

Case Study

CAPITALISE – leadership development programme for CEOs / Executive Directors of arts and cultural organisations based in the East Midlands



Aims

The programme had five key aims:

- To provide continuing peer support to Chief Executives or equivalent involved in the strategic development and operation of major capital arts projects in the East Midlands;
- To provide a sharing and learning environment that is open, honest and confidential;
- To identify and promote best practice in the management and leadership of major capital arts projects;
- To maximise the impact of major East Midlands arts projects, including those with recent capital investments, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Members of the CAPITALISE group will act as advocates in the promotion of the capital builds programme in the East Midlands, and the impact achieved on the creative and cultural infrastructure.

Programme

Eighteen CEOs/Executive Directors from arts and cultural organisations across the East Midlands participated in Capitalise which ran from January 2009 to March 2011. The programme consisted of a range of core and optional modules including:

- Regular network meetings with presentations from a variety of keynote speakers including John Barnes from Marketing Judo, Dick Penny, Executive Director of Watershed Bristol and Clare Cooper, Mission, Models, Money
- A series of “Go-see” visits to landmark cultural and artistic projects in Newcastle upon Tyne, Philadelphia, USA and Toronto and Montreal, Canada
- A learning style diagnostic tool, followed by the offer of tailored professional development
- Facilitated action learning sets

- Opportunities for individual training, mentoring and coaching
- An advocacy programme, encouraging members to raise the profile of their work regionally and nationally
- A customised “StrengthsFinder” assessment of participants’ leadership styles
- A final residential event and legacy planning session

Key Successes and Strengths

The visits to Gateshead, Philadelphia, Montreal and Toronto were, for many of the participants, the most valuable and successful part of the project. The Go-see visits strengthened the network, introducing participants to other contexts, new ways of working, and providing inspiration for their own leadership.

In particular the visits extended the purpose and impact of the network itself. The members stated that spending intensive and protracted time with each other helped them to form and cement valuable professional relationships. This has led to closer understanding, and also to practical benefits including the planning of new collaborations in the region.



Visit to Clay Studios, Philadelphia
Photo by Kevin Ryan, Charnwood Arts

The visits also “opened doors and raised horizons,” enabling participants to experience a variety of professional practices and to see “different business models which may be of use in the coming period of national austerity.” Participants particularly benefited from the work (and follow-up) with Nick Crosson from the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, and the parallels between the economic and social contexts in North America and the UK.

Conclusion and Legacy

The programme has succeeded in building, fostering and supporting a network of leaders who have valued the opportunity to learn about and support one another’s

work. It has also provided the basis for more collaborative working as well as developing individual leaders' skills and confidence.

Importantly individuals on the programme were able to benchmark their own organisations and performance against that of others – in some cases reminding people what they are already doing well, and in others giving them higher standards to aim for as well as the confidence to do so.

There has been agreement by all CAPITALISE participants to continue with the network until March 2012 unfunded – a legacy that testifies to the programmes success. The group will continue to hold regular meetings and meet, learn from, and develop new relationships with other UK based arts and cultural organisations.

They will review the programme at the end of March 2012 and decide on how best to continue, considering membership and how future activities will be financed. They have agreed to act as mentors and coaches to emerging leaders in the East Midlands and to disseminate the learning from Capitalise throughout their own organisations. They will continue to seek opportunities to work collaboratively and to support one another's work.

Participants

Vince Attwood	Soft Touch Arts Ltd
Alex Farquharson	Nottingham Contemporary
Peter Helps	Sinfonia VIVA
Simon Hollingworth	Lincoln Drill Hall
Skinder Hundal	The New Art Exchange
Peter Ireson	Derby Live
Keith Jeffrey	QUAD
Steve Mapp	Broadway Media Centre
Stephen Munn	Deda
Shona Powell	Lakeside Arts Centre
Paul Russ	Dance4
Niki Russell	Nottingham Artists Studios
Kevin Ryan	Charnwood Arts
Peter Shelton	First Movement
Stephanie Sirr	Nottingham Playhouse
Rosalind Stoddart	Cultural Engineer and Artist
Martin Sutherland	Royal & Derngate
Jeremy Webster	The Collection, Lincoln

Further Details

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