



Evaluation Report Executive Summary

(activity up to June 2022)



Introduction

This Executive Summary is based on a full report about the programme developed through the Brighton & Hove ABCD Plan for Cultural Recovery¹, which has, as its key aim: ‘To create a cultural sector in Brighton & Hove that is more inclusive, collaborative and sustainable than pre-Covid.’

The programme has a set of overarching aims which have initially been met through three different strands of work; Enliven Brighton (using arts and culture to animate the city centre), Engine Room (training and development for local creatives) and Cultural Communities (arts and culture in local neighbourhoods). This Executive Summary outlines the learning points and recommendations that emerged through the analysis of evidence, as is presented in the full report. The learning points include positive examples of things that have worked well and could be usefully continued, as well as those which indicate potential areas to be refined or changed.

¹The Plan and the full Evaluation Report can be viewed at: <https://cultureinourcity.com/abcd/>

Project Summary

The Brighton & Hove ABCD Cultural Recovery Programme (ABCD) has evolved through a common ambition to counteract the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the cultural sector in Brighton & Hove. It has also been fuelled by a sense of there being a need to act to address the longer-term inequalities in the sector and society. Founder members, representing some of the cultural networks in the city, were aware that partnership working and involving freelancers would be important to the effectiveness of the programme.

Brighton & Hove City Council and Arts Council England (ACE) were involved early on, ensuring resources to pay people involved. In addition, local National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) and successful ACE Cultural Recovery Fund (CRF3) applicants contributed to paying freelancers to be involved. This was crucial in terms of being able to create opportunities for paid involvement for a wide range of people working in the creative and cultural sector.

Whilst Brighton & Hove Council have supported the programme, financially and otherwise, the council has not tried to claim the programme as their own but has supported the plan in ways that have encouraged further support. The ABCD Governance Group has made strategic decisions about the structure of the programme and working groups were recruited through an open process to take forward the priority areas.

The content of the programme has been developed and supported through a carefully considered and orchestrated governance structure, with working groups making decisions about the three different programme strands². The working groups have developed their roles organically, which has led them to all be quite different in terms of how they operate and function. Although the groups' roles were autonomous and flexible there was specific expertise in the room for all working groups, relating to the focus of that working group.

² All strands and projects are detailed on the website: <https://cultureinourcity.com/abcd/>



Project Summary

Partner organisations and practitioners benefitted from the opportunities presented by being part of a wider programme, not least because of the dynamic interplay there has been between different projects and programme strands. This interplay has also led to a programme that, whilst having distinct strands, has also been recognisable as one consistent programme, delivered through four phases. This evaluation focuses on Phase 2 and 3.

PHASE 1 Apr-Sep 20

Initial consultation with 100+ creative workers in the city

PHASE 2 Feb-Sep 21

Working group recruitment and project development

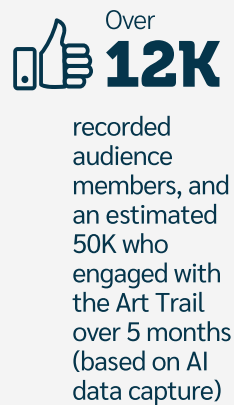
PHASE 3 Oct 21-June 22

Projects delivered followed by a Review & Reset meeting

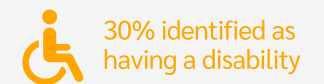
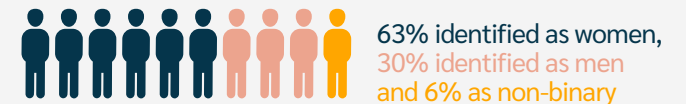
PHASE 4 Jul-Dec 22

The remaining two ABCD strands will begin

Across the programme there have been³:



Of those employed (based on surveys returned):



³ See Appendix 1: ABCD Facts & Figures

Findings

The overarching aim of the programme, ‘To create a cultural sector in Brighton & Hove that is more inclusive, collaborative and sustainable than pre-Covid’ has clearly been met through a carefully devised programme, with enough structure for it to address its aims and enough flexibility to be responsive, enabling it to be inclusive.



Findings

The ABCD programme strands have met their specific aims and in doing so have addressed the key issues and challenges that Covid-19 imposed upon communities, as identified through research at The Centre for Cultural Value:

Audiences: While the shift to digital transformed cultural experiences for those already engaged with cultural activities, it failed to diversify cultural audiences.

Workforce: The UK's cultural sector is undoubtedly at an inflection point and facing imminent burnout alongside significant skills and workforce gaps.

Organisations: In light of the pandemic and Black Lives Matter, many cultural organisations re-evaluated their purpose and their relevance to local communities, which was complemented by increased local engagement⁴.

The programme has addressed these points through nurturing, supporting, employing and diversifying the cultural and creative workforce, extending audience diversity - not least through work in the public realm which is free of charge but also free from any potential threshold anxiety - and encouraging networks and collaboration to flourish.

⁴ See Walmsley et al. Culture in Crisis: impacts of Covid-19 on the UK Cultural Sector and where we go from here. Centre for Cultural Value. 2022. <https://www.culturehive.co.uk/CV/resources/culture-in-crisis-impacts-of-covid-19/>

The extent to which people are keen to see this work continue has been evidenced by audience feedback, for example:

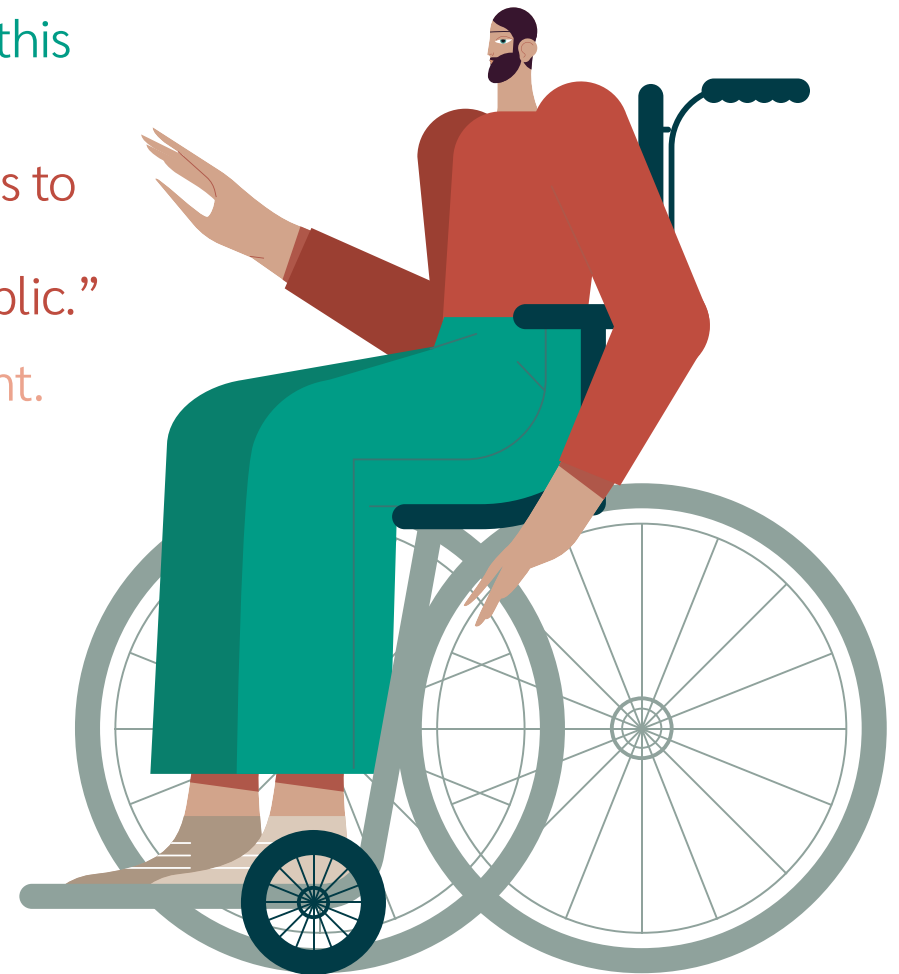
“Can we have more of this kind of thing?”

“Would be great for this to be a regular thing. Bringing art to the public.”

“Permanent. permanent. permanent.”

“More events please.”

(Enliven Survey, May 2022)



Findings



One of the key characteristics of the programme, which has contributed to its success, has been the centrality of collaboration. Another successful and effective strategy has been building on the assets of communities, through working together with local organisations, creatively and collaboratively.

There has been valuable learning, articulated by the Governance Group, about how to drive forwards the programme and overcome challenges, through working in partnership with wider networks. The Governance Group has recognised how valuable it is to work with specific partners with relevant expertise, understanding and connections, to make meaningful things happen. This in turn has exemplified the value there is in working flexibly with partners and responding to and accommodating different needs, situations, and timelines.

It is evident that the Brighton & Hove ABCD Plan for Cultural Recovery has been effective in addressing its aims so far and what's more, it has done so responsively and swiftly.

The process has generated useful learning for the ABCD partners and the council. For example, there has been important learning for the council in terms of its approach to working strategically with the wider sector.

Another area of learning has been articulated by Enliven partners the Brilliant Brighton Business Improvement District, who, whilst quick to express how excellent different events have been, also stated that they would have preferred to have more involvement in the decision-making process. One important strand of this learning has been differences between working practices in different sectors and that it is essential to set aside time at the outset to recognise and appreciate these differences. Sharing of policies might also be useful in ensuring a common understanding of relationships and roles of different partners involved.

Findings

Whilst the programme has met its aims in ways that can be sustained and built upon, it is apparent that there are several key areas for future focus, some of which will be supported by the two remaining strands of the original ABCD Plan. For example, one future focus will be about Space to Grow, addressing the need for creative space in the city within which artists and cultural organisations can develop and sustain their practice.

Another area that is similarly being pursued is the initial research project for the Creative Worker Income Guarantee scheme. The need to pay freelancers for their time is a key area of success within this programme, as it is essential for freelancers to be paid to engage in strategic long-term decision-making processes if those processes are to become more inclusive and representative of broader perspectives than just those of PAYE staff from existing organisations.

Other learning coming from the work is about diversity. The programme has managed to support the development of strands of work that have successfully diversified participants and audiences engaging but there is still work to do. Key learning has been about the advantages of working with partners who have expertise and networks in different contexts. There has also been learning about the need to consider 'how to implement anti-racist practice in a project that has many stake holders.' (Governance Group interview, January 2022.) Another focus for the middle and longer term, is about cultivating more diverse leadership.

There has been important learning about access, as the Alternative Tours work with disabled people has highlighted issues of access around the city, which will be reported directly to the council.

Key learning that might successfully inform future work has been articulated by the Enliven working group, when they acknowledged and articulated how a diverse leadership group nurtures a more equitable space in which people can be their authentic selves and contribute in more authentic ways, thereby evolving a more diverse programme.



Recommendations and Ways Forward

The realisation of the programme aims has generated significant impact and cultural change, not least through the learning that has surfaced. This learning has influenced strategic approaches across partnerships and informed practice across organisations.

The learning-based outcomes from this programme to date, as evidenced throughout the main report and summarised in the previous section of this summary, are ripe to build upon in future, alongside the planned continuation of the programme.



Recommendations and Ways Forward

Governance, Structure and Working Groups

Whilst the working group model has clearly provided a useful structure for more equitable decision making, which is flatter and less hierarchical than many others, ideas have been suggested during reflective conversations about how this model might be improved or built upon. For example, it would be useful to anticipate that working groups for different types of projects would take on different shapes and roles, as they need to develop in bespoke ways in response to the different needs of different projects. Furthermore, the working group structure and processes may have benefited from more lead in time, clarity around roles and greater agency for the working group Chairs.

Diversity and Diverse Leadership

Whilst this programme has been positive in the ways in which it has centred on diversity and developed diverse leadership, there has been key learning which can be expanded upon across the partnerships, such as at the council, to ensure more diverse leadership as a norm across the area. Alongside this, some people have indicated a need to ensure that anti-racist practice is similarly commonplace in Brighton & Hove.

Legacy

It is clear there is a keen appetite, amongst artists, organisations, participants, audiences and businesses, for the work developed through this programme to continue. Alongside this there is a clear need to develop a way of holding the work, through a non-hierarchical structure, based on the model developed within this programme, which can ensure a cohesive approach that makes the most of potential partnerships and connections. There has also been significant feedback suggesting that an important part of the programme's wider legacy, will be to share how this programme has evolved and what has happened as a result.

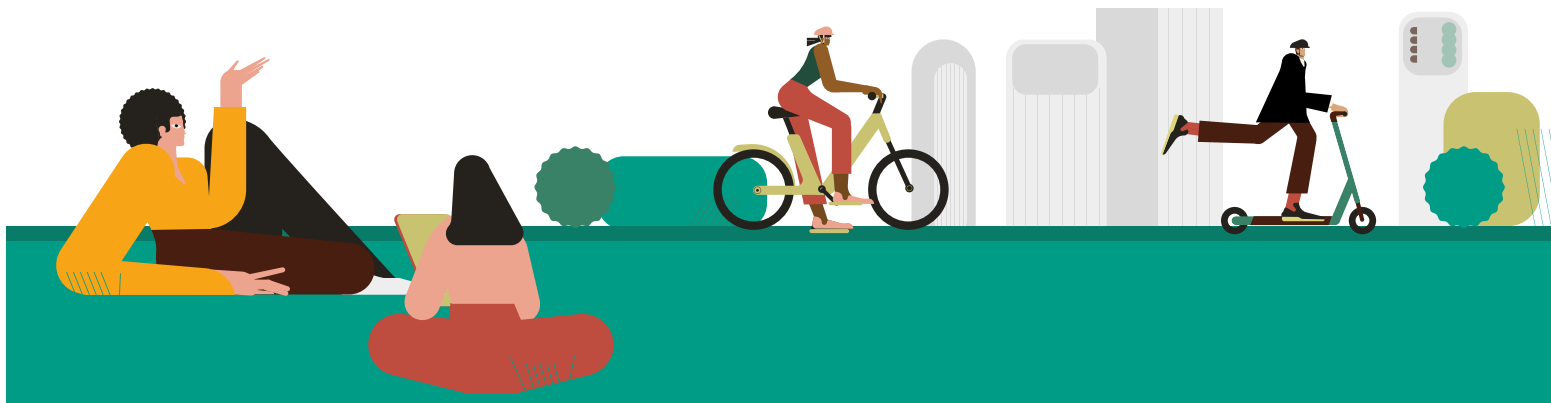
Future phases

The Brighton & Hove ABCD Cultural Recovery Programme has resulted in a wide range of positive outcomes and has cemented a set of partnerships that promise to deliver a hugely beneficial programme in future.

The learning from this programme indicates that the next phase of the work is key in terms of building upon the work that has happened, to evolve an effective way of maintaining the connectivity and sense of a common vision amongst and across a wide range of partners.

As the work continues to develop, not least through the future focus on Space to Grow and Creative Worker Income Guarantee, the learning from this phase will usefully reinforce the structures that support the programme's activities.

The opportunity for Brighton & Hove's cultural and creative sector to imagine what happens next, will be key to informing the detail of the programme's future evolution, as this will ensure that it continues to be directed through a non-hierarchical structure and process.



Priority Areas for 2022/23

In June 2022 an open meeting was held, - attended by 50 people from across the sector - to reflect on the ABCD programme so far, but mainly to look forwards. Out of this has come the following priority areas for the remainder of 2022/23 and beyond.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL VALUE

VISION: In 2030 arts and culture in Brighton & Hove and is recognised locally, nationally and internationally as a key contributor to the city's economy, a driver for inward investment and a means to sharing our creativity and values around the world.

- What kind of data/evidence do we need to be collecting to back up what we all already know, that Brighton & Hove's cultural sector is essential to making the city an attractive place to live, work and do business?
- How do we continue to support the rights of and conditions for Freelancers?
- How do we improve access to funding and opportunities?
- What is the particular role of the city's Festivals and Fringe?

CREATIVE & CULTURAL SPACE

VISION: In 2030 Brighton & Hove's cultural spaces from grassroots venues to historic institutions are protected for future generations and where possible in community ownership. To support this there will be an active ongoing dialogue between the cultural sector and developers in the city, which sees cultural space as an essential part of any future plans.

- How can we influence planning policy to make cultural space an essential requirement?
- With the reality of hyper gentrification in Brighton & Hove, how do we address the threats to independent cultural space in the city?

INCLUSION AND ANTI-RACISM

VISION: In 2030 climate justice and social justice will be brought together through mutually accountable practices and approaches. Brighton & Hove's cultural sector will lead on anti-racist practices in the city in tune with ecological sustainability. Access – for artists and audiences – will be central to policy and practice.

In 2030 Brighton & Hove will be a national and international leader in enabling equitable and flourishing conditions for women and non-binary people's participation in cultural production.

- What new kinds of practices and knowledge would enable the sector to work in this way?
- How do we work collectively to ensure that a necessary concern for equity and safety also enables an open and radical sensibility for experimentation?

YOUNG PEOPLE

VISION: In 2030 the cultural sector in Brighton & Hove will be accessible for young people regardless of circumstances or educational opportunity.

- How do we make culture accessible in its own right for young people, as well as make the sector an attractive and sustainable option for their future careers?
- How could the Fringe and Festivals nurture and seek talent more widely - providing support for an ecology of creative practice?

CULTURAL LEADERSHIP & DECISION MAKING

VISION: In 2030 Brighton & Hove's cultural sector demonstrates leadership in distributed and democratic ways with thriving and risk taking organisations working hand-in-hand with independent/freelance cultural activists; artists, producers & organisers. Together they are making culture with communities across the city, prioritising those who experience marginalisation. Cultural decision making in Brighton & Hove is inclusive, equitable, accountable, transparent, driven by a widely adopted Brighton & Hove cultural manifesto / cultural values that enshrines the way that we work together.

- What are barriers to diversifying leadership in the city and how might we overcome them?
- What might a new structure for cultural decision making at a city look like and how might it operate?
- What would you include in Brighton & Hove's cultural manifesto / set of cultural values?

Appendix 1 ABCD Income, Expenditure & Engagement

FUNDS RAISED

Phase 1, Consultation & creation of ABCD Plan (Apr-Sep 21)

Arts Council England (ACE)		£20,000	
Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC)		£8,000	
What Next (WN)		£1,000	
			£29,000

Phase 2, Planning, Fundraising & Project Development (Feb-Sept 21)

Brighton & Hove City Council		£31,400	
Brighton Dome & Festival		£10,000	
Contributions from National Portfolio Orgs (funded by Arts Council England)		£3,800	
			£45,200

Phase 3, Project Delivery (Oct 21 - June 22)

Welcome Back Fund (WBF)	Project work across all three strands	£196,000	
Arts Council England	Enliven Brighton	£49,000	
Brilliant Brighton Business Improvement District (BID)	Enliven Brighton	£30,000	
Pebble Trust	Enliven Brighton	£5,000	
Cause 4	Fundraising strategy w/s	£2,680	
Safer Streets / Police & Crime Commission (PCC)	Safe & Equal Brighton	£20,500	
Cultural Recovery Fund Round 3 contributions from cultural organisations (CRF3)	ABCD Freelancer reps & leadership support	£13,250	
Brighton & Hove City Council	Project management, Working Group costs, evaluation	£43,100	
			£359,530

Phase 4, Continued research & activity, future planning (Jul-Dec 22)

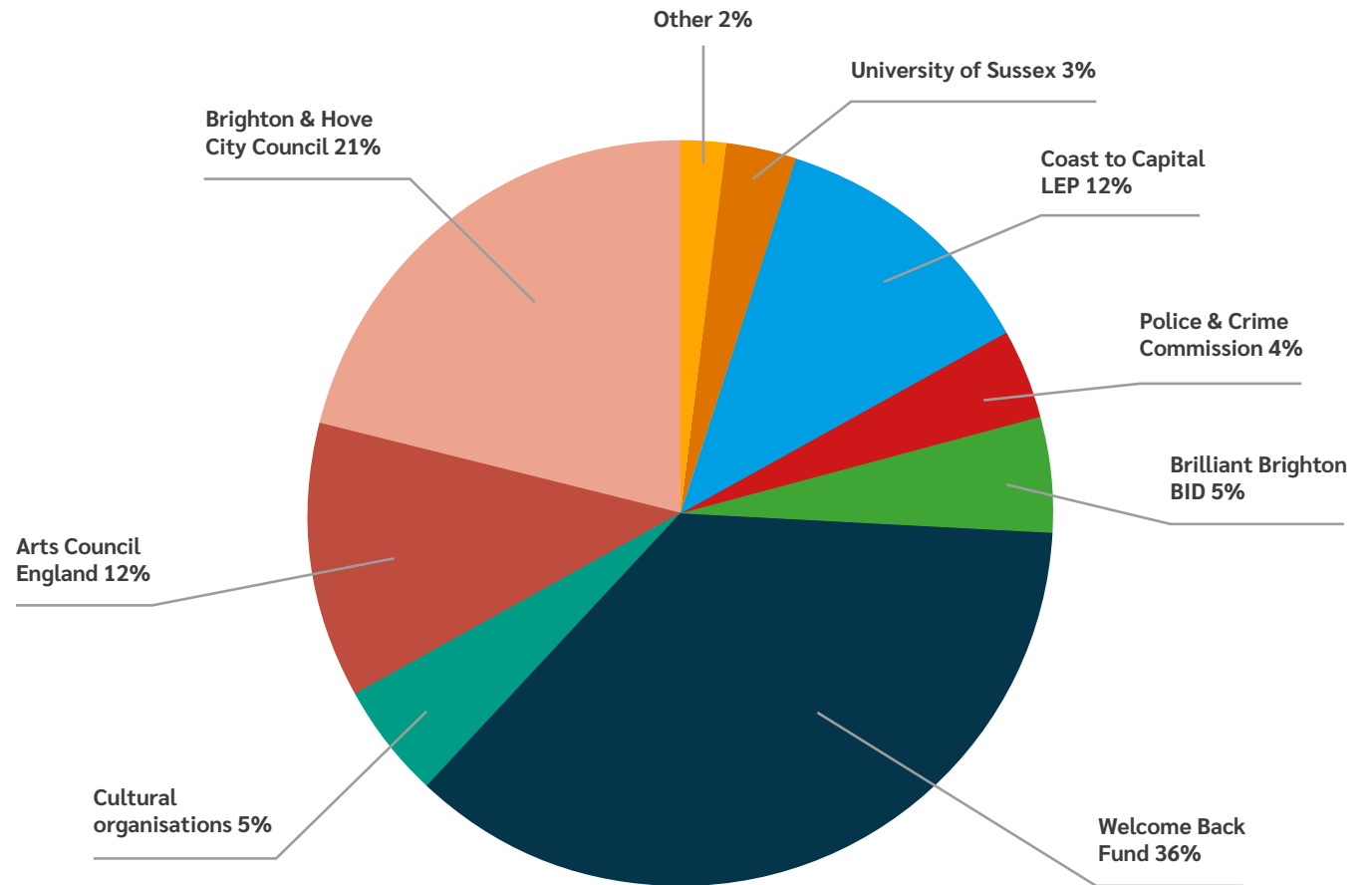
Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership (C2C)	Space to Grow	£68,900	
University of Sussex	Creative Worker Income Guarantee initial research	£15,000	
Brighton & Hove City Council	Project management, Working Group costs, Space to Grow	£30,950	
			£114,850

TOTAL			£548,580
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Appendix 1 ABCD Income, Expenditure & Engagement

INCOME SUMMARY:

Brighton & Hove City Council	£113,450
Arts Council England	£69,000
Cultural organisations	£27,050
Welcome Back Fund	£196,000
Brilliant Brighton BID	£30,000
Police & Crime Commission	£20,500
Coast to Capital LEP	£68,900
University of Sussex	£15,000
Other	£8,680



Appendix 1 ABCD Income, Expenditure & Engagement

ABCD PROJECT BUDGETS

	Funder	
Fundraising workshops	Cause 4	£2,680
Third Thursdays	WBF, ACE, BID, Pebble Trust	£82,000
Enliven Art Trail	WBF	£23,000
Alternative Tours	WBF	£23,650
Enliven Brighton marketing & evaluation	ACE, BID	£11,000
Culture in Our City website update	WBF	£8,000
Igniter Events Series	WBF	£18,000
Meanwhile Space seminars	WBF	£15,000
Leadership Support Programme	WBF	£23,000
Brighton Creative Stories campaign	WBF	£23,000
Community-led Events	WBF	£15,000
Marketing	WBF	£10,000
Safe & Equal Brighton	PCC	£20,500
Space to Grow	C2C, BHCC	£74,000
Creative Worker Income Guarantee	University of Sussex	£15,000
Phase 1 freelancer payments	ACE, BHCC, WN	£29,000
Other freelancer costs (recruitment etc)	BHCC	£5,000
Working Group Freelancers (Mar21 - Dec22)	BHCC, ACE, NPOs, CRF3	£73,200
Project Management (Mar21 - Dec22)	BHCC, ACE, WBF, C2C	£77,200

Appendix 1 ABCD Income, Expenditure & Engagement

NUMBERS ENGAGED

Project	Artists / Creatives (employed)	Participants (sector)	Audiences / Participants (public)
Consultation phase	100	-	-
Recruitment panels	5	-	-
Working Groups	27	-	-
Fundraising strategy w/s	4	85	-
Third Thursdays	109	-	11,183
Enliven Art Trail	8	8	53,000
Alternative Tours	20	-	347
Culture in Our City website update	2	-	-
Igniter Events Series	20	172	-
Creativeity & Meanwhile Use seminars	10	96	-
Regroup 'n' Renew Leadership Support Programme	5	27	-
Brighton Creative Stories campaign	2	5	-
Community-led Events Development	5	-	495
Safe & Equal Brighton	7	42	-
	324	435	65,025
25 new commissions			
24 events			
48 Workshops			
30 participants paid a per diem			
27 volunteers			
Marketing:			
Social media reach (direct)	60K impressions		
Social media reach (via VisitBrighton)	70K impressions		
Culture in Our City website	2500 users have visited the site since the new version launched in March 2022-to June 2022		

Appendix 2 ABCD Working Groups

The original make-up of the first three working groups (recruited March 2021) was as follows. Due to the pressures of reopening following lockdown, some members were not able to take up an active role and stepped back.

ENLIVEN BRIGHTON

Co-Chairs:

Tarik Elmoutawakil, Marlborough Productions

David Sheppard, Marlborough Productions

Members:

Sarah Davies, Creative Workspace Network (previously at Phoenix Arts Space)

Kim Jack-Riley, Tea & Grazing Ltd

Sally Oakenfold, The Hope and Ruin

Tristan Sharpes, dreamthinkspeak

Simon Vaughn, Creative Giants

THE ENGINE ROOM

Co-Chairs:

Erin Barnes, Independent Producer

Marina Norris, Cultural Baggage, What Next?

Brighton & Hove

Members:

Philippa Aldrich, Future Perfect Company

Julian Caddy, Brighton Fringe

Joe Shelton, University of Brighton

THE CREATIVE COMMUNITIES NETWORK

Co-Chairs:

Cath James, South East Dance

John Varah, Same Sky

Members:

Nicky Crabb, Little Green Pig

Faith Dodkins, The Spire / freelance

Lex Hollingworth & Paul Musselwhite, Komedia (stepped back)

Terri-Sian Lugosi, EPIC / freelance

Will Mytum, BOAT (stepped back)

Jess Starns, Dyspraxic Me

Jonathan Suffolk, freelance

ABCD GOVERNANCE GROUP

Co-Chairs:

Donna Chisholm, Co-Chair, Brighton & Hove City Council

Kate O’Riordan, Co-Chair, University of Sussex (joined Nov 2021)

Members:

Working Group Co-Chairs

Ian Baird, Event Producers Independent Committee (EPIC)

Louise Blackwell, LOOKOUT Brighton, What Next Brighton & Hove

Andrew Comben, Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival, Arts & Creative Industries Commission

Synthia Griffin, Brighton & Hove City Council

Jane McMorrow, Creative Futures, Arts, Health & Wellbeing Network

Report by Dr Roz Stewart-Hall

