

5x5x5=creativity

House of Imagination

Creativity can enhance wellbeing and transform lives. Children and young people in Bath need an arts space: a centre for making, creative thinking and sharing their ideas, a place of connectivity, creativity, imagination and learning.

5x5x5=creativity is working in partnership with creative, education and cultural partners to develop a world class and unique Arts School for children and young people in Bath. We want to develop an international model of co-creativity and collaboration where children and young people can learn together alongside international and local artists and creative professionals. We are proposing an Arts School for children and young people as a residency-based programme, open to all children and young people and complimentary to the school system.

We have successfully secured funding from the Loveday Charitable Trust, £50,000 over 3 years, and have been invited to apply for a further £25,000 per year from Herman Miller Cares. Bath Spa University and the RSA and have also expressed an interest in supporting the project.

About the House of Imagination

We have, through 15 years of research with 5x5x5=creativity, seen how the arts can enable us to explore and shape our values and identities. The aim of the House of Imagination is to create a multidisciplinary space for participants to create and co-create responses to personal, cultural and social issues – such as identity, wellbeing, environment and human rights – working alongside artists, designers, makers and thinkers. In this non-hierarchical, inclusive environment, we want to engage children and young people in a meaningful dialogue with international artists, designers and creative professionals. The long-term goal is to establish the House of Imagination as a centre for research and creativity with young people at the heart.

In the House of Imagination we want to explore research-oriented methodologies, with young people working alongside contemporary arts professionals, focusing on the quality of research and engagement by drawing upon the range of contemporary artistic practice and demonstrating the efficacy of a studio-based methodology. The House of Imagination also has the capacity to engender the life skills of critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation, particularly for children and young people who do not have access to the creative and cultural life that the city currently has to offer.

We are seeking funding to support the rental and equipping of a suitable space, to support artists' time, purchase materials, showcase work and ideas created by young people and develop a virtual/online space for House of Imagination. We aim to work with the following participants:

- At least 1500 children and young people via residencies with their schools, alternative school provision and out of school workshops, events and training and volunteer opportunities
- At least 450 educators via school residencies, training programme and volunteer opportunities
- At least 70 artists via commissions, training and volunteer opportunities.

The space would operate from 9am – 8pm, six days per week. Residencies will be offered over short and longer time frames and cost structures; workshops and making space will be made available to participants outside of school hours; and bursaries made available for families, children and young people on low incomes. For the remaining time, the space will be available for other organisations to hire and deliver their work with children and young people. The hire fees are intended to develop an income stream for the House of Imagination.

A particular focus of the House of Imagination will be supporting children and young people to ‘achieve against the odds’. Through partnerships with organisations such as Mentoring Plus, Young Carers, the Youth Service and other voluntary sector groups, the House of Imagination will be an alternative space to school, where learning is co-constructed and creative and cultural experiences, not otherwise available to them, are explored.

The House of Imagination concept builds on the work of ‘School Without Walls’, a 5 year ongoing project with 5x5x5=creativity, initially the egg theatre Bath and St Andrew’s Primary School (now involving 5 schools), where the city is conceived as a campus for ‘learning everywhere’.

www.vimeo.com/schoolwithoutwalls

The research is underpinned by a clear set of values and principles:

- rigorous and creative collaboration between both adults and young people, with mutual trust and purposeful risk
- creativity, creative thinking and imagination as central tenets
- children and young people as creative and competent
- real life contexts and learner agency
- careful observation, documentation, reflection and sensitive analysis of emerging themes and experiences often co-designed with children and young people in direct response to their dispositions and interests
- engaging all the children’s senses and sensibilities to allow them to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings
- sharing creative expertise and thinking between artists, educators, cultural centre partners and mentors.

We are also interested in novel / innovative? and student-centred forms of documentation and dissemination, with an ambition to raise wider public awareness of the role and impact of arts-based, practice-led research. This can take the form of exhibitions, pop-ups, festivals, broadcast and social media, website / digital?, journals and publications. We want to demonstrate real/visible?/perceptible? engagement across boundaries and disciplines, highlighting the power of creative thinking and making.

The House of Imagination intends to develop the following experiences for young people:

- enquiries centred on real world contexts and contemporary creativity
- visiting/collaboration with? Interaction with? international and local artists, designers and other creative professionals
- residencies in which students experience creative workshops, Open Space events and work with creative professionals
- a breadth of engagement with the creative and cultural industries e.g. curatorial, productive,

critical, design roles.

In short, a co-designed enquiry-based model of learning that:

- is multi-disciplinary and contemporary
- engages socially engaged artists and creative professionals
- develops autonomous learners who can take responsibility for their own self-directed learning and creative environment.

There is a strong social purpose that drives the principles of the House of Imagination:

- providing an engagement with the contemporary culture of our times - including visual cultures, a culture of design and making, and a culture of learning
- building a 'gallery of ideas' that supports innovation, creativity and incubation
- establishing an open creative space for children and young people in a shared environment
- creating a space that includes creative activity, cultural display and social activity.

There is a strong ethical purpose and agreement that children and young people will:

- engage with the key processes of creativity and wellbeing
- learn together alongside creative professionals as role models
- reach their creative potential and learn more about themselves, one another and our world through the arts and creativity.

We advocate that the distinctive features of the arts are a serious and expansive area of study for students as a creative enquiry-based approach to learning, designed to develop in young people the dispositions of creativity and innovation. New technology will be used as a platform for students to collectively develop an enquiry based model of learning, with associated documentation and shared enquiries.

We believe in:

- Education as a *form* of art
- Every human being as an artist
- The study of the arts as central to a creative education
- The creative capacity of every individual to shape society through participation in cultural life
- Socially engaged arts and alternative education models.

Alongside the House of Imagination we are developing an MA in Art and Context at Bath Spa University and the Global Academy of Liberal Arts (GALA) with international partners.

Context

House of Imagination is a unique concept in the UK and internationally, combining contemporary, multi-disciplinary creative professionals working alongside children and young people in an arts school context, as a residency-based programme and complementary to school curricular. Bath city-centre has a rich cultural offer/offering? for adults with a mix of activities aimed at children and young people. The Holburne Museum, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath Museums, the Mission Theatre, the egg theatre and

commercial galleries all offer good quality arts experiences. However, none of these organisations, with the exception of the egg theatre, are entirely child-focused.

In the House of Imagintaion, children and young people are at the heart of the space engaging in their own creativity alongside their peers, families and creative professionals in a creative, democratic and intergenerational space with a clear sense of engagement and participation.

Outcomes

Participants will demonstrate:

Children and Young People

- Increased confidence to express their own ideas through a variety of media/art forms
- Increased confidence to access cultural and creative provision outside of their communities
- Confidence and experience to lead creative and cultural activities in their communities
- Increased engagement in learning, exploration and questioning
- Increased understanding of a wide variety of art forms and creative employment opportunities

Educators

- Increased understanding of creative and critical thinking skills and how to apply these in different contexts
- Increased confidence to articulate their creative practice and how it informs their signature pedagogies
- New networks and partnerships with cultural organisations, artists and other educators to enrich the experiences they offer children and young people

Artists

- Increased understanding of how their professional practice and work in a social context are intertwined
- Increased confidence to articulate their practice and approach to working with children and young people
- Increased understanding of work in a social context and with children and young people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

We will have delivered at least:

- 50 research residencies with schools
- 200 workshops for children and young people outside of school hours
- 1 pilot project and 5 residencies for children and young people in challenging circumstances
- 20 CPD sessions for educators
- 20 CPD sessions for artists
- 20 hires of the space by external providers

How we will deliver the project

The House of Imagination will be developed and led by 5x5x5=creativity. The Director of Research and Director of Business will work closely with the board of trustees, a key group of artists and educators to develop a detailed business plan and timeline for delivery.

We will employ a team of freelance artists, educators and mentors drawn from the existing 5x5x5=creativity team to deliver sessions. Through collaboration with cultural centres, schools, creative industries and Bath Spa University, we will identify emerging artists, creative industry professionals and educators to take part in our training programmes and then deliver sessions in the House of Imagination.

The day-to-day management of the space will be shared between the Director of Research and Director of Business initially, with a view to employing a manager of the space in year 2 of the project.

We are also keen to explore how young people can become involved in the management and day-to-day running of the space and will ensure that young people are closely involved in the development and delivery of the initiative.

Key Partners: Herman Miller Cares, Grant Associates, Bath Spa University, RSA, Ideas of the Mind, Illuminate Bath, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios.

The House of Imagaination will also enable us to create relationships with new partners, businesses and cultural centres.

Art and Design, Education, Arts Management and Publishing undergraduate and postgraduate students from Bath Spa University will be involved in placements each academic term alongside PhD researchers. Our staff team will also contribute to the university lecture programmes.

These partnerships and collaborations will help to identify key creative professionals to work alongside children and young people in residence in the House of Imagination.

Launch of House of Imagination: 18 June 2015

Sir Ken Robinson has offered to launch the House of Imagination on 18 June 2015:

'It's now widely recognised that developing children's creative abilities is essential in itself and a vibrant pathway to learning and achievement in all areas of the curriculum. What many people seem to understand less are the practical implications for teaching, for the curriculum and for the culture of education more generally. 5x5x5=creativity is a long term collaborative project that brings together children, teachers, researchers and cultural organisations from across the country to fathom together the principles and practice of creative education. The project is unique in several ways: in its collaborative structure, in its long term vision and in how it uses rigorous research practices to enlighten and evaluate the processes of creative teaching and learning. The work of 5x5x5=creativity is national in scope and international in significance. I'm delighted to be counted among its patrons and to benefit, along with many others, from its findings and insights.' Sir Ken Robonson, December 2014

Timeline

Year 1

January – August 2015

Planning Phase – key tasks include:

- Produce a detailed business plan and audience development plan to cover all aspects of the programme – aims, objectives, budget planning, operating procedures, staffing, volunteers and safeguarding
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- Identify and secure a suitable space and equip appropriately
- Continue fundraising to secure finance to ensure first three years of operation
- Deliver five events/residencies to raise the profile of the House of Imagination and develop audiences
- Develop our website to provide a virtual space to support the physical space
- Recruit and appoint artists and volunteers
- Research and write appropriate policies and operating procedures

Year 2 and 3

September 2015 – August 2017

- House of Imagination opens to the public and delivers a residency-based programme in partnership with schools, cultural centres and voluntary organisations for children and young people, artists and educators.
- One pilot project will run in partnership with an organisation that supports disadvantaged young people and a more extensive programme for these young people developed in year 2.
- Workshops, making space and studios will be made available to children and young people outside of schools hours.
- Artists will be supported to create new work with, and alongside, children and young people (subject to fundraising).
- House of Imagination links with a variety of local arts and community events e.g Bath Film Festival, Party in the City, Illuminate Bath, Somerset Art Weeks.

- House of Imagination offers volunteering opportunities for educators, artists and others interested in gaining insight and experience in the research-oriented methodologies with young people working alongside contemporary arts professionals.
- Ongoing fundraising and development of income streams e.g a café space, hire and rentals, consultancy and professional development.
- Evaluation of the programme to be undertaken by external evaluator, in partnership with 5x5x5=creativity and Year 3 programme adjusted accordingly.
- A full evaluation of the programme, undertaken by an external evaluator and planning for next 3 years of delivery based on the evidence and experiences of the first 3 years of operation.

Evaluation and Dissemination

We are 'researching children researching the world.' We describe our evaluation as qualitative and illuminative and seek to make creative learning possibilities visible. We are trying to identify, illuminate, describe and clarify the qualities and elements that enable children and young people to build on their own creative capacities. All the participants are perceived as researchers in shared enquiries. The implication of this approach is that everything is open for enquiry and debate - having this responsibility values everyone's contribution and generates confidence and motivation. We are investigating the impact on the children and young people, the adults and the partnerships.

Given that evaluation involves everyone, our evaluation material is generated through the following processes:

- documentation of children's learning stories in all sessions with the artist in each setting
- personal journals - all colleagues are encouraged to keep one
- initial and end of year evaluation interviews with all participants
- mentor review meetings with the 5x5x5 evaluators
- mentor meetings with settings using a creative, reflective cycle for continuous review
- group reviews for all participants in local authority groups;
- triangle/triangular? creative reflective reviews in each setting between educator, artist and cultural centre
- an artist blog
- professional development - documentation of all sessions
- case studies of some individual children
- Masters students carrying out their own evaluations.

Social Media activity (in collaboration with Bath Spa University Publishing students), interviews with participants and visitors, online feedback, website activity, press and media coverage, audience numbers and stories of experiences from children, parents, families, volunteers, creative professionals, researchers and mentors will contribute to our evaluation reports.

Reflection and action will be monitored via our planning group meetings; all interviews, documentation and journals will be reviewed and analysed and contribute to the publication of a final evaluation report.

We disseminate our work via the following means:

- Professional development events and conferences
- Exhibitions
- Website and newsletter
- Publications and journal articles
- DVDs and vimeos
- Social media

About 5x5x5=creativity

5x5x5=creativity is an arts based research organisation recognised for enabling successful and innovative approaches to developing creativity and critical thinking skills. This is achieved through exceptional and exciting creative partnerships with artists, schools, cultural centres, higher education and creative industries.

5x5x5 is inspired by the celebrated Reggio Emilia educational approach in Northern Italy that respects children and young people as strong, capable protagonists in their own learning. It recognises children's innate inquisitiveness, and affords them the space, time and individual adult attention to explore and learn from the world around them.

This child-informed approach is distinguished by a unique commitment to the role of documentation and research in learning and teaching - and by the participating adults' role as companions, not leaders, of the children and young people.

Artists and the creative process are at the heart of our work. In 2014 Herman Miller Cares supported us to develop and deliver Forest of Imagination and we invited local and international artists to be part of this four day contemporary art event. The event was visited by over 1900 people and developed in partnership with Grant Associates, Bath Spa University, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Ideas of the Mind and Illuminate Bath.

All of our research leads to the creation of artistic work by the participants. Our 'Schools Without Walls' project, delivered in partnership with the egg theatre, enables children and teachers to find innovative approaches to learning by working alongside artists in settings outside the school campus. In June 2014, artwork created by the participating children was presented in a city centre shop and parents, carers, teachers and the local community were invited to see the drawings, films, sculptures and writing, guided by the children. In October 2014, the Minister for Schools Rt Hon David Laws MP, visited Bath to find out more about 'Schools Without Walls'. Sir Ken Robinson and became new Patrons in October 2014.

5x5x5=creativity currently employs 3 staff:

Penny Hay: Director of Research – 20 hours per week
Louise Betts: Director of Business – 20 hours per week
Justina Clarke: Administrator – 10 hours per week

5x5x5=creativity Trustees

Mike Young, Chair of Trustees, 5x5x5=creativity, former Director of Education, Bath

Dame Tamsyn Imison, Patron 5x5x5=creativity, NACCCE

Sally Jaeckle, Service Manager for Early Years Services Bristol

Mary Tasker, former Chair of Human Scale Education

Dr. Jack Whitehead, Adjunct Professor at Liverpool Hope University, a Visiting Professor at Ningxia

Teachers University in China and a Visiting Fellow at the University of Bath

Mary Fawcett, former Director of Childhood Studies University of Bristol

Toby Jackson, former Head of Learning at Tate Modern

Wayne Lindsay, Creative Director at Ideas of the Mind Ltd

Ed Harker, Head teacher, St Saviour's Infant School Bath

5x5x5=creativity Patrons

Professor Richard Wentworth, former RCA

Sir Christopher Frayling, RCA and Arts Council England

Professor Iram Siraj, Institute of Education London University

Professor David Almond, Bath Spa University

Sir Ken Robinson, NACCCE and Getty Foundation

Penny Hay and Louise Betts, 5x5x5=creativity

January 2015