The Mighty Creatives
Partnership Investment Evaluation
Partnerships, impact, ingredients for the future

Findings of an evaluation into CEPs and other investments in the East Midlands

Final Report, 16th May 2022

WorldPencil

the mighty creatives

Quick guide

Contents

Who is this report for?

This report includes evaluation findings and distillations based on practical insights, and recommendations for future development. It has been produced primarily for the Bridge Organisation (The Mighty Creatives) in the East Midlands, and we hope may be of use, secondarily, to CEPs and Bridge Organisations nationally, and to Arts Council England.

Accompanying Partnership Development Framework

This report is produced in conjunction with a Partnership Development Framework, provided in a separate document, for use by CEPs and other cultural learning partnerships.

Disclaimer on findings and views

This report presents findings from a developmental research project, comprising interviews and surveys with CEPs in the East Midlands, interviews with TMC staff, and analysis of available data related to CEPs and other investments. On occasion, findings are reported related to World Pencil's wider work in cultural learning across the UK. We have endeavored to present a balanced and impartial view of the research evidence and have attributed findings to particular groups of research participants where appropriate.

The views and findings in the report are not necessarily those of TMC or Arts Council England, and they do not necessarily endorse any of the views contained within this report. The report contains a number of recommendations as to future work.

World Pencil
March 2022

1. TMC's funding and investment programmes

An overview of TMC's Bridge investment programmes

Overview of funding programmes

Over the years under consideration for this research (2018-22) TMC has operated several different Partnership Investment (PI) programmes, and successive rounds of those programmes, as shown in Figure 1. A summary of the programmes is below:

Cultural Life Fund: the funding programme through which CEPs and other investment programmes (e.g. Derby Virtual Arts School) have been funded. It has had four rounds, and an additional round of CEP funding.

START: a specific investment in a partnership originally hosted by Children and the Arts.

Sector Support Commission, renamed **Creative Communities Fund**, has provided smaller grants, often to smaller arts and cultural (A&C) organisations, including for covid-specific projects.

Youth Cultural Life Fund later renamed as **Young Empowerment Fund**: small grants made to individual young people. These funds have been considered by TMC as part of the Sector Support Commissions/ Creative Communities Fund.

TMC also distinguishes between partnership investments made to CEPs, and those made to other partnerships, organisations and individuals, the latter investments coming under the heading '**Innovation**'.

1 Funding Programmes timeline
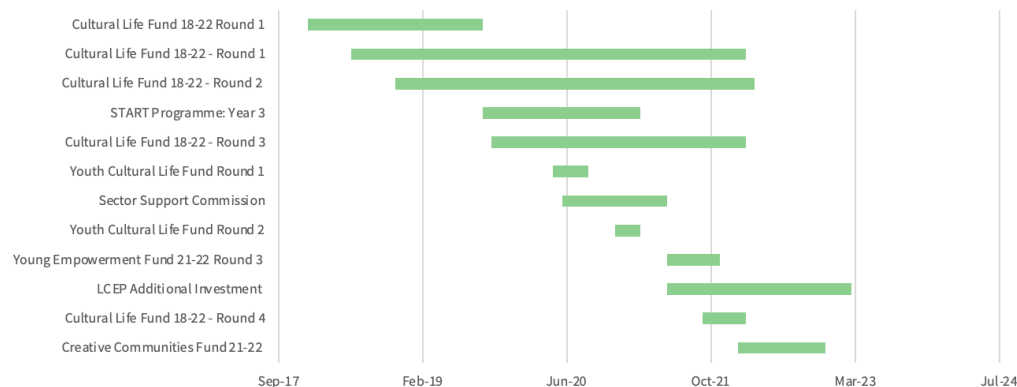
Figure 2 shows, for each fund/round, the investment by TMC, the match funding achieved, and the ratio of the two (return on investment, or ROI), ordered by match funding achieved. As these data show, the biggest investment round was one of the most recent, presumably when CEPs are more numerous and developed.

This round also achieved the largest match, although it was the first round of CEP funding, in the period under review, that achieved the highest ROI (£2.62 per £1 invested).

Figure 3 shows the number of investments made in each round. Excepting the particularly high number of investments made in the two young people funds, the number of investments increases with time, presumably reflecting the breadth and maturity of the CEP and other investment portfolio.

2 Funding programmes: TMC funding and match
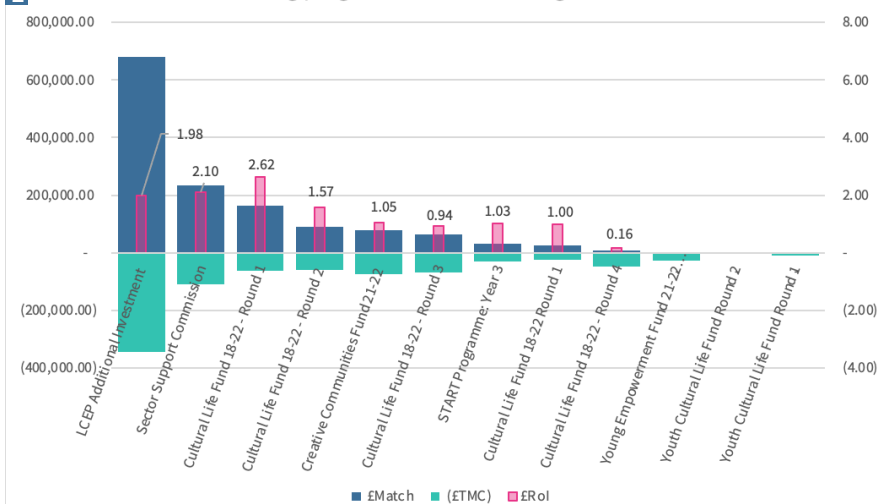
3 Funding programmes: number of investments
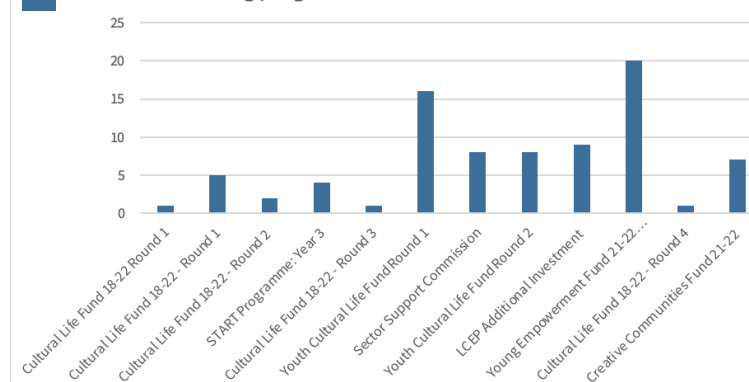
2. Overview of cultural education partnerships and other investments

A summary of the Cultural Education Partnerships (CEPs) in the East Midlands, their funding from TMC and from other match sources

Overview of partnerships

As elsewhere in the country, CEPs in the East Midlands are individual. Each emerges in different ways from different contexts. Each has different needs, to which it responds in different ways. Each has different resources at its disposal and different approaches to securing further resource and funding, and with differing degrees of success. The table on page 10 provides a summary of the different CEPs in the East Midlands, against some of these differences.

Partnership focus

During this research, we have noted that one of the most significant differences between the CEPs is their approach to partnership – the purpose and focus of the partnership. We summarise these different focuses below:

Convenience: partnerships that come together because they're obliged to, or because of optics, but they aren't particularly innovative or additionally productive in their practice as a result of the partnership nor, often, are they welcoming to newcomers.

Communication: the partners, particular arts and cultural (A&C) organisations, communicate their individual cultural learning offers collectively, particularly to schools – a one-stop shop.

Co-operation: the joined-up partners, particularly A&C organisations, consolidate and review their collective cultural learning offer, e.g. to ensure there is minimal duplication or super-serving of particular locations, and to ensure provision is targeted where it is most needed.

Community: people and organisations coming together more informally to share, learn, grow and develop together, often with

projects and activities developing within clusters of the community rather than spread across its entirety.

Collaboration: the partners work together to design and deliver cultural learning work together, e.g. so as to be able to combine their individual specialisms and resources to make a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts (synergy), particularly in responding to a challenge or need that they couldn't address individually, or so as to have strength in numbers for funders and commissioners.

Concomitance: the joined-together partners develop a shared brand and identity that takes on and fundraises for work of its own, often in place of the work they might have done individually.

Incorporation: the partnership comes together to form a new legal entity in its own right, albeit one that potentially becomes a new competitor in the landscape it initially sought to convene.

Whilst there might appear a natural progression through this list, it is not always the case that the later focusses are superior to the earlier ones in a particular context. Indeed in many cases, CEPs have a combination of focusses from this list.

A commentary on these focusses is provided in Chapter 9.

CEPs in the East Midlands

CEP name	Locality	Lead organisation	Coordination	Structure	Description	Partnership Focus	Leadership
Black Shale	Amber Valley & Bolsover	Platform Thirty1	By lead organisation	Lead org leading web of partners, guided by partners.	A web of small or individual arts/cultural organisations and schools led and connected by Platform Thirty1, which develops co-created project activity and local skills/development, in a semi-remote rural area. Large proportion of individual and micro-organisations with little capacity in locality lends structure towards organisation-led web, rather than traditional partnership.	Collaboration / community	Organisation-led
Captivate	Ashfield & Mansfield	Inspire	Has coordinator	Board & action groups	A cooperative of arts and cultural organisations, facilitated/coordinated by a part-time coordinator, with focussed action task groups and successful fundraising for the future, in two towns with high deprivation.	Co-operation	Coordinator-led
ChalleNGe	Nottingham City	Nottingham Trent University	Has coordinator		Operational partnership of principally arts and cultural organisations, hosted by University, with vibrant young people's group, each representing a CEP partner.	Co-operation	Coordinator-led
CCEP	Chesterfield, principally Staveley	Community Growth CIC	Recently appointed coordinator	Board & projects, moving to core group + pool of collaborators + supporters community	A dynamic and passionate partnership and web of small community orgs/practitioners, championed by two leaders at Community Growth, galvanising partnership at many levels, in a deprived former industrial area.	Community / co-operation	Lead org-led moving to partnership coordinator-led
The City Classroom	Leicester & Leicestershire	Spark Arts (until August 2022)	Has coordinator	Board & membership	Subscription-based partnership service for A&C organisations, individual artists and schools, providing a signposting one-stop-shop for schools, CPD, projects, conferences, city passport, comprising mainly the smaller arts organisations. Similar to a mini Bridge organisation, it has a strong focus on building connections between A&C organisations and schools, with A&C collaboration happening in other networks, incl. the city NPO network (19 NPOs).	Co-operation / collaboration	Lead org / coordinator-led
DCEP	Derby City	Derby Theatre (Univ Derby)	Has had producer	Partner group & programme teams	Described as doughnut structure: outer ring is the existing offer of activities that can be brought together and offered out; middle of the donut is bespoke services for schools, e.g. a MAT that wants to develop YP confidence; inner ring is core partners – generally learning managers of the partners – and also a CEOs group.	Collaboration	Producer-led
High Peak	High Peak	Platform3 (shared by Buxton Opera & Festival)	Currently has scoping researcher	Plan for steering group of A&C and business	An emergent CEP led by an already collaborative shared cultural learning department of two A&C orgs, starting with cross-sector consultation, working in a rural area where out-of-school activity is limited by bus timetables.	Plan for collaboration	Plan for coordinator-led
UNLOCK	Northamptonshire	Royal & Derngate theatre	Has had coordinator	Board of partners & micro-commissions	Arts-led arts partnership of county-wide organisations cooperating on their individual opportunities and collaborating on digital micro-commissions targeting areas of need. Sited in a rural, post-industrial county, sometimes described as risk averse and self-effacing, in the middle of London, Oxford, Birmingham & Cambridge commuter corridors.	Co-operation / collaboration (micro-commissions)	Organisation-led -> collectively led
Lincs CEP	Lincolnshire	Linconshire Music Service	Has manager	Probably board, partners group and listings for wider membership (providers and	Emerging CEP at the scoping and design stage. Has early plans to incorporate as a CIO, principally so as to have fundraising independence from the local authority, whose services/departments form a significant proportion of the	Co-operation / incorporation	TBC

CEP funding

Figure 4 shows both the timeline of how East Midlands CEPs and other investments have been funded by TMC, and also the funding (from TMC and match funding) in each case.

It should be noted that the timeline of funding is not in all cases the same as the timeline of partnerships: in some cases partnership-working was already taking place (e.g. in Derby) and in many cases the CEP is working hard to continue beyond TMC's funding.

Comparing the two charts, there is some correlation between duration of TMC funding and the amount of match funding raised: match funding often takes time. Many CEPs in the East Midlands and elsewhere have found finding a 100% match contribution to match Bridge partnership investment funding (an initial stipulation by Arts Council) very difficult, so it has no doubt been beneficial that TMC has been able to be flexible around this in some cases.

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CEPs and other programmes timeline

CEPs and other programmes: £TMC and £Match
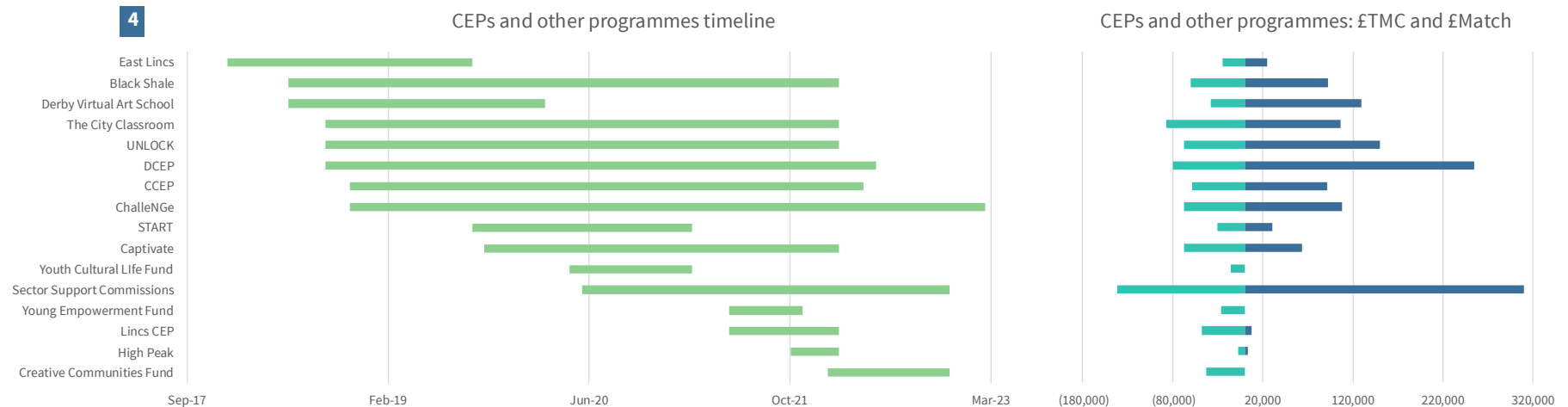
Match funding analysis

Match funding for partnership investment is a stipulation from Arts Council to Bridges for their investment of its funds. Some of the reasons for this, and the outcomes that match funding itself represents are discussed below (page 35).

Figure 5 shows, for each CEP and Innovation programme, the total investment from TMC, the match funding achieved and the ROI, sorted by the ROI.

The Derby Virtual Arts School – a partnership project with the Derby Virtual School – has been most successful in match funding terms, with the contribution of the Virtual School (LA funding) itself.

The CEP with the highest ROI, by some distance, is DCEP, which has been particularly successful in its grant funding, notably the DfE Opportunity Area funding (£1m) and ACE's Youth Performance Partnership funding, for which only CEPs were eligible and only 6 out of over 90 CEPs were successful.
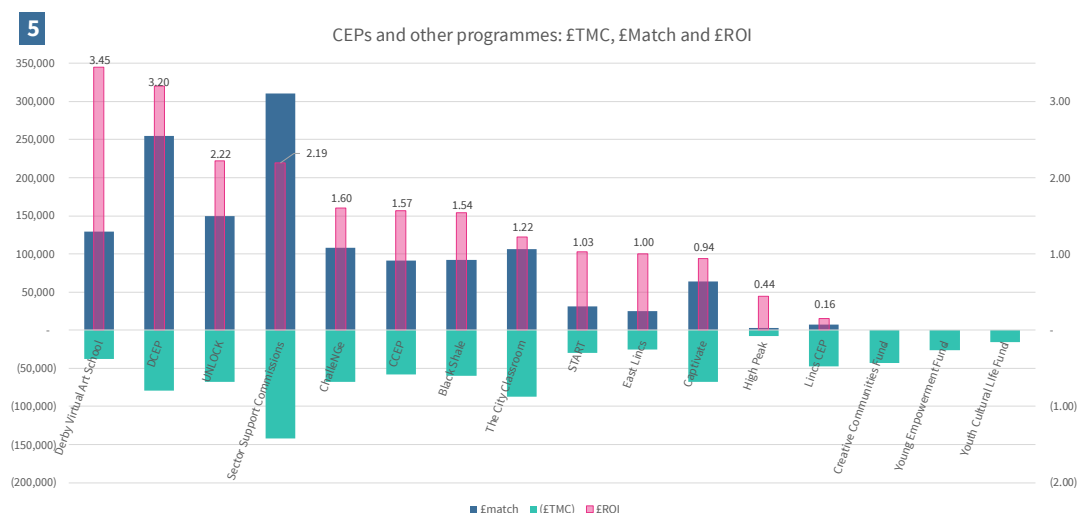
Sources of match funding

We have attempted to undertake an analysis of the sources of match funding, based principally on the match funding that has been cited in fundee monitoring reports, amounting to over 70 match contributions.

However, there is significant discrepancy (over £1m) between the total match contributions listed and the match achieved by CEPs as included in TMC's reporting. We assume that this discrepancy is a combination of:

- Match funds that were not ultimately received; and

- Match funding that was not eligible for inclusion in TMC's reporting as coming from ACE sources (ACE funding is not eligible as match for Bridge partnership investment).

So we have included balancing counter-transactions, to bring the figures reported here in line with those reported by TMC. The balancing transactions are:

- (£641,323) for Black Shale and

- (£365,133) for ChalleNGe.

To the extent that these discrepancies do represent ACE-originated match funding then it is worth mentioning that, were ACE-originated funding included, this would significantly change the shape of reporting in Figure 5.

In particular, a strong part of Black Shale's approach has been for the CEP to support small A&C organisations with their own fundraising and bid-writing capacity, much of which may have been to ACE funds, which would not be eligible for inclusion as valid PI match, but which represents a considerable impact in terms both of bringing funding for cultural learning into the area, and in building the capacity of small A&C organisations.

Figure 6 shows the breakdown of match sources. Notes on a selection of these sources follows.

5 CEPs and other programmes: £TMC, £Match and £ROI

Legend: ■ £match ■ (£TMC) ■ £ROI

6 Sources of match funding

(Sunburst chart labels, inner to outer):

- Match
  - Unspecified Match
  - Trusts & Foundations
  - Community Activity
    - School Activity
    - Infrastructure
    - CEP Lead Organisations
- TMC
  - Cultural Life Fund
  - Covid Response
  - Creative Communities Fund
  - Innovation
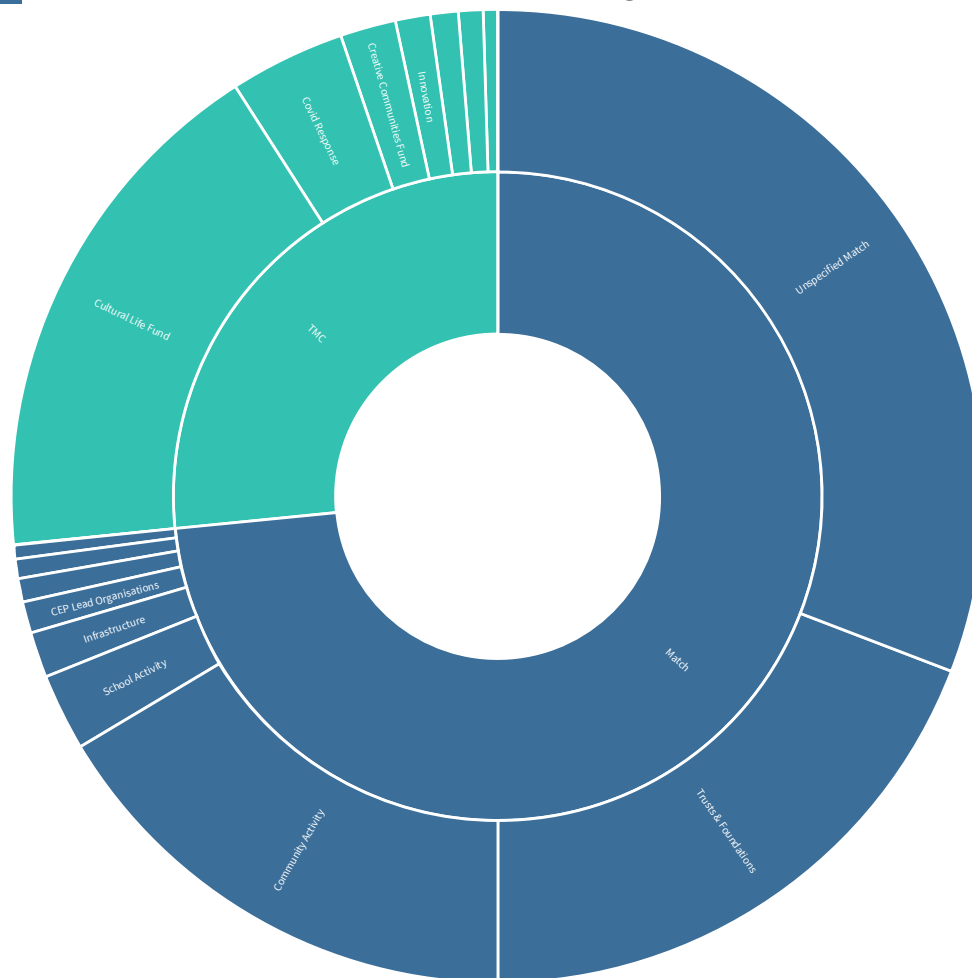
Trusts and foundations: The biggest source of match is other funders, of which Children in Need, Big Lottery and Esmee Fairbairn are significant.

Community activity: Match described here as community activity is largely small project funds that have been secured as part of ChalleNGe's project development work across the partnership.

School activity: These contributions are again cited by ChalleNGe – contributions by schools to CEP activity. We are aware that similar contributions have clearly been made as part of school-based activity in other CEPs but we do not have data for these.

Membership: Although not listed in Figure 6, The City Classroom's membership model should be included in this commentary. The CEP has adopted a membership model, whereby individual and organisation partnership pay an annual fee, from the outset and has recently agreed to sustain the model. The fees vary (£30 for individuals, £100 for schools, £100-250 for A&C organisations depending on means), meaning the membership brings in around £5-6,000 per year. This is not a huge figure, compared to some of the larger project grants, but it is large enough to make a significant contribution to the CEP's coordinator, much of whose role is to serve and support the membership.

3. Impact overview of TMC's investment

Summarising all the evaluation findings, an overview of the main impacts found from the research to have resulted from TMC's investments and the partnerships they have supported

Impacts overview

Survey respondents and interviewees were asked to describe impacts that CEPs and PI have had under three headings:

- Impact on children and young people;

- Impact on the partners in CEPs and other investments;

- Impact on partnership working.

The data from these qualitative methods were distilled into a set of core impacts described, and the factors contributing to them. The 65 cited impacts from the survey and interviews were then codified against these two sets. This impact distillation draws on a similar analysis we have conducted previously for CEPs elsewhere, and attempts to categorise the huge array of impacts and outcomes achieved by CEPs and PI, particularly impacts that may have longer term, 'step change', impact, beyond direct delivery outcomes. [1]

The results are below. First, in Figure 7 is a summary of the impacts, ordered by the number of times they were cited by interview and survey participants. (The number of citations is clearly not an exact indicator of the significance or frequency of one impact compared to another but may give a reasonable illustration.)

Then in   Table 1, each impact is described in turn including:

- A description of the impact;

- A quotation illustrating the impact in practice;

- The CEPs/PIs by whom the impact was cited;

- The main factors cited as contributing to the impact;

- Indicators of the impact, with data where available.

Table 2 summarises the factors cited by research participants as having been significant in their work achieving certain impacts.

[1] Produced for Artswork in 2021 for LCEPs in the South East. Reproduced with permission.

Impacts cited by participants, by number of times cited

■ Developing cultural learning in cultural organisations

■ Developing cultural learning in non-arts organisations

■ Developing strategic partnership-working and infrastructure for cultural learning

■ Direct delivery

■ Harnessing cultural learning for social impact and challenging circumstances

Building collaboration and trust

Consolidated cultural learning offer

Income generation and growth

Support for cultural learning through the pandemic

SME development opportunities

Sustained relationships legacy

Building infrastructure

Developing strategic behaviours

Access to cultural learning

Covid-specific arts-based support

CYP-led cultural activity

Creative careers development

Personal development through cultural learning

Support for cultural learning in schools

Support for cultural learning outside cultural sector

School's own skills for cultural learning

Cultural organisations developing new work for social impact

Digital capacity building

Improving cultural learning in strategy

New cultural learning funding

Student-led cultural activity

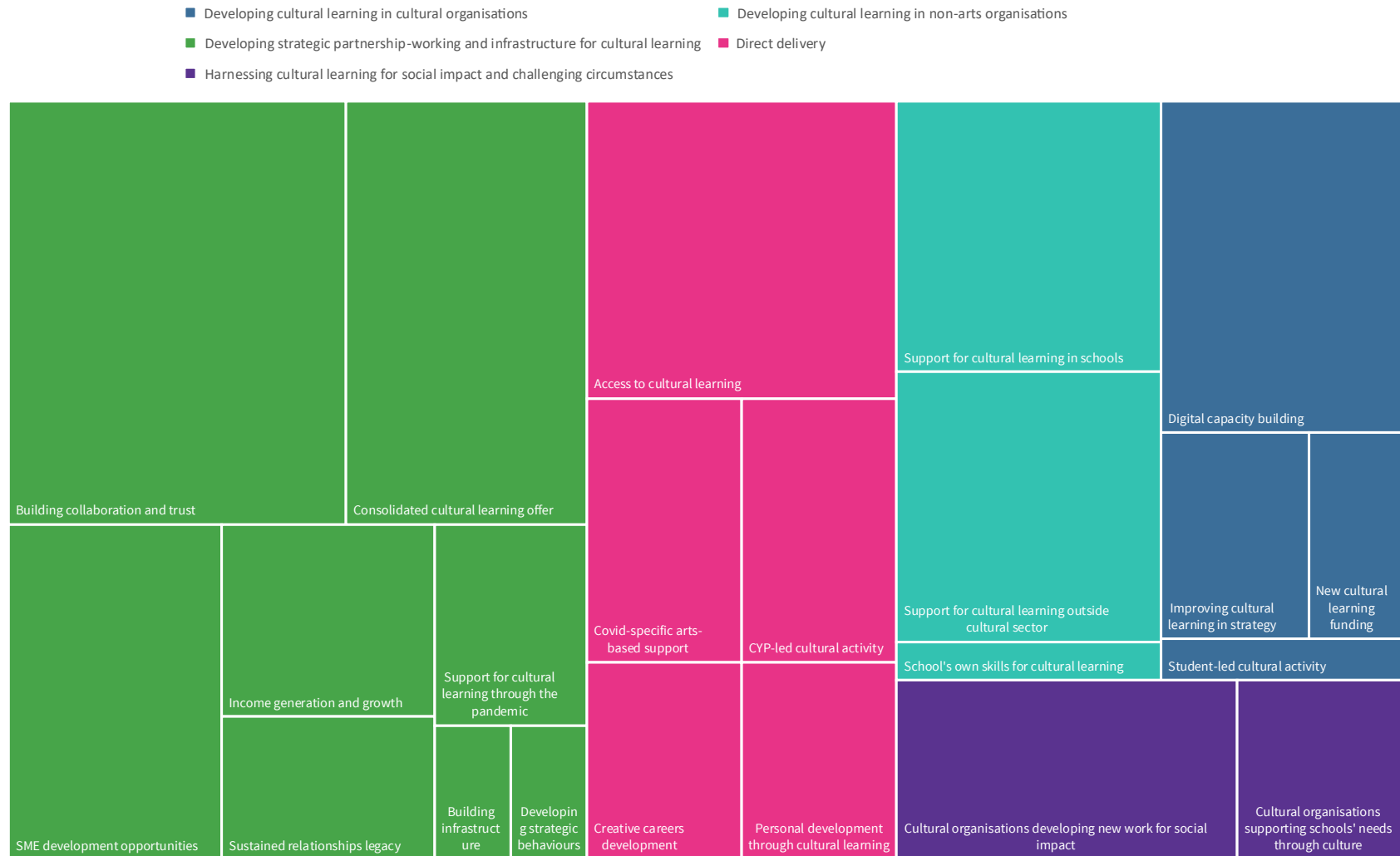Cultural organisations supporting schools' needs through culture

Table 1: Analysis of the impacts of CEPs and TMC's other investments

Developing strategic partnership-working and infrastructure for cultural learning

Building collaboration and trust

Greater trust and collaborative working is developed between partners, organisations and individuals, e.g. where there may have been little trust before

"The CEP seems successfully to have brought together a diverse (size and focus) set of partners around a shared regeneration vision."

Cited by: ChalleNGe; Captivate; CCEP; UNLOCK; The City Classroom; CATA START; High Peak

Factors: Partnership affordances; Partnership working; CEP partner meetings; Coordinating provision; Needs-designed provision; Working towards bigger agendas; CEP communications

Indicators: 60% of respondent impact reports cite building collaboration and trust as an outcome

Consolidated cultural learning offer

The cultural learning opportunities provided are coordinated to avoid duplication, focussed to target under-served areas, and/or centrally communicated to schools/others in a more accessible form

"Everyone's more aware of partners' individual activities and working more collaboratively on pockets of deprivation"

Cited by: ChalleNGe; DCEP; Captivate; CCEP; UNLOCK; CATA START; The City Classroom

Factors: Partnership affordances; Partnership working; Strength in numbers; CEP partner meetings; Coordinating provision; Needs-designed provision; Working towards bigger agendas; CEP communications

Indicators: # of expo-type events
# of one-stop-shop websites and magazines
Usage of the above

SME development opportunities

SMEs, including in arts & culture, are supported, e.g. through fundraising capacity-building, developing connectivity, developing relationships with schools or being advocated for regionally

"Having small grants means that small arts organisations are eligible – otherwise they'd be too small to be involved in the Bridges"

Cited by: Black Shale; CCEP; UNLOCK; Writing East Midlands; Fermynwoods Contemporary Art; The City Classroom; Egg Box

Factors: Partnership affordances; Digital engagement; Partnership working; TMC funding; Needs-designed provision

Indicators: # of SMEs as partners
SME income generation

Income generation and growth

Organisations and partnerships are supported to develop new income streams and business development

"For them, this project has led to more successful grant applications for them to run other projects within local schools."

Cited by: DCEP; CCEP

Factors: Partnership affordances; Strength in numbers; Lockdown-induced re-thinking; Building proven track record

Indicators: # of cited business development streams
TMC investment has achieved 160% overall match contribution of £1.4m

Sustained relationships legacy

Stronger relationships are sustained beyond funded activity

"It has therefore made it a more stable relationship, not solely reliant on the Headteacher. It means too that more work is reaching more and more diverse young people"

Cited by: ChalleNGe; ArtReach; DCEP

Factors: Partnership affordances; Partnership working; TMC funding; Needs-designed provision

Indicators: # of cited mentions

Developing strategic behaviours

Individuals and organisations develop more strategic behaviours, e.g. around strategic planning, needs analysis, partnership affordances, bigger-picture thinking, relationship-building and collaboration

"Arts organisations now have a collective goal for improved strategic working and action to consult and develop strategies with stakeholders (e.g. schools and local authorities)"

Cited by: The City Classroom

Factors: Partnership working

Indicators: # of cited mentions

Building infrastructure

Systems, resources, venues and sustained relationships for cultural learning are developed

"Working on a 3-year plan [we're] now a strong partnership of arts, education and community organisations… We've developed a solid foundation on which to grow."

Cited by: ChalleNGe

Factors: Partnership affordances; Partnership working; TMC funding; Needs-designed provision

Indicators: # of cited mentions

Support for cultural learning through the pandemic

Funding and capacity building for organisations and partnerships to sustain and adapt provision under lockdown, also enabling some organisations to increase access to provision post-lockdown

"It kept us going in lockdown, enabled us to develop digital provision which has been developed further since lockdown. It helped develop our relationship and on-going contracts with schools."

Cited by: Egg Box; Fermynwoods Contemporary Art, Writing East Midlands

Factors: Partnership affordances; Partnership working; TMC funding; Needs-designed provision

Indicators: # of cited mentions

Direct delivery

Access to cultural learning

CYP have access to cultural learning opportunities that they did not have before

"The main impact on CYP has been removing the post-code lottery barriers to cultural learning provision, through co-operation and needs analysis and targeted delivery."

Cited by: UNLOCK; DCEP; CCEP; ArtReach; The City Classroom

Factors: Partnership affordances; Coordinating provision; Needs-designed provision; Practitioner expertise; Hyperlocal working; Access to specialist expertise; Consortium fundraising

Indicators: COT and session data (see below)

Covid-specific arts-based support

Arts-based interventions support covid-related issues and challenges

"It's kept them going in lockdown, enabled them to develop digital provision, which has been developed further since lockdown. It helped their relationship and on-going contracts with [schools]."

Cited by: Writing East Midlands; Fermynwoods Contemporary Art; Egg Box; ChalleNGe

Factors: Digital engagement; TMC funding; Working with community organisations

Indicators: Project-based evaluations

Creative Careers development

CYP are supported to understand and/or pursue creative industries careers

"These young people came together to co-create the project with us. Their roles were significant and they have been able to continue beyond the project and get involved in further programmes of work or into employment with us."

Cited by: DCEP

Factors: Partnership affordances; Long-term development; CYP commitment

Indicators: Project-based evaluations

Personal development through cultural learning

CYP develop personal and/or social outcomes through cultural learning

"The care leavers were involved in co-creating the conference. This has increased their overall involvement in the projects but one young person is now engaged as a fully professional sound designer. Another is a paid intern."

Cited by: DCEP; High Peak

Factors: Partnership affordances; Long-term development

Indicators: Project-based evaluations

Developing cultural learning in non-arts organisations

Support for cultural learning outside cultural sector

Organisations from other sectors (e.g. business, health, local government) support cultural learning, including where it meets their agendas

Cited by: DCEP; CCEP; Lincs CEP; The City Classroom; ArtReach

Factors: Partnership affordances; Strength in numbers; CEP partner meetings

Indicators: # of non-arts partners
TMC investment has achieved 160% overall match contribution of £1.4m from outside ACE funding

Support for cultural learning in schools

Cultural learning is better encouraged and supported in schools, e.g. where there had been little support previously

"Schools and communities with limited access to high quality arts provision now have a multi-arts organisation that can signpost opportunities and provide targeted arts activities."

Cited by: ChalleNGe; CCEP; DCEP; The City Classroom; UNLOCK

Factors: Partnership affordances; Needs-designed provision; CEP coordinator; Hyperlocal working; Support for school arts coordinators

Indicators: TMC partnership investment has supported work in over 170 schools
Schools working with CEPs are 2% more likely to be engaged in Artsmark than East Midlands school overall.

Schools' own skills for cultural learning

School staff and leaders have better skills and experience to support cultural learning themselves

"We make sure the reason for the project is related to the school's needs, and that there is lots of CPD for staff in schools."

Cited by: Black Shale

Factors: CPD

Indicators: # of school staff participating in CPD

Developing cultural learning in cultural organisations

Capacity and skills development

A&C organisations and practitioners develop new skills, resources, capacity and abilities to work with new or different communities and groups

"The impact of the LCEP national programme has been significant in order for us to learn from others about the way their programmes work. I hope our LCEP also influenced others positively."

Cited by: DCEP; CCEP; ArtReach; The City Classroom; UNLOCK

Factors: Partnership affordances; Digital engagement; Partnership working; TMC funding; Access to industry professionals; CEP coordinator; Lockdown-induced re-thinking; Learning from other CEPs nationally

Indicators: Over 170 schools have been involved in TMC PI-supported activity
# of people attending CPD

Digital capacity building

A&C organisations develop capacity, systems and skills to offer opportunities through digital services, including digitising their previous offer

"It's enabled us to offer lots of digital access provision – backstage tours, first encounters with arts etc."

Cited by: Writing East Midlands; The City Classroom; Lincs CEP; UNLOCK; Fermynwoods Contemporary Art; Egg Box

Factors: Partnership affordances; Digital engagement; TMC funding; Access to industry professionals

Indicators: # of CYP using apps and services
6 investments citing developing their digital capacity as an impact

Improving cultural learning in strategy

A&C organisations have more emphasis and/or better strategy for cultural learning in their organisational programming.

"Having a true person-centred approach and activities designed by the community has meant that the new development, which had been invisible to the community and subject to vandalism, has now become part of the community, and they want to look after it."

Cited by: CCEP; High Peak

Factors: Partnership affordances; CEP partner meetings; Hyperlocal working

Indicators: Anecdotal reporting

New cultural learning funding

New sources of funding for cultural learning are realised

"We've been commissioned by the police, by youth services collaborations under covid, by housing and others."

Cited by: DCEP; Lincs CEP

Factors: Partnership affordances; Strength in numbers

Indicators: TMC investment has achieved 160% overall match contribution of £1.4m, including from crime, housing, health, and business sectors

CYP voice

CYP participate in decision-making related to and design of cultural learning opportunities

"The CEP is inclusive and collaborative in a way that's listening to young people and community and leading and making stuff happen and holding arts accountable for making stuff happen."

Cited by: DCEP; High Peak, ChalleNGe

Factors: Practitioner expertise; Building trust

Indicators: # of investments reporting as informed by CYP voice

Student-led cultural activity

Cultural organisations develop skills and/or commitment to support CYP to lead cultural learning

"We engaged with a group of SEND students from several local specialist schools who co-created a mobile app that is now used by the public. The project gave them the opportunity to push themselves in creative and technological areas."

Cited by: CCEP, ChalleNGe; DCEP

Factors: Partnership affordances; Digital engagement; Access to industry professionals; Coordinating provision; Long-term development; CYP commitment

Indicators: Anecdotal reporting

Harnessing cultural learning for social impact and challenging circumstances

Cultural organisations developing new work for social impact

A&C organisations develop new skills/capacity and strategy/commitment to harness cultural learning for social impact, including for other agency's agendas

"It's kickstarted our organisation to have its SEND focus."

Cited by: The City Classroom; CCEP; ArtReach; Fermynwoods Contemporary Art; Egg Box

Factors: Partnership affordances; Digital engagement; Partnership working; Strength in numbers; CEP partner meetings; Working towards bigger agendas; Contact brokering

Indicators: # Citations

Cultural organisations supporting schools' needs through culture

A&C organisations purposefully support schools with their extra-cultural needs through cultural learning activity

"Everyone has a thing that they like teaching so the question is how can you help them use arts and culture to take it a step further."

Cited by: Fermynwoods Contemporary Art; Black Shale; Leicestershire

Factors: Digital engagement; Needs-designed provision

Indicators: # Citations
Repeat engagements with schools

Table 2: Significant factors contributing to impact

Partnership activity – factors related to the activities a partnership or investment undertakes, how it is designed, delivered etc.

Digital engagement	**Coordinating provision**	**CEP communications**	**Contact brokering**
Where digital technologies have been used to make cultural learning accessible, or engaging, or social, including during covid lockdowns	Where partners have worked together to coordinate provision of cultural learning opportunities, e.g. to minimise duplication, or over-serving one community but under-serving another, or to target provision for particular communities in need	The communication activity undertaken by the CEP, including CEP websites, newsletters, listings magazines, communication between CEP coordinators and stakeholders, CEP sharing events etc.	Where CEPs have been able to broker new relationships and contacts, e.g. between small A&C organisations and schools, between A&C organisations and other sectors, between A&C organisations and local authorities
CPD (Continuing professional development)	**Hyperlocal working**	**Building proven track record**	**Support for school arts coordinators**
CPD, training and learning opportunities provided by or as part of the CEPs programme of activity	Activity based on small geographies, such as within villages, rural locations or local communities in towns and cities	Where a CEP has built up a significant-length track record of high-quality impactful work that is instrumental in convincing new organisations to participate or unlocking new funding/commissioning.	Where a CEP and its activity provides support particularly for arts coordinators in schools, who are often cited as feeling isolated, particularly where cultural learning support in the school is not extensive.

Partnership composition – factors related to who is in the partnership, and the organisations, expertise and sectors they represent

Access to industry professionals	**Practitioner expertise**	**CEP coordinator**	**Access to specialist expertise**
Where a CEP has been able to provide access to high-quality, well-known, or particularly expert individuals, particularly in arts and culture and the wider creative industries	The particular skills, knowledge and experience of the individual practitioners who have worked on a particular project or intervention	Where the skills and activity of the CEP coordinator have been particularly significant to achieving an impact	Where the wider CEP partnership has afforded access to particular specialisms and expertise that individual partners might not have or have been able to access
Involving multiple members of organisation staff			
Where partnership or other activity has included not just a single representative of an organisation (e.g. the learning manager in an A&C organisation) but many, which typically might unlock a deeper engagement and one that can withstand individual staff turn-over			

Partnership strategy – factors related to how the CEP or investment decides what to do, when, how and with whom

Needs-designed provision
Where the CEP's strategy is based on an analysis and understanding of the needs to which it could respond, typically including analysis of socio-demographic and other data, consultation with CYP and consultation with other stakeholders, such as schools. This may also involve working towards others' agendas, such as local authority or LEP plans and priorities.

Working towards a bigger agenda
Where a partnership is mobilised and rallied around a shared vision, often a need, aspiration or agenda that is bigger than that of any of the individual partners, or that they might be able to achieve working alone.

Long-term development
Where a partnership has been able to work together for a longer time, or where it has been able to support particular communities for longer periods.

Lockdown-induced re-thinking
Where the radical and often prohibitive changes enforced by covid lockdowns have forced or provoked people and partnerships to rethink and re-assess their strategies and approaches, often with positive and sustained impact.

Partnership working – factors related to the process of working with other people and organisations

Partnership affordances
Things that can only be done, or only done as well or with the same qualities, in partnership. This might include synergies (where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts), joint specialisms (where partners can focus on what they each do well) or shared resources (skills, materials, venues, contacts etc.)

Partnership working
The process of working regularly and concertedly with other people and organisations on a shared approach or objective

Strength in numbers
Strength derived through a partnership building a larger body of skills, people, resources, expertise, track record etc., which enables that partnership to achieve things that individually they could not have. Typically this includes being recognised by larger agencies, having sufficient scale to take on larger commissions etc.

CEP partner meetings
The meetings that CEPs hold with partners (boards, steering groups, wider communities etc.) which typically provide time for people to share ideas and experiences, learn from each other, appreciate broader agendas etc.

CYP commitment
The commitment of children and young people, particularly those engaged as young leaders, to a cultural learning activity or programme

Building trust
Developing established relationships where people know from experience that each other can be relied on (e.g. for confidentiality, quality of work etc.), without which other aspects of partnership working and collaboration may be difficult to progress

Learning from other CEPs nationally
Sharing insights and experiences with other CEPs, which might be regional (e.g. within the East Midlands) or wider, particularly across particular common attributes (e.g. CEPs in rural locations)

Cross-artform working
Often an example of partnership affordances, this refers to where a group of single-artform organisations can come together to offer opportunities and services that combine several artforms.

Funding – factors related to how partnerships can attract funding, investment and other income sources

TMC funding

The financial investment from TMC's PI programmes, particularly where it provides core funding, support for a partnership coordinator, or initial funding which then encourages other funders to come to the table.

Consortium fundraising

Fundraising that is and often can only be done by a consortium, such as funds that are only accessible to CEPs and other partnerships, or fundraising with the specialisms of the partners come together to make uniquely strong applications, or simply with the work involved in bid-writing is shared.

4. Impact on children and young people and schools

Findings from the research on the experiences children and young people have had, and the impacts on them and their schools

The following analysis of impact on children and young people draws largely on the data collected as part of TMC's Collective Outcomes Tool (COT).

As Figure 8 shows, there is significant variation in the number of COT response postcodes for CYP that CEPs and other investments have been able to collect. The City Classroom has almost six times as many as the next most numerous (Black Shale). In the analyses of COT data here, most data are averages but inevitably those averages will reflect greater participant populations from The City Classroom.

Other sources of data included in the analysis include:

- Fundee reporting, monitoring forms and evaluations, although it has not been possible to aggregate the full data describing impacts on CYP that this large volume covers;

- The available data on schools that CEPs and other investments have worked with, drawn chiefly from fundee monitoring reports for partners and participants;

- Data collected by TMC related to Artsmark in schools across the East Midlands in its role supporting Artsmark as part of Bridge;

- National school databases from Edubase and ONS, used for cross-referencing with school data from fundee monitoring;

- Socio-demographic data relating to deprivation, postcode locations, population demographics, local area statistics etc. from ONS, used for cross-referencing with COT data.

Notes on Collective Outcomes Tool data

The COT dataset is an unusually universal *and* granular dataset for cultural learning! And the potential for these data to be scrutinised along several spectra is significant, as we have attempted to realise in part here.

However, it is important to note, in an analysis of impact, what these data do and do not show. For instance,

COT data do represent a strong indicator for:
- Socio-demographic profiling of participants;
- Profile of CEP reach and targeting;
- CEP targeting areas where cultural activity is less common, particularly alongside Audience Agency analysis.

They are a *reasonably* strong indicator for:
- The extent of participation or whether an individual participated multiple times in long-term opportunities or once in a one-off, as just over 22% of CYP are reported to have participated as part of an Arts Award, which suggests a reasonable length/depth of experience in those cases;
- The extent to which participation / activity is new to that locality or CYP, as only 20% of CYP are reported to have participated in school-based extra-curricular activities other than the CEP activity.

Whilst COT data are good indicator of the outcome of cultural learning activities and opportunities being provided, they are not on their own an accurate indicator of impact on or outcomes for CYP participants, beyond what can be conjectured about general outcomes of CYP participating in cultural learning (although this conjecture could be improved with more detailed cross-analysis with individual CEP evaluations than we have been able to undertake here).

In addition, it is noted that some CEPs have been far more successful at gathering COT data than others. Some CEPs have, for various reasons, found it easier to gather COT data from schools and others. So, as data that have not been collected uniformly for all CEPs, they can be used only with reservation as a means of comparing CEPs

It is also noted that in many cases, COT postcode data are those of the school rather than individual young people, e.g. where schools have not been able to provide individual pupil postcodes so the school's postcode has been used multiple times for each participant. In practice, this will often have little impact on overall socio-demographic COT profiling as school pupils often live close to their schools, or in areas with similar socio-demographic profiles.

8 Number of COT responses
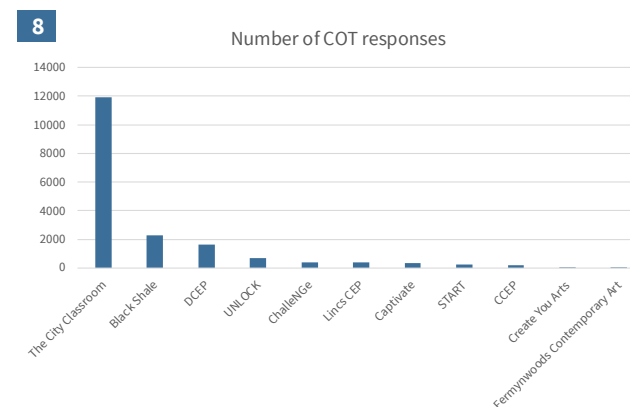
9

COT data: CYP participant year groups, 2017 -21
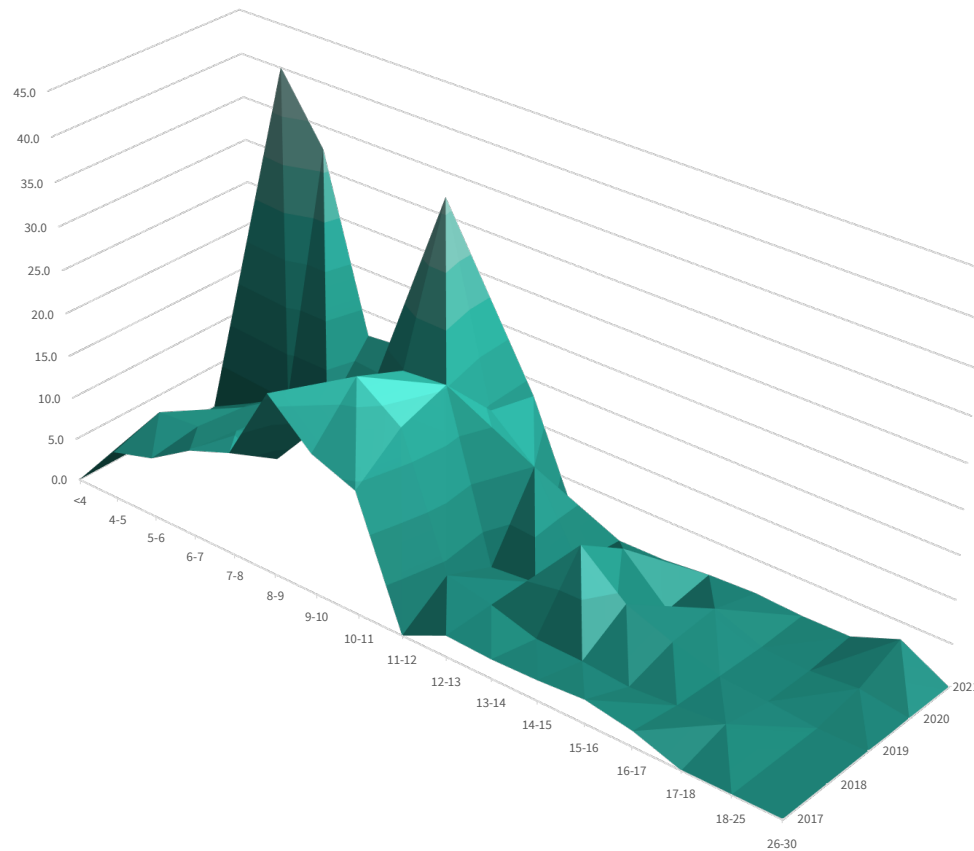
Age of young people participants

As shown in Figure 9, the majority of COT participant data are for primary-aged children, particularly influenced by the primary focus of The City Classroom. There are also spikes in 2021 for Reception-year and year 4 children.

CYP participants compared to population averages

Figure 10 shows the aggregated available COT data for all reporting CEPs and investments, that relate to CYP characteristics, and compares these data to regional and national averages. As these data show, on average, TMC's CEPs and investments appear to be effectively targeting children and young people in minority groups and challenging circumstances in all but one dataset.

The only exception is for CYP with an Education Healthcare Plan (EHC) but this discrepancy may well relate to (a) the difficulty of securing data on this sensitive question and (b) the fact that EHC data have only relatively recently been collected nationally, and, indeed the national reported numbers are increasing significantly each year.

10 COT data: CYP participant characteristics compared to East Midlands and England averages

Legend: COT data (5-year average) · East Mids average · England average

11 COT data: IMD Decile profiles

12 COT data: IDACI Decile profiles

13 COT data: Education & Skills Decile profiles
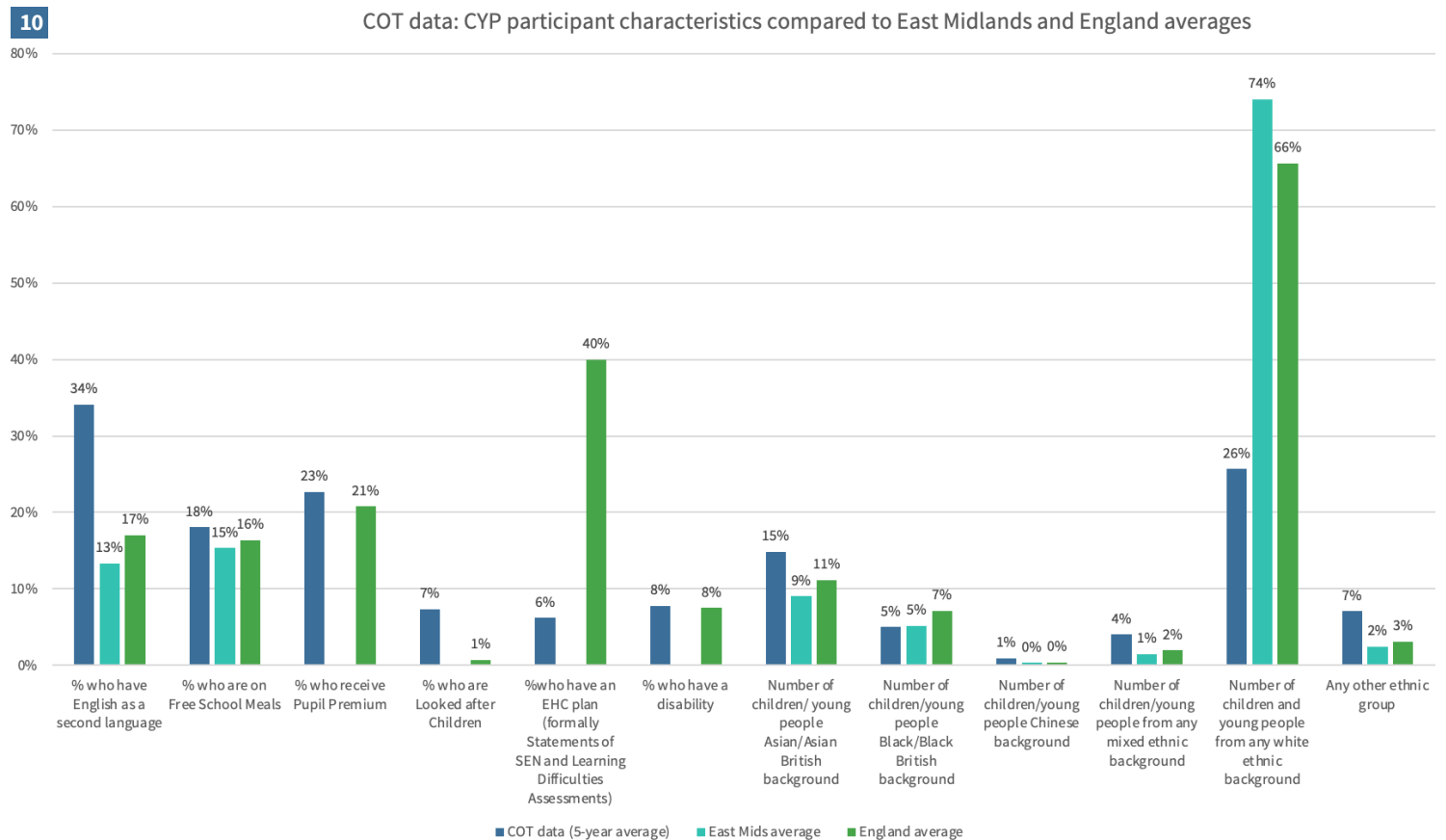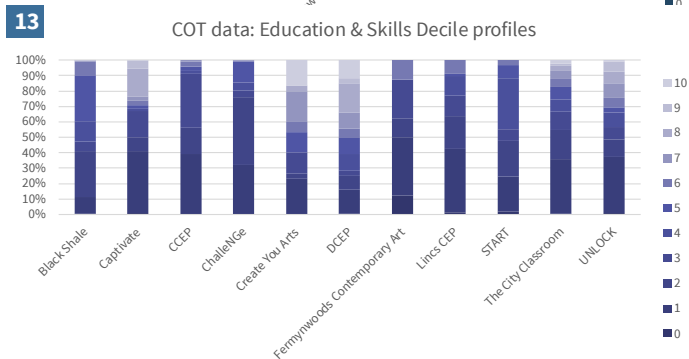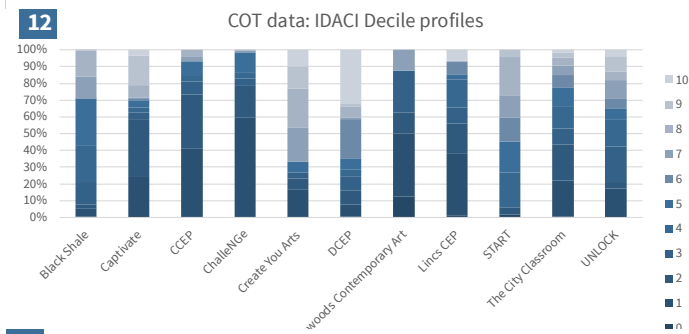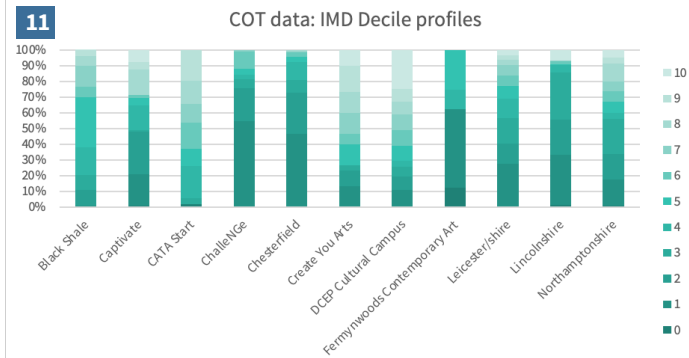
Deprivation profiles of CYP participant data

Figures 11 to 13 show the indices of deprivation profiles (Index of Multiple Deprivation, Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index and Education and Skills Index). In each chart, lighter colours represent lower degrees of deprivation.

At a glance, these show that some CEPs and investments (ChalleNGe, CCEP, Fermynwoods, Lincs CEP) have worked particularly with children in the most deprived areas whereas others (START, Create You Arts, DCEP) have more of a spread across the deprivation indices.

Of course, these data will reflect to an extent the local area profiles where CEPs are based and operating, as well as the people and places they target within those areas.

Audience Agency profiles of CYP participant data

TMC have used the Audience Agency's Mosaic tool and data set to profile COT data against the Mosaic profile types. The results for the most recent year (2020) are reproduced in Figure 14.[3]

The Mosaic profile types descriptions of the most common types in the COT data are reproduced to the right.

These results suggest that much of CEPs' work and TMC's investment are effectively targeting CYP and families in some of the most deprived areas in the East Midlands.

14 The Mighty Creatives Postcodes / East Midlands
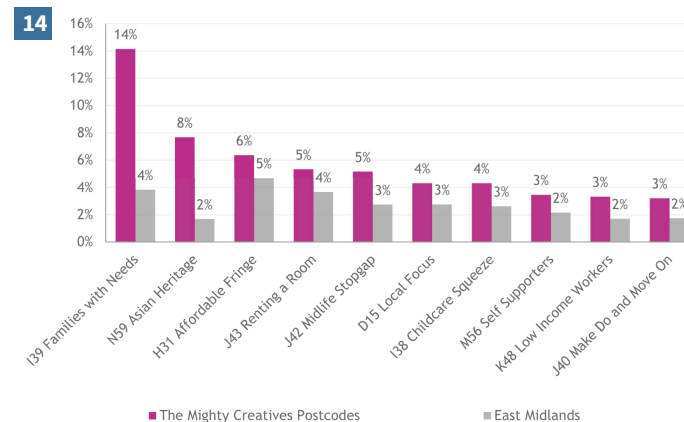
Type	Group description	Type description
I39 Families with Needs	Families with limited resources who have to budget to make ends meet	Families with many children living in areas of high deprivation and who need support
N59 Asian Heritage	Residents of settled urban communities with a strong sense of identity	Large extended families in neighbourhoods with a strong South Asian tradition
H31 Affordable Fringe	Younger households settling down in housing priced within their means	Settled families with children owning modest, 3-bed semis in areas where there's more house for less money
J43 Renting a Room	Single people privately renting low-cost homes for the short term	Transient renters of low-cost accommodation often within subdivided older properties
J42 Midlife Stopgap	Single people privately renting low-cost homes for the short term	Maturing singles in employment who are renting short-term affordable homes
D15 Local Focus	Householders living in inexpensive homes in village communities	Rural families in affordable village homes who are reliant on the local economy for jobs
I38 Childcare Squeeze	Families with limited resources who have to budget to make ends meet.	Younger families with children who own a budget home and are striving to cover all expenses
M56 Self Supporters	Mature homeowners of value homes enjoying stable lifestyles	Hard-working mature singles who own budget terraces manageable within their modest wage
K48 Low Income Workers	Urban renters of social housing facing an array of challenges	Older social renters settled in low value homes in communities where employment is harder to find
J40 Make Do & Move On	Single people privately renting low-cost homes for the short term	Yet to settle younger singles and couples making interim homes in low-cost properties

[3] All data and charts are © The Audience Agency, 2020

15: CEP activity locations (COT data)

Legend:
- The City Classroom
- Black Shale
- UNLOCK
- Create You Arts
- DCEP
- Lincs CEP
- ChalleNGe
- Captivate
- Fermynwoods Contemporary Art
- START
- CCEP

Map labels: Lincoln, Chesterfield, Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, Northampton
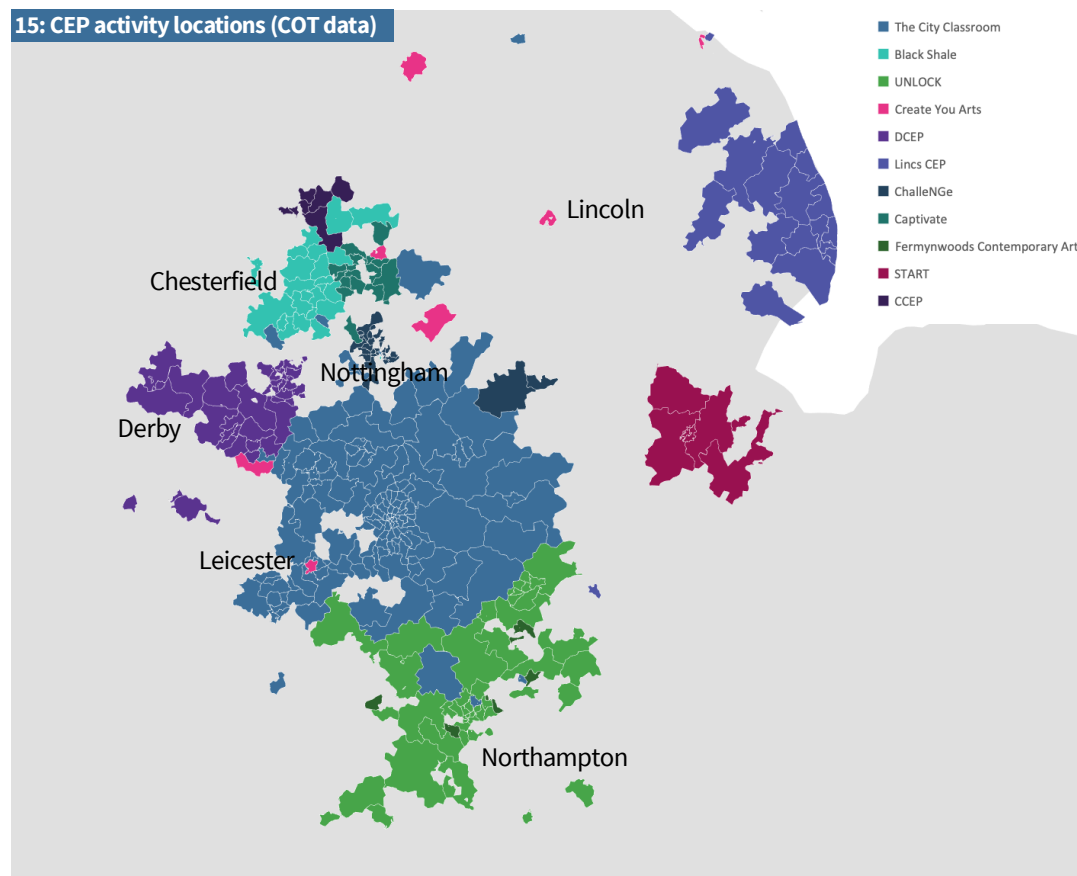
Where are CEPs and other investments working?

The map in Figure 15 shows the areas where CEPs and other investments have worked. This is based on the postal districts (postcodes without the final two letters) for COT response data.

The map gives an indication of how geographically concentrated the reach of some CEPs is (e.g. ChalleNGe, CCEP and Captivate) compared to others (e.g. The City Classroom). It is notable too how some CEPs, such as Black Shale, despite much hyperlocal working, are covering wide areas.

This map however does not give a sense of how much activity or interaction a CEP has in an area, which is shown in Figure 16.

16: Number of participants in CEP activities

>3,000 participants

>150 participants

1 participant

Lincoln

Chesterfield

Nottingham

Derby

Leicester   LE7 9

Northampton
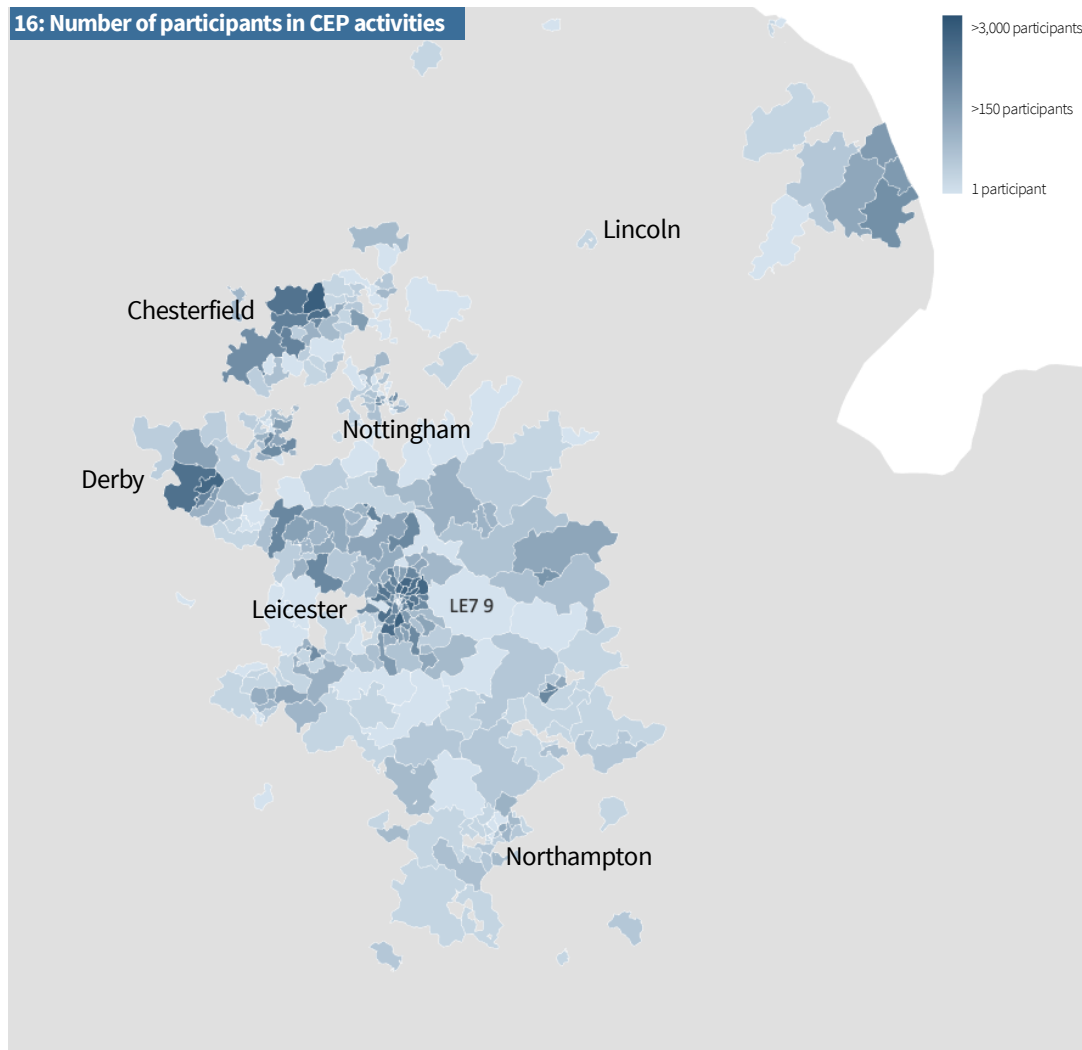
As Figure 16 shows, the variation in the number of COT data in a postal district is huge: in some districts (the lightest colour on the map) there is only 1 COT participant, whereas in others (the darkest colour) there are over 1,500. (The colours represent a log scale.)

As this second map shows, whilst the coverage of some CEPs might be wide, the bulk of activity and interaction is very focussed on particular areas.

It should be noted also that in many cases schools have not been able to provide CEPs with individual pupil postcodes, in which cases the school's postcode has been used. Of course, most CYP will live near their school, particular for primary schools, but this will have some impact on the data – reporting locations of schools in some cases and CYP in others.

"I think the main impact on CYP has been removing post-code-lottery barriers to cultural learning provision, through co-operation and needs analysis and targeted delivery."

Work with schools

Work with schools, and sometimes other special education institutions (e.g. PRUs and special schools) is a central focus of most CEPs.

Figure 17 shows the numbers of schools, with phase of education, cited as working with CEPs in CEPs' funding monitoring forms. With the notable exception of DCEP, all CEPs have focussed on working with primary schools.

Which schools are CEPs and other investments working with?

As an indicator for targeting children and young people in particular need Figure 18 shows the percentage of children and young people eligible for free school meals in schools that CEPs have worked with, compared to other schools in the same postal districts. As the chart shows, four out of six CEPs for which there are comparative data (UNLOCK, The City Classroom, DCEP and ChalleNGe) are working with schools with higher %FSM than other schools in the same areas. There is a significant difference in the case of The City Classroom and DCEP (8% and 14% respectively).

The reverse is true for Captivate and Black Shale, but it should be noted that, as postal districts are relatively small areas, there may not be significant differences between the socio-demographics of students attending one or another school in the same district. Equally, there may be other reasons why a CEP is or is not working there.

Certainly, comparing the average %FSM of schools that CEPs have worked with, with the same figure for the East Midlands overall (Figure 19) shows that CEPs and CEP localities are those where there are higher proportions of FSM children.

17 Numbers of schools working with CEPs

18 %FSM in schools that have worked with CEP, compared with other schools in the same areas

19 %FSM in schools that have worked with CEPs, compared with other schools in the East Midlands
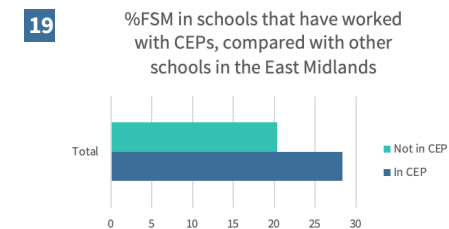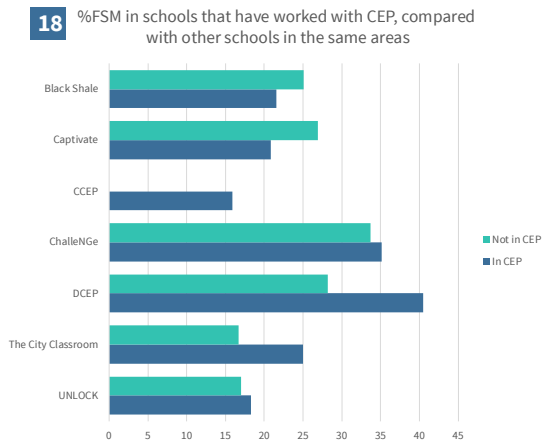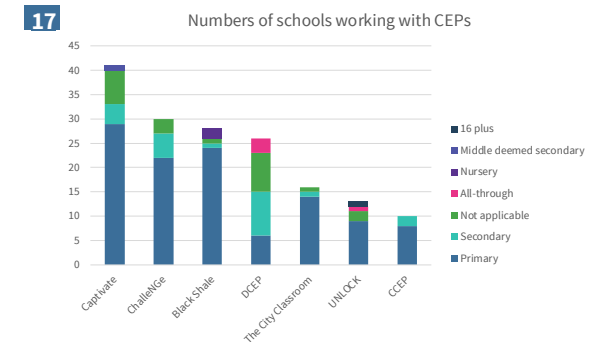
20 Artsmark in schools that have worked with CEPs, compared with other schools in the same areas
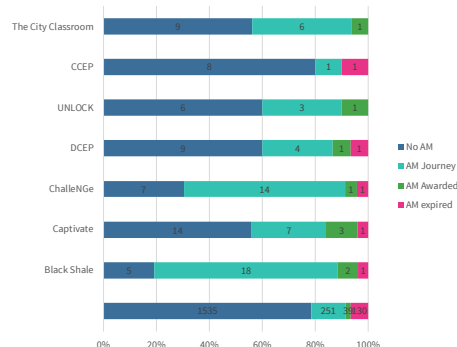
21 Artsmark numbers in areas where CEPs operate, compared to elsewhere in East Midlands
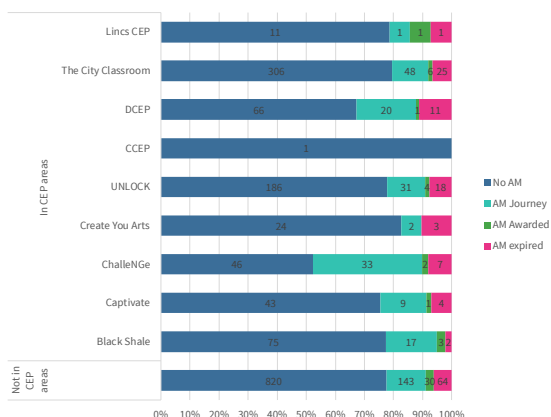
Artsmark

Encouraging and supporting the development of Artsmark is a component of TMC's partnership investment, although we understand that is not as stipulated a component and a condition/target for funding, as is the case in other Bridges.

Whilst Artsmark is sometimes cited by CEPs as a challenging part of Bridge partnership investment elsewhere in England, we fielded no comments in this regard from East Midlands CEPs, although neither did we routinely ask about it.

TMC's CEPs are routinely asked about Artsmark registrations and awards as part their funding monitoring reports. However, in our processing of the available monitoring reports, there were very few Artsmark reports, from only two CEPs: Black Shale (31 Artsmarks registrations) and DCEP (3 registrations).

However, further analysis of TMC's Artsmark data suggests that CEPs may have a more significant impact on schools' take-up of Artsmark. Figure 20 compares Artsmark status of schools where CEPs have worked, with those of other schools in the postal districts where CEPs submit COT data (the bottom bar). As these data show, for all CEPs (excepting the one school listed by CCEP), the proportion of CEP-engaged schools engaging with Artsmark[4] is significantly higher than other schools in the same areas.

Looking further afield, Figure 21 compares Artsmark statuses for schools in areas where CEPs operate (based on COT postal districts) with all other areas in the East Midlands. Despite CEPs generally working in areas where deprivation in general is higher or cultural activity is lower, schools are approximately as likely to be pursuing Artsmark as elsewhere across the region.

In several cases (UNLOCK, DCEP, ChalleNGe, Captivate and Black Shale), a higher proportion of schools in CEP areas are pursuing Artsmark than region-wide.

As Artsmark can be used as a proxy indicator for a school strategically developing its cultural learning practice, this suggests a significant impact of CEPs. We note, though, that absence of Artsmark in a school does not indicate that its cultural learning is poor or getting worse.

Arts Award

A very similar picture is seen with Arts Award:

- In our understanding Arts Award is encouraged but not stipulated in TMC's funding;

- It is routinely asked about on monitoring forms but data are only reported for a small number of CEPs (Black Shale – 73 awards; Captivate – 120; DCEP – 11);

- But COT data indicate that just over 22% of young people who participated in activity did so as part of an Arts Award (almost 4,500 CYP).

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[4] In the analysis reported here, we have conflated the various statuses of Artsmark awards, on the journey, renewing, having expired into those 'engaging with' Artsmark, meaning those who are currently or have previously pursued it.

5. Impact on partners, partnerships and partnership-working

Findings from the research on the impact of TMC's investment, and CEPs' broader development, on the partners, partnerships and partnership-working in the localities

Impact on partners

The impact on partners and partnerships are summarised above in Table 1 on page 16. This chapter covers certain aspects of partner and partnership impact in more detail.

Digital impact

In several cases, one of most appreciated impacts of TMC's investment is the development of digital skills and capacity in CEPs and A&C organisations.

In the case, for example, of Writing East Midlands, The City Classroom, Fermynwoods and Egg Box, often a relatively small amount of investment has meant that these organisations could transfer much of the practice and opportunities online during the pandemic, with significant consequent impact for them and the CYP they work with. In all cases, this capacity is being carried forward.

For example, Writing East Midlands, who were forced to move their writing sessions online during the pandemic have found that there are many advantages in continuing to work this way, particularly around minimising logistics (travel to sessions) and hence being able to broaden participation.

UNLOCK, with its focus on digital micro-commissions has again found that relatively small investments can have a significant impact in developing digital skills and enabling artists and A&C organisations to develop new online and technology-enhanced delivery. This has included things like virtual backstage tours, first encounters with opera etc. that, now delivered digitally, mean that a much larger number of CYP are able to access them.

"We're now a fully operational digital organisation, which has been massive for us. We didn't have the money, understanding or training to do it before so the investment has been huge for us as an organisation."

Cross-arts opportunities

One of the clearest affordances of A&C organisations coming together in partnerships is being able to offer mixed- and cross-artform opportunities. This was central to the enthusiasm of the young people in Connecting Notts – ChalleNGe's young leaders group – who strongly appreciated the array of opportunities that the CEP has brought together and thence to them – some of which they didn't know about, or know they were accessible or where they were.

If ACE's NPO portfolio provides a representative sample, the majority of A&C organisations are artform-specific (rather than cross-arts), and certainly much of the cultural learning infrastructure is constructed this way (music services and hubs, artform subjects in schools, dance schools, learning departments in the A&C organisations that are themselves artform-specific etc.) – i.e. cross-artform organisations are the minority.

The opportunities in cross-artform working, which can be seen in opera, festivals, film etc., are rich and exciting and, at least according to Connecting Notts, that excitement is appreciated by young people. In which case it is perhaps a missed opportunity that in several CEPs this cross-artform affordance of CEPs seems often to be under-realised. Several CEP interviewees described cross-artform working as not being a significant part of CEP coordinated or collaborative activity. Cross-artform activity in this reporting is different from several artforms having their own activities, which has been a more common feature of CEPs – dance over here, theatre over there etc.

"How would the project have been different if you'd done it on your own?"
"Yes, possibly we could have done it on our own. It was unique because it offered children two choices – an art journey or a dance journey."

This may be a consequence of the common focus in East Midlands CEPs on cooperation, rather than collaboration, as discussed above and more extensively in Chapter 9, page 51.

Building capacity in smaller organisations

This has clearly been a particular focus in some CEPs where there are large numbers of very small A&C organisations, such as Black Shale, CCEP and the Sector Support Commissions/Creative Communities Fund.

Impact on partnership-working

CEPs: Survey views on CEP impact

Legend:
- Black Shale
- CCEP
- ChalleNGe
- Creative Communities Fund
- DCEP
- High Peak CEP
- The City Classroom
- TMC Staff
- UNLOCK

Categories (top to bottom):
- P'ship is enabling opportunities for CYP that my organisation couldn't provide alone
- P'ship is productively providing opportunities for CYP
- P'ship has had significant impact on collaboration in the locality

Axis: Strongly disagree — Strongly agree
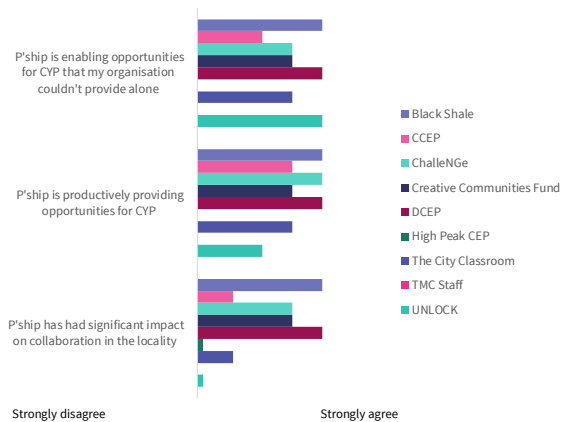
Building trust

Trust is in many ways the vital blood stream of partnership working and it would appear that in virtually all cases, East Midlands CEPs and other partnerships have developed this effectively. Through our interviews, there was very little sentiment expressed of lack of trust or grievance between partners and plenty of expression of strong trust having been built up over time.

"Historically people have around here worked in their own silos and been nervous of partnership working as a risk to their organisation, with everyone competing for the same funding pots. This has been a barrier to broadening the CEP too which we're looking to address. Now the core partner organisations really do trust each other."

Building co-operation

Co-operation between A&C organisations, both around better joining up and coordinating their existing offers, and collectively targeting particular areas of need, has been a strong focus of several CEPs.

"Everyone's more aware of partners' individual activities and working more collaboratively on pockets of deprivation."

As well as CEP partners working together to review their collective portfolio of offers and responding appropriately, several CEPs have developed one-stop-shops for schools that describe, showcase and provide listings for their collective offer, in the form of websites and printed magazines.

Building collaborations within the CEP

Several CEPs (e.g. Black Shale, CCEP, The City Classroom) have focussed, rather than building collaboration across the CEP, on developing smaller collaborations within the CEP, responding to particular needs, opportunities and funding.

"The rich partnerships that the CEP has enabled have been its success."

Building collaboration in the locality

CEPs appear to have had mixed impact on collaboration in their localities. As Figure 22 shows, whilst there is broad agreement that CEPs are providing opportunities for CYP and reasonable agreement that they are providing opportunities that individual partners could not have provided on their own, there is less agreement that the CEP has had significant impact on collaboration, particularly in The City Classroom, UNLOCK and CCEP.

Potential reasons for this, emerging from interviews include:

- There was already a good degree of collaboration before the CEP (see below);
- The CEP has focussed more on small hyperlocal collaborations than locality-wide partnership;
- The CEP has struggled to build collaboration;
- The CEP has chosen to focus more on cooperation.

Building on existing strong partnership working

CEPs appear to have had a significant impact on partnership-working in some cases but less so in others, as Figure 22 shows:

- Interviews and survey responses suggest a strong growth in partnership-working in Black Shale, where Platform Thirty1 has apparently led the development of several individual

partnerships and a good degree of area-wide partnership working.

- A similar pattern emerges in CCEP, although here there have been more individual partnership projects and less area-wide collaboration, but this is a recognised area for future development.

- In Derby and Nottingham there appears to have been a good degree of trust and collaborative working between A&C organisations already, which, in many cases the CEP and its activity have solidified and given an opportunity for good will to turn into collaborative activity.

- Similarly in Northamptonshire, the UNLOCK A&C partners are reported to have known each other for some time, particularly those who all have a county-wide remit.

- Some research participants from ChalleNGe and Captivate (though not all), have suggested that whilst there is good cooperation and collaboration in the CEPs, sometimes it is felt that CEP partners are advocating more strongly for their own work than for the CEP, whereas in other CEPs partners have been reported as describing their role in the CEP before that in their own organisations.

Even in cases where existing partnership working might have been strong, however, the development of and investment in CEPs has been significant to partnerships. For example, one DCEP participant suggested that, even given the strength of partnership working beforehand, they would have been unlikely to be in a position to win the big grants they did without the capacity built up as a CEP.

Building capacity of partnerships

One of the most significant impacts of CEP investment, of course, is to have developed the CEPs themselves, particularly where they can sustain themselves to continue that development.

Match funding

Match funding, which is analysed above (page 12), in itself represents a considerable impact achieved by CEPs and other investments, and by TMC in many cases where it has been instrumental in bringing in match funding.

Match funding represents in most cases additional funding for cultural learning. It indicates strength of relationship between CEPs and other sectors where they are the match funders (local authorities, businesses, sports sector etc.). It recognises the work that CEPs have had to do in applying for, advocating for and raising funds. It represents the recognition in many cases of the impacts that other sectors understand that cultural learning can have, including beyond cultural outcomes themselves.

Strength in numbers for fundraising

Strength in numbers is mentioned as one of the factors for CEP impact in Table 2 and certainly it is a key factor for partnership funding and being commission-ready. Derby, in particular, report this as having been a very significant factor in their success in fundraising and securing local commissions (from police, housing and the local youth alliance, which is a centralised funding distributor for funding aimed at supporting children and young people). Collectively, DCEP has become recognised locally as the representative of the cultural sector.

24 CEP Partners by sector (all CEPs)

A&C, 206
Unknown, 105
School, 59
CYP, 47
Education, 33
Business/community, 11
Local authority, 10
TSO, 14
Bridge, 7
Care, 2
Sports, 1
Science/tech, 1

25 CEPs: Partnership composition (number and sector)

Legend:
- Science/tech
- Care
- Sports
- CYP
- Bridge
- Local authority
- Business/community
- TSO
- Education
- School
- Unknown
- A&C
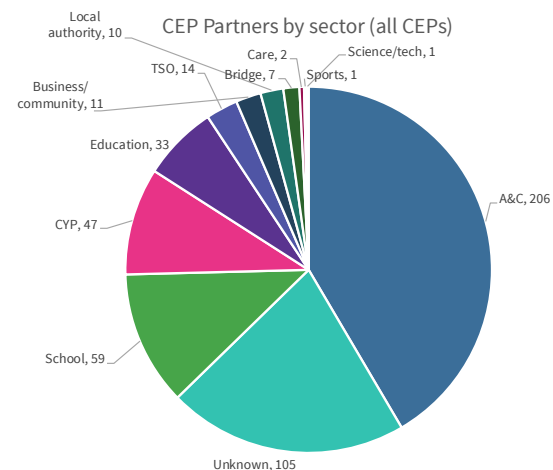
Partnership analysis

Figures 24 and 25 show an analysis of the partnerships of the CEPs, collectively and individually. It should be noted that in some cases, CEP partnership, which is taken from fundee monitoring and TMC reporting, includes a CEPs' wider membership or communities of collaborators; in other cases it includes the core partnership groups.

Breadth of partnership

Overall, CEPs appear to have a good breadth of partnership, comprising roughly 50% A&C organisations (discounting the 105 partners whose sector is unknown). The same pattern is, by and large, observed in individual CEPs, although each has its individual set of non-arts partners.

Representative coverage in partnership

Whilst there is good breadth (several sectors are present) in several cases there is less good representation from non-arts sectors in CEPs, as corroborated by survey respondents' view in Figure 23: whilst most CEPs agree that the culture sector is well represented, there is less strong representation from education and other non-arts sectors.

Involvement of the local major cultural learning stakeholders

There is also less uniform engagement of the main cultural learning stakeholders, particularly in DCEP and The City Classroom, also indicated in Figure 23 (second group). Some CEPs have struggled to engage particularly the larger A&C organisations. Reasons suggest by research participants are where these organisations, including large NPOs, do not see the CEP as particularly relevant to their work, and/or do not see cultural learning as particularly relevant to their work.

23 CEPs: Survey views on partner engagement

Categories (top to bottom):
- Good engagement other sectors
- Engagement of main cultural learning stakeholders
- Maximising resources across partnership
- Good education engagement
- Good culture sector engagement

Axis: Strongly disagree — Strongly agree

Legend:
- Black Shale
- CCEP
- ChalleNGe
- Creative Communities Fund
- DCEP
- High Peak CEP
- The City Classroom
- TMC Staff
- UNLOCK
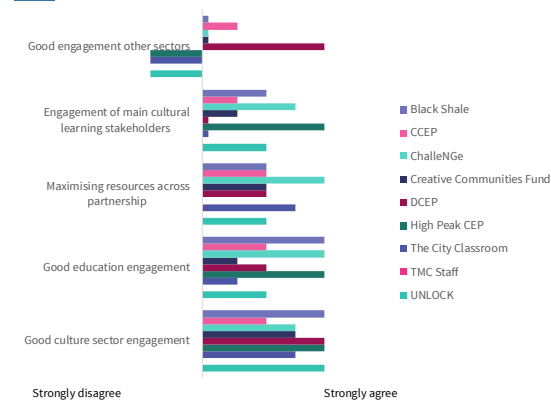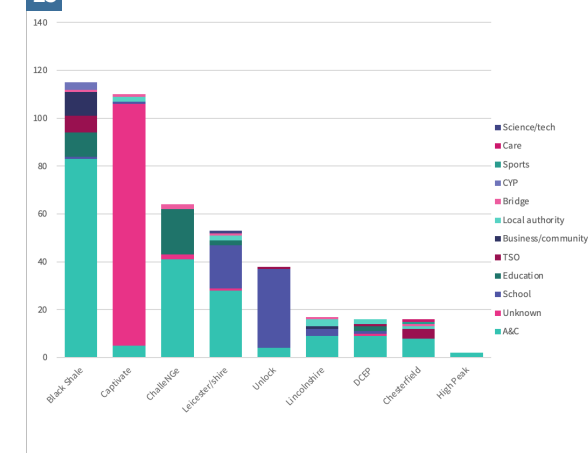
Involving non-arts partners

As discussed elsewhere, in some CEPs there has been a more of a focus on coordinating and targeting cultural learning provision than on developing new cultural learning work, including for extra-cultural agendas. Relatedly, there is a focus in some CEPs on arts and cultural activity and organisations, rather than how arts and culture might support other organisations and sectors with their agendas (with the major exception of schools, which are a focus throughout).

As Figure 23 shows, with the exception of DCEP, CEPs are either neutral or disagree that they have good engagement with other sectors. Several interview respondents when asked about non-arts partners replied that this had been an area they had struggled with, or not particularly focussed on, or not had capacity or weight to develop, or were planning to prioritise in the future.

However, there have been cited in the research several examples of productive partnerships with non-arts organisations. For example:

- CCEP have developed a productive relationship with Active Derbyshire, and have been commissioned through them to undertake various projects and activities;

- DCEP have developed commissioning relationships with policy, housing services, and particularly the consortia or youth alliance commissioning;

- DCEP, and TMC, have developed very strong relationships with the Derbyshire Virtual School, particularly around the Virtual Arts School programme and creative mentoring programmes with looked-after children;

- Lincs CEP have made good early relationships with corporate business partners;

- The City Classroom have recently developed good relationships with local counsellors related to how the CEP can respond to city council agendas with council funding.

CEPs as unwelcoming

Some feedback was received from research participants about some East Midlands CEPs being unresponsive or even unwelcoming, including to A&C organisations interested in working with the CEP. Impressions expressed were that sometimes CEPs have felt that they didn't need the expertise that these organisations offered.

Each CEP has to design its own approach to membership and partnership and to balance the needs of handling capacity and accommodating everyone who would like to be involved. But if CEPs are thought to have an element of exclusivity (denying access), as opposed to focussing (prioritising access), that would, on the face of it, not stand to be beneficial for the broader aims of CEPs.

How CEPs have developed

CEP inception

In our understanding, most CEPs have been initiated primarily by TMC staff. In some areas, such as Derby, when priority areas for CEP development were announced in the Cultural Education Challenge and subsequent Bridge communications, existing strong relationships saw CEPs as a very appropriate vehicle to further develop cultural learning in their locality.

In the case of High Peak, CEP stakeholders have essentially approached TMC about becoming a CEP.

Needs analysis

If CEPs are to respond to needs, informed analysis of those needs will be vital to effective strategy. As Figure 26 shows, CEPs agree that their strategies are well-designed around an informed understanding of need. The above data relating to how effectively CEPs are targeting areas of need corroborate this.

To varying extents, CEPs rely on

- conversations with schools and other stakeholders about their needs;

- ONS and other public data;

- CYP consultation and involvement in partnerships/working groups/project leadership;

- Partner/member consultation (especially in Leicester with its membership model or Captivate with its partners' needs commission)

In some cases, (e.g. CCEP) it is reported that deprived communities often feel they are already over-consulted but under-supported; what

is better than consultation is activity that is co-designed with them, where consultation is effectively incorporated into activity.

Lincs and High Peak CEPs are currently or recently going through scoping research and consultation regarding needs for and of the CEP.

In a discussion with Festival Bridge, they described a cultural landscape mapping tool they use where all the CEP partners put their activity data in. This means that CEP-wide and region-wide, the gaps can be seen, unless people don't participate, which happens in a few cases.

CYP voice

As Figure 26 shows, CEPs vary in the extent that their planning is informed by CYP's opinions and preferences. We are aware of the following means of CYP voice involvement:

- ChalleNGe has its Connecting Notts board, which brings young people from each of the CEP's board partners to a central group;

- CCEP has a community of young leaders;

- Derby are looking at bringing CYP into how the CEP is governed, through the partners organisations (similarly to ChalleNGe)

Strategy and planning

Figure 26 suggests CEPs are quite mixed and not always positive about having a clear and agreed strategy for the future. Certainly, much of this may revolve around uncertain funding and support for CEPs from ACE, with the recent clarity that there will not be the same Bridge-disbursed partnership investment as has been the case. And in interviews there is some sense that some CEPs have a clear set of development objectives for the medium term but others are by no means as clear. Now is arguably a crunch point for CEPs and this financial year 22/23 is likely to be critical to their future existence, in many cases, as we discuss in Chapter 9, page 50.

26 CEPs: Survey views on partnership strategy

Partnership has CYP voice-informed strategy

Partnership has needs-informed strategy

Partnership has clear, agreed strategy

Strongly disagree — Strongly agree

Legend:
- Black Shale
- CCEP
- ChalleNGe
- Creative Communities Fund
- DCEP
- High Peak CEP
- The City Classroom
- TMC Staff
- UNLOCK
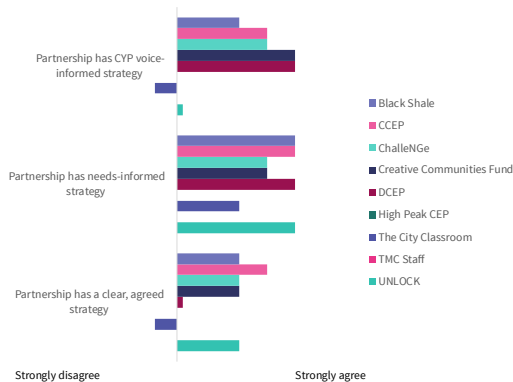
Delivery and development?

The question of development or delivery is one that one that has surfaced continually throughout CEP development, in the East Midlands as elsewhere. For clarity, we refer to:

- **Delivery** as being activities (cultural learning in this case) that directly involve and impact on beneficiaries (CYP in this case, and often teachers and other staff in schools), compared to

- **Development**, which refers to activities that are intended to impact on beneficiaries often indirectly but in ways that can outlive or be sustained beyond the time during which delivery might have been delivered. This might include training, resource development, infrastructure development, capital builds, relationship and partnership development, fundraising, particular for core (and fundraising) activity, and other capacity building.

Initially, we understand, when CEPs were initiated under the Cultural Education Challenge in 2015, there was a strong emphasis from ACE and Bridges that CEPs should focus on development activities, for long-term sustained legacy impact. However, many CEPs have found that development is hard without some element of delivery (funding for activity helps bring people to the partnership table, partnerships need to see impact for beneficiaries to sustain their momentum etc.), so delivery funding has been increasingly supported in CEP funding.

Latterly, during the covid pandemic, there has been a strong call for more funding to be made available for delivery, because of the challenges that have emerged from the pandemic.

Above this general undercurrent of emphasis on development moving towards delivery, individual CEPs appear to have taken their own approach to delivery and development:

> *"We're strategic in intent but grassroots in practice. We support young people leadership, we help partners with their own bid-writing. With schools, our emphasis is on CPD and how A&C can*

> *help school agendas, building shared agendas and reflective practice."*

> *"I don't think the CEP should be running programmes, although it could be convening them."*

> *"We've always been a delivery CEP - projects with direct delivery with CYP and teachers - not a totally strategic body, which I think has been really important."*

> *"At beginning of the Cultural Life Fund, there was strong focus on delivery, rather than development or CEP infrastructure, and COT necessitates delivery if you want to look effective [because it asks for data on delivery activities]. But without development, the sustainability is very difficult, as we're now seeing."*

> *"Sometimes the delivery grants pull weight towards the organisations delivering, pulling focus from the collective strategic working."*

> *"Should we do delivery? It's a conversation we have at almost every partnership meeting, especially as you need to do it for fundraising [because most funding is for delivery]. But all the partners are doing [delivery] – there's no need for the CEP itself to do it too. The CEP applying for funding for delivery would be competition, and not needed."*

According to interviewees, TMC is generally thought to have had a stronger emphasis on encouraging development in the earlier days of CEP development and partnership investment, with an increasing move towards supporting delivery, but also with a case-by-case flexibility in both directions.

Or development and delivery?

This has led some interviewees to suggest that there should have been a more universal focus in CEPs on development, capacity building and legacy building, particular at the current point when the future of CEPs is relatively unclear. Our conclusions are discussed in Chapter 9, page 53.

6. TMC's support and provision

Beyond funding, how has TMC's support been received and built upon?

Overall, research participants were very positive about and appreciate of TMC's support, beyond its funding. Very few criticisms were fielded.

Cited benefits of TMC's support

These are also the things that CEPs and other investments hope will continue.

Consultancy and training

Several participants have reported favourably about specific support offers including:

- Cause4 fundraising support;

- TMC's evaluation training.

Flexibility

Several participants have commented on TMC's flexibility in dealing with fundees' required changes.

TMC's participation as CEP support and CEP partner

Participants are generally very positive about TMC staff's involvement in CEPs. Very few criticisms were fielded, other than some challenges around conflicts of being both funder and partner.

In general, the main criticism raised has been that TMC staff's contribution has waned with time: several participants commented that TMC support had been great and extensive in the early days of a CEP but then levelled off, whereas more on-going involvement would generally have been appreciated.

"It sometimes feels that TMC supports CEPs towards funding eligibility, when what they really need (as well as funding) is start-

up development support. Lots of mentoring, for example, would be good."

Landscape connectedness

One of the most commonly cited benefits of working with TMC is the awareness of the wider cultural landscape that TMC can provide – across the region and nationally, including the funding and policy landscape.

Advocacy

Related to the above, another commonly appreciated benefit is TMC's advocacy for its funded organisations, particularly the smaller organisations. Several participants note, for example, that they would not have good relationship or reputations with ACE without TMC's advocacy on their behalf.

CEP-to-CEP sharing

Many participants appreciate significantly the exchange that TMC supports between CEPs, regionally and with other Bridges.

Challenges and recommendations

These are the things that CEPs, in some cases, would recommend are reviewed.

COT tool

Whilst some participants rate the COT very highly, others have found it very difficult to source the data to use it, including data protection challenges for schools in supplying pupil data.

Shared secretariat services

Some CEPs have suggested that TMC could provide centralised secretariat services to cover some of the time-consuming tasks that drain partners' reserves of volunteer energy and in a way that could be more efficient if done centrally, rather than multiple times in individual CEPs. This might include organising events and meetings, administering CEP memberships, and administering communications

Small grants

Several people have responded favourably about small grants, particularly as being valuable for small organisations. Others have suggested that the paperwork for these needs to be more minimal for them to be worthwhile.

TMC and development agency *and* delivery agency

A few participants commented on occasional challenges around TMC being an organisation that delivers projects and programmes with CYP as well as one that acts as a development agency supporting other organisations to do the same. Essentially, this appears to some, on the one hand, to divide TMC's interests and, on the other hand, for TMC to present itself sometimes a competitor to the same organisations that it is supporting. Participants have suggested that TMC should focus on what it does best, without specifying what that is.

Needs-designed strategy

A few participants note that on occasion TMC's support has been less useful and that this would be avoided if there were greater consultation on what people needed before TMC decides what support they will provide.

7. The aims of the Cultural Life Fund

Summary of impact against TMC's aims and objectives for the Cultural Life Fund

Aims of the Cultural Life Fund

The stated aims of the Cultural Life Fund are:

1   To improve, increase and sustain cultural education in schools and communities for children and young people living and learning in the East Midlands, starting with priority areas as identified by Arts Council England;

2   To improve creative and cultural outcomes for children and young people;

3   Take steps to develop and sustain partnerships, supporting Cultural Education Partnerships.

1: Improve, increase and sustain cultural education for CYP, targeting priority areas

Drawing particularly on evidence and analysis presented in Chapter 4, there is strong evidence that this objective is being achieved.

2: Improve creative and cultural outcomes for children and young people

Objective 1 takes on questions about where cultural learning activity should take place, with whom, whether they'd done it before, whether it had been available before, what kinds of places they live, work and learn in, etc. Essentially these are questions related to cultural learning *outputs*. As we discuss below, much of the available evidence (most of the COT data and the fundee monitoring forms in particular) is outputs-based, hence why there is strong evidence to evaluate objective 1.

The second objective looks explicitly at cultural learning *outcomes*. Outputs data can often be used as proxy indicators for outcomes but not necessarily as outcomes indicators themselves. A child who

participated in an activity might have been profoundly and positively effected by it, and that might be more likely if it was an activity that is known to have such outcomes, but we do not know that to be the case simply because they participated.

As part of this research, we have not been able to identify a significant body of outcomes evaluations related to the funded activity.

However, in our assessment, there is good evidence in the available data that this objective 2 has been fulfilled:
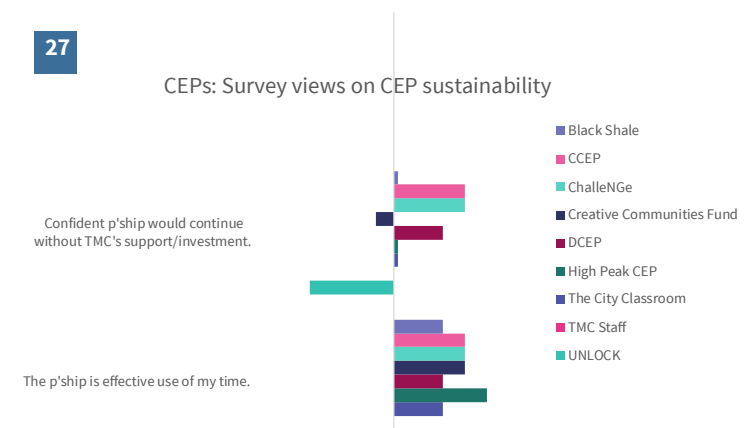
- CEP research participants are confident that CEPs have provided or supported cultural learning activities that have had positive cultural and creative outcomes for CYP;

- There is good evidence (e.g. reports of CPD, Artsmark data etc.) that capacity has been developed to support creative and cultural learning in schools, which is likely to have resulted in positive outcomes for CYP;

- Research participants have informed us of numerous cases and case studies of where it is reported that there have been significant and sometimes profound positive impacts for CYP;

- The data from COT and fundee reporting related to Arts Award, in combination with COT data around those CYP's other cultural opportunities (or lack thereof) suggest that there have been strong cultural and creative learning outcomes in these cases;

- The outputs data described above, in conjunction with reporting about the activities undertaken, in conjunction with our understanding of how such activities can have positive outcomes, suggests that there will have been much more widespread positive impact than can otherwise be evidenced – i.e. the COT data allow those outcomes to be generally conjectured.

3: Develop and sustain partnerships, supporting CEPs

As presented particularly in Chapters 3, 5 and 6, there is strong evidence that partnerships and CEPs have been developed and supported. There is also strong evidence that those partnerships have been sustained to date.

The harder question to answer is to speculate on whether the current state of CEPs is such that, in the given landscape, they are likely to be sustained in the future. Admittedly, this question is only implied but not explicit in the objective.

As we discuss in the following chapters, there is clearly uncertainty around the future of explicit support for CEPs and some CEPs are not confident about their future, as shown in Figure 27. At the same time, some CEPs are already in a strong position, certainly for the next one or two years. In Chapter 9 we suggest that concerted, strategic, collective and bespoke support for CEPs in the remaining period of Bridge support could be significant in securing their longer-term future.

27

CEPs: Survey views on CEP sustainability

Legend:
- Black Shale
- CCEP
- ChalleNGe
- Creative Communities Fund
- DCEP
- High Peak CEP
- The City Classroom
- TMC Staff
- UNLOCK

Confident p'ship would continue without TMC's support/investment.

The p'ship is effective use of my time.

8. Future growth factors: ingredients for partnerships

The needs, obstacles and opportunities for growth of CEPs and other cultural learning partnerships

Needs of CEPs and other partnerships

In the survey as part of this research, respondents were given a range of partnership ingredients and asked to vote for how much of each partnership ingredient their partnership needs to be most effective in the future. We used a quadratic voting system, where voters had 100 points with which to vote and where 1 vote uses 1 point, 2 votes use 4 points, 3 votes use 9 points and so on. This means that you can vote multiple times for one ingredient but this exponentially impedes your ability to vote for other ingredients. It is designed to provoke a considered and balanced response across a portfolio of options.

The results of this voting are shown in Figure 28 for all CEPs and then in Figure 29 for each CEP/investment group individually, including TMC staff's collective votes.

28

CEP development needs: total votes

Legend:
- Black Shale
- CCEP
- ChalleNGe
- Creative Communities Fund
- DCEP
- High Peak CEP
- The City Classroom
- TMC Staff
- UNLOCK
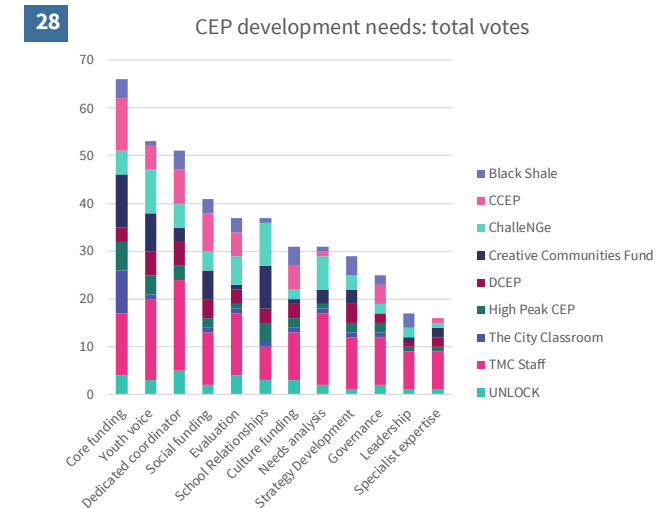
Needs profiles of individual CEPs

Black Shale

CCEP

ChalleNGe

(All)

Creative Communities Fund

DCEP

High Peak CEP

The City Classroom

TMC Staff

UNLOCK
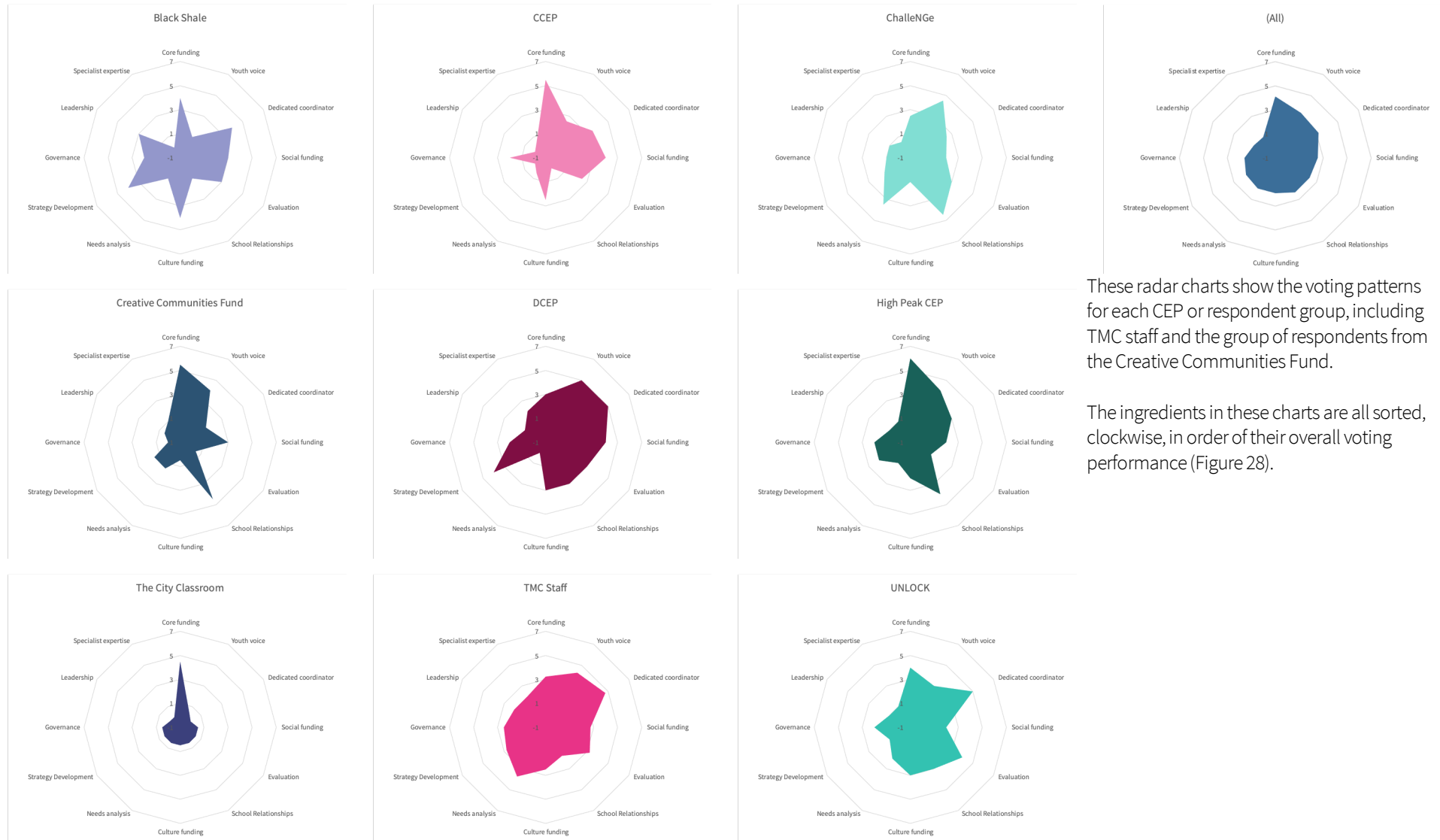
These radar charts show the voting patterns for each CEP or respondent group, including TMC staff and the group of respondents from the Creative Communities Fund.

The ingredients in these charts are all sorted, clockwise, in order of their overall voting performance (Figure 28).

Insights on CEP ingredients

In the following, we summarise insights from the research related to the above and other ingredients cited by research participants. This should be read in conjunction with the analysis of factors influencing impact on page 20.

Appetite for the CEP: people and organisations need to want it

"[This] CEP needs a city which values what the CEP is trying to do."

This means CEPs will need to ensure that they are:

- Identifying and responding to need;

- Measuring impact in response to that need;

- Communicating that impact.

Trust: the lifeblood of partnership working

CEPs, like trust, are about people. You can trust an organisation, like a brand, but whilst you might *approach* them as partners for this alone, you'd generally only *proceed* with the partnership if you trusted the people.

Trust takes time to build up and generally needs to be earned, rather than commanded.

Fundraising: the eternal question

Fundraising is too big a topic to cover pithily here. The main insights from participants are:

- Ensure you have a strategic approach, in your relationship building, needs analysis, strategy development, fund prioritisation, bid writing and approach to income generation;

- Income generation is more than bid writing: traded services, membership fees, commissions, sponsorship, tickets etc.

- Consider resources you already have within the partnership;

- Try to engender collective responsibility and ownership, so that resources and fundraising activity can be shared.

Good partnership composition: vital for what you want to achieve

"I'm proud of what we've done but now we need a step up – more influential people, more advocacy for reluctant schools."

"Commitment from partners is key. And in our CEP the steering group members could give capacity because of their NPO funding, but equally this meant we only had NPOs on the group in the first place, which has now been reviewed and broadened."

It is easy and understandable to want and need to start with A&C organisations and arts-advocate partners but CEPs report that many of them now need to develop new non-arts partnerships.

Getting partners: not always straightforward

"It helps that all our CEP partners are county-wide and that there isn't much competitive overlap between our fields of work."

"The small A&C organisations have had mixed engagement: some have been mentored, some have not engaged, some have seen the CEP as a cash cow."

"We've struggled to get big NPO participation – they think the CEP's a bit small fry, but they do participate in a small way."

CEPs need to have a strong, clear and well-articulated vision, and ideally a demonstrable track record, to bring in new partners.

But equally important is that they critically question how the CEP could realistically benefit those potential partners.

Collective impact ingredients

Respondents have suggested a revitalising of the Collective Impact approach and its ingredients:

- Common agenda;
- Shared measurement;
- Mutually reinforcing activities;
- Backbone support.

It takes time: invest time and money for the long term

"For us it has taken two years to build up the CEP planning/strategy, database, comms, contacts, school relationships."

Of course this might be interpreted as CEPs needing patience and long-term funding, but it also means that CEPs need to question what it would take for partners to keep supporting and participating in the CEP over time.

Benefits for partners

"If you asked for a benefits survey, I think all LCEPs would be able to articulate the benefits for themselves, as well as for CYP. They often forget the journeys they've travelled."

Related to time, CEPs need to consider carefully the benefits for CEP partners themselves: this often-voluntary contribution is sometimes largely overlooked.

Evaluation: not always popular but surprisingly important

Evaluation is perhaps a perennial challenge in cultural learning and too big a topic to discuss extensively here, but we present a summary of findings from the research.

"Can you see the evaluations? Yea! Nobody's ever asked to see them before!"

Evaluation is very significant to CEPs:

- It can be the shared measurement that leads to mutually reinforcing validation of why the CEP needs to be there at all;
- It is vital for much fundraising, income generation, partnership engagement and advocacy;
- It is an important part of a CEP's shared quality assurance and strategy development.

With the regards to the COT, some research participants think it is fantastic; other think it is extremely impractical to use, particularly in persuading schools to produce postcode data. This becomes particularly significant if it becomes a barrier for schools to participate in activity, which has been mentioned in a small number of cases.

As above, we would suggest that the COT is used alongside more outcomes evaluation methods and tools.

UNLOCK have been focussing on creative evaluation methods, and have found that, because participants are expressing themselves, the evaluator is more likely to get an authentic response from participants, as opposed to them telling the evaluator what they think they want to hear.

Festival Bridge and Arts Connect have commissioned Andrea Spain to undertake programme-level evaluation of CEPs through shared evaluation tools, which would be worth investigating.

CEP Coordinator

CEP coordinators, or producers in some cases, have been the backbone of many CEPs. Allowing CEPs to have this form of core funding, that can open up other partnership affordances by cajoling, servicing and supporting the partnership, has been a shrewd and strategic move.

"I believe that the role of the coordinator has proved vital. This role pulls the strategy and its implementation together. Coordinator activities and responses from the whole partnership. This is a role which ultimately brings the partnership to life. It recognises that the partnership has value."

"How has the partnership-working come about?"
"It's been about [the coordinator], who's a natural partnership worker."

"We're less effective and less clear in our direction since [the coordinator] left."

"Time is key challenge as arts organisations are hugely stretched already and so fully supported and funded CEP staffing is required to effectively administer activity and partnerships."

Some CEPs outside the East Midlands are trying to appoint shared coordinators, across two CEPs.

Challenges of having a coordinator

Paradoxically, some participants have suggested that, particularly when the coordinators are effective partnership workers, having a partnership coordinator can undermine the development of proactive partnership working from the partners themselves: essentially if the coordinator is doing it, they don't have to.

In some cases, participants suggest, the CEP essentially *becomes* the coordinator, in which case the partners might feel they're doing

partnership working, at least as far as ACE reporting goes, because of the coordinator; whilst the coordinator thinks the partners are in it for themselves, natural and inevitable though this may be.

"Equally, now core funding is going for the CEP we're trying to find ways of embedding CEP activity into partners' activity."

Participants have also described the challenges that coordinators have in being independent, particularly as they are generally hosted in/employed by the CEP lead partner.

"Coordinators aren't the only way of building infrastructure-type step-change within the CEP, and certainly not the only way of CEPs achieving step change – a focussed piece of work can also do this, like something around mental health, looked after children etc."

Lead organisation needs and challenges

Participants described the challenges of being a lead organisation if it means applying for funding on behalf of the CEP, where that means they cannot then apply to the same fund on behalf of themselves.

Participants described the importance of having a lead partner who has capacity to employ and ideally support CEP personnel.

Participants describe the importance of having the right lead organisation – with capacity and the right, non-self-interested approach to partnership.

Participants described the sometimes-formidable workload and stress of leading a CEP.

9. The Future for CEPs: analysis and recommendations

Our interpretation of the data and findings with recommendations for CEPs and for TMC

In the above, we have attempted to be as objective, factual and impartial as we reasonably can. In this final chapter, we offer both our analysis and some more subjective commentary. It is based only on what we have seen, heard and read as part of this evaluation, so if it draws on any misunderstandings on our part, we apologise.

CEP partnership strategy

Whilst they are different and individual, the main thing that all CEPs share is that they are partnerships, albeit of different forms. And so, as has emerged in this research, to be worthwhile and, in most cases, to be effective, CEPs must develop 'partnership affordances' – i.e. things that are afforded by partnership working – things that, in a particular given context, can often only be done through partnership.

Partnership affordances

It is these partnership affordances – the things that only a partnership makes possible – which is really the point of a partnership. Without partnership affordances, partnerships can be hard work with little dividend. Conversely, partnership affordances are often also synergistic – i.e. where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, that is, they can yield additional dividends to partners and stakeholders even without additional resource input.

Looking again at the data in Figure 30, one might reasonably hope that all partners in a productive partnership would agree that the partnership enabled things that the individual partners could not do alone – otherwise what's the point of the partnership? – but that appears not to be the case.

We recommend that CEPs should look hard at their potential partnership affordances and synergies because within them lies the power of the partnerships: the potential for them to be not just mutually beneficial vehicles for collective efficiency but fonts of cultural impact.

CEPs: Survey views on CEP impact
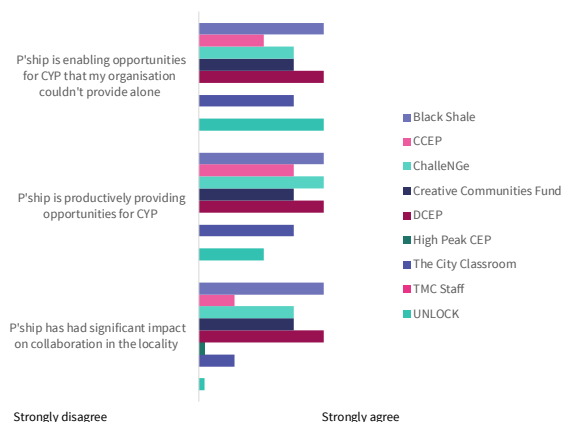
Partnership focus

At the beginning of this report, we distinguish between different partnership focusses:

- Convenience

- Communication

- Cooperation

- Community

- Collaboration

- Concomitance

- Incorporation

Although there appears to be a clear progression, perhaps even preference, cumulatively through this list, the reality is not so straightforward. For instance:

- In some cases, such as some of the more rural CEPs in the East Midlands, there isn't anything like the same infrastructure of established sizeable A&C organisations that might be found in some towns and cities – so there is very little capacity for often micro-organisations to contribute to the business planning and agreements sometimes required for Concomitance or Incorporation, and a Community or Collaboration approach may be more realistic, and ultimately effective.

- For example, Black Shale is probably more of a single organisation-led network than a partnership in the prevailing CEP sense but in the absence of anyone else to take on or be part of a more high-powered partnership (i.e. no big A&C infrastructure), it's not clear what would be more effective. The CEP has tried a more "executive approach but it felt disingenuous" and, either way, the current structure doesn't prevent the CEP being informed by the partners – i.e. the Community approach appears to work well for them.

Preference for Cooperation over Collaboration

Returning to partnership affordances, one thing we have noted is that in some CEPs there is much more focus on coordinating partners' existing work (Cooperation) than on attempting for the CEP to deliver its own work (Collaboration, Concomitance). Indeed some interviewees in these CEPs felt strongly that the CEP should *not* try to deliver its own work because this is what the partners are doing. This may be in the best interests of CEPs, partners and CYP in some cases: maybe if the CEP tried to take on more of a delivery role and fundraise for it, it would end up being a competitor to others and CEP engagement would falter.

And, it should be noted that ACE has clearly expected CEPs to aim for delivery – it is the final stage in a CEP's development trajectory in their reporting. This too can be unhelpful: if the direction of travel from the outset is set as moving towards CEP-based delivery, that can prohibit CEPs from seeing how much they could achieve simply by better coordinating their existing provision – i.e. by focussing on Cooperation.

Shared ambitious vision

But, in our estimation, the risk of a CEP focussing on Cooperation is that, whilst it might be targeting partners' provision towards areas of need, it is perhaps less likely to be coming up with its own compelling and ambitious vision: "let's make sure we're not duplicating our efforts or super-serving" is important but not perhaps particularly inspiring, nor is it likely to engage non-arts organisations in the CEP.

"It's vital to have partner buy-in to one collective vision, with individual agendas put aside for the good of the partnership and the offer for CYP."

It is this ambitious shared vision – "if we only came together, we could achieve *this*…" – particularly a vision that is bigger, or broader, or deeper than the vision and agenda of any of the individual

partners, that really mobilises people to join and commit to partnerships.

For partnerships to be sustained needs many things – funding, commitment, trust, activity, benefit to partners, perceivable impact etc. but the thing that seems to galvanise partnership working is these bigger visions, e.g.:

- tackling significant CYP challenges head-on, such as emotional well-being, knife crime etc.

- becoming a City of Culture (which has galvanised Hull, Southampton, Nottingham, Coventry and so on).

"The CEP seems successfully to have brought together a diverse (size and focus) set of partners around a shared regeneration vision."

Therefore, we recommend to CEPs that, yes, they should ensure that their own collective provision is well coordinated and communicated – but then they should look outwards to see how they can harness their specialisms for bigger, needs-informed ambitions.

Cross-arts working

Another related observation around partnership affordances is that there appears in some CEPs to be little, at least as far as we have been told, of cross-arts development across artform-specialist partners. (ChalleNGe certainly appears to be an exception to this; the cross-arts working is hugely appreciated by its Connecting Notts group of young people.) This is one of easiest-to-see affordances, and one that quite quickly becomes exciting, in an artistic sense.

Harnessing cultural learning for social impact

Perhaps the next easiest-to-see partnership affordance of CEPs is how they can bring together their collective specialisms, skills,

resources, venues, contacts and connectivity (which is much greater when assembled) to work towards extra-cultural agendas – particularly, in the case of children and young people this is often social and personal impact of CYP – the Virtual Arts School is a good example, as is DCEP's work with police commissioners and the Youth Alliance.

These agendas tend (a) to be beyond the specific focus of cultural organisations and (b) they are not agendas over which CEP partners need to compete – instead, they lift perspectives up and outwards.

These kind of agenda (tackling knife crime, teenage pregnancies, poor mental health etc.) are not quite the same as targeting cultural learning at areas of need. There has long been debate in the cultural sector between the instrumental and intrinsic value of culture – targeting cultural learning is perhaps an example of capitalising on the intrinsic. But both instrumental and intrinsic emphases are still essentially concerned with culture – they are culturally oriented. What World Pencil, as an organisation, tend to encourage is what we refer to as 'culture on purpose' – not focussing so much on this benefit of culture or that benefit, so much as looking at what needs and challenges exist outside the cultural sector, and then seeing how, if at all, culture can be harnessed to make a positive impact.

We recommend that CEPs look to identify how they can work towards culture-on-purpose objectives, goals and visions.

Engaging non-arts partners

As outlined above, several CEPs have said that engaging non-arts organisations has not been a particular strength, or a focus, but that it is now a concerted area for development.

Many CEPs can engage non-arts partners, beyond schools, when people in those organisations understand, believe in and possibly enjoy personally the impact of arts and culture – when they 'get it'. But it is difficult to engage these organisations otherwise.

Having culture-on-purpose goals, however, helps to engage some of these non-arts organisations in the work of a CEP. If a CEP is demonstrably and effectively working to tackle, for example, antisocial behaviour in a community, then it is a sensible proposition for crime commissioner's department to engage with it. If a CEP is working with mental health professionals to tackle poor mental health, it is more likely for it to be worthwhile for a CAMHS department to talk to it about joint fundraising.

These non-arts partnerships can be vital, yes, for bringing in funding for CEPs and cultural learning but, moreover, integrating them into other and wider societal networks and agendas – helping CEPs to grow, to become integral, and not just wanted but needed.

So we recommend that CEPs, having identified their partnership affordances, and possibly their culture-on-purpose agendas, work with non-arts partners on refining those agendas together and then, hopefully, developing new collaborations together.

Relatedly, we recommend that CEPs should consider trying to find cultural learning advocates from non-arts sectors to sit on or chair their boards. This has often been reported as being highly effective in encouraging CEP growth, in integrating with other sectors' agendas and in navigating competition and other sensitivities within the CEP.

Development and delivery

The analysis on page 40 touches on the debate between development and delivery, noting that some research participants have suggested that CEPs should, in some cases, have focussed more on development activities.

This is a difficult conjecture to call. For example, whilst it might be true that spending effort on advocating to local counsellors (development) could have greater net impact on funding than writing a delivery project funding bid (delivery) if the counsellors support local authority funding decisions, it is also true that the counsellors might be voted out the next May, and the effort would have been better spent writing bids.

Equally, there are times, as many CEPs have noted, when you need to do delivery activity precisely so as to achieve development outcomes. So whilst it might be true that training a school teacher cultural learning skills (development) could have more sustained outcomes than running a session for their students (delivery), it could be that the school teacher needs to see the session themselves (delivery) before deciding to participate in the training (development).

Either way, what is always true is that these things should be done *strategically*: there should always be a focus on development of strategic planning, behaviours and assets.

What is also perhaps true, in our observation, is that some people are more naturally inclined towards development – others towards delivery, and it is often quite quickly clear which way they are inclined. Both might be strategic, or not. The point is that, in the wash, CEPs need a combination of development and delivery activity to be effective, and each should perhaps be undertaken by people who are inclined towards that approach.

Equally, TMC will have amongst its staff people who are inclined towards development or delivery. It makes sense for both to be supporting CEPs in their respective areas of specialism.

We recommend that CEPs should strike a strategic balance between delivery and development in their strategy and planning, and that TMC should look at how its staff support these two often distinct approaches.

We recommend that CEPs and TMC together should look at how CEPs can develop stronger strategic behaviours and assets across their partnerships.

(To clarify, this is not to suggest that either CEPs are unstrategic – rather that they need strategic behaviours throughout, and these can developed as well as recruited in.)

CEP futures

Of all the questions we asked CEPs and other investments, the question about the future sustainability of the partnership met with the most mixed responses, as Figure 27 on page 44 shows.

Some CEPs have funding secured for the medium term. Clearly some CEPs are looking at NPO funding. Some are looking at sharing the cost of a coordinator between various partner organisations. Some are looking at alternative sources of income – commissions, memberships etc. CEPs are being resourceful about funding: some will be successful, others less so.

Perhaps a different question would be what would need to happen for CEPs to be sustained, at least for a time, without funding – specifically, if they are not useful enough to their partners for those partners to want to sustain them without funding, maybe that needs to be addressed first.

What would be lost if CEPs folded?

Local knowledge, trust, relationships, actual and potential partnership affordances, infrastructure – these things can take years to build but very little to bring down. In the case of CEPs, this development has taken some seven years.

At their strongest, CEPs bring together otherwise disconnected provision, they find efficiencies within a financially stretched sector, they sporn collaborations which create things that couldn't otherwise have been created, they bring significant funds and entrepreneurialism into cultural learning, and they rally and galvanise people and organisations into harnessing cultural learning for significant and profound impact for children and young people, particularly where it's most needed.

Of course, it is many of these strongest CEPs which are likely to be well set up and well supported so as to grow, develop and be sustained.

What of the others? At their less strong, given the above list of CEP achievements, you could say that these CEPs just aren't quite there yet – they simply need more support, time, perhaps a few new people, and they should get there. The main thing that would be lost, then, if support for CEPs were lost, would most probably be the capacity and collateral that *these* CEPs have built up (rather than the stronger ones, which are less vulnerable), and their potential to develop into hyper-effective impactful CEPs.

As far as we've been able to ascertain, there is good willing in all of the East Midlands CEPs and CEPs are coalitions of the willing: this is a strong foundation.

The question is then, if it's just a matter of time and further investment for all CEPs to have the chance to excel, who has the time and investment and are these CEPs the most effective way of using those resources? This is as much a question for TMC, as it looks

forward to hubs and other partnerships, as for the CEPs themselves and their partners.

Making the most of 2022

2022 is an opportunity for TMC and the East Midlands CEPs, and other partnerships, to make the most of the remaining Bridge resource.

In this report, we have analysed what individual CEPs say they need and what CEPs have shared in how those needs are met (Chapter 8). This chapter also reports what of TMC's support CEPs value most.

We recommend that TMC should draw on these analyses to work closely with CEPs and other investments to identify how these needs might be met using available resources across the CEP portfolio and, where appropriate, in other Bridges and CEPs. TMC in particular, we are told by CEPs, has a wide pool of skills to offer CEPs in their various areas of need and capacity development. Now is the time to deploy those skills.

Recommendations for TMC

At the same time, of course, TMC needs to factor in how CEPs might feature in its own strategy and fundraising, which will clearly have an impact on the above, as it will on TMC's on-going support for CEPs and other cultural learning partnerships.

We recommend to TMC that, to build on what it has developed in the CEPs and other partnerships and minimise the risk of losing this, moving forward, it should consider including in its regional cultural learning development role the securing of at the least a 'bare bones' support offer for cultural learning partnerships. Of course, it may hopefully be able to offer more, and in certain cases it may make particular strategic sense to TMC to do so, but the following 'bare

bones' offer should also result in reputational and strategic dividends for TMC, as well as the partnerships.

Future CEP support programme: 'bare bones' offer

The following is based largely on what CEPs have said they value most, would really struggle without, cannot see who else would provide, and think TMC does well.

Active partner

Where it makes sense for TMC's agendas and focus, TMC should continue to be an active partner in CEPs and other partnerships.

Partnership development and strategy support, by experts

TMC's support in developing CEPs is widely valued. Where it can continue to offer expert support, potentially on a consultancy basis, it appears this would be valued by CEPs. This might focus on strategy development, partnership development, partnership planning, and, particularly, doing so whilst bringing in insights from a wider geography.

Providing tools and techniques

TMC should continue to provide CEPs and other partnerships with tools and frameworks, such as it is likely to encounter or develop as part of its wider strategy. This might include tools for evaluation, planning, consultation, impact design etc.

CEP exchange

If, as indicated, TMC continues to have a regional perspective and role, it is likely to make sense for it, and CEPs/other partnerships, if TMC continues the much-valued function of supporting exchange between CEPs. If need be, this could be less extensive than previously, but it is a role that should be fulfilled. Essentially, CEPs

between them can work out solutions to most of each other's challenges but, at least in the medium term, they are likely to need a regional player to support them in that exchange.

Landscape insights

Again, in TMC's future regional capacity, it will be afforded a broader regional perspective than many CEPs have access to, particularly those working hyper-locally. Where possible, TMC should share this set of insights, including around regional funding opportunities with CEPs and other partnerships.

Advocacy

Similarly, where TMC is able to advocate for CEPs' and other partnerships' work as part of its work in a regional role, this will be something that it can be hard for locally-sited partnerships to do otherwise.

"We have a long history with TMC, they have shown great belief in our work and been our number one champions. We would really hope that our work with them will continue. We have all learned so much working together"

Epilogue

In conducting this research, we have been granted the opportunity to discuss in some depth, and with a wide range of people and partnerships, the often remarkable work that goes on under the banner of cultural education partnerships. The affordances that these partnerships offer, which have been explored in this decade and that, with these funds and programmes and those, have been shown time after time to have the potential, or the current capacity, to make real, often startling impact on the lives of children and young people, and those around them, particularly where there are greatest and most unrecognised needs.

Having worked with cultural education partnerships for some time, it seems that to us that these, in many cases, largely voluntary but highly impactful initiatives, are having their founding sources of support questioned just a little before time.

Therefore, it has been a welcome opportunity to be part of considering how that support could, might and should, be sustained.

The touch paper is lit.

10. Glossary of Abbreviations

A&C	Arts and Culture, encompassing visual and performing arts, crafts, heritage, museums, literature etc.
ACE	Arts Council England, England's primary arts and culture funder, a non-departmental body of the UK government and independent charity
Bridge	Bridge Organisation. ACE has appointed in each English region a designated Bridge Organisation, which is funded to build bridges between cultural and education sectors. Part of this remit is to support CEPs.
Captivate	Nottinghamshire CEP (Ashfield and Mansfield)
CAMHS	Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services, specialist local area services, part of the National Health Service, that support referrals related to mental health
CATA	The former organisation Children and the Arts
CCEP	Chesterfield Cultural Education Partnership
CEP	Cultural Education Partnership. In this report we refer to the capitalised 'Cultural Education Partnerships' (or CEPs), meaning those partnerships supported by ACE Bridge Organisations with ACE funding as part of ACE's Cultural Education Challenge, and to lower-case 'cultural education partnerships', meaning partnerships established for cultural learning and cultural education in general, including CEPs.
ChalleNGe	Nottingham City CEP
COT	Collective Outcomes Tool – a tool designed to capture granular and inter-operable data related to cultural learning opportunities, used by TMC and its investee organisations

CPD	Continuing (or sometimes Continuous) Professional Development, which might include training, mentoring, individual research and learning, professional qualifications, group reflection sessions etc.
CYP	Children and young people
DCEP	Derby Cultural Education Partnership
EHC Plan	Education and Healthcare Plan, formerly Statements of Special Needs, maintained by schools and other authorities in relation to CYP with particular needs
FSM	Free School Meals, a per-pupil government-funded education subsidy based on income deprivation, providing free school meals.
IDACI	Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index – an aggregate deprivation measure maintained by the ONS that indicates how levels of income deprivation in an area affect children and young people
IMD	Indices of Multiple Deprivation – an aggregation of the several indices of deprivation maintained by the ONS for areas across the UK
LAC	Looked after children – those children who are looked after and supported by the state and local authorities for a variety of reasons, including children and young people in care
LCEP	Local Cultural Education Partnership. This is the same as CEP. LCEP is used in some locations.
Match	Funding sought to complement or match a particular investor's investment. In this report, 'match' generally refers to funding CEPs have sought to match the investment TMC makes on behalf of ACE.
NPO	National Portfolio Organisation – an organisation in receipt of regular core funding from ACE, as part of the largest part of ACE's investment portfolio

ONS	Office of National Statistics
PI	Partnership Investment, in this report referring to the investments made by TMC, generally on behalf of ACE, into CEPs and other initiatives
PP	Pupil Premium, a per-pupil government-funded education subsidy, with eligibility based on multiple categories, including FSM, providing relatively significant funding based on eligible pupil numbers, although funding does not need to be spent exclusively on PP-eligible CYP within the school. %PP is used as a per-school indicator of the levels of need and challenge amongst the school's student population.
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit, organisations responsible for care and education of CYP with particularly challenging needs, often including those excluded from mainstream schooling
ROI	Return on Investment
SSO	Sector Support Organisation, a part of ACE's NPO portfolio where SSO grant-recipient organisations are funded to support other organisations in the cultural sector
START	A specific TMC investment in a partnership originally hosted by Children and the Arts
The City Classroom	Leicester and Leicestershire CEP
TMC	The Mighty Creatives, who are, amongst other things, the ACE Bridge Organisation for the East Midlands region.
UNLOCK	Northamptonshire Cultural Education Partnership
Virtual School	A multi-discplinary network of support agencies and individuals (e.g. educators, social workers, health visitors, GPs, local authorities) who work together to support looked-after children

11.Research methodology

World Pencil Ltd were commissioned in November 2021 to undertake an evaluation for The Mighty Creatives of the impact of their investment portfolio.

Aims of the research

The aims of this research, from the commissioned brief, are:

- To review the reach and impact of the Cultural Life Fund – funded through Partnership Investment, drawing on partnership reports, ACE evaluations for context, data from the Collective Outcomes Tool and evaluation sessions with funded partnerships.
- To review delivery and impact against programme aims.
- To present insight into the growth, development, challenges and changes of the partnerships invested in.
- To offer a series of recommendations for the future development of the existing partnerships.
- Create a partnership framework to support the development of future place-based partnerships.

Research methodology

This research was undertaken through a mixed methodology comprising:

- Background research and data analysis, including:

  o Documentation on TMC's investments, including funding agreements, fundee monitoring reporting, websites, COT data;

  o Self-evaluation forms submitted by funded organisations;

  o TMC's collective data sets and reporting;

  o Funding programme documentation, planning etc.;

  o TMC and national Artsmark data;

  o Public data from ONS and other government agencies (deprivation indices, post codes, school data etc);

  o TMC's reports from The Audience Agency Mosaic tools.

- 24 semi-structured 45—90-minute telephone/Teams interviews with CEP leaders, chairs and administrators, representatives of TMC staff and other Bridges (Festival and Arts Connect);

- An online survey distributed to all CEP leads, who were asked to distribute it to all CEP partners.

Research questions

1. **CYP impact**: What has been the impact of PIs on children and young people? Including:
   a. Participant numbers and characteristics;
   b. Evaluated outcomes;
   c. Arts Award;
   d. Fulfilment of PI targets and objectives.

2. **Partners impact**: What has been the impact on partner organisations, including:
   a. Support for cultural learning delivery;
   b. Developmental step change and capacity building?

3. **Partnerships impact**: What has been the impact on partnerships, partnership-working and collaboration for cultural learning?

4. **Partnership development**: How have CEPs and other cultural learning partnerships developed hitherto, including:
   a. Initiation
   b. Needs analysis and focus
   c. Involving young people
   d. Composition including different sectors
   e. Development journey
   f. Strategy
   g. Activity
   h. Maintenance
   i. Fundraising
   j. Sustainability without TMC £ investment

5. **Ingredients**: Which factors and ingredients have been most significant to CYP-based, partner-based and partnership-based impact, including:
   a. Funding and financial investment;
   b. Other support from TMC;
   c. Composition of the partnership;
   d. Strategy;
   e. Others;
   f. With hindsight, what changes would have resulted in greater net impact?

6. **PI aims**: Drawing on the above, how has PI fulfilled its programme-level objectives?

7. **Framework**: What framework and recommendations would be most productive in supporting future cultural learning partnerships?

Survey participation

CEP / investment	Interviews	Survey responses
Black Shale CEP	Yes	Yes
CCEP	Yes	Yes
DCEP	Yes	Yes
Derby Virtual School		
UNLOCK, Northants CEP	Yes	Yes
Captivate CEP	Yes	
Lincs CEP	Yes	
Leicester CEP	Yes	Yes
High Peak CEP	Yes	Yes
ChalleNGe CEP	Yes	Yes
Creative Communities Fund	Yes	Yes
TMC Staff	Yes	Yes
START programme	Yes	
Young Empowerment Fund / Youth Cultural Life Fund		
Other Bridges	Yes	
Total	24	16

We held a semi-structured focus group with 10 young people from the Connecting Notts group.

Semi-structured interview questions

1. How has the partnership **developed** during the time you've been involved and what, with hindsight, would you change for it to have developed more productively?

2. How has TMC's partnership **investment made a real difference** to the lives of children and young people?

3. Which **factors** of the investment contribute to immediate and long-term impact in access for CYP to arts and culture?

4. Where and what **step change** has been achieved and what factors contributed to the step change?

5. Where have new **non-arts partners** been brought into the investments and what is the long-term impact is on those partners?

6. How valuable has been the **non-financial component of TMC's support**, such as staff support?