

Youth Engagement in grant-making

Insights and learning to what enables meaningful participation
by children and young people for Creative Scotland



LOTTERY FUNDED



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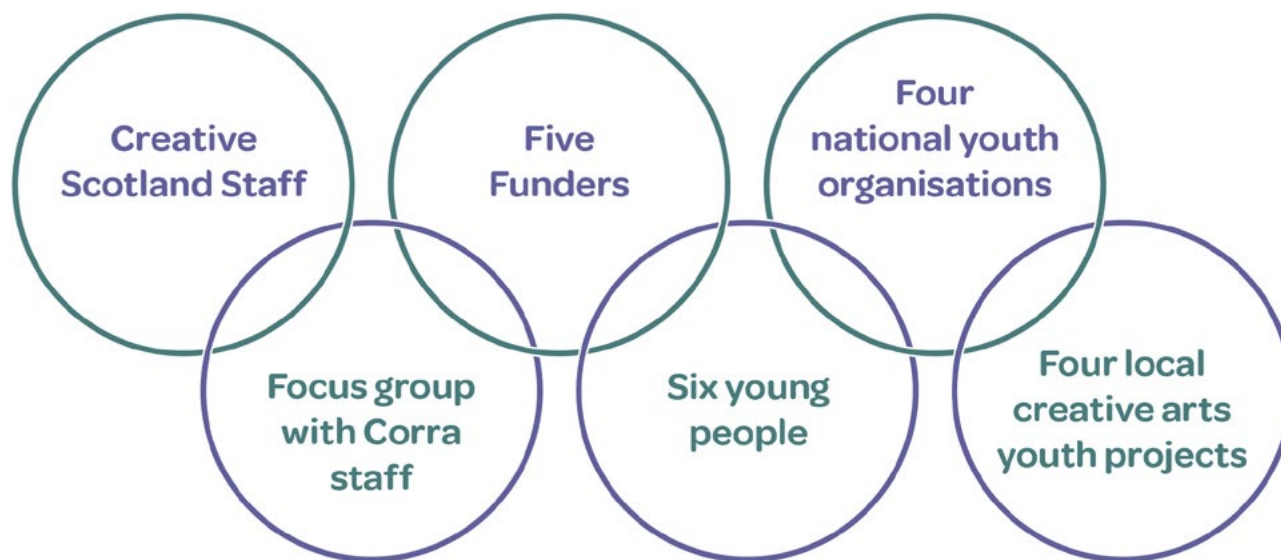


Introduction

Creative Scotland commissioned Corra Foundation (Corra) to help progress their commitment to supporting children and young people's participation in grant-making. In this report we share the insights and lessons learnt from a variety of perspectives in delivering and supporting young people's participatory grant-making and youth-led funding.

Corra conducted individual conversations and focus groups with a range of people all involved in participatory approaches. Corra also conducted a desk-based review of previous reports on young people's participatory grant-making.

The young people, funders, various youth organisations (national, local, youth arts focused)¹ we spoke to bring a unique perspective from their distinct roles. All offered an honest reflection of youth-led and participatory grant-making. What emerged were similar reflections that shaped a core set of themes shared within this report.



¹ The youth organisations Corra spoke to engaged in different ways and varied from local creative arts organisations delivering a youth-led fund, to national youth organisations facilitating participation. A glossary of terms is provided in Appendix 1.

A single thread runs through everything - having the right conditions helps support participation. This is evident across multiple areas, and while these might not be new, they are worth re-emphasising.

- **Valuing and investing time in relationships.**
- **Commitment, resources, time, and support.**
- **Willingness to adapt as participation inevitably changes over time.**
- **Providing supportive spaces and opportunities to grow.**

A learning event on the 30 January 2024 presented an opportunity for others to add and challenge findings. The insights from the day have been incorporated into the report. A summary of the event is included in Appendix 2.

Reflections from all the conversations have been shaped into two supporting materials. Two composite case studies designed to help tell the story from the perspective of a funder and young person reflecting on what helps or hinders supportive participatory grant-making to happen (appendix 3). A summary of practice examples that help and hinder participatory approaches with young people (appendix 4).

All of this formed a series of strategic considerations for Creative Scotland as well as supportive reflections for others involved in participatory and/or youth-led grant-making.



Background and context

The involvement of people with lived expertise in design, delivery and decision-making of support and services that impact them is vital. System change, service redesign, and funding are evolving to be more participatory and for everyone with lived experience including children and young people, but it has to be meaningful. People need to see how their contribution is making a difference.

In the last few years participatory grant-making has been increasing. Many funders are looking to develop ways that ensure their approach and funding has the greatest impact. There is a global network and community of people aiming to share practice in participatory grant-making - [Participatory Grantmaking Community](#). Across the UK, several funders have embedded participatory approaches with young people, all keen to share their experiences and many contributing to this work.

As part of the Scottish Government's Time to Shine¹ youth arts strategy (published November 2013) there has been a clear commitment to

participation and youth led arts opportunities. Creative Scotland has delivered upon this through various opportunities. This includes the National Youth Arts Advisory Group that aims to support children and young people to be heard, to lead and act on the issues that are important to them. There has also been the design and delivery of several youth-led funding programmes. The purpose is to provide children and young people with funding opportunities across Scotland to enable youth-led creative ideas and projects.

Creative Scotland have a commitment to supporting children and young people's participation. Until now opportunities to participate in fund design and decision-making has focused on groups of young people aged 16+.

In 2023 Creative Scotland approached Corra to help them connect and learn from other funders who engaged in participatory grant-making with children and young people. The purpose is to help continue their commitment to supporting children and young people's participation and how this could continue to evolve in a supportive and meaningful way.

1 [Time to Shine - National Youth Arts Strategy | Creative Scotland](#)

What we heard

Young people's input influenced decisions.

From the experiences of those Corra spoke to youth participation in grant-making had:

- **Enabled collective decision-making.**
- **Challenged funders current thinking or funding processes.**
- **Upskilled and delivered positive outcomes for everyone involved (including funders).**

Everyone that Corra spoke with had a clear strategic commitment to participatory grant-making. This was a key enabler in ensuring that participatory approaches were meaningful.

As relationships built over time between funders and young people it created conversations to expand opportunities. There was a willingness to learn and adapt processes. Many people were more open to considering how participatory approaches aligned (and sometimes hindered) their existing funding processes. Young people raised questions about their role and were often

actively seeking space to influence strategy or access wider opportunities that participation brought (not just a decision-making panel).

All acknowledged that this required more resources and time than they had originally planned. Both youth organisations and funders shared the challenges of budgets and staff time.

Several funders found that they needed to spend a substantial amount of time helping support young people to engage and build their confidence, offer training or coaching young people on certain activities. Funders also talked about logistics. For example, ensuring young people's travel arrangements were met and accompanying young people to events or activities.

A locally run youth organisation also talked about the importance of core funding. Encouraging participation has to be accompanied with the support needed to help facilitate connections and maintain supportive engagement with young people.

Funders acknowledged the skills and expertise all youth organisations offered. Youth organisations were often commissioned to help reach young people, as well as help facilitate and support young people in the grant making process.

There was an increased recognition of the importance of the relationship with and between the funder, especially with young people. Several young people wanted to engage more and in different ways with the funder. Speaking with locally led youth organisations, they valued a relationship between themselves, the funder, and young people.

In nearly all examples young people were 16+, most 18 and over. In some examples, the funders had long-term relationships with young people. The young people were supported by the funder to access and develop opportunities to progress their own career.

Themes

Importance of supportive, open, and trusting relationships.

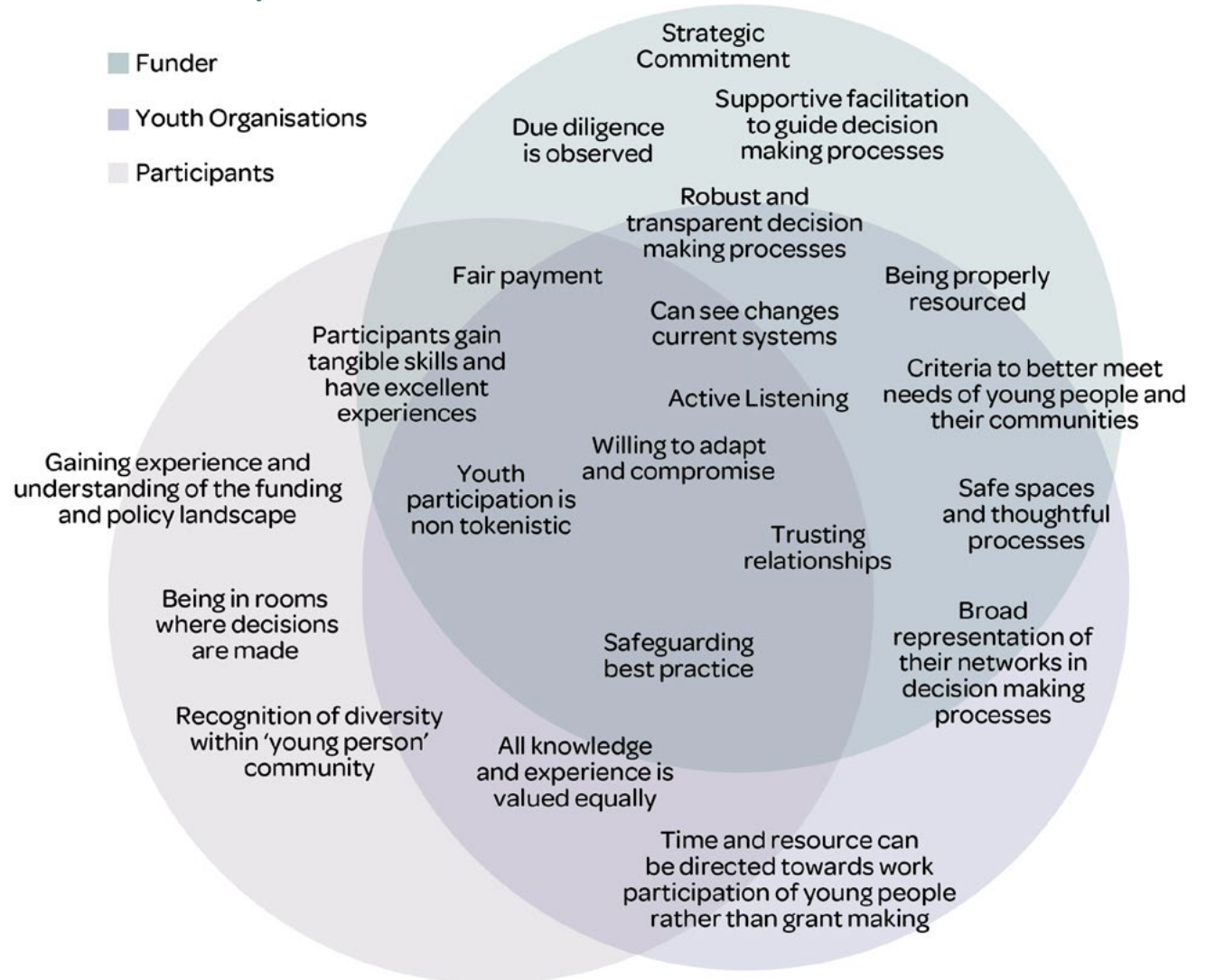
Analysis from this work has re-emphasised the importance of creating the right conditions. It reflects the importance of a collective commitment by all to work in a youth-led or participatory way.

- Valuing and investing time in relationships.
- Commitment, resources, time, and support.
- Willingness to adapt as participation inevitably changes over time.
- Providing supportive spaces and opportunities to grow.

Creating the right conditions is built on trust between funders, young people, and youth organisations.

Through the conversations we heard about engagement in practical ways. Some of the key elements of this are illustrated in diagram on the right.

What is important?



Facilitation

The relationships between the funder, youth organisations and young people has to be supportive, open and honest. Done well it enables engagement, provides clarity on roles, and offers the right facilitation. At times people talked about the tension within some of these relationships. If left unchecked this could lead to a confusion felt by young people. In a few instances, youth organisation facilitators were perceived as gatekeepers of young people. Young people also told us they often sought clarity about their role.

Young people (12 - 16)

- Youthworker.
- Engaging in groups.
- Targeted and focused activities.
- New experiences.

Everyone acknowledged that youth facilitation is a skill and necessary to support the process. Youth organisations and young people reflected that it was important to have the right, age-appropriate skilled facilitator to help with the participation approach. This is unique and differs depending on the age of young people. An example of what young people valued is shown in the diagram below.

Feedback from the learning event also highlighted that organisations with established trusted relationships with young people can often be best placed to lead on youth-led approaches.

Young people (16+)

- Supportive facilitator.
- Engaging in more 'work like' activities.
- Gaining experience/ developing skills.

Nearly all the youth organisations Corra talked to had frustrations about funding processes getting in the way of participation. People spoke about the bureaucracy with funding which often involved lengthy documents, unfamiliar language, and short timescales. There was a feeling in some instances that funders focused more on process than meaningful participation. All of which creates barriers to participation.

For example, some of the young people and youth organisations talked about high volumes of reading required, often a barrier especially for young people where English wasn't their first language or had additional support needs.

While funding processes brought barriers, everyone agreed that funders needed to recognise they have a role as a facilitator. Funders need to bring their skills and knowledge to help young people in making funding decisions. Examples of this were offering young people clarity and considerations that go together with grant-making from setting criteria, designing applications through to decision making.

There were examples where funders had and were already in conversations about changing their remit with youth organisations they partnered with – redefining roles. This has included funders taking a more leading role in facilitating sessions on design of funds.

Young people didn't always feel that there was clarity of purpose or intended impact of their role. At the event on the 30th January 2024 people felt this was seen as an integral part of the full process and not seen as an add-on.

Funders acknowledged the importance of adapting processes as youth-led and youth participation progresses. The most impactful examples of participation reflected how funders had listened, reflected, and shifted their own funding practices.

Based on feedback from young people one funder redesigned the criteria with the young people. Another example saw young people attend Board meetings and offer insight on decisions that the young people's panel had made.

There is a shared acknowledgement that facilitation takes time and needs to be factored into the additional budget as this can often result in a reduction of the funding pot.

Paying young people

The funders we spoke to have a desire to pay young people. All had provided some form of reimbursement. Discussions about paying young people felt more difficult when talking about younger people (under 16) and if payments would affect young people's benefits.

Not every aspect of participatory grant-making was reimbursed, for example if young people were attending an Advisory Group or became Board members.

If payments can't be made or roles were voluntary, conversations need to be upfront, making young people aware of the position. One funder told us through co-production with young people on their Advisory Group they collectively agreed which activities wouldn't be paid for.

There was a definite split in opinion about payment for young people's time between youth organisations. The national youth organisations Corra spoke with did not agree with paying young people. They felt skills development was a supportive way to reimburse young people (e.g. offering accredited courses) plus they also value the role of volunteering.

Young people believe that getting paid is important in recognition of their skills and the work they were doing. This was particularly important to ensure a more equitable approach and increase diversity if non-payment presents as a barrier.

Young people stressed that they believe payment should be for all hours worked including preparation time and not a one-off payment that can feel tokenistic. They often found themselves the only person in the room not in a paid role, which can create an unequal dynamic.

Diversity/Involvement of young people

Both national and local youth organisations had the ability to use their networks to reach and engage young people. Funders who often have their own networks also found youth organisations' connections to young people critical to support the process.

In nearly all cases it was a strategic decision to engage with slightly older young people (16+). Safeguarding was often the main reason why funders did not engage with younger children. There was collective agreement by participants at the event on 30 January that more needs to be done to engage younger children.

Increased diversity often was more prevalent through locally led recruitment. A couple of funders spoke about alternative ways to engage younger people and children, working through groups at a community level. Many of the groups they engaged with at a local level were existing grantholders.

Everyone acknowledged the importance of having different experiences involved in the grant-making and decision-making process. As well as younger children, certain geographical areas, social-economic backgrounds, Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities, disabled young people were mentioned as not being fully represented in youth-led or participatory approaches.

Language was highlighted as contributing to limited engagement due to the use of jargon and acronyms that young people do not understand. Young people with additional support needs and disabilities also require individual-led support to reduce barriers.

It was evident that in most instances young people who were involved had already shown an interest in participation. They had the confidence and abilities to actively engage in participatory opportunities. However, people said that this could mean young people closest to issues were often not involved.

Two funders shared experiences of input from young people who traditionally would not get involved engaged in the participatory approach. The funders felt that they brought a valuable perspective, added to the conversation, which led to different decisions being made.

Diversity has to be accompanied by meeting the individual support needs of young people. In examples where this worked well support was practical, emotional, and creating further opportunities.

Participatory activities

- Understanding information
- Building confidence
- Coaching
- Safeguarding

Logistics

- Accessibility (including materials)
- Travel arrangements and accompanying people
- Providing details and instructions
- Safeguarding

Young people pointed out that funders and facilitators need to have the right tools (e.g. creating the right group dynamics) and support to engage with young people from different backgrounds. There was agreement at the event on 30th January that specific support is required for young people engaging for the first time helping to build their confidence and develop their skills. Suggestions to help build confidence and skills included young people having a known youth worker attending to provide support and encouragement.

Funders should also consider how long a young person should be involved in participatory approaches (or decision panels), which will be dependent on the nature of the fund. The longer individuals are on a panel, the deeper their experience but this limits the opportunities for others to become involved and provide a more diverse representation.

It is important to remember that young people are individuals, they can't represent all views. Which is contrary to how many young people felt.

Participation in strategy

Several young people believed that by being involved with national or UK-wide funders they would see a real shift in power dynamics.

Young people wanted to make tangible contributions to strategic planning and be able to influence decisions. Funders spoke about the need for a dynamic approach. They acknowledged this might not necessarily change their strategy or direction, but all were open to working through alternatives with young people.

Bureaucracy within organisations was frequently identified as a challenge when trying to shift power and adapt to change through young people's participation.

Change in processes can be slow, whereas young people's individual situations can change quickly, resulting in needing to move on. Reducing bureaucracy and creating new approaches requires significant time and effort from organisations.

Young people said participation presented an opportunity for them to develop their own skills. However, some young people felt meaningful opportunities were not always accessible (e.g. governance roles). Young people described inconsistent pathways to employment opportunities and suggested that these need to be formalised.

While organisations might not always be able to offer opportunities, organisations need to be alert to the interests of young people. There were examples shared by funders who found additional ways to offer personal development opportunities. This included presenting on behalf of the funder and attending Board meetings.

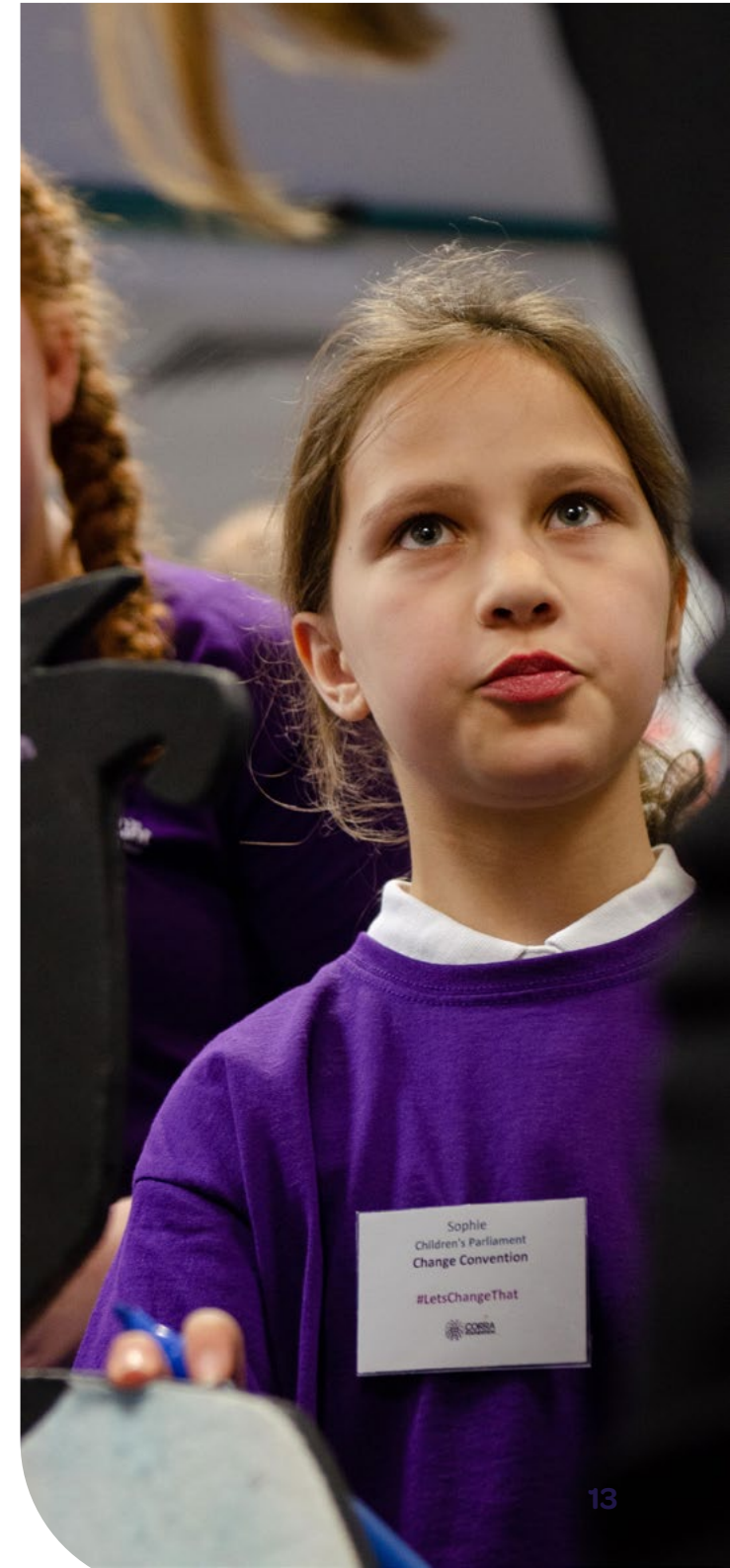
As part of the conversations, Corra heard positive stories; the impact of grants, funded work and positive progression of some young people involved in the participatory approaches. There is however a disconnect as the young people we spoke to felt it was less apparent to see the long-term impact of the work or how their input was influencing long-term strategy. Everyone acknowledged that further structures are required to enable young people to speak to decision makers. Creating feedback loops was highlighted as a way to help ensure that young people can see the impact of their involvement.

Funders shared positive impact of young people involved in participatory approaches. Young people had become community leaders, artists, and gained employment in creative industries. Other examples of young people becoming Trustees for organisations.

Most youth organisations supported the willingness for funders to have longer-term relationships to participatory approaches. There was recognition that it enables better engagement and opportunities.

The national youth organisations felt they could work with funders to co-design meaningful participatory approaches. Locally led youth organisations felt it wasn't easy for young people to engage in these types of activities. It was something to progress towards.

While it does require more time and resources from funders, investing in long-term relationships will have a greater impact. It enables young people to have increased opportunities and involvement in planning, funding decisions, learning and evaluation.



Strategic considerations for Creative Scotland

As shared in this report, the ability to work in a collective, long-term, and adaptive way is central in supporting meaningful participation. It was often rooted in a group of young people who brought their lived expertise, knowledge, and skills to support the design and delivery of programmes. Several examples have shown young people moving on to governance roles.

Creative Scotland has a continued commitment to supporting children and young people's participation in grant-making and youth-led funding. They have developed internal skills and expertise as one youth organisation told us.

Creative Scotland has relationships with young people and skills in-house and should lead and support youth participation.

Representative from youth organisation

This report also identified several groups of children and young people who do not participate in opportunities. If Creative Scotland seeks to increase diversity both through their central youth engagement activities or at community level, they have to consider how to widen their reach.

Locally led grant-making opportunities can appear to increase diversity of young people's involvement. Funders said it was often easier to engage younger children by working through a local youth organisation.

As the analysis suggests, working through local/ community partners has greater reach to diverse groups. If Creative Scotland's priority is to increase equity and diversity, then targeted youth-led grant programmes would be more effective with the additional suggestions:

1. Continue to find ways to build upon their youth engagement activities with a core group of young people. This group should help to co-design and shape their strategy: who to reach, guidance for youth-led funding ideas, engagement in the arts, learning and celebrating success.
2. Core support (e.g. funding) to the local/ community partners will help build and strengthen relationships with children and young people who currently are least likely to get involved in the arts. Offering funding like this over time has the potential to strengthen the engagement of children and young people in participatory opportunities.

These considerations are drawn from the analysis of this work and are presented based on how Creative Scotland can continue to engage and work alongside communities. Creative Scotland should use these to work alongside children and young people to shape their ongoing approach to youth engagement activities.

What next

Through a collective approach of reflecting on what has been heard at each stage, we have drawn out important pointers for good practice, potential barriers, and gaps. One key theme from the learning event held in January 2024 (see appendix 2) was to ensure participatory roles are equitable and fair. This could include summarising proposals in ways that are manageable for children and young people to understand and engage with and remember to pay people to do something that is someone else's full-time job.

Through these findings we spoke with people who identified a real opportunity to increase the evidence of impact across participatory grantmaking. This report and accompanying materials provide a useful tool to reflect on how we continue to support participatory and youth-led approaches in grant-making.

- **Reach** includes engaging with younger children in safe and meaningful ways.
- **Upskilling and development** support future opportunities and pathways for children and young people including reducing barriers to governance roles.
- **Understanding impact** supporting the learning and feedback loops – connecting children and young people who have been involved in decision-making and/or receiving funding.
- **Managing expectations** creating the right facilitation, support, and spaces that encourages collective decision-making.
- **Strategy and organisational approach –** Involvement across the whole of an organisation to develop and implement approaches, which embed processes and intended impact.
- **Learning together** willingness to share learning and knowledge that helps challenge and progress our current ways of doing. Feedback from the session on the 30 January highlighted an opportunity to collectively increase understanding of the impact of children and young people's participatory grantmaking.

Corra would like to thank Creative Scotland for seeing the opportunity and providing the resource and time for this project. We would like to thank everyone who gave their time, energy and openly shared their experience and ongoing commitment to this work.

Appendix 1 Definitions and glossary of terms

- **Young people**

To describe children and young people aged 12 years to 25. Throughout this report generally used to describe young people 16 years to 25.

- **Youth organisations**

Organisations who aim to provide guidance, support, activities and opportunities for children and young people.

- **Local creative arts organisations**

Community based organisations focused on a specific geographic area to offer creative arts opportunities for people.

- **Locally led youth organisations**

Community based organisations focused on a specific geographic area who provide guidance, support, activities, and opportunities for young people.

Throughout the report we used the collective term of youth organisations when talking about partners who helped facilitate and support children and young people in participatory grant-making.

- **Youth participation in grant making**

An approach that enables children and young people to participate in the co-design and delivery of funding and grants to other young people or/organisations.

- **Youth-led funding**

An approach where children and young people lead in the design, development, and delivery in the distribution of funding and or grants.

- **Community**

Community can be defined either by people living in a specific geographical area or a group of individuals who have a shared experience/ culture or backgrounds.



Appendix 2 Insights from learning event

A learning event on 30 January 2024 was attended by over 40 people. Young people, funders, policymakers, third sector and communities, as well as staff from across Creative Scotland added and offered to challenge the findings. A summary of the main points is shared below:

Enabling children and young people to participate

- Embrace the benefit children and young people bring and offer them clarity on what they can influence.
- Acknowledgment that older young people still want support.
- Be aware of people who have and haven't been involved in participation. Support to build confidence and ability.

- Welcome the opportunity for children and young people to challenge, be less resistant to change.
- Support participation in different ways including groups or having youth workers attend.
- Important to enable and support opportunities for children and young people to be involved in governance/strategy/decision-making.
- Consider co-designing clear exit points to move on and find ways for children and young people to encourage or support other children and young people to get involved.
- More structures are needed to help children and young people speak to decision-makers.
- More is needed to engage younger children.

Representation

- Awareness that children and young people are there as individuals and they can feel pressurised into representing all children and young people's views. Make sure this doesn't happen.
- More diversity is needed.
- Consider how to establish equity as part of targeted approaches.
- Be mindful that national, open callouts may attract people who already have skills to participate. To increase diversity, we need to support those who may not necessarily have the skills.

Facilitating participatory approaches

- Aim to build a lot of time in the process to build relationships with children and young people.
 - Ensure support is relevant to the needs of children and young people as individuals. This includes reducing barriers especially for disabled children and young people including those with additional support needs.
 - Increase focus on helping engage and support people from diverse backgrounds to participate. This includes children and young people who have no previous panel experience.
 - Look to expand participation that goes beyond the decision-making stage. This includes designing and developing applications. The role is bigger than just the grant.
 - Review the language you use to make it accessible and inclusive.
- Provide clarity and structures to support the process. Be open about what is practical, and why some processes will not change quickly.
 - Provide clarity on endings. Have conversations with children and young people on length of their engagement, ending involvement, other opportunities.

Paying young people

- Paying young people recognises and values their skills.
- Aim to pay for all hours. It should not be tokenistic.
- Acknowledge that young people will need more preparation time which should be paid.
- Understand how it feels if the young person is the only person in the room not being paid.
- There is an unequal dynamic if young people are not paid.

How Funders work

- Take further steps to understand what involvement means to children and young people.
- Improve diversity and look to incorporate youth-led funding within wider funding approaches.
- Don't try to fit participation into typical approaches. Aim to reduce bureaucracy and look to implement new processes that embrace participatory approaches (specific consideration to time to design and deliver programmes and diverse ways to apply).
- Increase transparency by ensuring applicants know a youth panel will review applications. This might encourage how people apply (the language they use).
- Awareness that decision-making panels should be part of a wider package of participation.

Ways to understand impact

- Ensure the process is seen as a whole and everyone involved understands why, how, and where participatory approach fits.
- Provide clarity on the purpose/remit/intended impact, particularly children and young people.
- Ensure feedback loops are built into the approach (feedback from children and young people involved and for them to see the impact of the funding decisions they have made).

Other considerations for participatory approaches

- Ask if your participatory approach is shifting power in the right way?
- Awareness of who is in the room and who is leading the room. Re-check purpose and support that enables participation.
- Ensure participatory model is not tokenistic, and is the right way to deliver funding?
- Participation does have higher costs (time and money). This could have an impact on the overall size of funding available.
- Organisations who have trusted relationships with children and young people are best placed to support youth-led approaches.
- Allow work to evolve, remember change doesn't happen all at once.

- Important to involve the wider staff in organisation, not just those focused on direct participation.
- Be clear if employment opportunities could be available for young people. Could these be formalised?



Appendix 3 Composite case studies

The CC Trust

The CC Trust was established to support children and young people. They do this through distributing grants to individuals and local groups with a focus on helping children and young people flourish. The CC Trust believe in taking an inclusive approach to their grant-making. They have a strategy that incorporates the views and feedback of their applicants, grantholders and children and young people.

In 2020 the CC Trust set-out to be more participatory and look at how young people with direct experience of accessing or receiving support could have a more meaningful role in their grant-making. The Board agreed the young people would be allocated a budget and have final decisions on who would receive grants.

At the beginning of this new way of working, the CC Trust took time to consider why they were doing it, what they meant by participatory grant-making, who it was for, how they would recruit and support participants and what relationship they wanted to have with young people.

- **Work with a partner to help identify and connect with young people.**
- **Work with a partner to design a programme that would help young people connect as a group.**
- **Work alongside the young people and CC Trust to agree a shared group remit and scope for the funding.**

The youth participation partner recruited six young people aged between 18-23 alongside the young people the CC Trust reached out to through the youth organisations they funded. Through their own network, the CC Trust recruited a further four young people aged 16-21.

The young people had many different lived experiences and brought a wide range of expertise and interests. CC Trust wanted to ensure that all young people involved were supported to fully participate. They allocated budget and additional resources to help with training and skills development, some of which was delivered by the youth participation partner, some by CC Trust themselves and some by other external providers. The young people formed an advisory group and the youth participation

partner initially worked with the young people and CC Trust to shape and develop:

- **Practicalities including how often the group would meet, payment, presenting information.**
- **How the group would work includes the importance of listening, respectful of others' point of views, expectations and coming to a shared agreement.**
- **Decision-making remit and the role between the young people's group and CC Trust's Board.**

The young people's group were guided by CC Trust staff on the potential pros and cons of different funding opportunities. This helped shape how they wanted to design a funding model and criteria.

CC Trust also quickly realised the depth of insight the young people brought in relation to opportunities that could have a bigger impact on their grant-making processes. By taking the time to capture this, the process took longer than anticipated. CC Trust took the decision to delay making any announcement of funding

opportunities. While this was difficult it did result in a more participatory approach.

The young people participated in all stages of the process and were keen to understand all aspects including governance and finance. These were areas that initially the CC Trust had assumed would be undertaken by them. Ongoing training and support were provided by CC Trust to help young people with these particular areas.

The young people felt it was important to connect with the Board. It was agreed by the young people and CC Trust, that two representatives from the group would attend Board meetings. The young people supported by CC Trust staff provided updates on each stage of the process; developing models and criteria, making funding decisions and measuring the impact of funding made.

The CC Trust have delivered one funding round. A reflection session with the young people individually and as a group has helped them think about what worked well, and where improvements are needed. They are committed to the ongoing relationship with young people. They recognise that they have learnt a lot and were open to listening when things didn't go to plan. They believe it is extremely valuable to listen and reflect and not just always jump in to respond, but to take time to think through options with the young people. CC Trust didn't always find this easy for them or the young people.

CC Trust were overwhelmed by the commitment shown by the young people and while they didn't always attend every meeting, they were passionate about their role. CC Trust didn't want to lose this and worked with the young people to look at how they could support a long-term relationship. They felt this would both benefit them but help support the career and aspirations of each young person involved in the advisory group.

Given these conversations the Trust are now looking at how they further support the ongoing relationship with young people.

What helped to make the process work well:

- **Being clear on the purpose.**
- **Being clear on the remit of the youth participation organisation.**
- **Connection and relationship between young people, Trust staff and the Board.**
- **Developing skills of individual young people.**
- **Willingness to learn and change.**

Derek's story

He responded to an advertisement promoting opportunities to get involved in decision making with the CC Trust.

The opportunity was promoted through the network of youth-led organisations that Derek is already engaged with through his local artists group as well as being promoted on social media. He knows a few people who were interested in applying.

The application process was straightforward, and support was available from a dedicated staff member at CC Trust who were on hand to provide answers to questions Derek had about his involvement. He needs some support around literacy – both to complete the form and to participate meaningfully. He also requires financial support to travel to meetings. When approached with questions, the CC Trust provided clear guidance around what commitment is expected from participants. Participants were to be paid an hourly rate for their attendance at meetings and their preparation time. They were also

signposted towards a trusted partner who can provide information on self-employment, tax, and benefits.

Derek's application was processed, and he was contacted to attend introductory sessions for participants to get to know support staff at the CC Trust, other young people who have been selected to participate and an independent facilitator who would be working on this process.

Following the initial session, the group worked together to explore where there may be missing perspectives, and some targeted recruitment was carried out by staff at the CC Trust to bring on board participants with a range of experiences.

CC Trust provided clear information about what decisions had been made regarding funding criteria and the application process. The themes of the fund had already been set by the trustees; these align with the Trust's strategy. Participants were invited to a series of facilitated sessions to carry forward the application's design and planning and decision-making process. There was regular direct contact between participants, CC Trust

staff and board members with channels of communication determined by participants.

As the group developed relationships with each other and deliberative processes deepened, the independent facilitator led discussions and supported decision-making. Participants were offered the chance to see the grant making journey through to the end, walking through the administrative and due diligence processes with CC Trust staff.

Derek has been involved in the first iteration of this decision-making process and has been involved in reflection sessions alongside the other participants, CC Trust staff and board members. There have also been some discussion sessions involving grant holders – reviewing the application process with applicants who received funding and those who did not.

Derek has expressed an interest in getting involved in the next round of funding. A vacancy has recently been advertised on the CC Trust website and social media, looking for new trustees to join the board. Following his experience of attending board meetings, Derek is keen to get

involved but feels he does not have enough experience at this stage. CC Trust board members are keen to welcome young people to the board but have never had the opportunity to explore how this could be done.

Derek, members of the CC Trust Board and the staff team will work together to put together a learning and development plan. This will support Derek to develop knowledge and skills to be able to participate in board business and to help current board members to engage in discussions about how they can share their skills and embrace the creativity and fresh thinking of potential new board members.

What helped the process work well:

- **Involving participants in discussions about the process at the earliest possible stage.**
- **Trusting the wisdom of participants.**
- **Supporting the learning and development journey of young people in practical ways.**
- **Being willing to make bold choices.**

Appendix 4 Youth organisations what helps and what hinders

Table 1: National Youth Organisations

Area	Good Practice	Challenges
Recruitment	Social media and via networks	Limitations time and their networks
Diversity	Connections through networks	Dependent on interest and time available
Age representation	12-25	Wide age range, more difficult to facilitate
Support and facilitation	Skilled in working with young people	Restricted by timescale
Remuneration	Accreditation experience	Value of volunteering
Funder relationship	Clarity of roles	Pressure of timescale and resource

Table 2: Local Creative Arts Organisations

Area	Good Practice	Challenges
Recruitment	Local relationships and connections	Participation mostly white female
Diversity	Use of local knowledge – target	Dependent on interest and time available
Age representation	12-25	Wide age range, more difficult to facilitate
Support and facilitation	Providing individual support	Restricted by focus of work
Remuneration	Pay living wage	Young children can find a paid role intimidating
Funder relationship	Grants for local activity	Pressure of timescale and resource

About Corra Foundation

Corra Foundation exists to make a difference to the lives of people and communities. It works with others to encourage positive change, opportunity, fairness and growth of aspirations which improve quality of life. Corra wants to see a society in which people create positive change and enjoy fulfilling lives.

In 2020 Corra launched a ten-year strategy. It is long term because making a difference on the big challenges will take time. At its heart is the strong belief that when people find their voice, they unlock the power to make change happen.

Our ways of working

At Corra we have a set of principles that we strive to put into practice across our roles as an employer, independent funder, charity and partner, as well as in our influencing activity. We will:

- Listen and respond to people, communities and organisations and amplify voices that are less well heard – their wisdom is at the heart of Corra’s approach.
- Build relationships, always working alongside others on the basis of shared power, mutual trust and shared learning.
- Pursue diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), trying to challenge structural discrimination and contribute to radical shifts in the funding sector.
- Be an open, trusting and flexible grant maker.
- Ensure we contribute to tackling climate change, through our investments, operations and grant making and encouraging others to take action alongside us.
- Be bold, taking considered risks and supporting others to do the same.

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