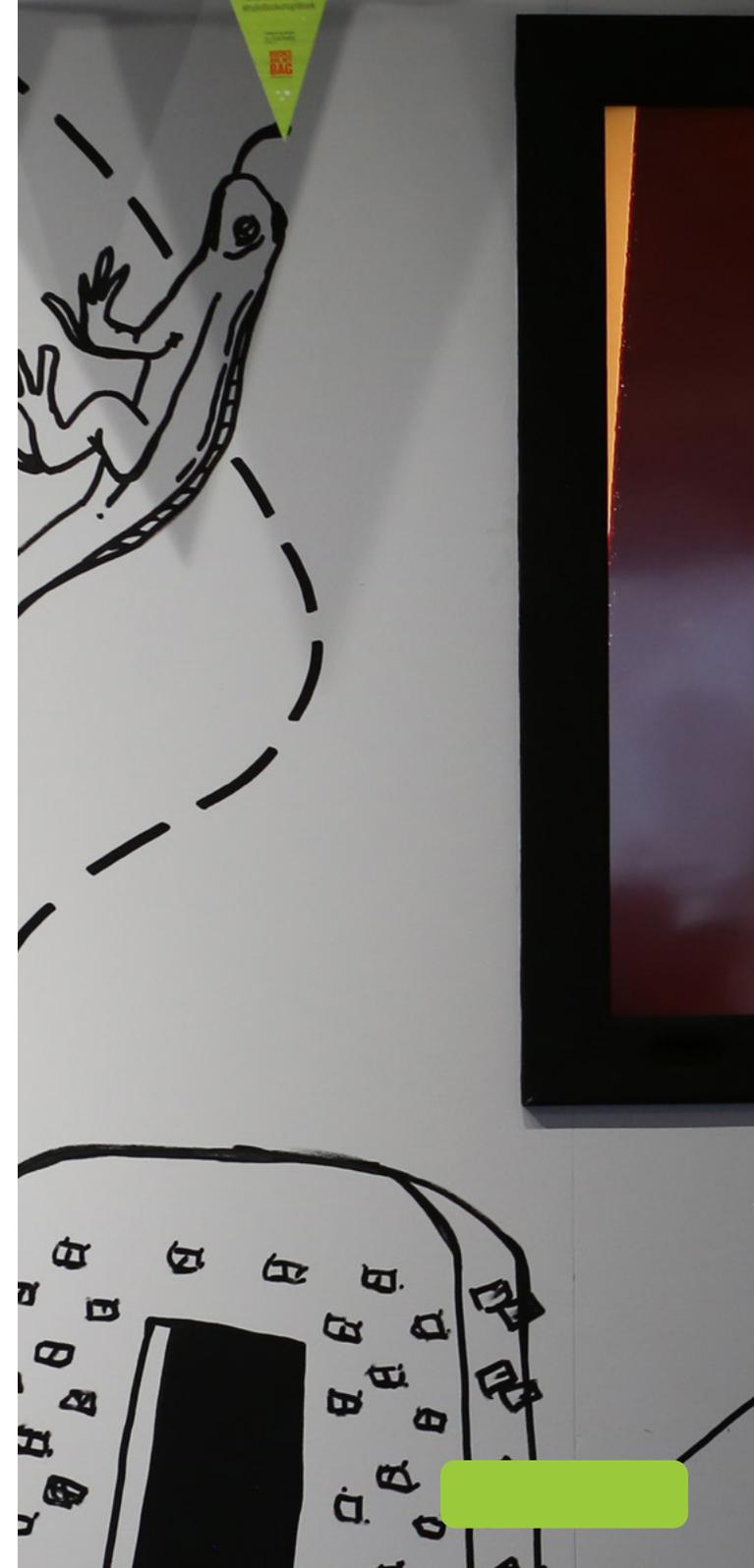
– ARTISTIC DIRECTOR (UK)



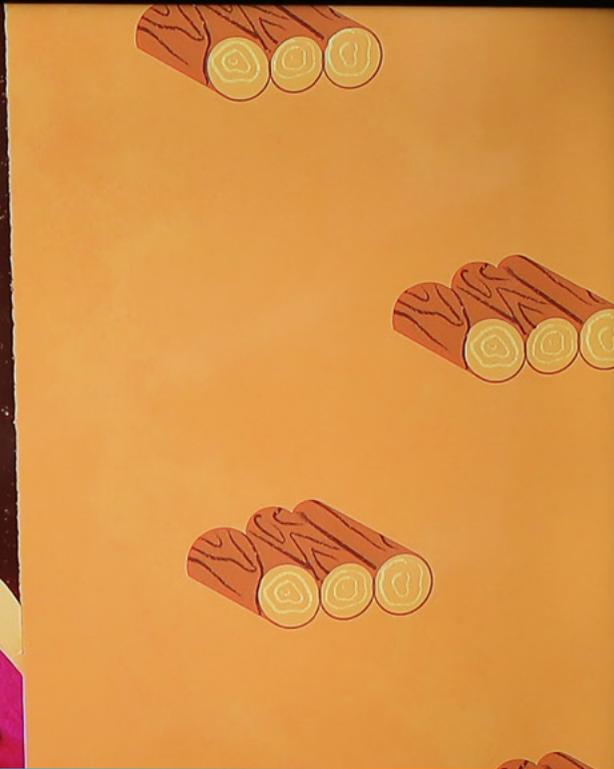
Where Are You? - (Image credit: Anand Chhabra)

## LEGACY

In response to the above, it should be noted that the relationship with the Birmingham 2022 Festival was an overwhelmingly positive one. **“Without the air of the games, this partnership wouldn’t exist without [The Birmingham Festival Team] being the catalyst to make it happen. It was down to them that they talked to us about our ideas.”** The UK artistic director repeatedly spoke glowingly about how the encouragement and support they received was irreplaceable. This led to Black Country Touring, for the first time in their 23-year history, building a new relationship with the British Council that they intend to take forward.



Where Are You? - (Image credit: Anand Chhabra)



**“THE SYNCHRONICITY OF ACTUALLY HAVING TWO GROUPS OF PEOPLE IN TWO PLACES, WATCHING ONE THING... YOU ASKED AT THE BEGINNING, DO WE THINK IT WORKED FOR BOTH SETS OF AUDIENCES? I THINK IT REALLY DID”**

-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR (UK)



**COMMISSIONED ORGANISATION**

OPEN THEATRE (UK)

**DELIVERY PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**

ENSPIRE (PAPUA NEW GUINEA), MAMA DOJO (AUSTRALIA)

**SECTOR / ARTFORM**

THEATRE

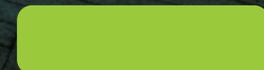
**THEMES**

HYBRID WORKING, INCLUSIVITY, RESPECT AND EQUALITY, LEGACY

Wantok - Open Theatre (Image credit: Wantok)

05

# WANTOK



## KEY FINDINGS



WHEN ASKED WHETHER THE PROJECT “REFLECTED A BROAD AND INCLUSIVE RANGE OF VOICES”, ON AVERAGE AUDIENCES SCORED THIS

**9/10**



**91%**

OF AUDIENCES RATED THE PERFORMANCE AS “EXCELLENT”



**18**

ACTIVITY LOCATIONS ENGAGING PARTICIPANTS OR AUDIENCES’



**213**

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS ENGAGED



## PROJECT

Wantok was jointly conceived and co-developed by Open Theatre, Enspire and Mama Dojo

- Open Theatre, from Coventry, use nonverbal physical theatre to collaborate with Young People with Learning Disabilities (YPWLD). For over 30 years they've been creating quality art which reflects and celebrates the unique creativity and abilities of young people with learning disabilities.
- Enspire design projects mostly for South Pacific audiences that educate and inspire people about Papua New Guinea by creating music and visual art which contends with social issues affecting Islander communities.
- Mama Dojo from Australia produce films, live shows, podcasts and online workshops. They have toured over 50 countries working with cities, schools, theatres, governments and cultural groups.

Commissioned by Birmingham 2022 Festival and funded by the British Council, Wantok brought four weeks of creative activities to parks and public spaces across Birmingham during Summer 2022. A series of workshops with schools and youth groups in the West Midlands was followed by a regional tour across five venues of a brand-new theatre production that featured world-class performers alongside young people with learning disabilities.

The five venues were The Red Shed in Edgbaston, Erdington High Street, Blakesley Hall in Yardley, Weoley Castle Ruins and Castle Bromwich Hall and Gardens. Each show was delivered outdoors and was interactive, free and accessible to all. Performances lasted approximately 50-60 minutes and most performances were on grass. A Blakesley Hall performance was designed with a touch tour, audio description and strategic interruptions in order to support multiple access needs.

Wantok mixed family-friendly comedy with cultural insights from Australia and Papua New Guinea. The production offered a humorous treatment of intercultural communication. It aimed to radically reimagine Australia-Pacific traditions; specifically, annual Papuan "Sing-Sing" celebrations where groups of indigenous peoples gather together to create visual, physical and musical performances for one another. In a similar way, Wantok used the symbolism of 'birds' as a way of talking about different cultures. Different performers dressed as different kinds of native birds of the UK, Australia and Papua New Guinea. Through a series of interactive performances and playground games that audiences of all ages could get involved in, Wantok taught audiences about several different Papuan groups and rituals.

## KEY LEARNINGS

### HYBRID WORKING

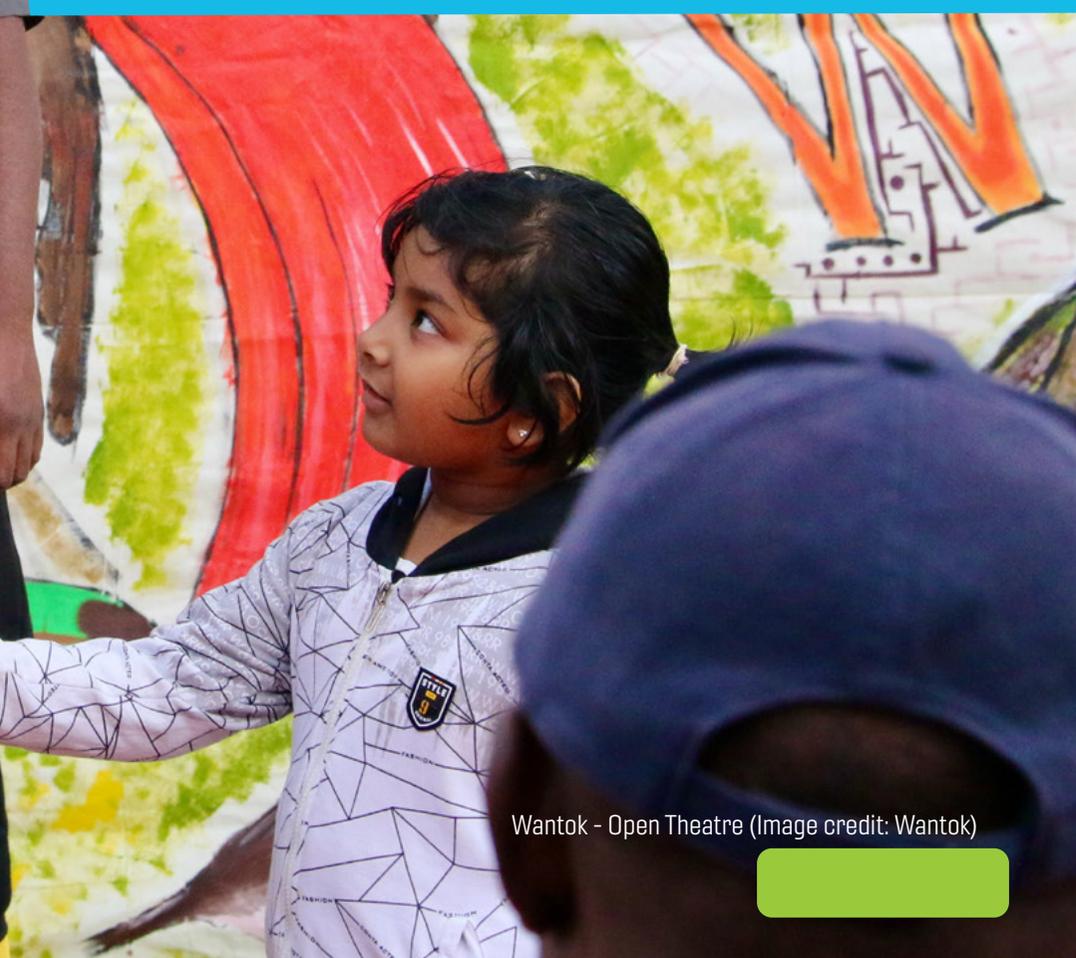
**"We got a lot of big logistical stuff done on Zoom, but it was very much apparent that we couldn't make those big creative steps in terms of actually building a show until we were in the room in the UK. So, it's been two years of logistics, grant applications, you know, scheming and dreaming. And then five intense days, when we got [to Birmingham, UK], of actually making a show. And then three weeks of performing that show. In other words, we feel like we've created some great relationships, we've put on some great shows, but it's just the beginning, particularly creatively speaking, now that we know the personalities and the logistics are all possible, doable, done. Now we can really take it to the next level." – Artist (Australia)**

The collaboration emerged from Mama Dojo touring the UK in 2019. An experienced international performer, they took the initiative to reach out to the Birmingham 2022 Festival team and invite them to attend some of their shows taking place in a Birmingham school. They were subsequently invited to attend a Birmingham 2022 online roundtable meeting that Open Theatre were also present at, described by the artist from Australia as "creative speed dating". All partners note an instant connection when they met and a feeling that there was potential to work together.



**“IT’S JUST THE BEGINNING, PARTICULARLY  
CREATIVELY SPEAKING, NOW THAT WE  
KNOW THE PERSONALITIES AND THE  
LOGISTICS ARE ALL POSSIBLE, DOABLE,  
DONE. NOW WE CAN REALLY TAKE IT TO THE  
NEXT LEVEL.”**

– ARTIST (AUSTRALIA)



Wantok - Open Theatre (Image credit: Wantok)

The partnership put together a proposal and received an R&D commission from Birmingham 2022 Festival, funded by the British Council, to look at how to develop their partnership online. This involved peer learning opportunities over Zoom between artists and practitioners in the UK and Oceania. The project wasn't without its difficulties. Along with a 10-hour time difference, there were challenges in engaging artists from Papua New Guinea (PNG) because of internet connectivity, lockdown curfews and occasionally displacement due to violence. The following exchange shows how the international partnership helped to accommodate such issues:

**“THESE ISSUES ARE THE REALITIES OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA. SO, I THINK IT WAS REALLY IMPORTANT FOR EVERYONE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT EARLY IN THE BEGINNING”**

– ARTIST (PNG)

**PNG Artist: “these [issues] are the realities of Papua New Guinea. So, I think it was really important for everyone to acknowledge that early in the beginning. And everybody did, everyone was very patient. I was probably the least patient.”**

**Australia Artist: “Because you’d seen it all before! Whereas everyone else’s like: “Oh, wow, power outages are exciting.”**

**PNG Artist: “(laughs) and I’m like: “this is daily life!”**

“Likewise, there were cultural differences that they had to contend with that the artist from Australia relayed to us: **“the reality is that there are some real cultural differences. And you can get very comfortable... We’re so fluent in the modern Anglosphere office talk and the wrong and right things to say and stuff, and we know how to just sort of effortlessly swim next to each other. But what happens when you are dealing with a genuinely different culture? Gender roles, hierarchies, all this sort of stuff - you realise how particular our approach is in the West, and how different it is in other countries and you’ve just got to give each other room and take some time with it.”** All partners agreed that a watershed moment arrived when they collaborated with PNG University who introduced them to their learning management system. This helped to bring together all of their thoughts, resources, files and media into one accessible space. It’s worth noting that SMEs and freelancers working in international cultural relations are unlikely to have access to structured management systems so partnerships with local institutions could be vital in supporting knowledge exchanges in hybrid working.

## INCLUSIVITY

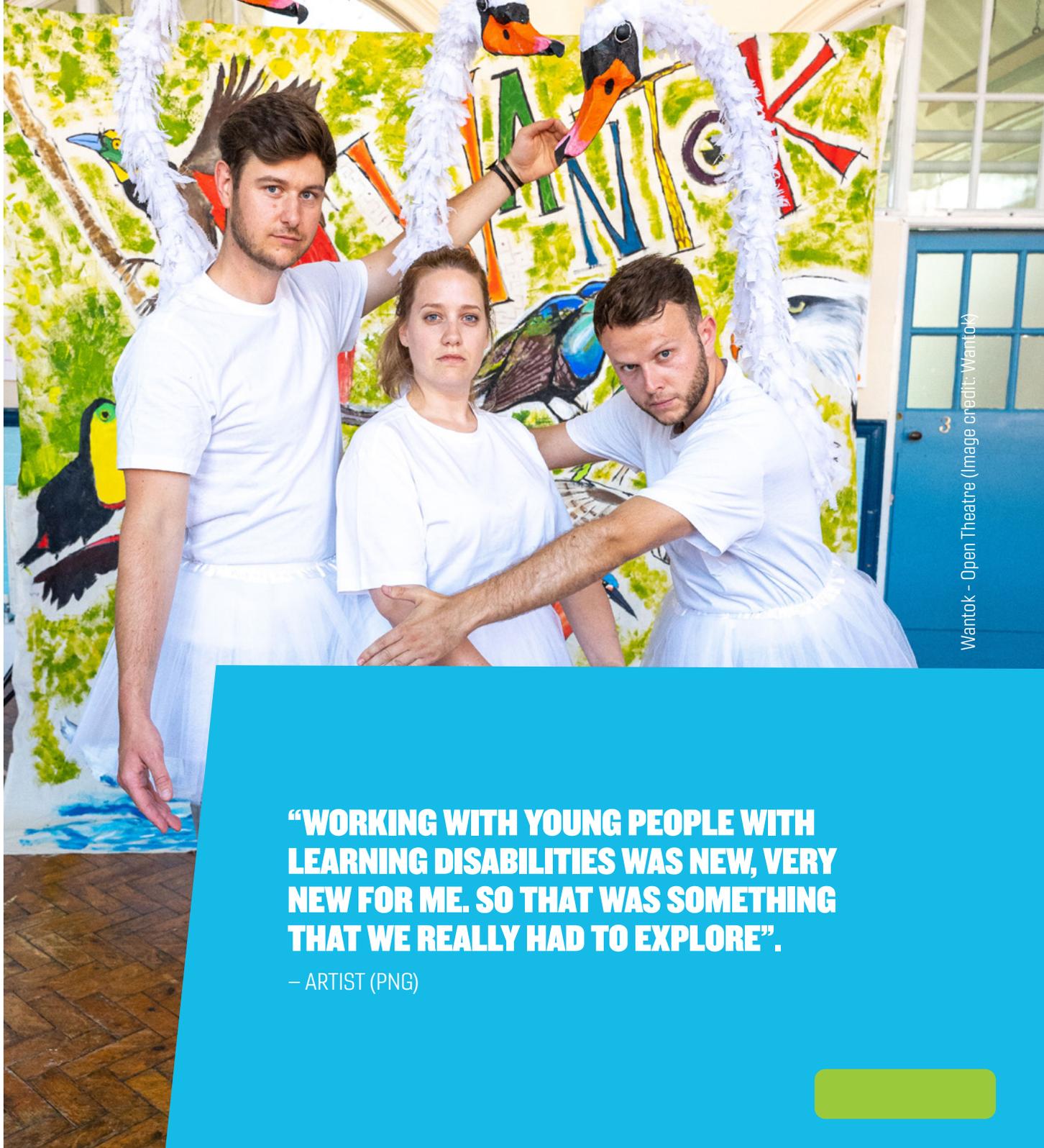
From the outset, the UK producer was clear that **“one of the points of the programme was to absolutely not perform in the centre of Birmingham, in the big squares where everything else was happening. It was to take the project out to the communities, especially if you’re talking about young people with learning disabilities”**. The director told us that meeting audiences where they are and working in unconventional theatre spaces, provided opportunities to learn **“how to interact better, how to set things up that involve the audience more, and therefore it created its own energy and its own joy through that process that then fed back... It became itself through the process of interacting with the audience.”** Despite their experience in this field, Open Theatre said that they’d never really delivered performances in outdoor spaces before but the success of Wantok had encouraged them to do more of that in the future.

International artists had their own learning curves. The artist from PNG opened up that **“working with young people with learning disabilities was new, very new for me. So that was something that we really had to explore”**. To do this, international partners visited SEND schools in Australia ahead of their visit to the UK and introduced them to Open Theatre remotely. The director from the UK relayed to us that **“the teacher in the special school they worked with in Brisbane, she has said: “I’m going to completely change the way I work. Get rid of all the desks in my room and have an open space” and you just go: “well, that’s amazing after a week of**

work". We've done a zoom together and she's talked about a connection with their school as a result." On this point, the artist from Australia said: "there's a real value here in us building these skills, not just for PNG, but for Australia as well."

## RESPECT AND EQUALITY

Like the "sing sing" celebrations it was modelled on, the production showcased the rich cultural variance of Papua New Guinea. That being said, artists from Papua New Guinea were quick to point out that they were not representative of their entire country or its indigenous peoples. The director from the UK recalled them clearly saying "Look, I come from one tribe in Papua New Guinea, there's 5, 6, 700 tribes, I cannot represent them. I can tell you about them, but I cannot represent them." Similarly, the international artist from Traveller also spoke about the pressure they felt in representing their country. Here, the openness and respect shown by UK organisations was remarked on as beneficial for all parties. The UK director of Wantok explained that "in terms of the cultural exchange, it was very much set up that we would learn about Papua New Guinean culture, artistry, and they would learn about working with people with learning disabilities. That was very much the core of it. And that came from [The international artists] rather than from us." This approach appears to have been achieved.



Wantok - Open Theatre (Image credit: Wantok)

**“WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES WAS NEW, VERY NEW FOR ME. SO THAT WAS SOMETHING THAT WE REALLY HAD TO EXPLORE” .**

– ARTIST (PNG)

“Our practitioner team learned a lot about the Papua New Guinea culture... They’re being inspired to try some art or more craft activities based on some of the things they’ve seen.” – UK Producer

“[UK Director] is just like, my new guru. He’s just such a phenomenal spirit... He’s just engaging with the world in such a way that has so much value.” – PNG Artist

“[Artist from PNG] has the on the ground sense that can only come from spending as much time as they have in their native land, to just see the forest for the trees of what’s going on here.” – Australian Artist

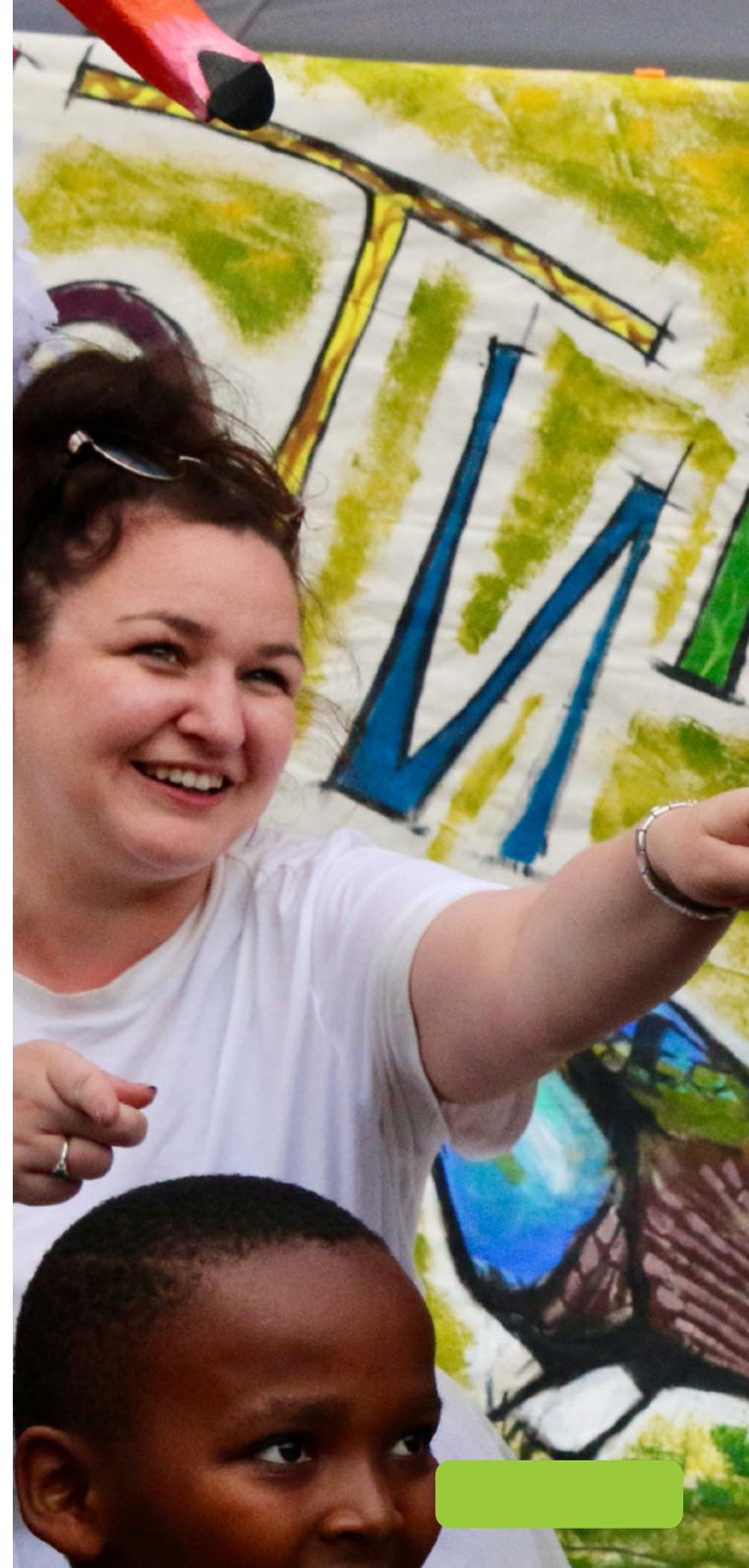
Arguably by not centring voices of bigger nations in the partnership, all sides of the project could report on the collaboration positively and learn from one another.

## LEGACY

In the immediacy of the project, it appears as though this collaboration has raised the profile of the UK partner organisation.

“I think what this project has done, has made other people in Birmingham look at us and think, “That’s interesting. They’re working with people from Australia and Papua New Guinea. They’ve done the show that everyone’s talking about.” It’s raised our profile in a way. It’s given other people a different perspective on who we are and what we do.” – Director, UK

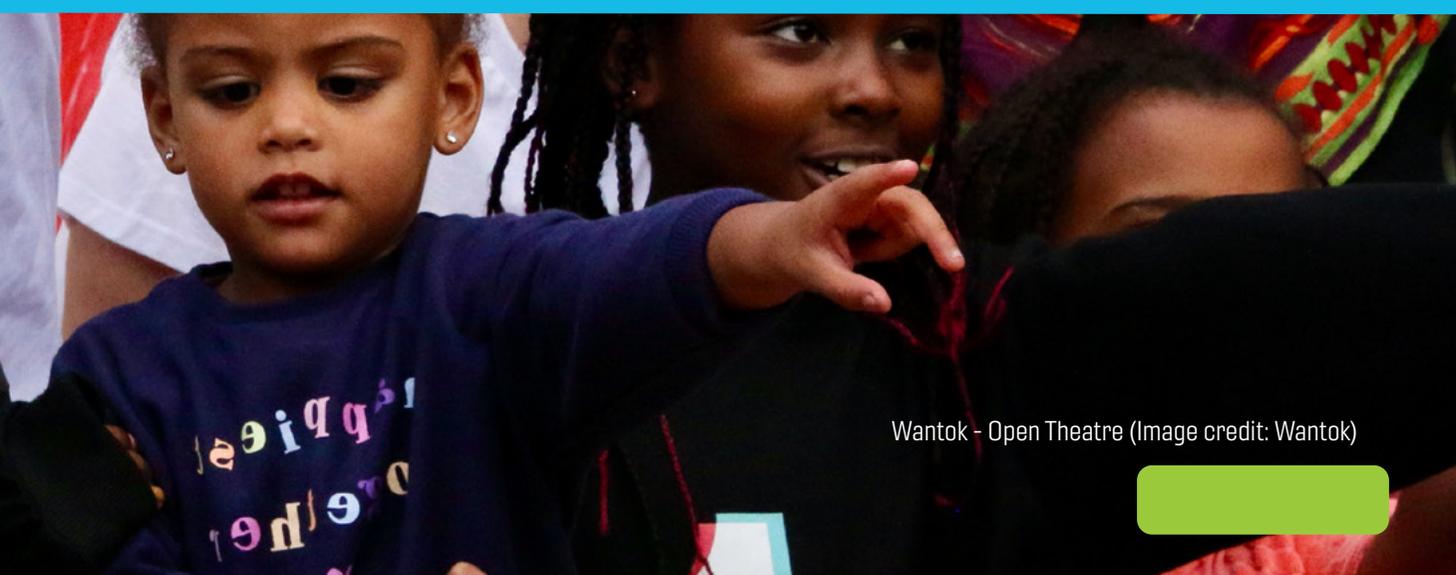
All partners were keen to continue their collaboration and have ambitious plans for touring their work globally. The director (UK) explained that one of their thoughts was that “we could take Wantok around the world, all we need to do was change the nature of the birds”, demonstrating entrepreneurialism and confidence in replicating their model of work in other settings. However, they were also mindful that the conversations they need to have with policymakers and funders to better “position our work as art as opposed to social work.” The feeling is shared by their international partners who would like to return to the UK. The artist from Papua New Guinea can see similarities between the city and their island nation: “I love Birmingham. I don’t care what people say... I love brum. I could happily exist in this city.”





**“I THINK WHAT THIS PROJECT HAS DONE, HAS MADE OTHER PEOPLE IN BIRMINGHAM LOOK AT US AND THINK, “THAT’S INTERESTING. THEY’RE WORKING WITH PEOPLE FROM AUSTRALIA AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA. THEY’VE DONE THE SHOW THAT EVERYONE’S TALKING ABOUT.” IT’S RAISED OUR PROFILE IN A WAY. IT’S GIVEN OTHER PEOPLE A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO.”**

- DIRECTOR (UK)



Wantok - Open Theatre (Image credit: Wantok)



06

# TRAVELLER

## COMMISSIONED ORGANISATION

EASTSIDE PROJECTS (UK)

## DELIVERY ORGANISATION

RAJNI PERERA, FREELANCE ARTIST (SRI LANKA / CANADA)

## SECTOR / ARTFORM

VISUAL ARTS

## THEMES

A FUTURE BEYOND THE COMMONWEALTH; ENGAGING NON-TRADITIONAL AUDIENCES; PROJECT TENSIONS; LEGACY

## KEY FINDINGS



# 100%

OF STAFF WORKING ON THE PROJECT RATED THEIR OVERALL EXPERIENCE AS 'EXCELLENT' (71%) OR 'GOOD' (29%)



# 2,216

LIVE AUDIENCES AT EASTSIDE PROJECTS' GALLERY



# 736

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT HOURS TO COMPLETE



EMPLOYED STAFF INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERED WORK FOR THIS PROJECT





Traveller - Eastside Project (Image credit: Stuart Whipp)

## PROJECT

Lead artist Rajni Perera, a Sri Lankan-Canadian artist, was invited by Eastside Projects to expand on her ongoing Travellers series of paintings, sonic artworks and sculptures for an exhibition at Eastside Projects' Digbeth gallery between 4th June and 6th August 2022. The vivid artworks aimed to animate ideas and raise issues of hybridity, ancestorship and futurity. It featured a humanoid mannequin riding a full-size model horse as the centrepiece, with the rest of the gallery adorned with paintings, curios and artefacts. Rajni decided to collaborate with local artist, Matt Gale to incorporate some of the artist's fungi sculptures into the exhibition. Alongside this, Rajni worked with local street artist Annatomix to develop a public mural in the city. The display site was a wall next to the River Rea in Highgate and it shows a postapocalyptic world of people migrating by boat. The works depict diasporic identities and dream worlds.

The original connection between the artist and the gallery came about through Eastside Projects' R&D visit to Toronto, supported by the British Council in 2019. At this point, they were already thinking of their programming for 2022 so were keeping an open mind as to who they might like to work with. Out of the list of people they came back with, **"Rajni's work really stood out"** according to the artist-curator (UK). From there, they made contact with the lead artist who felt an affinity to their UK peers: **"[Artist-curator from the UK] was such a dream to work with... it was just like a couple of quick chats. And our dream for the show was really aligned, it was not hard at all".**

## KEY LEARNINGS

### A FUTURE BEYOND THE COMMONWEALTH

The ideas of imperialism and the commonwealth were ever-present in this project. The lead artist was clear that, as an immigrant artist, they don't necessarily feel as though they belong to the class of people who are the primary cultural producers for the country they live in, Canada. The UK's artist-curator expanded on this point too, explaining what Eastside Projects originally hoped to gain through this collaboration: **"We felt that it would offer something very interesting in relation to what we thought of as this politically complex ground of the Commonwealth, and that she's projecting into the future, but she's doing it by looking at a future diaspora coming from land which may also exist within the current Commonwealth."** This idea of reimagining a future commonwealth relationship was considered, to some degree, by all projects included in the case studies but it's arguable that Traveller confronted this concept to the fullest. The lead artist explained how they believe a future commonwealth could look: **"I feel like in disassembling a painful legacy, moving forward into a better collection of countries and nations working together. This is the work. Inviting artists like me who are like: 'F' that idea of how it's always been."**



## A FEELING OF “TENSION”

For Eastside Projects, they felt that they'd been transparent from the beginning that they intended to work with some artists who offer critical positions of the Commonwealth. The artist-curator said they were keen to “clarify” and “strengthen” ideas of anti-colonial artists and take a very firm anti-racist position in their project. We've noticed through our interviews that a particular strength of this programme was the willingness of the Festival to invite artists to unpick the history of the commonwealth.

This appears to have contributed to a positive view of the UK in circles of non-UK nationals. Eastside Projects felt the Birmingham 2022 Festival team were very supportive of them tackling themes of colonialism and imperialism.

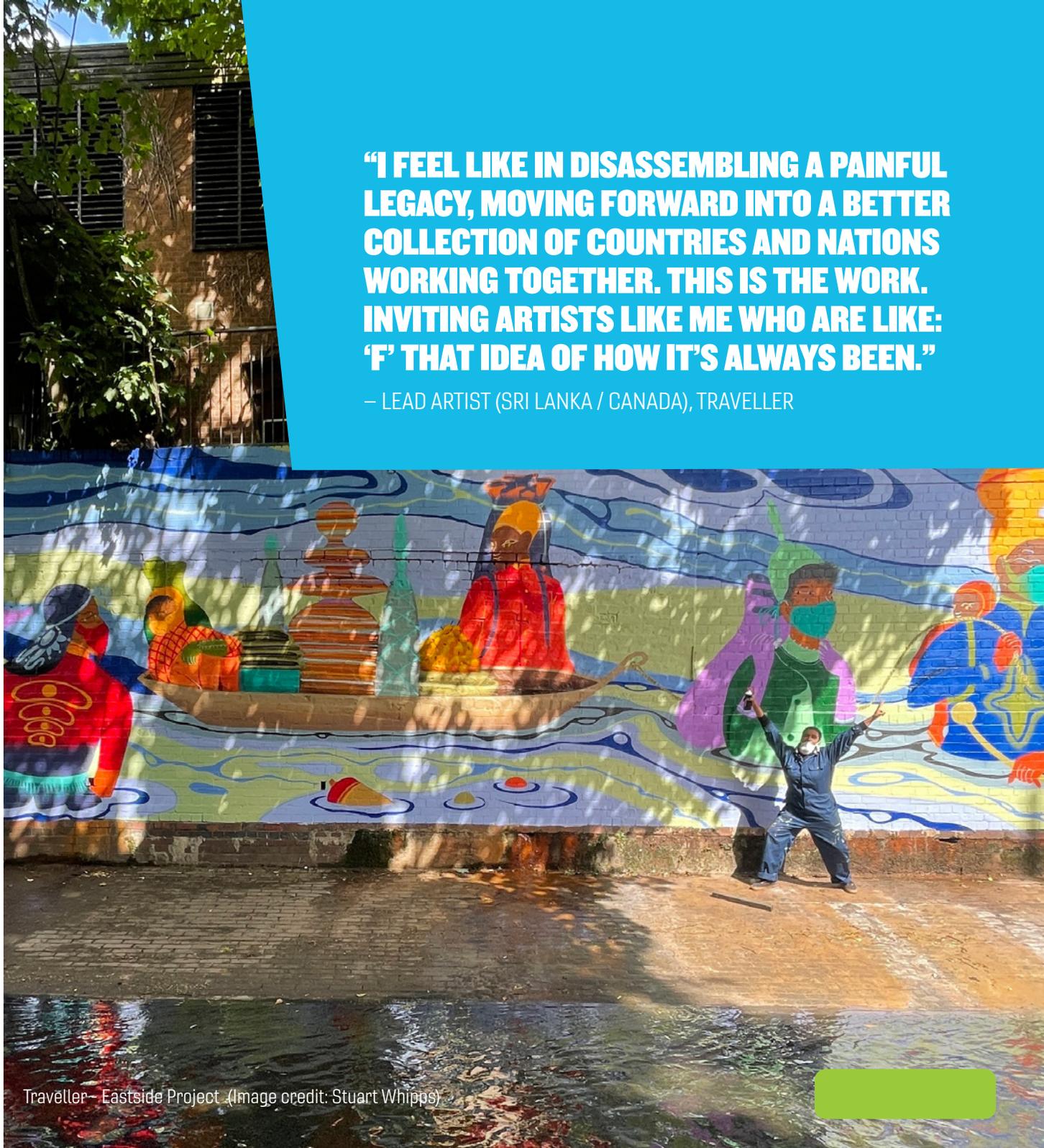
However, it was perceived that the support they received overall began to wane nearer to the Games beginning.

There was an incident involving another artist where the funder decided that they could no longer include their logo on the artwork due to their role as an Arms-Length body with Royal Patronage. The funder however, was still fully in support of the artwork and its inclusion in the festival.

To have mitigated against this from happening, it was suggested by the Eastside Projects team that marketing efforts around the festival could've been **“a little bit more direct upfront, then any attack could have been dissipated”**.

**“I FEEL LIKE IN DISASSEMBLING A PAINFUL LEGACY, MOVING FORWARD INTO A BETTER COLLECTION OF COUNTRIES AND NATIONS WORKING TOGETHER. THIS IS THE WORK. INVITING ARTISTS LIKE ME WHO ARE LIKE: ‘F’ THAT IDEA OF HOW IT’S ALWAYS BEEN.”**

– LEAD ARTIST (SRI LANKA / CANADA), TRAVELLER



Traveller – Eastside Project (Image credit: Stuart Whipps)

**“WE DEFINITELY COULD HAVE DONE MORE THERE... I THINK IT WOULD HAVE BEEN GOOD TO HAVE MADE A SORT OF DEDICATED PROGRAMME FOR THAT NEIGHBOURHOOD... THESE PROJECTS HAVE BEEN PART OF EXPANDING OUR PRESENCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO CULTURE ALL ACROSS THE CITY.”**

- ARTIST-CURATOR (UK)

As an organisation, they tried their best to push their narrative but it was felt that they lacked resource to do this. In future, it was recommended that a specially dedicated marketing budget, specifically for smaller organisations, could help to rebalance promotion of the Festival and ensure that all work gets more even exposure.

### ENGAGING NON-TRADITIONAL AUDIENCES

Eastside Projects have a proud history of exhibiting international cutting-edge artists in their multi-purpose gallery space so they were united in feeling that the most unique aspect of this project was the outdoor mural. They chose the site because it felt original and perhaps overlooked by traditional publicly-funded arts and culture. The site was also relevant to the project as it is on the River Rea that the Anglo-Saxon Beorma tribe supposedly first arrived in Birmingham to found 'Beorma's home' (and later, Birmingham). To secure this site, the off-site coordinator needed to negotiate with several stakeholder groups, including the Environment Agency. Reminiscing on the installation, the off-site coordinator said the team were often approached by lots of people who were naturally very curious about the work they were doing. This sort of reception has encouraged Eastside Projects to see the potential in engaging nearby communities: **“We definitely could have done more there... I think it would have been good to have made a sort of dedicated programme for that neighbourhood... these projects have been part**

**of expanding our presence and contribution to culture all across the city.”** – Artist-curator (UK).

This relates to other UK organisations such as Open Theatre and Black Country Touring who have similarly been pushed out of their comfort zone, experimented with new ways of working and have increased their confidence and resilience as result.

### LEGACY

Both partners said they'd be open to working together again. There is an immediate international legacy for the work that's been created as it will be transported to an exhibition in Philadelphia, USA next before being shown in Canada. Rajni arranged with Matt Gale to include the fungi sculptures in the touring exhibition, meaning a Birmingham-based artist will also feature in future shows. For Eastside Projects, they feel like they caught Rajni Perera at just the right time as her star is rising and will be delivering more major works going forward.



**“SHE’S PROJECTING INTO THE FUTURE, BUT SHE’S DOING IT BY LOOKING AT A FUTURE DIASPORA COMING FROM LAND WHICH MAY ALSO EXIST WITHIN THE CURRENT COMMONWEALTH.”**

- ARTIST-CURATOR (UK)

Imagine Bamboo (Image credit: Andrew Moore)

# OUTPUTS SUMMARY



## OUTPUTS SUMMARY

As part of the evaluation of the Birmingham 2022 Festival, audiences, participants, volunteers, staff and freelancers involved in the festival were asked for their views through a questionnaire which was managed by The Indigo Consortium, the data of which has been made available for this evaluation. Whilst not necessarily relating to questions of 'international collaboration' they do provide useful context for the study overall.

## OVERVIEW



**29**

**PROJECTS WITH  
INTERNATIONAL  
COLLABORATIONS**



**109**

**INDIVIDUAL COLLABORATIONS  
BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AND  
ORGANISATIONS ACROSS 29  
PROJECTS<sup>7</sup>**



**31**

**ORGANISATIONS FROM  
OUTSIDE THE UK RECEIVED  
FUNDING THROUGH THESE  
PROJECTS**

<sup>7</sup> In the Birmingham 2022 Festival Evaluation Report, 115 international collaborations are listed. This is because of 6 collaborations taking place as part of the 'Let's Go Further' talks programme. Those collaborations are not included as part of this scope of work.

# OVERVIEW



**667**

ARTISTS EMPLOYED



**3,963**

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS  
ENGAGED



**374**

NEW PARTNERSHIPS FORMED AS  
PART OF THESE PROJECTS



**131,344**

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENTS  
ACROSS THESE PROJECTS\*

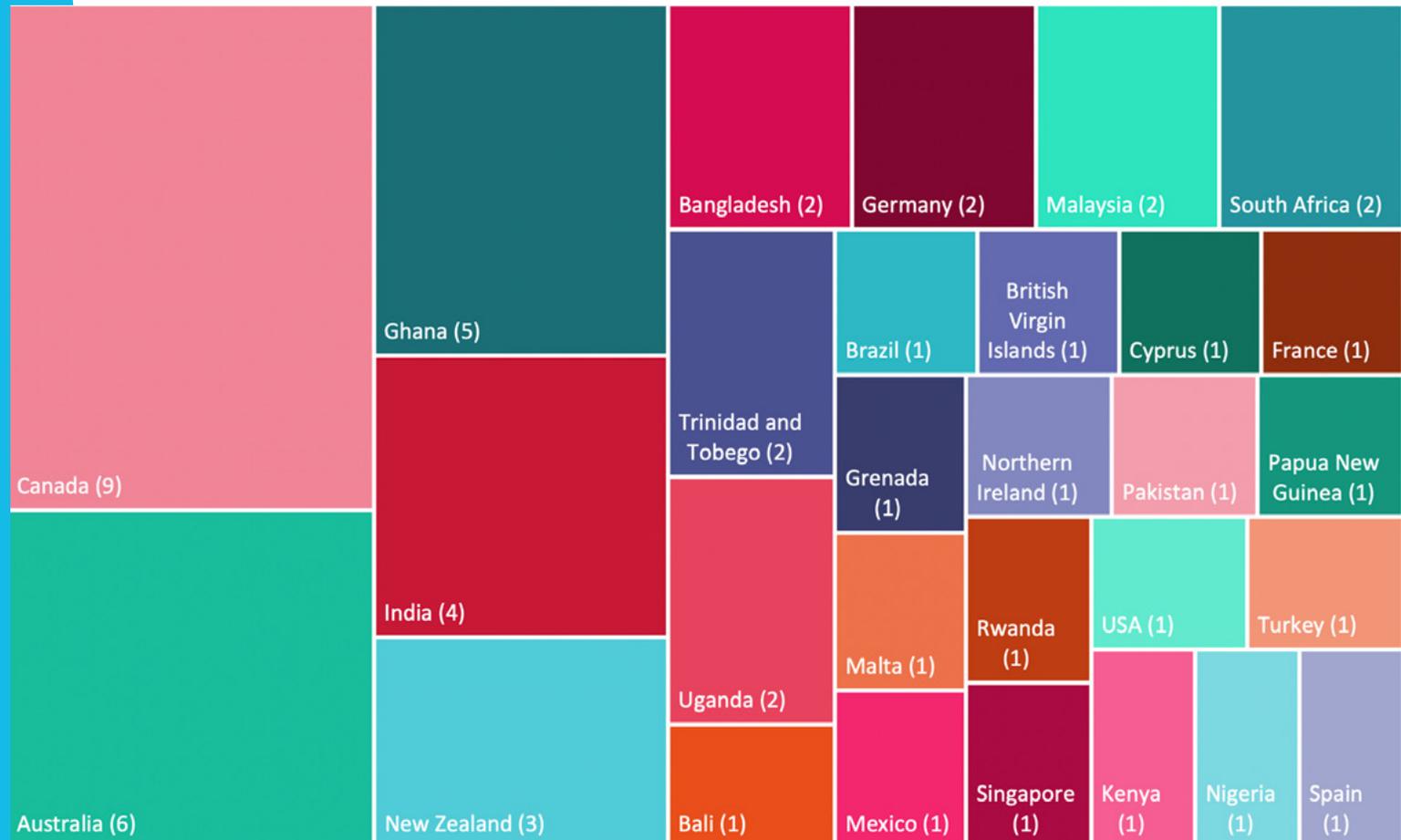


**86%**

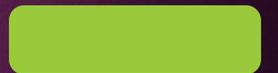
OF PROJECTS SAID THEY PLAN  
ON CONTINUING TO DEVELOP  
NEW RELATIONSHIPS



**A BREAKDOWN OF THE COUNTRIES COLLABORATING ORGANISATIONS WERE BASED IN (IN BRACKETS, THE NUMBER OF ORGANISATIONS FROM EACH COUNTRY)**



Waswasa (Image credit: Soul City Arts)



# AUDIENCES

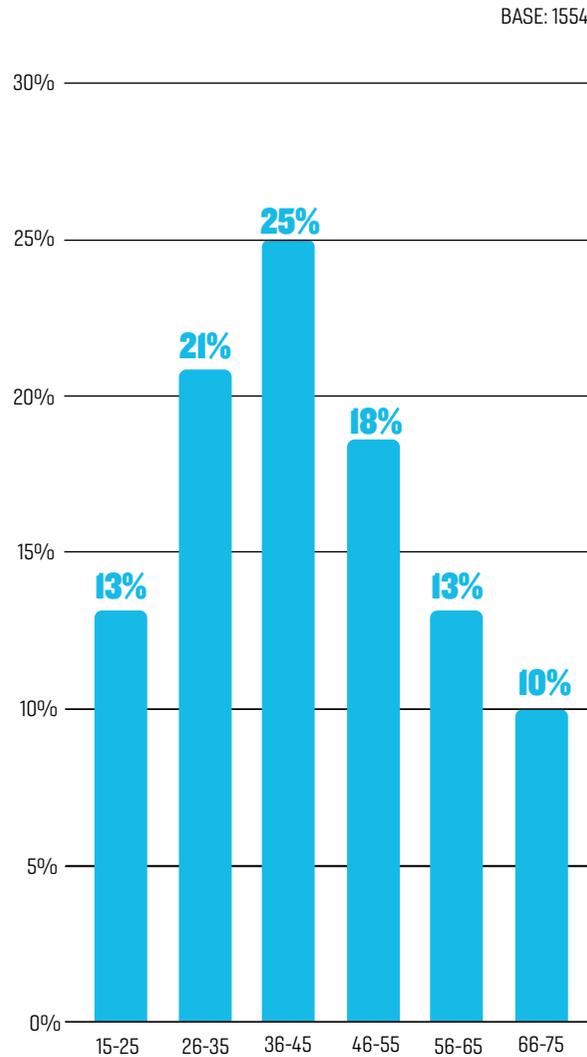
There were 1676 questionnaire audience responses to the questionnaire received from people attending 25 different sets of activities in Birmingham 2022 Festival.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

A range of questions asking for the way in which audiences self-identified around several factors with the overall results outlined here:

### AGE

There was a broad range of ages represented, with the highest proportions coming from the middle age ranges with 25% being between 36 and 45 years old and 64% between 26 and 55 years old.



Two of the case studies had some of the youngest audiences, 29% of questionnaire respondents for Anthem Anthem Revolution and for As We Speak being between 16 and 25. Healing Gardens of Bab also had a younger audience, with 61% being between the ages of 16 and 35. On the other hand, Flourish! had an older audience with 80% being between the ages of 46 and 75.

## ETHNICITY

Audience respondents were asked to self-identify with one category from a given list. The ethnic diversity of participants across all projects was:

**14%**  
ASIAN OR ASIAN  
BRITISH

**6%**  
MIXED  
HERITAGE

**8%**  
BLACK OR  
BLACK BRITISH

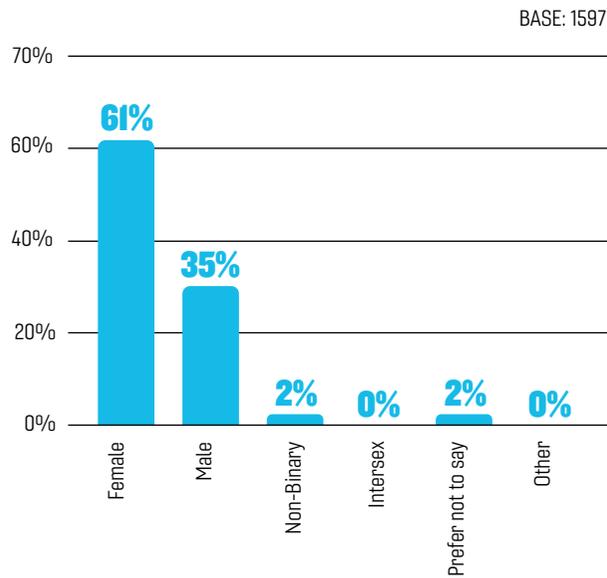
**71%**  
WHITE  
BACKGROUNDS

**0%**  
MIDDLE EASTERN/  
ARABIC

**1%**  
A RANGE OF OTHER  
BACKGROUNDS

## GENDER

Asked how they would define their gender, surveys gave the following overall result.

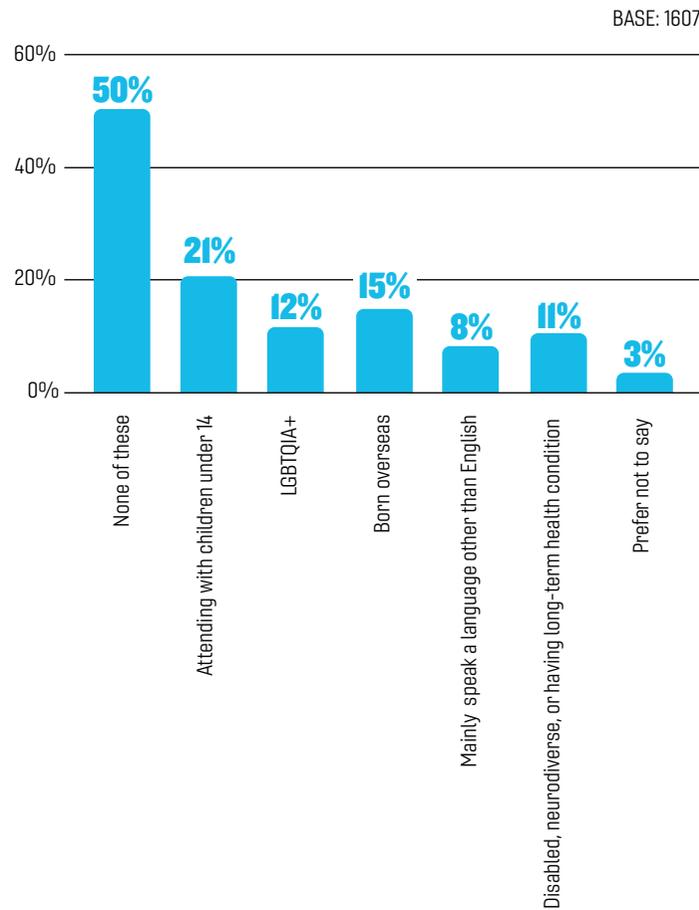


As noted in the Case Studies (above), the only project to report a higher number of male respondents was Anthem Anthem Revolution which had 62% self-identifying as male, 36% as female, 1% as non-binary and 2% preferring not to say.

## FURTHER IDENTITIES

Audiences were also asked a further question: 'Do you identify with any of the following?'

Notable in the context of international collaboration are the figures of 15% of respondents born overseas and 8% not speaking English as a first language.



Healing Gardens of Bab had 22% of the audience saying they were born overseas, with Wantok at 27%, Imagine Bamboo Summit at 24% and Flourish! at 22% also having high proportions of those born overseas (though these latter three have lower sample sizes).

In terms of those attending with children under 14, the following projects had high numbers of respondents answering affirmatively, including three which are case studies in this report.

- Where Are You? 78%
- Wantok 51%
- Precious Emily 30%
- Anthem Anthem Revolution 30%

**66%**  
BIRMINGHAM AND SURROUNDS

**1%**  
IN SCOTLAND, WALES OR NORTHERN IRELAND

**21%**  
WEST MIDLANDS

**2%**  
OUTSIDE THE UK

**10%**  
ELSEWHERE IN ENGLAND

## HOME LOCATION AND TRAVEL

Asked where respondents normally lived provided useful context about audiences at Birmingham 2022 Festival as well as providing a starting point for further questions about travel to the area.

Asked about where they usually live gave the following overall result

Of those coming from outside Birmingham and Surrounds: 34% of Interlinked audiences came from West Midlands and 16% from Elsewhere in England. Anthem Anthem Revolution, one of the case studies also had 22% coming from the West Midlands and 12% from Elsewhere in England

Asked about whether the event encouraged them to travel to the area (asked of those who were not resident in the area) 29% said it was the main reason and 19% that it was a contributing factor (base = 482).

## AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE

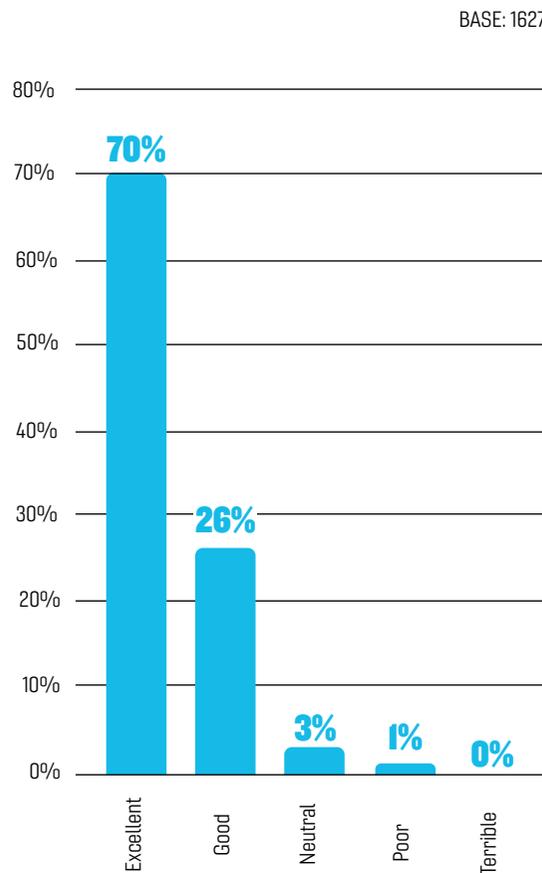
Audiences were also asked to provide feedback on several questions which asked about their experience and impact of the event.

The question: How would you rate your experience overall? gave the following answer:

Of those with enough responses to provide a good indication of appreciation, the projects with the highest proportions of

'Excellent' responses were:

- Wantok 91%
- Where Are You? 89%
- Wondrous Stories 80%
- Interlinked 74%
- Wasawa 74%



Two of these, Wantok and Where Are You? are case studies included in this report.

With a slightly different angle, audiences were asked if they would recommend Birmingham 2022 Festival to a friend on a scale of 1-10. 58% gave 10 (extremely likely) as an answer.

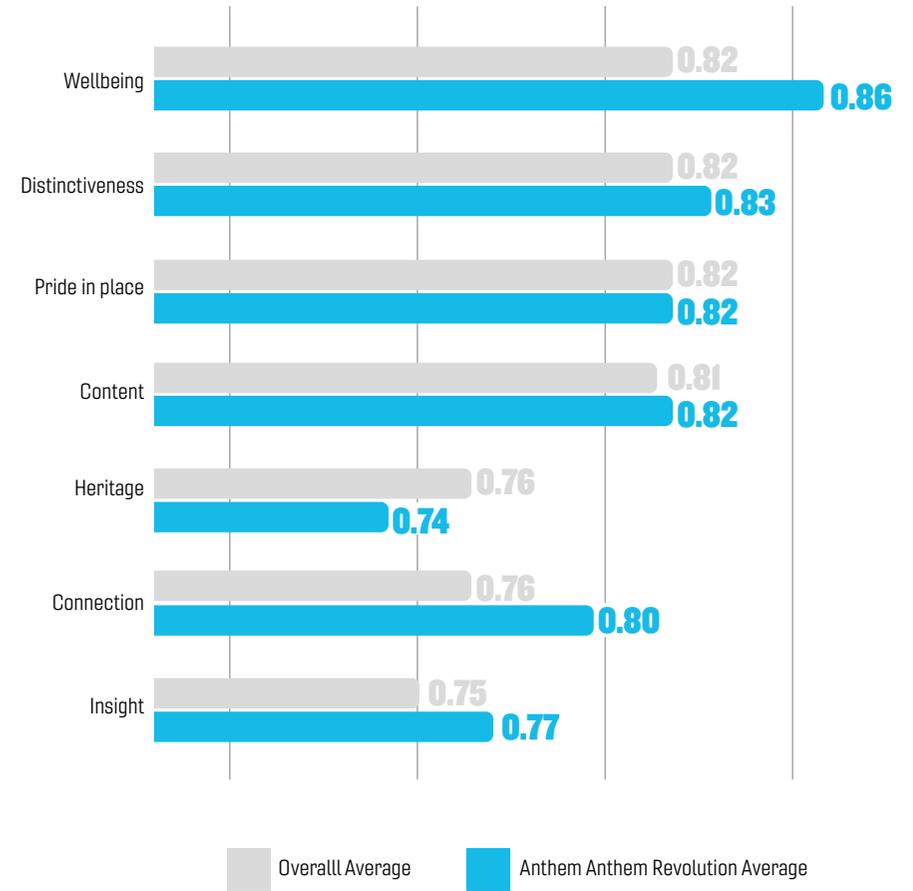
# AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE



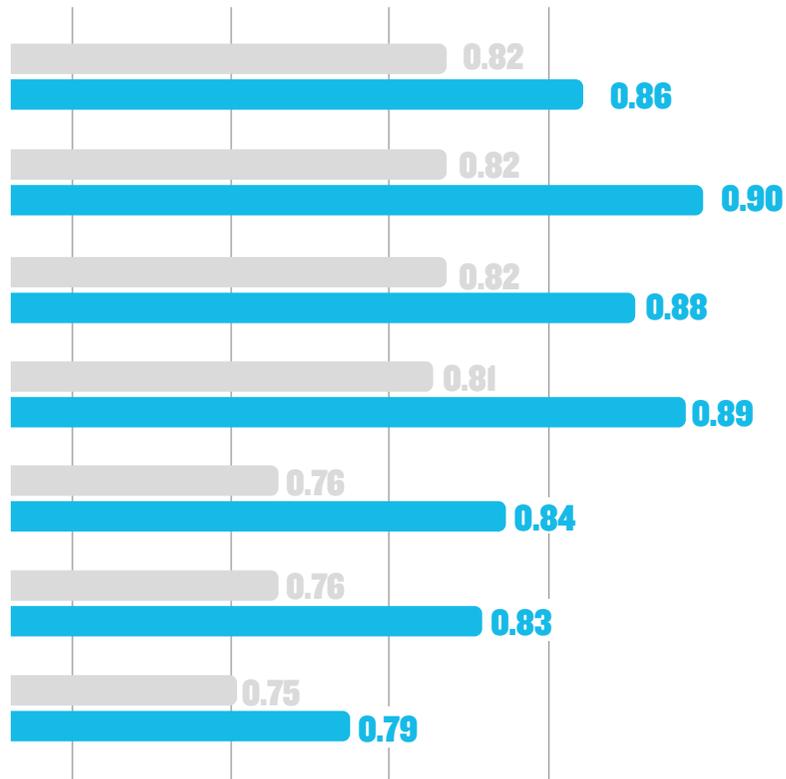
Audiences were asked to respond and rate the impact of the event in a series of factors. Overall, the impact with the highest response were those of Wellbeing, Distinctiveness and Pride in Place, all of which scored 0.82 average score.

Of the case studies, the following results were obtained from those with a minimum response rate 40.

# ANTHEM ANTHEM REVOLUTION

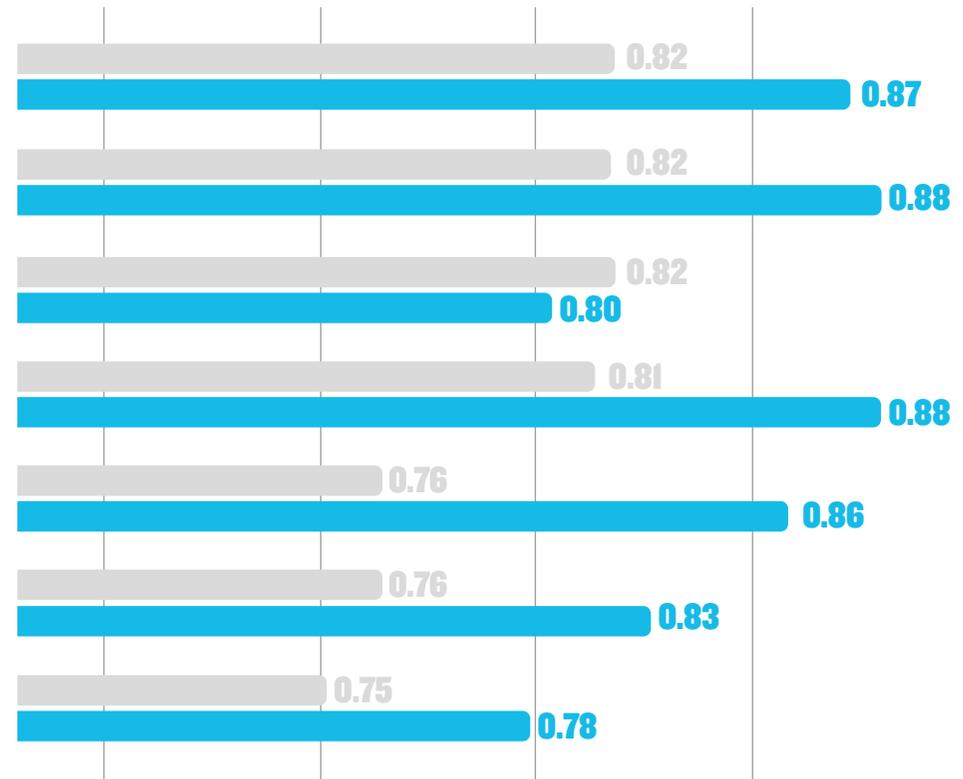


## WHERE ARE YOU?



Where are You? Average

## WANTOK



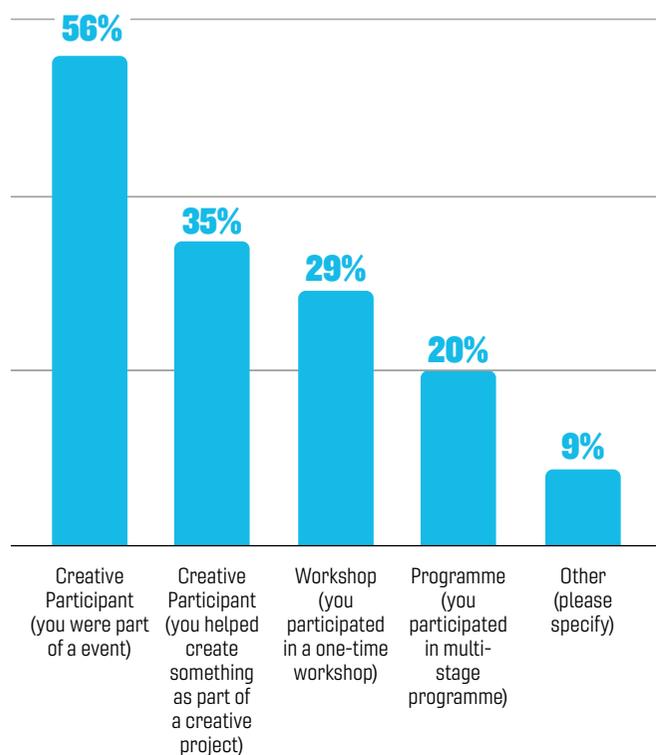
Wantok Average

Of particular note in these results are Anthem Anthem Revolution which had a high score of 0.86 for wellbeing and 0.80 (compared to 0.76 average) for connection and Where Are You? which had a high score (0.90) for distinctiveness and 0.89 for content. In addition, Wantok had a high score of 0.90 for content and 0.88 for Insight (compared to an average of 0.75).

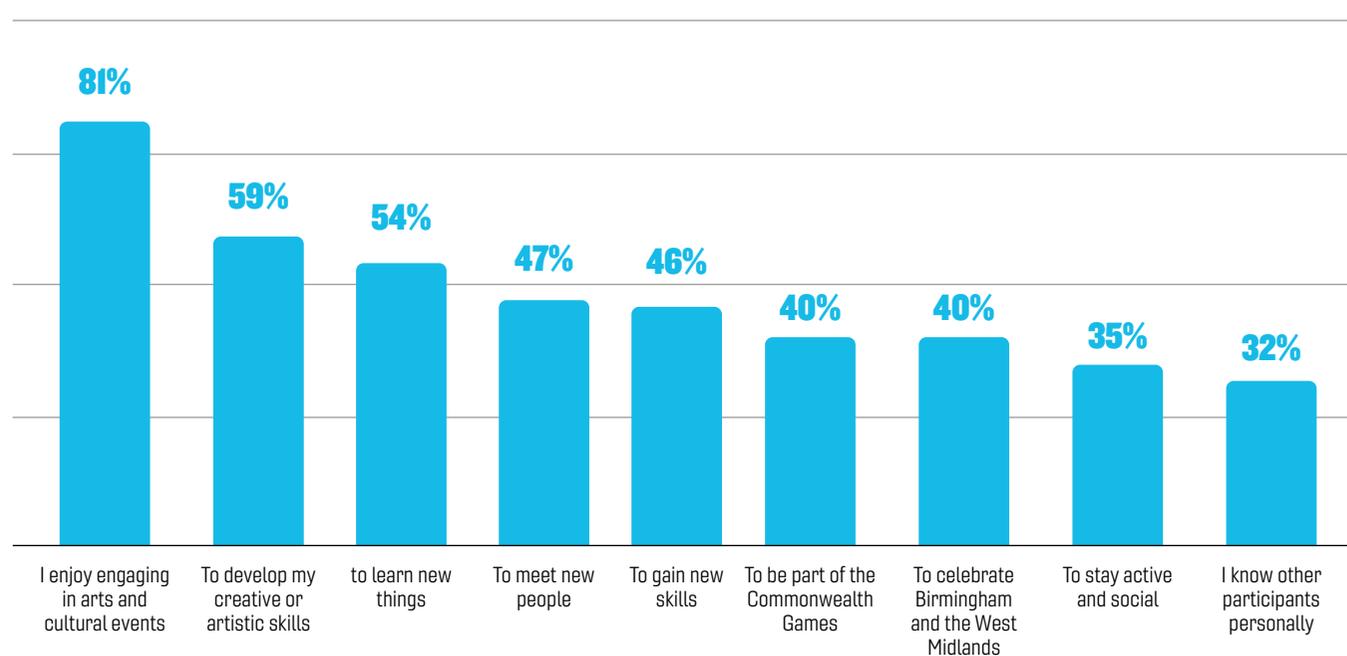
## PARTICIPANTS

Participants of the various projects crossover with the audiences as outlined above and by the nature of this participation represents a smaller number of people. For these, the questionnaire responses were 114 and came from a smaller range of projects. However, their views are useful in the aggregate.

Looking for example at their types of participation, it can be seen how this ranges across several areas though interestingly 35% were actively involved in contributing directly to the project (rather than being only a workshop participant).

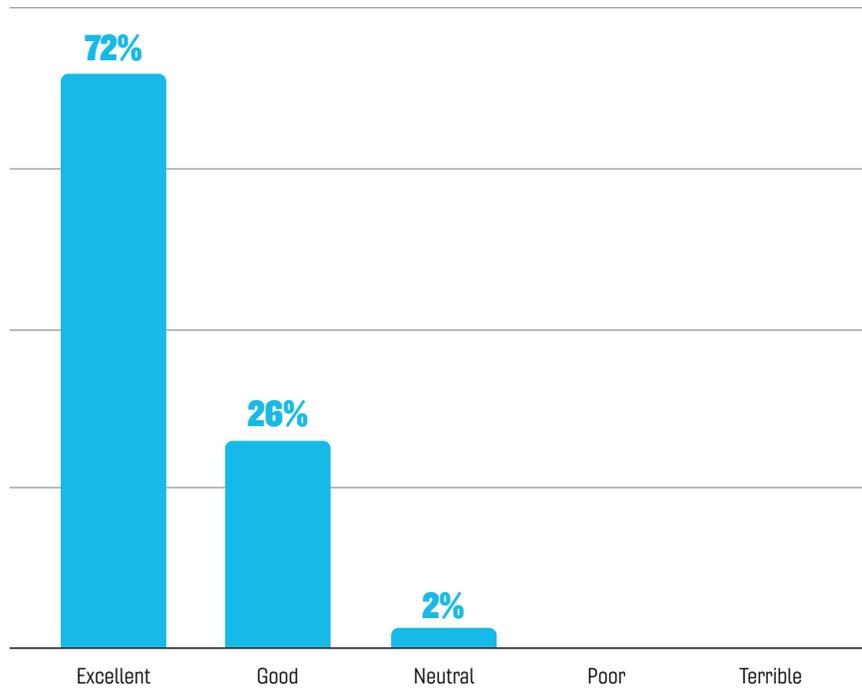


Asked about their motivation for being involved they gave the following answers.



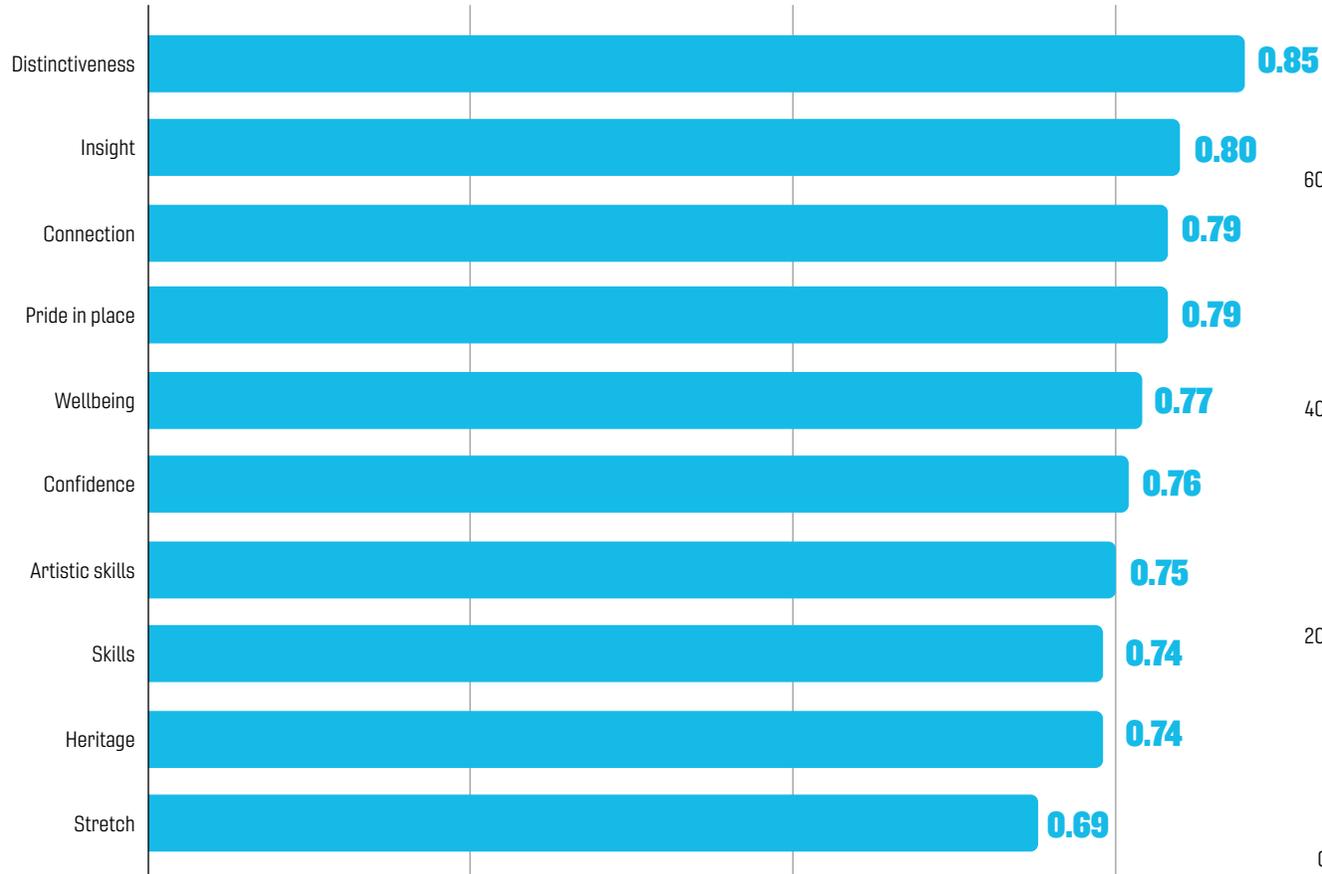
These represent a wide range of reasons for involvement with people frequently having more than one factor. Being part of the Commonwealth Games was articulated as being important for 40% of those surveyed.

Their ratings for the quality of their experience stand out, with 72% rating this excellent and overall 98% saying it was either excellent or good.



In terms of the participant experience, it was distinctiveness and insight that came out highest.

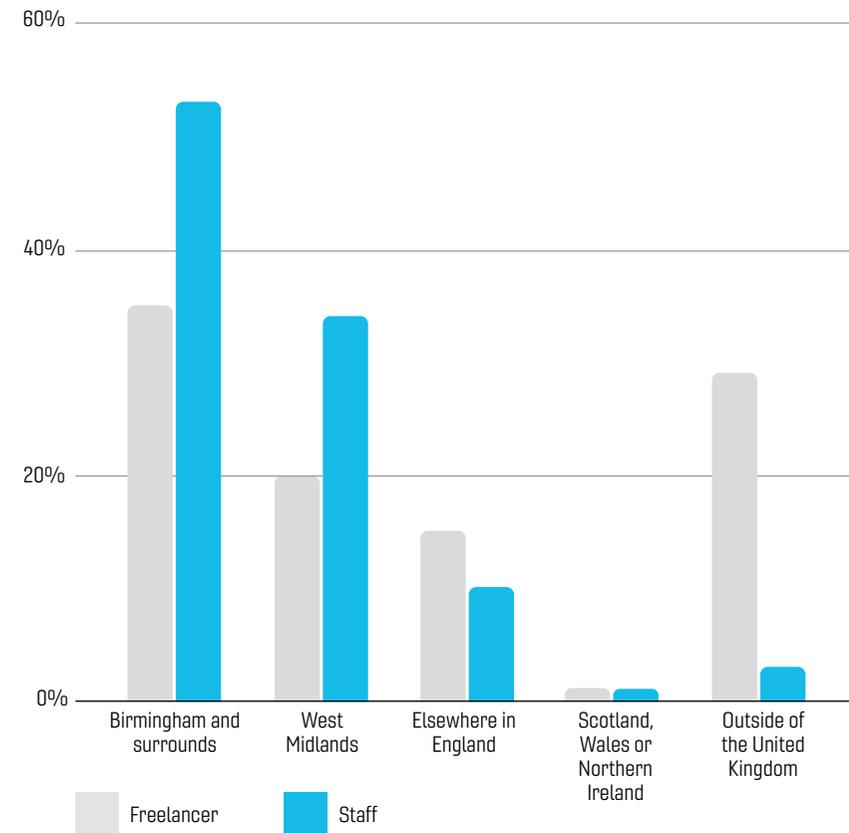
### PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE



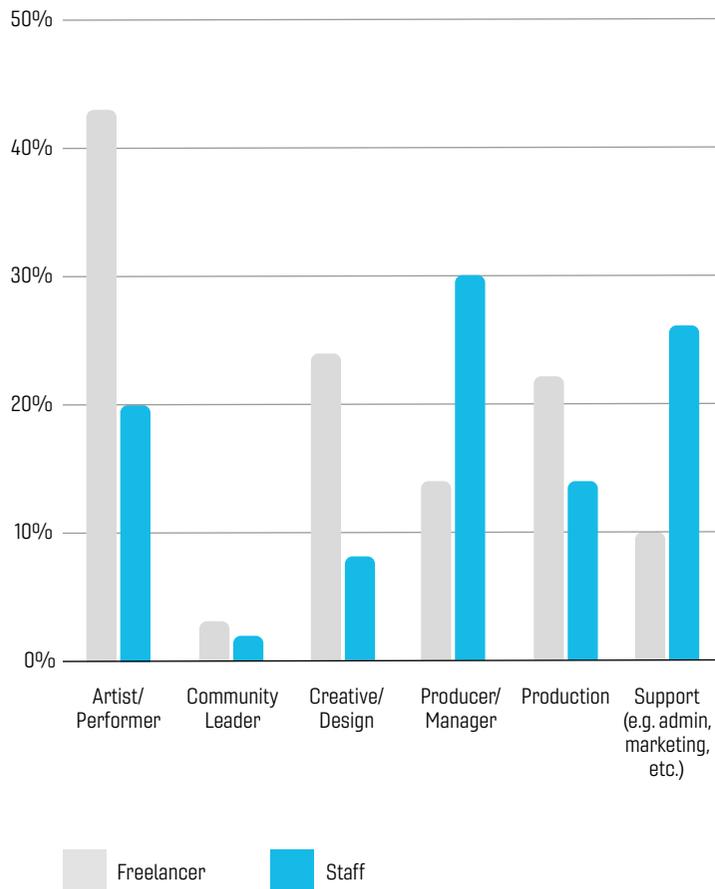
### FREELANCERS AND STAFF

165 questionnaires were answered by freelancers and 155 by staff involved in these project.

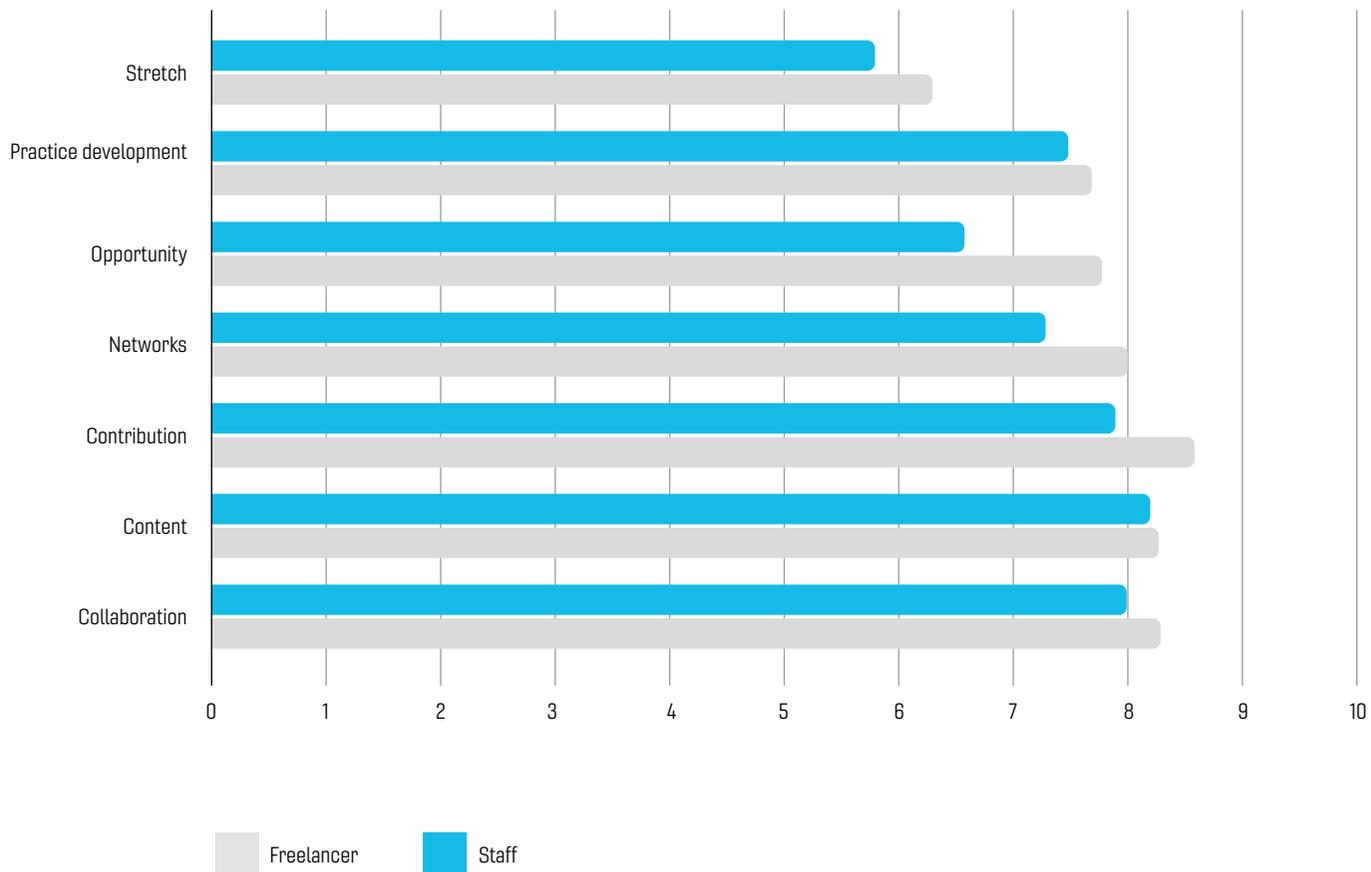
Unsurprisingly perhaps, staff were more likely to be located in the area with 87% living in Birmingham or the West Midlands, while 29% of freelancers live outside of the United Kingdom



Staff job roles were identified as being a range of areas but compared to the freelancers they were more centred around production and administration than in the artistic fields with 30% reporting to be producer/managers and 26% in support roles.



Asked about their experience of being part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival and which elements were especially strong for them, on average freelancers gave 'contribution' the highest score while staff had a stronger average preference for 'content'.



# CONCLUSIONS

A person in silhouette is walking away from the camera into a brightly lit doorway. The scene is bathed in a cyan/blue light. The word 'CONCLUSIONS' is overlaid in large, bold, white capital letters across the center of the image.

## CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the projects included in this evaluation have demonstrated the value of international collaboration in a broad sense. They fulfilled the main aims of this part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival, using the opportunity of the Commonwealth Games and the global attention it gave. The projects reported satisfaction at being given a brief that was clear but open enough to allow the development of initiatives in a broad range of areas and using a variety of methods. This meant that artists were given a great deal of artistic freedom to advance their existing work to produce new adventurous outputs. In one case, an organisation worked very specifically on a theme of interest to the audience in both countries, made for young people, and exploring ideas of place and culture in the 21st Century world. In another, innovative use of technology was used to engage participants alongside re-interpretation of traditional ideas.

Many of the case studies dealt intelligently with ideas of cultural difference and similarity, and of Britain's place in the world. The freedom to put these elements at the centre of their projects was welcomed without feeling they needed to 'sell' the UK. This meant that concepts of the Commonwealth could be discussed in an open and unrestricted way. It also ensured that themes linked to First Nations peoples, imperialism, colonialism and of immigration could be addressed, with some of the most interesting outputs coming from these interactions.

The collaborative nature of the projects also led to innovation of artistic methodology. This could mean the painting of a mural in public view by a recognised artist using a different type of practice, co-created narrative and theatre building that takes place in two countries at once or using playground games with schools to discover known or unknown elements of traditional cultures.

In all cases, the projects felt well supported by the Birmingham 2022 Festival team, especially as noted above for 'letting them get on with it' once selected and provided with the means to produce their work in the way they wanted. The main challenge expressed by lead organisations was the difficulty they sometimes faced in arousing public interest. Some would have liked more central marketing support through the Festival or Games. This was especially the case where projects were being presented in public spaces in Birmingham that were not in obvious thoroughfares or part of other Festival activities, with some not attracting the level of audience they desired.



(Image credit: Terrapin/Peter Mathew)



Wantok - Open Theatre (Image credit: Wantok)

Others felt they would have liked more connections to be made between the projects themselves, with some of the artists taking part from abroad feeling that they came 'in and out' of the country to do the project without gaining the benefit of being part of the wider celebrations and activities.

Nevertheless, the overwhelming feedback of the projects was appreciation and satisfaction at being able to deliver their work within the Birmingham 2022 Festival.

### OUTCOMES

The Birmingham 2022 Festival was successful in achieving the following main stated outcomes.

#### **Birmingham 2022 Festival promotes new models for approaching international collaboration which are genuinely multi-directional in their exchange of knowledge**

This was one of the most successful outcomes. The projects demonstrated innovation both in development of ideas and of methodology.

Particularly notable across all case studies was their use of digital technology. For some, the impact of Covid-19 accelerated their transition towards digital cultural relations. Many projects made their home online and created synchronised and meaningful artworks together in partnerships despite never having met. However, for others the capacity to meet in person

was vital. Those who did meet in-person spoke of cementing ties and breaking new ground in their collaboration, while those who only met online spoke of wanting to meet in-person to advance their work together. There also seemed to be a digital divide, with SMEs and freelancers needing the benefits of working with established institutions who could provide organised and secure online spaces.

Digital technology has supported a more distributed network of cultural actors to exchange value directly with one another across cultural and linguistic barriers. It has not only established relationships between partners but also contributed to deepening, extending and continuing collaborations beyond the end of the project cycle.

The working methods chosen by projects indicated equitable or shared approaches that led to synergetic outputs. Where any imbalances to partnerships were identified, UK partners worked hard to counteract them. For instance, of the six case studies, five were structured so that the UK partner was the commissioning organisation. UK partners expressed consciousness of this and aimed to readdress this power imbalance. Full agency rarely, if ever, sat with UK partners on creative direction or management decisions. Instead, agency was either split across partners or weighted towards the international side. Where one partner took more control over project aspects, this was often agreed and seen as key to multi-directional peer learning activities.



**“FABULOUS TO SEE  
A SIMULTANEOUS  
PERFORMANCE WITH  
GHANA. MY 3-5 YEAR OLD  
WAS ENTRANCED!”**

- AUDIENCE MEMBER FROM WHERE ARE  
YOU?

**“THIS EVENT WAS  
BEAUTIFUL AND HELPED  
ME HAVE A NICE DAY WITH  
LOVED ONES “**

- AUDIENCE MEMBER FROM TRAVELLER

### **Birmingham 2022 Festival provides global attention to work with international collaboration**

As many of the organisations and partners were relatively small in size (in terms of numbers of staff or resources), the capacity to be part of this larger celebration was a valuable opportunity to raise their profile and status. 56% of audiences said that the Birmingham 2022 Festival was either the main reason (44%) or a contributing factor (12%) in their decision to travel to the area where they attended the project activities. This suggests that the profile of the Festival helped to increase awareness of the international collaboration projects. However, some project leaders felt that they could have benefited from more coverage of the Festival within the UK so as to aid attendance locally. Media attention was positive and examples of national and international media coverage is evidenced in the case studies. In terms of digital online engagement twelve of the projects had audiences with a reported total figure of 77,456 digital audience engagements.

Another element to this outcome was the way in which UK organisations could also demonstrate areas of expertise or knowledge that were new or not much explored in other countries. This could mean the development of particular working practises for engaging people who are neurodiverse or in the application of film-making skills, for example.

The focus on Birmingham and the West Midlands for the festival and more widely as the centre of the Commonwealth Games was an important factor both in terms of motivating international

creatives to participate as well as providing a context for many of the themes tackled. This could be about language, national anthems or the nature of ‘home’.

### **Birmingham 2022 Festival increases confidence in UK cultural sector for undertaking international and intercultural collaborative projects**

International collaboration often took place in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. This presented both challenges and opportunities, as partners needed to work intensively and over long periods of time with remote mechanisms. Practical elements such as time zone variances, environments and working schedules, alongside structural and cultural differences required attention and flexibility. This needed to be negotiated and accommodated within project structures. In addition, projects that worked with partners from ODA countries and smaller island nations also frequently had to negotiate differences in technical capacity and infrastructure.

However, it also encouraged partners to think creatively about co-operation and to consider different approaches. To support this, some projects found innovative workarounds and patches that enabled sustainable practices. Others too built new partnerships with larger institutions to provide virtual platforms and work spaces that could be more accessible. Yet, it was often the soft skills demonstrated by partners that paid dividends: patience, understanding and trust were all important.

Furthermore, although the organisations involved had excellent capacity and knowledge of working with underrepresented ethnic groups, many reported important learning about 'First Nations' or of deeper understanding of migration and travel.

For some, their project pushed them outside of their usual comfort zone – either working in new environments (e.g. outdoors, digital, SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) schools or with new audiences.

There were also other unexpected outcomes, for example one artist developed a much higher global profile during the project, with the work delivered in Birmingham consequentially reaching even wider audiences.

All of the partners consulted identified further opportunities and legacies to their work – expressing confidence in pursuing new work practices or partnerships they'd identified.

### **Birmingham 2022 Festival produces international collaborative projects that are inclusive and accessible**

The case studies investigated in this report all aimed to produce projects that were inclusive and accessible. Themes such as welcome, hosting, migration, and new perspectives on traditions and history naturally led to this outcome.

The projects discussed also built accessibility and inclusion into project delivery across engagement strands. Some sought equity for artists across countries via equal payment, others

worked with groups or organisations to further inclusion for particular communities, for example people with learning disabilities.

This meant that ideas could be engaged with at different levels, relying on interpretation by the audience to gain greater depth.

This was also frequently extended to audiences, who had the opportunity to access work in public spheres, although some project organisers felt that more could have been done to encourage more people to attend public events that they were organising.

A key principle articulated by many of the organisation leads, was that of equality of involvement. This could mean different things such as ensuring artists and staff were paid the same across projects or considering the access needs of different groups of people.

### **Birmingham 2022 Festival has promoted a positive view of the UK in both residents and non-UK nationals**

As noted previously, a constant theme from the case studies was that project partners felt supported and encouraged by the Birmingham 2022 Festival team in decentralising the UK narrative. This in turn meant that projects were confident in fostering equitable and intersectional dialogues. Such openness was especially well received by international partners who expressed respect for organisations in the UK in making the first step.

Waswasa (Image credit: Soul City Arts)



Artists, both from the UK and outside, welcomed this capacity to take a perspective that was not constricted or censored through the projects, even if this meant that themes might be directly confronting topics such as British Colonialism or the role of the Commonwealth in the modern world. There was widespread appreciation of the support received from the Birmingham 2022 Festival team in allowing them to develop these themes, encouraging multi-directional dialogues that could explore the legacy of imperialism.

By being confident in addressing painful legacies, it meant that conversations could then move towards a place of learning and healing – led by international peers – and developing ideas and solutions for these elements. The level of international understanding achieved by these projects felt richer and all the more mature because of this approach and contributed to promoting a more rounded and ultimately positive view of the UK.

**Birmingham 2022 Festival has engaged representative and inclusive audiences through international collaborations, resulting in increased awareness of arts and culture sector**

It was an especially strong outcome for the case studies in this evaluation. This was due to the proactive encouragement of participation of parts of the public who would not normally be involved in arts and cultural projects. Attracting representative audiences in the UK or elsewhere is not 'business as usual'. Many studies including that of The Audience Agency demonstrates that unless it is directly addressed, with active targeting and

practice it will not 'automatically' happen. These case studies for example demonstrated this by locating specific communities not normally engaged in arts and culture, or by placing the work in a place and at a time when a more diverse audience might be attracted.

Accommodation of cultural variance was used proactively to create diverse artistic and engagement opportunities. UK partners showed sensitivity to the problematic histories of empire and Commonwealth but it is notable that, on the whole, international partners were very forward thinking, wanting to design a new commonwealth: based on multilateralism, respect and mutuality of exchange.



Where Are You? - (Image credit: Anand Chhabra)

# RECOMMENDATIONS



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS

Due to the nature of this evaluation report, it makes sense that it is held internationally. We recommend exploring opportunities to disseminate this report through international partners and networks to increase awareness and exposure of the projects this report covers.

## SHARE LEARNING

This report goes some way to disseminating the rich knowledge exchanges that have taken place through the international collaborations. However, all projects involved will hold even deeper insights into how to successfully hold a space for international exchange. Therefore, it's recommended that projects are given further platforms to share their learning widely and support the cultural sector to grow in confidence for undertaking international and intercultural collaborative projects in the future.

## A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Many of the projects we learnt from over the course of this evaluation demonstrated attempts to not centre the UK in their relationships. It was not possible within the scope of the report to replicate this approach but, in future, it is recommended that extra support be given so that evaluators may also work with an international partner (particularly from the Global South). This will help in reducing bias by incorporating non-Western or non-UK-centric perspectives into the analysis of the report.

## DIGITAL CULTURAL RELATIONS

We've seen over the course of this evaluation, the growing importance of, and dependence on, digital technology in facilitating international collaborations. Further research is required in this field to understand the implications of this development, both in terms of enabling a more distributed network of cultural actors to participate, and exacerbating existing global inequalities through the digital divide.

## CONTINUED SUPPORT

The majority of the international partnerships in this report simply wouldn't have happened without resources and guidance from Birmingham 2022 Festival and international commissioning organisations. International work and exchange are vitally important for the quality, strength and diversity of the UK cultural sector. It is therefore crucial that international collaborations of all scales continue to be supported.





Imagine Bamboo (Image credit: Andrew Moore)

## REBALANCING POWER DYNAMICS

When a contracted organisation or lead partner is based in the UK, active efforts should be made by that organisation to de-centralise its power in the project and seek equity. Further to these efforts, commissioning organisations and funders also play a vital role. Delays in payments can be detrimental for international collaborations. If we are to support a diverse cultural ecosystem and more balanced power relationships then payment instalments should be processed in advance of work beginning.

## SOFT SKILLS

Soft skills are crucial to the success of international collaboration. Projects frequently spoke of the need for 'patience', 'understanding' and 'trust' when building relationships. We'd also add 'openness' and 'curiosity' to these terms. A genuine interest in others and a willingness to share each other's stories were key attributes we observed as commonplace amongst the projects we spoke to.

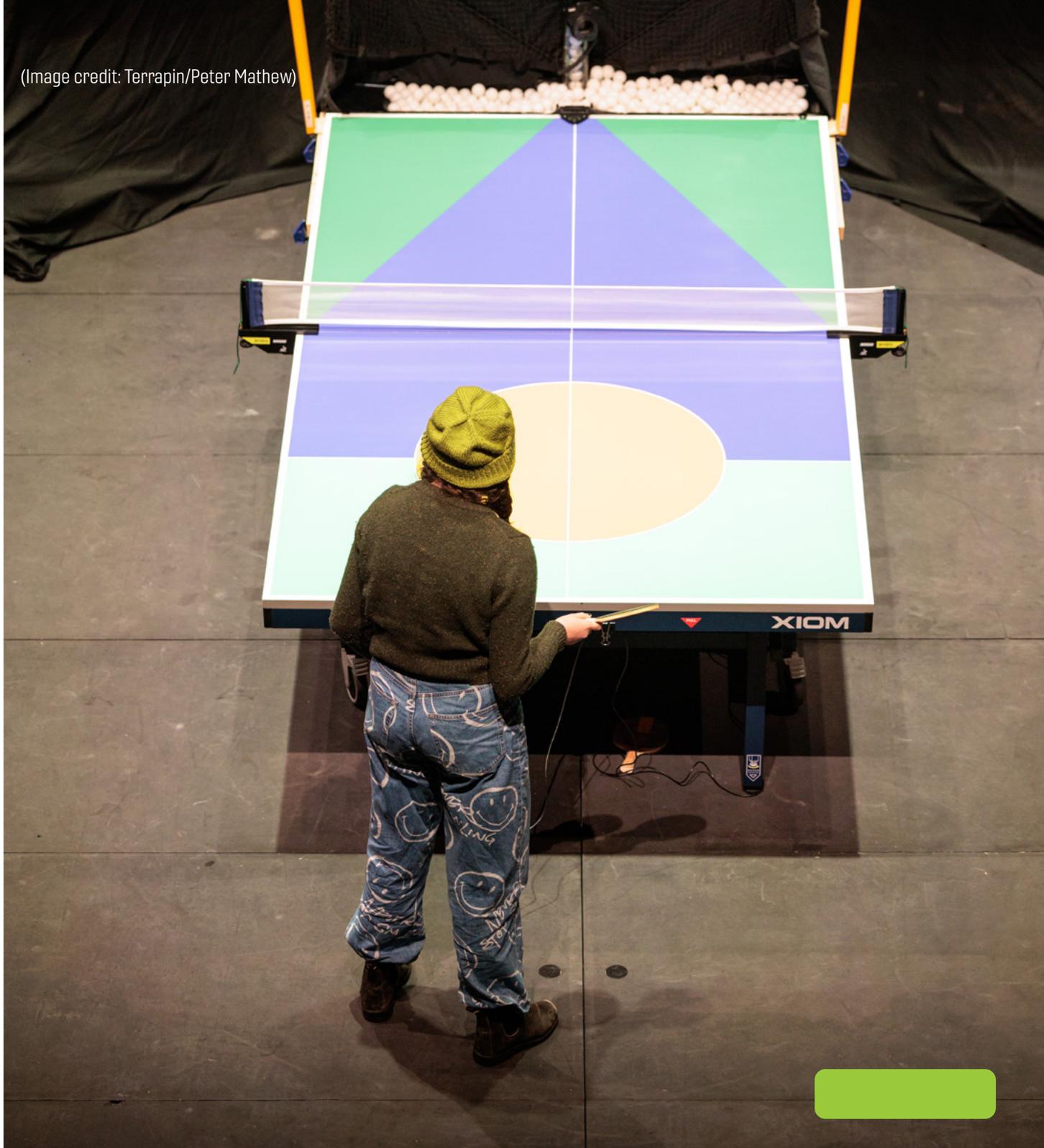
## MARKETING SUPPORT

Each of the projects in this report benefitted from the increased footfall and anticipation stoked by the Birmingham 2022 Festival and Commonwealth Games. However, some were more accustomed than others to dealing with the high level of exposure that the festival brought with it. To ensure that all organisations get a chance to capitalise on the media attention that is part and parcel with these kinds of mega events, projects with smaller in-house teams could benefit from more dedicated training or concentrated marketing support to boost the global attention they receive.

## INTROSPECTION AND HUMILITY

The UK cultural sector should continue to acknowledge and reflect on the painful histories and legacies of the Commonwealth. Showing initiative in confronting difficult subject matter and demonstrating a willingness to work with (and be led by) international collaborators whose communities were most adversely affected by these shared pasts, will promote a positive view of the UK.

(Image credit: Terrapin/Peter Mathew)



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This evaluation report has been developed by The Audience Agency. The two primary authors are:

**Jonathan Goodacre, Senior Consultant (International)**

**Liam Smyth, Consultant (Digital Inclusion in Culture)**

The lead researcher responsible for analysing quantitative data is:

**Salma Elsayed, Research Assistant**

Additionally, we'd like to thank the following organisations and artists for being so generous with their time and contributing in-person to the interviews that we collected for the case studies in this report:

**Accra Theatre Workshop (Ghana)**

**Ava Dance Company (UK)**

**Beatfreaks (UK)**

**Black Country Touring (UK)**

**Border Crossings (UK)**

**Denni Proctor, freelance artist (Tasmania)**

**Eastside Projects (UK)**

**Enspire PNG (Papua New Guinea)**

**Mama Dojo (Australia)**

**Open Theatre (UK)**

**Rajni Perera, freelance artist (Sri Lanka / Canada)**

**Terrapin Puppet Theatre (Tasmania)**

The quantitative data was analysed was collected and supplied by:

**Indigo Consortium**

We also supplemented this with web-scraped data from key project stakeholders. A special acknowledgement goes to the reports and media developed by:

**Birmingham 2022 Festival**

**British Council**



for Solomon to sing the saddest song  
let not there studying the solutions

# APPENDICES



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I: PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

There were 29 projects in the Festival that included international collaboration as part of their work.

### OTHER ISLES

Other Isles is a celebration of creatives, artists and culture from the Cypriot and Maltese diaspora. It featured spoken word and poetry from local talent Joe Cook and Stephanie Kleanthous, official Derby County Football Club poet Jamie Thrasivoulou and international writer Dean Atta. It also included live music performances from electronic music producer Inwards, Birmingham based rapper and educator Eleftherios and second city ska, reggae, punk sounds from Lobster. Commissioned pieces screened on the night included a short film by Andonis Trattos with a score composed by British-Maltese, musician Craig Rogerson, music and visuals by Maltese rapper and activist REA and Turkish-Cypriot musician and creative Gamze.

### BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: FLOURISH!

Flourish! seeks to re-imagine the fanfare – a ubiquitous part of sporting ceremonies – for the 21st Century and bring together communities through the medium of music. Throughout the spring and summer of 2022, BCMG were working with ten 'musical triangles', comprising a non-professional or youth ensemble, a composer, and a Commonwealth connection, to create fanfares inspired by and celebrating the

Commonwealth - its nations, individuals and values of diversity and tolerance.

### BREAK MISSION AND ERIC SCUTARO (HOUSE OF SCUTARO): QUEER-SIDE FESTIVAL

Queer-side was a celebration of identity and individuality from the Queer community. Through an inclusive line up of acts from the ballroom and hip-hop communities, they offered an iconic and proudly visible platform for queer performance. Programme highlights included: Kimmy Beatbox, a familiar talent on Birmingham's stages; drag performances from Barbs and Beau Jangles; electric dance performances from the Welsh Ballroom Society; headline sets from Brum legend Sanity and renowned Parisian DJ Lazy Flow; dance workshops and a new digital photography commission celebrating queer representation and visibility.

Eric Peña Quintero, better known as Eric Scutaro, is a Venezuelan performer, choreographer, Hip-hop cultivator and activist of the Queer community. In Venezuela, he is a representative, pioneer, leader and exponent of Whacking/Punking and Voguing - two styles of dance belonging to the Queer community since the 70s. Through these two styles of dance, he has created spaces for artistic expression, opportunities and learning for young people and adults around human rights, trans rights, equality, justice, love and respect. Eric is a founding member of the first and only urban dance company sponsored by a theatre in Venezuela and throughout Latin America. Queer-side created ties for future artistic projects between Venezuela and the United Kingdom. Parisian producer and DJ,

Lazy Flow created a 'percussive cocktail' tailored for the dance floor.

### ABRICE MAZLIAH/WORK OF ACT: THE GARDEN STATE

This UK premiere took place from 8th – 11th June at Midlands Arts Centre (MAC). Garden State was a durational installation with a programme of free workshops, yoga classes, photography sessions and live performances talks, open mic sessions, meals and concerts. Prior to the installation the artists knocked on the doors of residents from across the city to invite them to help transform MAC's main theatre into an exotic ephemeral communal garden made of their favourite house plants, transforming the stage into an audience space. Garden State was inspired by the myth of Libertalia, an anarchist, exotic colony in 17th century Madagascar composed of people liberated from slave ships by pirates.

### FRIENDS OF CEDAR CHURCH: BSL COMMUNITY CHORUS

Over 150 different performers and personnel from different countries were involved in this creative collaborative initiative, including a brand-new verse originally written and signed in BSL. This was then interpreted into English subtitles and expressed vocally over the combination of a classically orchestral soundscape and percussive rhythms reflecting the range of traditions and vibrant flavours of the region.

Local artist collective Friends Of Cedar Church worked with staff and pupils of Longwill School For Deaf Children and artists from the d/Deaf community Deaf Explorer, Birmingham Music Service and Watoto Children's Choir (Uganda) to orchestrate and provide

a community song to celebrate British Sign Language (BSL) as a major language in Birmingham, a City of Languages, and across the world. The aim was to empower d/Deaf children by teaching signing through singing across whole communities.

### **THE BONE ENSEMBLE: CHOCFEST**

ChocFest was a multi-artform, community engagement and performance project about Birmingham's connections with chocolate. It was co-designed by The Bone Ensemble, groups and organisations of Stirchley & Bournville, academics and artists of West African heritage based in the Midlands and Ghana and cocoa-growing communities in Ghana.

Together with community and professional artists and performers from Birmingham and Ghana, The Bone Ensemble co-created a site-based performance, to tell their stories of cocoa and chocolate through words, music and song, developing and expressing their collective creativity.

### **SELEXTORSCHOOL**

Secondary school students worked with five Selextorhood artists, a Birmingham based community that supports aspiring and practising DJs and Music Producers who identify as female or a gender minority and inspires the younger generation to choose the music industries as a career path. The young people and artists worked together to plan and perform DJ sets on a professional stage to a live audience at BIMM in Central Birmingham.

The showcase took place at BIMM over two evenings. Female and gender minority students studying music technology and technical theatre arts at BIMM ran the stage set, lights and sound for the final show which was also live streamed.

### **CULTURAL RESISTANCE, CREATIVE PROTEST: THE GAP**

In this project, Cultural Resistance and Creative Protest, a group of community producers from Balsall Heath designed and delivered six public arts events. From the Cultural Revolution to Nazi Germany, from the Occupied Territories of Palestine to Apartheid South Africa, ordinary folk have used imagination, creative skills and ingenuity to resist and protest their oppression and overcome myriad injustices and persecutions and the project celebrated this universal cultural heritage.

### **WONDROUS STORIES**

The opening show of Birmingham 2022 Festival, a spectacular open-air performance inspired by the stories of Birmingham and the West Midlands. It was created by internationally acclaimed Leamington Spa based dance-circus company Motionhouse and took place in the city centre, featuring their professional company alongside a mass community cast. There were 7 performances with one live streamed on the internet enabling a global audience to engage.

The creative team comprised Artistic Director Kevin Finnan, designer by Sophie Donaldson, choreographer Jamaal Burkmar

and Sonia Sabri, spoken word artists Raza Hussain and Sebbie Mudhai, composers Sophy Smith and Tim Dickinson and digital projection artists Logela Multimedia (Spain).

### **IMAGINE BAMBOO SUMMIT**

Imagine Bamboo Summit was the culmination of the initial stages of Imagine Bamboo, an ambitious new public art project developed by Imagineer, with Artistic Director Orit Azaz. The project has brought together artists, designers, engineers and communities from across the UK, and internationally, to explore the potential of bamboo. This collaboration initially took place online through Digital Creative Labs, supported via an R&D commission from Birmingham 2022 Festival.

Bamboo grows across the globe, including in the UK and Europe, and is widely held by a growing network of engineers, architects and activists to be 'the future sustainable building material for the planet'. Imagineer were excited by the potential to collaborate with people from across the world to exchange skills and ideas and create beautiful strong lightweight structures at a variety of scales.

For the weekend, Imagineer brought together their international collaborators Rebecca Reubens (Rhizome, India), Bernice Dapaah (Bamboo Bikes, Ghana) and Orin Hardy and colleagues (BambooU in Bali) alongside other international voices from the bamboo community for a weekend of experimentation, play and building in which experts, artists and members of the public collaborated with this unique material.



## **BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL – FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS FROM CANADA**

A programme of work curated by and including Canadian dance artists and choreographers that was included Birmingham International Dance Festival, including performances by Kaha:Wi Dance Theatre, the inclusion of Santee Smith and Olivia C. Davies in a series of panel discussion events focusing on the influence of colonialist history on identity, practice, and artistry, a Canadian screen dance programme curated by Olivia C. Davies and artist bursaries for First Nations artists to attend the festival.

## **KEY TO THE CITY**

An existing project by the New York-based artist Paul Ramírez Jonas represented in Birmingham by Fierce, one of the UK's most highly regarded and experimental contemporary arts festivals. Key to the City bestowed a key to 15,000 individuals in a unique ceremony in a project reflecting on the democracy and equality of civic honours that predominantly acknowledge the work of politicians and armed forced personnel. The key temporarily opened locks and access to specific sites across the city including the rooftop of a city centre office building, a museum cabinet and a special menu in an Indian restaurant. In turn, the project invited audiences to reflect on how the city is a series of spaces that are private or public.

## **CHAIN STORIES**

A site-specific dance performance created through a collaboration between Black Country based ME Dance, NOYAM African Dance Institute (Ghana), Conception Dance Theatre (Grenada), Chain Stories told the story of those who came to contact with the chains made in the Black Country, and how that links the region to the Commonwealth. The project initially benefitted from a Birmingham 2022 Festival R&D commission (funded by British Council) which enabled an online choreolab between the collaborating dance companies, exchanging movement vocabulary and building the basis for the piece.

Incorporating dance, live music, narration with BSL interpretation and an outdoor exhibition of original artworks and historic photographs, audiences were invited to follow the chains on their journey encountering different people from the ground to the forge, along the canals, across the sea to Ghana, Grenada and back again. Through live performance, Chain Stories explored the struggles of those exploited in the push for cheaper labour and more profit spurred by the Industrial Revolution in the UK, and its global expansion. It focused on real life people who fought for equality in small and large ways – for women's rights, freedom from slavery and against racial oppression, while exploring the change in attitudes and slow progress for racial, gender and economic equality which people are still fighting for today.

## **COUNTING AND CRACKING AT BIRMINGHAM REP**

Featuring a cast of 19 performers hailing from six different countries, Counting and Cracking is an acclaimed and award-winning theatre production that follows the journey of one Sri Lankan-Australian family over four generations, from 1956 to 2004. In the course of telling this family's epic story of break up and reunion, the narrative also tells the tale of two countries: Sri Lanka post-independence and Australia as an immigrant nation. Presented at Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Counting and Cracking is written by Sri Lankan Australian S. Shakhthidharan and directed by Eamon Flack, Artistic Director of Belvoir, one of Australia's most celebrated theatre companies, who are also co-producers.

## **SUPERSONIC FESTIVAL**

Supersonic Festival, curated and produced by Capsule, is one of the UK's premier experimental music festivals. For the 2022 edition, Supersonic invited 2 guest curators to create a dialogue that examines the experience of musicians living and working within the current political climate, against the backdrop of the city hosting the Commonwealth Games. The 2 guest curators were Radwan Ghazi Moumneh aka Jerusalem In My Heart, a Montréal-based producer and musician, and Decolonise Fest (UK) who connect punx of colour to global struggles against the legacy of colonialism. The festival also commissioned and presented another Canadian artist, Big Brave.

## INTERLINKED

A new ballet inspired by themes of unity, exploring the influences that we have on each other's lives and how the energy that we exude bounces from one person to the next, in a neverending circle, Interlinked was choreographed by Juliano Nunes (Brazil), with a newly commissioned orchestral score by Australian composer Luke Howard, and lighting by Holland-based Northern Irish Designer Tom Visser.

The piece for 16 dancers specifically explores themes around gender identity and the perception of self, with the music driving the storyline which falls into four distinct movements. It was presented as part of Birmingham Royal Ballet's On Your Marks triple bill at Birmingham International Dance Festival.

## PRECIOUS EMILY

A project in which ten Birmingham primary schools collaborated with theatre company Stan's Cafe to create and perform plays about weightlifting, inspired by stories of Precious Mackenzie who overcame extraordinary odds to become a champion in apartheid era South Africa, and UK-based Emily Campbell who subsequently won gold in her competition at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

In July, a gala performance at Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) brought together scenes from all ten productions in a one-off spectacular, also inspiring a professional production for families which was presented at MAC in September.

The project team collaborated directly with Emily Campbell, and Precious McKenzie and his family, who are based in New Zealand.

## ACROSS BORDERS

Across Borders created international partnerships to inspire new poetry, inviting eighteen poets to exchange postcards with their selected partner who was another poet either based in or with historical links to a Commonwealth country. The postcard exchange started with the poets sharing their story with two people and hearing their stories back, via email or an exchange of words in another form, such as a conversation, or poem. Poets were invited to share their feelings, their experiences, their thoughts and affections for the country that has made them and is a part of them.

Across Borders featured artists across ten Commonwealth nations and territories and finished with them sharing their poetry live and as part of a published anthology. Poets included Fred D'Aguiar, Sonnet L'Abbe, Efe Paul Azino, Isabelle Baafi, Hinemoana Baker, Dzifa Benson, Kayo Chingonyi, Tishani Doshi,

Nafeesa Hamid, Nick Makoha, Roy McFarlane, Alvin Pang, Sivinee Ramlochan, Melizerrani T. Selva, Elfie Shiosaki, Saradha Soobrayan, Ellen Van Neerven & Njeri Wangari.

## MONSTERS OF THE WORLD

Jon McCurley's Monsters of the World focused on the global chocolate trade through the lens of his Irish-Vietnamese roots, and his parents' experience of meeting whilst working for Cadbury's in the 1970s.

Jon, a Canadian-Vietnamese visual artist, created a troupe of Blemmyes, headless half-human people with gold-coloured skin, as described in medieval European histories. Legends tell of them climbing trees, hiding from people, talking softly, eating leaves, and generally being weird. Today, Blemmyes can be interpreted as proof of proto 'fear of the other', which helped inspire 17th-century ideas like nationalism, and 20th-century ideas like xenophobia and racism.

Jon's Blemmyes roamed and frolicked in Bournville parks and in Victoria Square on the day of the Commonwealth Games Marathon event. As part of Monsters of the World, Jon also created Taste Test, a project which went to the home of Cadbury's and encouraged the public to try chocolate alternatives, based on discontinued recipes from the 70s.

## LOOTY GOES TO HEAVEN

A small Pekingese dog was taken from China at the end of the Second Opium War by British troops, brought to England, and gifted to Queen Victoria. This dog was renamed Looty, after the activity of “looting,” in reference to how the dog was found during the looting of the Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan) outside of Beijing. Looty lived for twelve years at the British royal palaces and died in 1872.

Amy Ching-Yan Lam’s Looty Goes to Heaven revived Looty’s story in the context of Birmingham, which is the current site of Crufts, the largest dog show in the world, as well as the home of Typhoo tea, a brand named after the Chinese word for doctor.

The colonial trades of tea and opium were closely linked and directly led to the Opium Wars, which caused Hong Kong, where Amy Ching-Yan Lam was born, to become a British colony. Taking the form of an animation, a speculative fiction, and a poppy meadow, Looty Goes to Heaven presented in the area of Digbeth, where the now defunct Typhoo tea factory is located. The looping animation shows Looty in a state of eternal rest, while the speculative fiction, available as a free publication in English and Traditional Chinese, imagines what Looty’s life and afterlife may have been like.

The meadow, planted after the Commonwealth Games end, features varieties of papaver somniferum (opium poppy) alongside a wildflower meadow.

## WASWASA

WASWASA – Whispers in Prayer is an immersive theatrical experience by artist Mohammed Ali that explores the act of Islamic prayer and what that means in a modern, secular society. The physical act of prayer now extends beyond religious spaces to places such as parks and city-squares; it spills over into our everyday worlds. It is even visible in sports arenas with athletes prostrating to the ground or raising hands to the sky in moments of triumph. Can we draw parallels between an act of personal faith and our quest to achieve a higher state of focus? The audience was invited to walk through a combination of art installation, live performance and projected film zones that disrupt the conventions of theatre, placing them at the very heart of the story.

## HEALING GARDENS OF BAB

Healing Gardens of Bab is an artistic response to our colonial history from a queer perspective, celebrating what Empire tried (and failed) to stamp out. Working with a group of five young LGBTQIA+ creatives, Fierce devised a programme of performances, events and artworks that uplift expressions of queerness globally, through joyous spectacles and participatory events in Birmingham.

Healing Gardens of Bab was anchored by three exuberant moments of queer celebration, community solidarity and healing: arts collective Duckie presented pop up performance

around Birmingham’s Botanical Gardens, in Princess, Picnic, Promenade; Australia-Filipino Collective Club Até presented sumptuous visuals of a future folklore in Chamberlain Square, complimented by a colossal late night party of vibrant pageantry, Club Muva, at Symphony Hall; and after hours at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, direct from Ottawa, encountered a flavour of the world’s only 2-Spirit Ball.

Healing Gardens featured queer artists and collectives from across the Commonwealth, including First Nations artists from Australia, Canada and New Zealand and creatives from India and Fiji amongst others. Elsewhere in the programme audiences were invited to engage in hands-on events and installations including Aotearoa/New Zealand artists Rosanna Raymond and Jaimie Waititi present the inaugural Birmingham SaVĀge K’lubroom in Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Reclaiming the gentlemen’s clubs of the same name first established in London in the 19th century, SaVĀge Klub posed the question: what might it mean to be a savage today?

## EQUATIONS FOR A BODY AT REST

Johannesburg-based painter and filmmaker Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi presented a multi-site multimedia artwork titled Equations for a Body at Rest, which tracks the history and symbolic presentation of the Commonwealth Games (and, by association, the Commonwealth body itself) from its genesis in empire to the current day.

Equations for a Body at Rest has three components: The Same

Track (video), The Name Game (series of posters), and the Equations for a Body at Rest reference website.

The Same Track is a video work which plays on screens around the city. It uses archival footage of Commonwealth Games athletes, spectators, and administrators cut together with images of economic and promotional activity in various British colonies and Commonwealth states. Through symbolic juxtapositions of scenes from different eras, the work highlights both transformation and stasis through time. The Same Track draws attention to the idea that the Games, including in its current iteration, is implicated in an ongoing political project centuries in the making.

The Name Game takes the form of a series of posters placed at billboard sites throughout the city. These posters – some reminiscent of, or alluding to, historical Commonwealth Games posters – are intended to interrogate the meanings of the Games in Birmingham and some of the discourse that surrounds them. Via QR Codes on the posters, audiences can also access an online database of information relating to the history of the Commonwealth Games and the Commonwealth itself. This curated repository is designed to illuminate, provoke and inspire.

### **BEATFREEKS: AS WE SPEAK (CASE STUDY)**

Eight young artists and organisers from Uganda, Malaysia, the British Virgin Islands, India, Pakistan, Rwanda, Trinidad and Tobago and the UK were given no-strings-attached grants by Birmingham-based Beatfreaks, to continue and deepen their work. They produced storytelling works as live performances and as a film documentary.

The artists' journeys were presented through storytelling – as live and filmed performances in a global experiment of shared experience and purpose – responding 'as we speak' with all that that implies.

### **OPEN THEATRE: WANTOK (CASE STUDY)**

Open Theatre Company collaborated with learning disabled performers in the UK, and artists from Australia and Papua New Guinea to create Wantok, a outdoor, accessible theatre performance bringing the stories, songs etc. The final performance was a reimagining of Papua New Guinea's 'singing' traditions. Collaboration meant knowledge transfer and exchanging different or new ways of working, particularly around working with learning disabled people.

### **BLACK COUNTRY TOURING/ACCRA THEATRE: WHERE ARE YOU? (CASE STUDY)**

A collaborative project between two theatre companies, one in Bearwood (West Midlands), one in Dzorwulu (Accra, Ghana) to make a new theatre and film production and story book for children. The two partners initially collaborated on a R&D project to explore how they could work together using entirely digital and online platforms. This was very successful and was maintained as a working method for the full production. Told through live performance, live streaming between Bearwood and Dzorwul and using recorded material and animation, it took place simultaneously in shops in both countries.

### **AVA DANCE COMPANY, BORDER CROSSINGS AND BRIAN SOLOMON: REMEMBRANCES (CASE STUDY)**

This dance performance was developed as a partnership, with Border Crossings leading a collaborative work between Ava Dance Company and Brian Solomon with the question of 'Who we are as we welcome others?' It was performed as an outdoor dance piece as part of the Birmingham International Dance Festival, and explored many themes related to the UK's place in the world and its relationship to Commonwealth countries and their indigenous populations.



### **EASTSIDE PROJECTS AND RAJNI PERERA: TRAVELLER (CASE STUDY)**

Canada-based Sri Lankan artist Rajni Perera from Canada expanded on her ongoing Travellers series of paintings, sonic artworks and sculptures in Eastside Projects' Gallery in Digbeth and as a mural on the walls of the aqueduct of the River Rea.. Depicting diasporic identities and dream worlds, Perera's vivid artworks animated ideas and issues of hybridity, ancestorship and futurity.

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### **TERRAPIN PUPPET THEATRE: ANTHEM ANTHEM REVOLUTION (CASE STUDY)**

This was a new work commissioned by the festival from Tasmanian puppet theatre company Terrapin. It manifested as an installation work in which participants play table tennis against a robot to hear a new national song as written by children, an anthem that reflects their hopes and dreams for the country of

Australia. Inspired by rhythm games like Dance Dance Revolution and Guitar Hero, each time a ball is returned, we hear a child's voice accompanied by a new musical element. As the experience progresses, this builds into a musical track for a new generation.

### **APPENDIX II**

#### **ONLINE RESOURCES FOR CASE STUDIES**

Anthem Anthem Revolution project web page:

<https://www.terrapiin.org.au/event/anthem-anthem-revolution/>

As We Speak project web page:

<https://beatfreaks.com/aswespeak/>

Remembrances online programme:

[https://issuu.com/border\\_crossings/docs/remembrances-programme](https://issuu.com/border_crossings/docs/remembrances-programme)

Traveller project web page:

<https://eastsideprojects.org/projects/traveller/>

Wantok project web page:

[https://www.opentheatre.co.uk/news\\_items/wantok/](https://www.opentheatre.co.uk/news_items/wantok/)

Where Are You? project web page:

<https://bctouring.co.uk/production/where-are-you/>



# OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK / AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

OUTCOME	OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	NOTES
Birmingham 2022 Festival promotes new models for approaching international collaboration which are genuinely multi-directional in their exchange of knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative working process for artistic and operational components</li> <li>Development and use of new operational concepts such as using digital / online</li> <li>Partnership learning exchange</li> <li>Legacy and ongoing relationships developed for involved companies</li> <li>Cultural differences accommodated and incorporated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge exchange and collaboration is mutual and/or multi-directional</li> <li>Working methods indicate equitable/shared approach leading to synergetic outputs</li> <li>Cultural variance accommodated and used proactively to create artistic and engagement diversity</li> <li>Ongoing relationships between partners established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparison of self-reported experience - UK/International (surveys)</li> <li>Working methods indicate equitable/shared approach leading to synergetic outputs</li> <li>Explore connections / understanding of the collaborating non-UK companies with UK partners and audiences</li> </ul>
Birmingham 2022 Festival provides global attention to work with international collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media coverage / media mentions</li> <li>Work made available for wider distribution and dissemination</li> <li>Global relationships established/developed with companies/projects</li> <li>Projects relate to wider Commonwealth Games themes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Projects promoted widely, including internationally</li> <li>Media coverage of Birmingham 2022 includes some of the 29 projects</li> <li>6 case studies represented positively in media reporting</li> <li>Coverage online / social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploration of this theme will need to be realistic in terms of its assessment. Many projects/companies are small operations.</li> <li>Documentation and self-reporting by projects will be vital</li> </ul>
Birmingham 2022 Festival increases confidence in UK cultural sector for undertaking international and intercultural collaborative projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities for purposeful international exchange, collaboration and practice development are created for artists, creative professionals and arts institutions</li> <li>In project development of skills and capacities for producing teams.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners (from each/all sides) report collaboration positively</li> <li>New networks and partnerships identified and pursued</li> <li>Reported change in confidence of engaging in international and intercultural projects</li> <li>New skills and capacities reported</li> <li>Legacy projects / opportunities / follow-ups identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited baselines – will require retrospective assessments of journey to be made.</li> <li>Legacy thinking/planning a vital component of this part</li> </ul>

# OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK / AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

OUTCOME	OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	NOTES
Birmingham 2022 Festival produces international collaborative projects that are inclusive and accessible	<p>Access and participation from all parts of the community</p> <p>Policies and procedures in place</p> <p>Creative and operational teams able to participate and contribute without barriers to access</p> <p>Proactive pursuit of those not often engaged in arts and culture</p>	<p>Participation by key target groups in Birmingham area (ref engagement, Audience Spectrum etc)</p> <p>Participants and audience representative of wider public</p> <p>Involvement of people with little experience of international exchange</p> <p>Proactive involvement of under-represented groups: women, Disabled Artists, Disability-led organisations, People from Asian, Black, First Nations, Indigenous, Middle Eastern/Arabic or Mixed Heritage backgrounds</p> <p>Involvement of audiences from areas of deprivation</p>	<p>Quantitative data / linked to background data key to this part</p> <p>Participants and audience</p>
Birmingham 2022 Festival has promoted a positive view of the UK in both residents and non-UK nationals	<p>A clear narrative about the UK for international audiences is shared with key UK civic and cultural events and partners</p> <p>Major civic and cultural events are supported to develop a local/regional version of the British Council's international narrative for the UK</p>	<p>Quality and perceived value of narrative by audiences</p> <p>Awareness and perceived value of major events and festivals by audiences</p> <p>Breadth of engagement with major UK festivals and events</p> <p>Perceived quality and value of support by stakeholders</p>	<p>Integration of quantitative audience data key to this part.</p>
Birmingham 2022 Festival has engaged representative and inclusive audiences through international collaborations, resulting in increased awareness of arts and culture sector	<p>Opportunities for purposeful international exchange, collaboration and practice development are created for artists, creative professionals and arts institutions</p> <p>In project development of skills and capacities for producing teams.</p>	<p>Participation by key groups:</p> <p>Four Nations, Inside/Outside London</p> <p>Little previous experience of international exchange</p> <p>Women, Disabled Artists, Disability-led organisations, Ethnic minorities (where relevant)</p> <p>involvement of/from ODA countries</p>	<p>Investigation of different elements – producers/project team, artist/ creatives etc + audiences and participants</p>



# INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

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