

HEIF case studies 2021: Arts specialists cluster

The Research England-funded Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) supports higher education providers to exchange knowledge with business, public and third sector organisations, community bodies and the wider public, increasing economic and societal benefits from their work.

The case studies below demonstrate the ways that English higher education providers have used HEIF to support knowledge exchange activities, and the impact they have achieved. The arts specialists cluster includes specialist institutions covering arts, music and drama.

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LAMDA: LAMDA examinations

Background

LAMDA Exams awards qualifications in the provision of communications and performance to schools and performing arts schools globally, uniting learners of all abilities, backgrounds and cultures. In the 2018-2019 academic year, over 120,000 learners registered for LAMDA Examinations across 35 countries.

The syllabi and qualifications support the development of fundamental life skills of young people helping them develop oracy and communication, along with building confidence and self-esteem, providing the foundations needed to realise their full potential.

LAMDA Examinations has a wide presence in the independent school sector (46% of LAMDA Exams customers) and performing arts businesses but has minimal presence amongst state schools, which we are seeking to change.

HEIF support

The HEIF allocation provides key funding to Exams to deliver the proposition to businesses and schools, whilst enabling it to extend its support to state schools through free workshops, teacher resources, support services, partnerships and relationship management. The HEIF funding supports staff costs, syllabi and product development, business development, marketing and workshop delivery.

Impact

Following the Coronavirus pandemic, research is emerging on the detrimental effects of lockdown on young people, from low self-esteem to poor communication and language skills, particularly amongst early years, which will impact on their education trajectory. LAMDA Exams can play a vital role in supporting schools and educational settings in the recovery for young people in rebuilding these skills.

The Broadway Academy in Birmingham, a large state school with high proportion of Pupil Premium and ESL, has been entering its students into LAMDA Exams for the past four years and is reaping the rewards through student progression.

In 2018-19, the Broadway Academy's students in English achieved a Progress 8 score of +0.45. This result will place them in the top 15% of English departments nationally for student progress. Student progress has been increasing year-on-year, driven by their ambition and determination to ensure that every child – regardless of their context or starting point – receives an excellent education.

Reflecting upon the success of their students, they cite four vital principles which created the conditions for ongoing growth and improvement:

1. A collaborative, ambitious and committed team of teachers driven by a sense of moral purpose.
2. A challenging, coherent and effectively-sequenced curriculum, including intensive literacy support for students who need it.
3. An approach to teaching and learning that is guided by a fusion of research-informed principles and creativity.
4. A whole school approach to Literacy including all students sitting the LAMDA Examinations, and a well-stocked Library and an Academic Librarian.

Alignment to priorities

There continue to be high levels of inequality within education, particularly amongst extra-curricular activities. LAMDA Exams aims to level this up, supporting social progression and skills acquisition to aid in shaping all young people's life chances across all schools and communities.

LAMDA Exams aims to extend the opportunity, making a more accessible proposition for state schools, growing its presence across this sector, and supporting young people across all communities, thereby aiding social wellbeing and levelling up of education across the UK.

LAMDA: Mischief Theatre Company

Background

The Mischief Theatre Company was founded by a group of LAMDA graduates in 2008, who came together to craft their own work, culminating with the *Play That Goes Wrong* that quickly gained traction, winning Best New Comedy at the 2015 Laurence Olivier Awards.

The group have since gone from strength to strength, creating further work and touring around the world, eventually securing a year-long residency at Vaudeville, with their new play *Groan Ups*. This residency overlaps with continuing productions *The Play That Goes Wrong* at the Duchess Theatre and *A Comedy About a Bank Robbery* at the Criterion.

Mischief Theatre have also achieved success in television, through the adapted *Peter Pan Goes Wrong* for BBC1 in December 2016 and a sequel, *A Christmas Carol Goes Wrong* starring Sir Derek Jacobi and Dame Diana Rigg, which aired the following Christmas. More recently, they have had a six-episode series commissioned by BBC1 with the *Goes Wrong Show*, based on their hit West End production, as well as a second adapted series, *The Play That Goes Wrong*.

LAMDA strongly believes that students should be inspired and equipped with the confidence, skills and knowledge to create their own work and will explore, research and evolve its training to empower students to be creative entrepreneurs of the future, as Mischief Theatre have done.

HEIF support

LAMDA utilises its HEIF funding to bring in a wealth of industry experts, writers and directors to support students with their understanding of the industry and garnering the right skills for changing industry needs. LAMDA also invests in building a wide network of industry relationships. More recently, LAMDA commissioned research on how to further embed entrepreneurship into its training and curriculum to equip students with the skills, knowledge and appetite for creating their own work. LAMDA will continue to invest its HEIF allocation in activities such as MishMash Festival, new writing projects, showcases and young companies, as well as university and industry collaborations, to support students and alumni in their contribution to the evolution and growth of the creative industry.

Impact

The creative industries are cited as growing at twice the rate of the UK economy overall, generating over £100 billion and accounting for one in ten jobs in the UK in 2017. Since 2010, the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the creative industries has increased by 53.1%. The sector now generates 5.5% of the UK economy.

Many of LAMDA's graduates go on to work in the creative industry, through theatre, screen, events, gaming and the arts. A large proportion of graduates use these skills to set up and initiate their own business and enterprise; LAMDA intends to foster this mindset further.

Alignment to priorities

LAMDA's work not only contributes to the creative economy's growth, but is committed to supporting, inspiring and backing entrepreneurialism amongst its students, graduates and alumni. Integral to LAMDA is the incubation of innovative ideas which can support prosperity and innovation within the industry.

University of the Arts London: Creativity powered by 5G

UAL and Three collaborated on a two-year multi-stranded partnership from Feb 2019 – March 2021, focused on the creation of use-cases around 5G broadband and creative and emerging technology education. The partnership included a large-scale infrastructure investment into workshop spaces and equipment at Central Saint Martins, UAL and the integration of 5G technology through two MA Fashion showcases as part of London Fashion Week. During the Covid-19 pandemic the partnership went on to deliver three R&D projects and a series of technology workshops, modular courses and talks called the Digital Innovation Season. The partnership was developed and managed by Knowledge Exchange (KE) staff funded by the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF).

The partnership has created economic benefit for Three due to the positioning of 5G technology use-cases around the fashion industry as a sub-set of the creative industries. The first MA Fashion Show use-case focused on a mixed reality fashion collection powered by 5G, blending a real-world collection with augmented digital assets. The 2020 fashion show focused on the high definition projection of a motion-captured student collection as part of the show. These creative use-cases act as demonstrators in a similar manner to the DCMS's roll-out of 5G Test-beds, where demonstrations were launched in tourism, heritage and other industries.

A further proxy for Three's economic benefit through the partnership has been in the awards it has won for the work, including Lovie Awards and nominations at The Drum Experience Awards. Three also gained significant media coverage. The 2020 fashion show was covered by The Times (Paywall) [The Sun](#), [Daily Mail](#), [Metro](#), [ITV News](#), [Forbes](#) and the [New York Times](#), as well as lifestyle magazines such as [Hypebeast](#) and [Complex](#), highlighting both the mobile network/5G aspect and the innovative technology implemented in the show

The partnership also created opportunities for over 25 artists, tech & games companies and educators to interact with UAL staff and students through the [Digital Innovation Season](#), a programme of workshops and short courses that provided over 100 hours of sessions on emerging technology, engaging nearly 500 UAL students. This included a symposium on the future of human-technology interactions, alongside masterclasses by Games Studio [Square Enix](#) and industry experts such as [Valentina Di Filippo](#) on data visualisation and storytelling.

In a survey of 117 students participating students:

- 90% felt the sessions were highly relevant or relevant to their development as creative practitioners and would take forward the skills and ideas they encountered
- 74% of participants felt the session(s) they attended taught them something they would have not been able to learn otherwise – and only 24% said that the sessions were similar to the type of learning they receive through their normal course programme.

141 students participated in R&D projects related to the future of fashion in football (with additional partner Chelsea), 5G router design and the future of mobile phone accessories. These projects attracted a large amount of interest across social media, with videos related to the showcased projects being viewed circa 32,000 times.

University of the Arts London: Fashion District – a new innovation and enterprise district for east London

UAL has led on the development of the [Fashion District](#), launched in September 2018, to drive economic and social transformation in east London, bringing together partners from the public and private sectors, spanning design, manufacturing, retail and education, to build on London's position as a global hub of technology-driven innovation in the fashion sector.

HEIF-funded staff have provided the delivery capacity for several aspects of this initiative including the development and operational coordination of the partnership, the core networking and innovation programme, and the securing of external funding - leveraging significant investment from The Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund and other partners.

HEIF has also enabled the commissioning of stakeholder consultations to ensure the activities address the needs and challenges of the communities that they serve, as well as enabling development of a strategic partnership plan with the London Borough of Waltham Forest, which helped secure investment to provide a new fashion business support programme in the Borough.

To date Fashion District has secured £7.8m funding from the GLA and Fashion District partners to create the long term infrastructure for a more connected fashion network in East London which included four major capital investments:

- A community focused fashion hub at Poplar Works, housing UAL's Making for Change training and manufacturing facility, alongside 40 affordable work spaces for early stage fashion and fashion tech start-ups
- Grow-on studios for more established businesses at Tramperry Fish Island Village; including co-working and showcase space and an innovation micro-factory, creating Europe's largest fashion campus
- A new Tailoring Academy at the Fashion Enter manufacturing & training unit, to meet demand for high quality fashion production skills
- A hub for emerging fashion businesses at Arbeit Studios Leyton Green.

These capital projects have attracted revenue funding to provide wrap-around business support for the resident businesses, accredited training in fashion production skills, and employment opportunities for local communities. In addition, funding has been leveraged for community engagement programmes focused on educational and design research activities. UAL students are actively involved in these programmes through curriculum projects and volunteering opportunities.

In 2018/19, UAL also secured two projects that extend the reach, connectivity and impact of Fashion District:

- [The Business of Fashion, Textiles & Technology \(BFTT\)](#) - with £5.5m funding from the AHRC-run ISCF-funded Creative Industries Clusters Programme, the programme is led by UAL and will support the growth of UK fashion, textiles and technology businesses through R&D investment.
- [DeFINE](#), a £2m EU-funded project, developing a transnational network of incubators, accelerators, businesses, and financiers, to drive the fusion of cutting-edge technologies with Europe's fashion and design industries.

UAL's London College of Fashion will be moving to its new home in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in 2023. Our students and graduates will benefit from our investment in Fashion District – an environment

that supports business growth and job opportunities, creating affordable work spaces, nurturing local talent and building skills, stimulating innovation, and connecting with our communities.

Royal College of Art: Concrete Canvas

Origin

[Concrete Canvas Ltd](#) is an [InnovationRCA](#) spin-out that develops and commercialises a ground breaking concrete canvas material that has transformed the way major civil engineering projects are implemented all around the world. The company's core technology emerged from the graduation project of the [Royal College of Art](#) alumni Will Crawford and Peter Brewin, who were looking into rapidly-deployable shelters for disaster relief and humanitarian applications, which continue to remain in the company's application portfolio nowadays.

Innovation

InnovationRCA helped the team secure its first worldwide patent for Concrete Canvas™, a resource efficient, flexible concrete impregnated fabric that hardens with water to form a thin, durable, waterproof and fire resistant concrete layer. The material is supplied in a roll that is easily transported and deployed in desired locations. Up to 200 sq m of concrete surfacing can be transported in a single pallet. The invention reduces installation works up to 10 times faster than conventional concrete solutions and enables bespoke construction solutions that are installed in a quicker and simpler way with much lower environmental impacts. Concrete Canvas™ is a low mass, lower carbon technology, which uses up to 95% less material than conventional solutions. Today, Concrete Canvas Ltd holds a strong patent portfolio, including 9 patent families with over 95 patents pending or granted worldwide in 26 territories.

Applications

Following incubation at InnovationRCA, the start-up has grown to the point where Concrete Canvas™ is now used in a wide range of humanitarian, construction and civil engineering applications from disaster-relief shelters to ditch lining. Exported to more than 80 countries, the primary markets for Concrete Canvas are in the civil infrastructure (road and rail), mining and petrochemical sectors where it is used for erosion control applications such as ditch lining, slope protection and bund lining.

Achievements

The company started selling in 2008, and sales doubled year-on-year for the first 3 years. It is now based in Wales and employs over 70 staff, with a turnover exceeding £13m. Concrete Canvas Ltd has over 75 sales partners around the world, and exports account for approximately 80% of its revenue. The company counts 7 of the world's top 10 oil and gas companies amongst its clients.

RCA's support through HEIF

Started as a student project in 2004, the project was supported by InnovationRCA, the RCA's centre for entrepreneurship and IP commercialisation, which was funded by the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF1) originally known as Higher Education Reach Out to Business & Community (HEROBC). InnovationRCA supports students, alumni and staff to commercialise their ideas and build successful businesses. Since its foundation in 2004, Innovation RCA supported 71 start-ups who raised £82 million in investor funds and created over 750 jobs in the UK. The InnovationRCA start-ups won over £18 million in competitive R&D funding and generated over £151m turnover in the last 10 years. More than 70% of start-ups supported by the RCA's entrepreneurship centre survive a 5-year operation threshold. In July 2019, InnovationRCA won the Accelerator of the Year 2019 from the UK Business Angels Association, in recognition of the programme's excellence and outstanding track record.

Royal College of Art: BA2119 - Flight of the Future

[BA2119: Flight of the Future](#) is an interdisciplinary Knowledge Exchange project developed in 2019 as part of the RCA's [collaboration with British Airways](#). The project objective was to create a vision for the future of flying and mark the centenary of British Airways. Led by Professor Ashley Hall and Dr Laura Ferrarello, the project brought together over 40 MA students across the RCA's Schools of Design and Architecture, who collaborated with British Airways (engineering, catering, archive and in-flight services) and leading experts from Airbus, Safran, Foresight Factory, NASA, Autodesk, International Airline Group (IAG) to design future oriented products and services capable of offering tangible experiences of future flying.

BA2119 became a collaborative journey of mutual learning and knowledge exchange between academic and industrial partners. This interdisciplinary collaboration triggered conversations and developed prototypes, which helped visualise new concepts and experiences of future flying. The project stimulated a meaningful dialogue between researchers, designers and the aviation sector on topics including food waste, health, wellbeing and new technologies. The project helped the airline company accelerate their thinking by applying a holistic approach to innovation that leverages and harnesses human needs over technology.

The final concepts and visual prototypes were exhibited at the Saatchi Gallery in London, UK and visited by more than 10,000 people. Later in 2019, the exhibition travelled to Shanghai, China to take part in the [Art & Design Education: FutureLab](#) event at the West Bund Art Centre during the Future Learn Expo. The project results were published on the [RCA Research Repository](#) to share a body of research work and to engage public in a debate about future of flying, technology and sustainability.

The pandemic crisis in 2020 further highlighted the need to re-imagine and re-invent travel. The future scenarios and concepts developed by the RCA students now look even more real. For example, a [wearable seat](#) could potentially become a solution for keeping physical and social distances. Smart luggage, AI-enabled onboard assistance and 3D printing solutions could optimise logistics, supply chain and automate services while offering efficiency and new experiences. Modular planes and slow flying could potentially create new travel experiences and optimise travel during the pandemic.

The project was supported by the RCA's Knowledge Exchange team, which is partially funded by the HEIF, who led project initiation, contract negotiations and partnership management. The BA2119 project is a strong example of how universities can contribute to the Government priorities around "Ideas" and "People", the Plan for Growth [Build Back Better: our plan for growth](#) with its focus on the digital and creative sector as a critical driver of innovation and growth, and the UK Research and Development [Roadmap](#) with its goal to further strengthen science, research and innovation across the UK. The BA2119 project is also a strong illustration of how universities can engage students in delivering knowledge exchange projects to support their employability, work readiness and professional development.

Guildhall School of Music & Drama: Guildhall Live Events

Our award winning Guildhall Live Events (GLE) team has featured nationwide at renowned festivals, historic properties and in cutting-edge exhibitions. With a specialism in immersive and interactive digital experiences, the team brings together art, technology and Guildhall School's world-renowned training. GLE formed as a business unit, aimed at exploiting the exceptional production and artistic capabilities of the Guildhall School. However the work is uniquely connected to the student learning experience, providing on-job learning during their training, and employability for graduates. The GLE team also seek out collaborative projects which deliver new insights in the application of performance and immersive technologies in different sectors and settings.

GLE projects push the boundaries for audience experience and are often produced in collaboration with Guildhall School students and graduates, creating quality opportunities of the highest artistic and professional standards. Partners to date include Barbican Centre, Haringey Council, London Metropolitan Archives, Waddesdon Manor, Museum of London, and Tower Bridge.

GLE collaborations aim to advance experimental and emergent technologies, often to enable greater access for under-represented audiences. Partnerships with local councils, museums and heritage institutions have supported place-making and civic purpose, from bringing town centres to life through light installations, to digitally showcasing and animating collections beyond the walls of the museum.

The University of East Anglia's Future & Form uses digital technology to support three established writers to reach a wider demographic. GLE is working with these writers to develop new technologies that will create innovative and interactive literary works to engage new audiences; promoting literacy and inspiring a new generation of young readers in the UK. This project offers strong example of how GLE supports the Government's Build Back Better agenda, incentivising the development of creative ideas and technologies that will shape the UK's future.

GLE projects build in professional development opportunities for staff and students. A recent partnership with BILD Studios at the start of the COVID pandemic transformed three School productions into a 'virtual stage' using digital technology. This ground-breaking work allowed productions to go ahead, and enabled over 100 artists, many students and graduates, to work remotely together to create one of the world's first virtual stages. GLE projects not only support the OfS' priority of delivering higher level skills to support COVID recovery, but also provide students and graduates with professional opportunities (OfS), thereby supporting productivity and growth through high-quality training (Build Back Better).

GLE's work also has the potential to help the theatre industry develop new working practices in immersive technologies and in the longer-term, this type of R&D project could support the sector post pandemic to regain and build their audiences. Through the use of innovative technologies such as XR (Extended Reality), mid-sized venues in particular, could look to benefit in their ambition to adapt and grow (Build Back Better).

HEIF funding has contributed to core salary costs, and some initial set up costs, in the development of the unit. This contribution will phase out over the next 3 years, as the unit establishes its long-term sustainability.

Guildhall School of Music & Drama: Guildhall Coaching Associates

Coaching & Mentoring was first introduced to the School in 2012/13 as a support and development tool for our teachers who were taking on explicit mentoring roles. We entered into partnership with an executive coaching business in order to develop a distinctive approach to coaching, drawing from their established expertise in professional coaching and Guildhall's expertise in performing arts, creative and improvisatory skills and embodied learning. Our training was accredited by the European Mentoring & Coaching Council. Over time, as staff and students reported significant improvements, we expanded the provision across the School to non-teaching staff and City of London colleagues – we have a training route now for every employee in our institution.

Ultimately, we recognised the transformative potential of coaching and mentoring beyond the conservatoire's walls, and expanded the work for and with external partners and audiences. We now offer our professional coaching service for those in business, health, education and social justice. Our Coaching and Mentoring programme trains teachers and mentors, teams and leaders to achieve their potential, and adapt and thrive in a changing world. Over 500 delegates have engaged in our training and around 200 Guildhall staff members have participated in the programme since its launch. We have a diverse group of 17 Guildhall Coaching Associates with expertise across a broad range of industries.

In 2020-21 we responded to the COVID crisis faced by creative industry professionals with Lockdown Lounge and Launch Pad; free regular forums to share lockdown experiences and to explore tools for building personal strategies and managing lives in the absence of work and income. A supportive learning community grew.

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Alongside our training programmes, we have worked with a range of partners to support mutual learning and exchange, with a focus on sector improvement and positive social impact. Partnership projects include:

- a new programme with a major charity to build the resilience of specialist charities and their employees working within homelessness charities
- a training initiative developed for and with the orchestral sector, to provide a model for supporting orchestral leadership, informed by research and piloting with several orchestras and players
- collaboration with the network organisation supporting voluntary organisations in the criminal justice system, to provide training to artists working within the system
- partnership within the British Council international network to address international economic and social exclusion.

Our coaching work directly responds to key priorities in the Government's Build Back Better agenda. Through high quality accredited training and CPD our programmes build resilience in the workforce, develop skillsets and adaptability, and support leadership and productivity in SMEs.

HEIF funding contributed to core salary costs, with seed funding for R&D with two partnership projects, in the development of the unit. This contribution will phase out over the next 2 years, as the unit establishes its long-term sustainability.

Royal Northern College of Music: RNCM Engage

In 2015, the RNCM established RNCM Engage as the 'locus for outreach activity, maximising the impact of the College's work in the community and promoting social cohesion and prosperity'.¹ RNCM Engage has brought together activity throughout the college, including learning and participation, young projects, curriculum and professional placements, programming, research and knowledge exchange, setting and creating a coherent and coordinated approach.

Annually, the RNCM engages with c.7000 community and school participants, while RNCM attracts audiences of over 85,000 people across its three public performance spaces.

From the 2016-2021 Knowledge Exchange strategy for 'RNCM Engagement' target KPIs are identified to increase the number of pre-tertiary students, particularly in NW region, who have access to RNCM Engage activities, grow the number of students and staff working in healthcare settings and bring music research to wider audiences.

RNCM Engage activity has been supported by HEIF predominantly by supporting staff posts. From the 2019-20 Annual Monitoring Statement HEIF allocation for RNCM Engage included:

B. Dedicated KE staff	Activity	% Full Salary
Fellow in Creative and Professional Practice (HM)	Entrepreneurship award, placements	100
Fellow in Creative and Professional Practice (GW)	Placements	100
Pathfinder Manager	Pathfinder	50
Head of Learning and Participation	Young Explorers, Christmas Family Day	100
Head of Junior RNCM	JRNCM, Young Projects,	62
C. Academic staff KE activity (including buying out academic time to engage in KE)		
Director of Research	Institutional lead for KE	20
Director of Programmes	KE Steering Group	5
D. Other costs and initiatives		% Actuals
Learning and Participation	RNCM Engage	66
Creative and Professional Practice	Student Placements	25
Sound and Video	Digital support	50

In November 2020, The RNCM won the *Times Higher Education* Award for 'Widening Participation or Outreach Initiative of the Year' for its Engage initiative. Through RNCM Engage, the RNCM plays a key role in delivering the joys of music to a wide range of people in Greater Manchester and beyond, irrespective of age or background. In 2018-19, the programme became more focused than ever, with new

¹ <https://www.rncm.ac.uk/engage/>

pathways laid out for under-represented groups such as those from low-income families, areas of low arts engagement and people of ethnic minority backgrounds. That year, Engage ran 227 projects for schools and community groups, reaching an estimated 150,440 young people across Greater Manchester and 62,249 from wider community groups. The projects included 'first contact' operations, which targeted those without previous access to live music, as well as music classes and subsequent guidance on studying at university, in addition to well-being projects in care homes, prisons and hospitals.

The key foundations of the Industrial Strategy, around 'Ideas', 'People' and their role in supporting 'Place' has informed RNCM Engage objectives. The RNCM works hard to facilitate access to communities, so that public and community activities can be kept free or affordable to participants and their families. The programming team remit is inclusive programming, festivals and events and professional engagements (350 per year). Within Academic Studies, two Fellows in Creative and Professional Practice are responsible for coordinating student placements (c. 200 per year). Student placements include performing, teaching, arts administration, marketing, and outreach projects in schools, hospitals and care homes.

The RNCM Research Department and Centre for Practice & Research in Science & Music (PRiSM) host regular public talks, weekly blogs and online events.² The use of high definition live-streaming has enabled the RNCM to develop a distance learning solution and to live broadcast to the public our Research Forums (83% increase in participants), Q&A and Masterclasses, Radio, and Concerts during the COVID-19 lockdown.³ Digital media, brochures, targeted mailing lists, website event and booking calendar are all utilised to keep the public informed.

² <https://www.ncm.ac.uk/research/research-centres-ncm/prism/>

³ <https://www.ncm.ac.uk/series/research-forums/>; <https://www.ncm.ac.uk/watch-listen/q-and-as-and-masterclasses/>; <https://www.ncm.ac.uk/watch-listen/ncm-radio/>; <https://www.ncm.ac.uk/series/thursday-lates/>

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance: Singing for lung health

Singing for Lung Health, a free weekly singing group established by Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in partnership with Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust, aims to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of individuals living with long-term lung conditions such as COPD, Bronchiectasis or Asthma. The group was created in response to the increasing awareness of singing's positive benefit for those with chronic lung conditions, helping to manage feelings of breathlessness, provide a sense of community and lift mood.

The pilot programme of Singing for Lung Health was initially funded by NHS Lewisham and Greenwich Trust for two ten-week terms, and it was then extended with continued funding from the Trust. 70% of patients reported improvements in symptoms after 8 weeks of sessions according to the COPD questionnaire and overall patients reported improvements in their breathlessness after each class (using the MRC Dyspnoea Scale).

After the Singing for Lung Health group's remaining sessions were cancelled due to Covid-19 in March 2020, Trinity Laban used HEIF funding to pay our specialist vocal facilitator to run online sessions of Singing for Lung Health, initially for the original pilot group members and then for more Lewisham and Greenwich residents living with lung conditions who could participate online. These sessions took place during the height of the pandemic and were very warmly received by the group members – many noted the group as an important social link during times of isolation.

One participant said: *"This has all been such a revelation - how we hold our bodies, how we breathe, the joy of really listening, the excitement of making sounds, the permission to let go, the sweetness of speaking & listening to people we care about."*

The Singing for Health programme achieves great social benefit by building community amongst those who live with long term health conditions, and providing opportunity for those who share lived experience to connect via a fun and sociable activity. It has provided regular engagement to vulnerable people during the Covid-19 pandemic, focused solely on improved wellbeing.

One participant who joined solely for online sessions noted: *"Although this is not the first S for H group I have attended, it's the one I seem to have gained most from. Certainly my breathing while singing is much easier now than before I attended the group."*

The group have continued to meet independently online in recent months as their social bond and experience of singing online has been so positive throughout the pandemic.

Recognition of the benefit of singing for those with long term health conditions, alongside continued need, has encouraged Trinity Laban to continue investing in the health of the local community as a cultural catalyst, securing local borough funding to establish two more Singing for Health groups in the Borough of Greenwich in 2020, one focused on Parkinson's, and one on Pain Management, alongside a new lung health group. HEIF funding allows us to develop and sustain this community focused programme where short term funding cannot.

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance: Thinking Space 2020 – a space to think in response to COVID-19

Thinking Space was created as a response to COVID-19 and was very successful in offering quick support via peer-led interventions for practicing music and dance artists to reflect. Following its initial success, the Conservatoire has continued to provide facilitated spaces for professional dialogues, reflection and exchange as we slowly emerge from the pandemic. The landscape of the arts industry is changing rapidly and the future is uncertain. Thinking Space gave an opportunity for artists from across the UK and beyond to connect with each other, problem solve, share learning and network beyond the lifespan of the sessions.

Beneficiaries are music and dance artists involved in teaching, creating, delivering workshops, collaborating or performing. Sessions have taken place online over three occurrences led by experienced facilitators who apply elements of Action Learning to their approach. During June and July 2021, we will see three further unique groups meet: one specific to dance, one to music and a third available to those who work across the art forms.

The work was supported by HEIF funding linked to Trinity Laban's knowledge exchange objective to contribute to professional and skills development among music and dance practitioners. 90% of participants reported new insights in their practice after attending the sessions. These ranged from new creative ideas, introduction to new platforms, and greater understanding digital delivery in the arts. Many reported that the group discussions have resulted in a changed approach in delivery.

"I've found new ways of modifying my work in this new landscape."

"I may be a lot more grounded and aware of the possibilities and opportunities out there, I also feel that having people to talk to about projects has really helped me look forward, despite the ongoing challenges for the sector."

"I felt really empowered by the sessions and much more confident in taking control of my work and future."

Other benefits included improvements to physical or mental health and wellbeing:

"The sessions rekindled a sense of belonging and purpose that had been challenged by the situation we are currently all facing as dance artists in a socially distanced reality where our support system is being shaken and is finding new ways of being"

The artist who access the groups in July 2020 have been able to be more future focused in times of great uncertainty:

"I can see these insights being implemented in the short and long term as I am facing the next year of activity not only as a phase I need to adjust to but also as an opportunity for new applications of my work"

The creation of Thinking Space allowed Trinity Laban to adapt knowledge exchange avenues to best serve professional artists during the Covid-19 pandemic. Peer sessions provided a digital environment for industry practitioners and educators to come together to share the knowledge gathered during a time requiring fast-paced learning to cope with the implications of the pandemic and even thrive in a new digital world.