

**THE MIGHTY CREATIVES
BUSINESS PLAN
2023 - 2028**

1. Introduction

At the beginning of this journey all I had was a vision and a small voice, hoping to be heard. Now seeing that vision come into fruition, I believe that my voice has been amplified and I hope that it will also amplify the voices and stories of the people who get involved with the project.

(Jess, Young Empowerment Fund participant)

Over 200,000 children and young people¹ of the East Midlands have experienced the impact of our work in over 2,000 schools and cultural organisations across the region since 2010. Many of those young people have experienced more than their fair share of social deprivation and poverty though: a recent Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for example demonstrates that 44% of cultural and educational organisations we have worked with are in areas of the first to the third deciles of the index of multiple deprivation.²

Evident in the rising tide of social deprivation are our young people who have faced an ever-increasing poverty of access to, and progression through, arts and culture in recent years. The reduction of arts in the school curriculum; the absence of sustainable youth services and the historical lack of equitable cultural investment have all contributed to a region where our young people find it increasingly difficult to experience what their peers experience in wealthier parts of the country.

The onset of Covid-19 has exacerbated this problem by providing long term challenges to their mental health, wellbeing, social connectivity, educational and economic prospects. These challenges are particularly exacerbated for young people in need³.

If there ever was a time for The Mighty Creatives to step up and support young people using the power of arts, culture and creativity then that time is now: and we need to urgently reassess how, where and when to provide that support for children and young people.

Our mission is to provide solutions to these challenges for those young people by working in partnership with stakeholders from across the public, private and third sectors. In doing so, we will contribute to improving their health and wellbeing; their cognitive abilities, behaviour and educational attainment; and their social connectivity and life chances in general.

Our ongoing priorities are to:

- Serve children and young people in need and those experiencing most disadvantage.
- Use the arts, culture and creativity for positive change for those young people.
- Provide a personalised, person centre pedagogy in which mentoring, and coaching play a fundamental role in generating personal change.
- Fight for the creative voices of children and young people.
- Implement a realistic financial strategy with manageable diverse income streams.
- Extend pan-regionally and eventually nationally from our HQ in the East Midlands.
- Place children and young people first by meeting them where they are (e.g. on-line, schools, communities, institutions).
- Focus on the growth of the Creative Mentoring programme / service area.

¹ For brevity, 'young people' will be used instead of 'children and young people' throughout this plan and means children from birth to 25 years old unless the context requires the term to be used in full

² 68% of organisations we work with are located in areas of the first to the fifth deciles of the index of multiple deprivation.

³ For our definition of need, please see section 4

- Recruit a new Chair of the Board (the term of office of the current Chair has come to an end) and extend the skills base of the trustees which reflects this new era.
- Implement a staffing restructure to ensure the new The Mighty Creatives is fit for purpose, agile and sustainable.

2. The Case for Support

In 2020 David Berridge⁴ reported that 1 in 7 young people aged between 5 and 16 experience one episode of need across the UK: with 30% more young people in care in 2020 than there were in 2015.

There are 28,820 children and young people registered in need in the East Midlands⁵, 7.1% of the national total. 6,470 of those children and young people are Looked After making up 7.8% of national total and a further 3,330 are young care leavers. 35% of those young people (17-21) are not in education, employment or training.

We have seen a rise in Pupil Premium allocations across the East Midlands in the last year and this is only set to increase as an effect of the pandemic and changes to welfare support and benefits. In the past, Pupil Premium has remained below a 1% increase year on year, but between 2020-21 and 2021-22 the Pupil Premium allocation for the region has risen by 3.7%.

This will have a huge impact on the level of services and support young people can expect and therefore creates an opportunity for the cultural sector to add support and offer creative interventions to support our most disadvantaged young people.

Young people in need experience significant disproportionate disadvantage, including heightened isolation, lack of stability, compromised mental health, lower attainment and lack of opportunities. They tend to have:

- very poor attendance in mainstream education, missing school across multiple academic years.
- feelings of shame and often alienated in school and communities.
- low levels of resilience to manage challenge.
- poor impulse control and high levels of anger leading to destructive behaviour.
- low self-esteem and are vulnerable to grooming.
- difficulty in regulating emotions.
- limited experience of family life, positive relationships & opportunities to make a positive contribution in their community.
- a lack of ability to understand & critique their own values and those around them resulting in a poor sense of their own personal moral compass.

The effect of social harm has negative consequences on social, emotional and educational outcomes for these young people. However, the effects of social harm on young people are complex and neither easily diagnosed nor predictable. Young people are individuals after all, and any intervention planned to support them needs to recognise that *'one size doesn't fit all'*: interventions must be bespoke, personalised and involve those young people themselves at the heart of their design, implementation and evaluation.

⁴ Berridge, D. et al. (2020, Apr 27). Children in Need and Children in Care: Educational Attainment and Progress, School for Policy Studies Bristol Poverty Institute, University of Bristol.

⁵ This figure is taken from 2021-22 Characteristics of children in need and refers to Children in need at 31 March by primary need and local authority' in East Midlands between 2021 and 2022.

3. How The Mighty Creatives provides support for CYP in Need

Our work with children and young people is supported by our Youth Voice Strategy, which sits at the heart of our organisational development.

As outlined in our strategy, we aim to *Improve and embed our work with children and young people aged 0-25 that champions their creative “voices” to influence change.*

We will:

- Diversify, develop and support our young audiences, and be inclusive of a variety of ages, abilities, genders, sexualities, religions and backgrounds.
- Challenge discrimination against children and young people and champion their beliefs, opinions, thoughts, needs and abilities.
- Provide the opportunities and training to nurture and empower children and young people to realise their potential, become their own leaders and influence real change within their lives, The Mighty Creatives and the wider world.
- Ensure all staff are committed and have the skills to respect, listen and act upon the views of children and young people, where appropriate.
- Support and advocate to other organisations and partners to improve and embed Youth Voice within their organisations and the work they do.

The Mighty Creatives follow a person-centred practice based on social pedagogy and our delivery is influenced by the following three models:

- Lundy’s *Model of Child Participation* to understand best practice when it comes to creating the space for Youth Voice initiatives.⁶
- Treseder’s *Model of Youth Participation* to understand the importance of the non-hierarchical nature of varying levels of Youth Voice initiatives.⁷
- The Mighty Creatives *Creative Mentoring Model*®, specifically how working in the *Third Space* helps a child or young person work towards self-actualisation.⁸

Working in *The Third Space* means working flexibly and in a person-centred way as well as being adaptive, reflective, experimental and nurturing. This way of working enables the development of an authentic and meaningful relationship with children and young people, that facilitates them to develop the skills to exercise their own voice, make their own decisions and empower them towards realising their own potential.

The combination of the three models provides the basis for creating an open and inclusive environment for children and young people to be facilitated and empowered to share their voice, needs, opinions and thoughts to make change. They also provide a foundation in understanding the complexities of the varying levels of Youth Voice initiatives and how these can be embedded. These will be used by The Mighty Creatives’ team to help shape future Youth Voice initiatives and ensure that children and young people are provided with the adequate support, resources and environments to enable authentic engagement.

All our work is supported by a diverse and dedicated Youth Board (18–25) each with their lived experience aligned to our work. They are encouraged to reflect on our past, examine the present, and help shape our future and will be an important part of our development in the coming years.

⁶ Laura Lundy 2007, *The Lundy Model of Child Participation*, British Education Research Journal, Volume 3, Issue 6 p.927-942 (https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/lundy_model_of_participation.pdf)

⁷ Phil Treseder 1997, *Degrees of Participation*, Empowering Children and Young People: Promoting Involvement in Decision Maker (https://www.nonformality.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Participation_Models_20121118.pdf)

⁸ Johnson and Ali, *The Third Space*.

4. Our Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles and Values

I remember an inspirational teacher at Primary School who I think changed the trajectory of my life. He incorporated art into history projects, science, and literature. He also read amazing, quite advanced books to us and I just remember it opening a whole new world to me.

(Alexa, Leicester)

Our vision is to inspire children and young people to harness the power of arts, creativity and culture for positive change.

Our Mission

To achieve this vision, our mission has five strategic objectives which all focus on improving the cultural lives of young people, especially those who are most disadvantaged:

SOC1. Children and young people living in need will have experienced a cultural intervention designed to improve their life chances.

SOC2. Children and young people are visible and audible in the leadership of services that impact them.

SOC3. Creative practitioners, educators and employers have a deeper understanding of the 'lived life of a child in need' and have developed the skills to support their development needs.

SOC4. Investment in our work has increased to support the sustainability and growth of the charity.

SOC5. Adoption and delivery of Creative Mentoring practice has been embraced nationally and internationally through the leadership of the National Centre for Creative Mentoring.

Our guiding principles

1. **We will listen and act:** embedding children and young people's voices throughout our work from conception of programme to delivery and governance and we will encourage others to do the same.
2. **We will work collaboratively:** partnership working is central to the work we develop to improve creative outcomes and cultural opportunities for our region's children and young people.
3. **We will respond to need:** we focus on nurturing and supporting the creativity of children in need and those working for them to promote high quality cultural practice.
4. **We will champion Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** we stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter Campaign and all marginalised communities across the world and will use our voice to speak out against injustice. We commit to listening, learning and taking action to improve access to creative opportunities for our region's children and young people.
5. **Engagement with artists and educators** is driven by a personalised, person centre pedagogy in which mentoring, and coaching play a fundamental role in generating personal change.
6. The **creative voices of young people** will be at the heart of the creative or cultural experience.

Our Values

Our values are inspired by the work of Munira Thobani and her work on the Thobani 6C Self Audit Tool©

1. **We seek Coherence in our work:** Social justice, equality and equity matters to us. We constantly review and refresh the narratives of why equality matters to us in our professional (and political) practices. We strive to have a coherent vision and set of values on equality and share this vision with your stakeholders. We set out our equality objectives to support us in delivering our purpose fairly and equitably.
2. **We seek to raise Consciousness** in our work: by increasing knowledge, understanding, awareness and empathy. We strive to improve our awareness of our privilege and possible complicity in maintaining discrimination and disadvantage.
3. **We are committed** to tackling inequality and disproportionality in all its forms.
4. **We strive to find the courage** to challenge the status-quo in perpetuating discrimination and inequality. We strive to act and influence the ways which can shift the balance of power and privilege in our work and build our courage by connecting and networking with the individuals, groups and organisations who are tackling discrimination, inequality and disproportionality.
5. **We seek Connectedness** with self-organised equality seeking groups and draw strength from being an ally by working in tackling discrimination that is direct, indirect and or inter-sectional.
6. **We prioritise Co-production** by developing leadership models which lead and empower others so that their contributions to achieve greater equitable outcomes for all our communities. We ensure there is accountability of everyone in the organisation to act consistently with achieving our organisational purpose and equity ambitions.

We strive for these values to be evident in all aspects of our organisation: governance, leadership, programmes, income generation and operations and processes.

Delivering Our Mission: our Theory of Change

Our Theory of Change explains how we will work strategically and collaboratively to achieve and demonstrate our strategic outcomes for children and young people in need. It provides a summary of the changes that will occur and provides the context for our programme development and delivery plans and is available in Appendix 1.

Starting with the problem statement, *“Children and young people living in challenging circumstances experience significant disproportionate disadvantage, including heightened isolation, lack of stability, compromised mental health, lower attainment and lack of opportunities and do not have equitable access to experience the social, educational and economic benefits of the arts, culture and creativity”.*

Our desired long-term goal is to inspire children and young people to harness the power of arts, creativity and culture for positive change, transforming their lives using creativity and culture as the tool for change.

This will result in children and young people feeling more confident and resilient; empowering them to influence decision making that effects their lives, speak out against injustice, and build aspirations that will shape successful futures.

Our definition of need

As highlighted in section 2, there are 28,820 children and young people registered in need in the East Midlands⁹.

There are also additional children and young people living below the poverty line, in areas of deprivation and with high support needs who are not registered with the Local Authority and are therefore not included in the above figures but would still be eligible for our services.

When we identify children and young people 'in need' we mean children and young people who are:

- care experienced.
- experiencing abuse or neglect.
- have a disability or life restricting illness.
- experiencing poverty / low income.
- absent parenting.
- living as a young carer.
- family disfunction.
- seeking asylum.
- in refuge.
- in alternative educational provision.
- rurally isolated.
- on Free School Meals.
- receiving Pupil Premium.

In addition to the needs identified above, we will also target our work in areas of high deprivation and need due to lack of infrastructure, support and opportunity.

5. Programme Development Plans

The following section seeks to present an overview of the direction for programme development in the next five years to support the re-growth of The Mighty Creatives and development of the Creative Mentoring Programme.

Our programme development plans will build on the success of our last 13-years and the strength of our Creative Mentoring programme to support children and young people where they are. All programme development will focus on the needs and priorities of the children and young people we serve and build services and support where they need them most. Our future work will be designed to be flexible to ensure our services remains relevant and responsive. We will hold regular development conversations with children and young people and those working with them to feed our direction of travel.

Our model of Creative Mentoring and youth voice and leadership will sit at the centre of our development, and we will work with schools, social services, community partners and creatives to enhance our collective offer for children and young people.

⁹ This figure is taken from 2021-22 Characteristics of children in need and refers to Children in need at 31 March by primary need and local authority' in East Midlands between 2021 and 2022

Our Vision
 To inspire children and young people to harness the power of the arts for positive change.

Our Strategic Objectives

SOC1. Children and young people living in need will have experienced a cultural intervention designed to improve their life chances.

SOC2. Children and young people are visible and audible in the leadership of services that impact them.

SOC3. Creative practitioners, educator and employers have a deeper understanding of the 'lived life of a child in need' and have developed the skills to support their development needs.

SOC4. Investment in our work has increased to support the sustainability and growth of the charity.

SOC5. Adoption and delivery of Creative Mentoring practice has been embraced nationally and internationally through the leadership of the National Centre for Creative Mentoring.

Our Programme Development Areas

- Youth Voice and leadership**
- TMC Youth Board
 - Youth Voice Consultation / Tenders
 - Youth Voice regional Network in partnership with Youth Music
 - Virtual Schools Network – My Creative Track

- National Centre for Creative Mentoring**
- Training and support for Creative Practitioners and artists, educators and employers
 - Research
 - Advocacy

Creative Mentoring 1:1 service
 Person-centred practice

Creative Mentoring group work in Schools –
 Creativity and wellbeing

Employ Me
 Supporting care experienced CYP into work

Creative Mentoring group work in community spaces –
 creativity and wellbeing

Tracking and Measuring Impact

We will follow an impact measurement framework that builds on our theory of change by first identifying the data we will collect. This will help us understand, evaluate and demonstrate our impact. Through our Impact and Data strategy and action plan we will have the tools needed to help us understand whether we are driving positive change and working towards our intended outcomes and organisational vision.

By better understanding our impact, we will be able to make decisions about the work we deliver now and into the future, guiding our decision-making around which activities to start, enhance, stop or change.

Through the delivery of our strategy, we will be able to:

- Demonstrate our commitment to change to our service users and stakeholders.
- Better engage with our funders and stakeholders by clearly showing how their investment in our activities and services is driving positive outcomes.
- Attract new sources of funding by demonstrating and evidencing our effectiveness and impact.
- Engage new and existing partners whose vision of impact align with our own.
- Strengthen our reputation as impactful, honest and effective through taking an evidence-based, transparent approach.

6. Marketing Strategy

“Creating this anthology is a truly collaborative process and it’s been both rewarding and deeply validating to see my words, some of which were written over three years ago finally come to life.”

Charles, recipient of Youth Empowerment Funding

Competitor Analysis

Our competitor analysis showed that of 11 identified organisations, four were funded by ACE at the time of the analysis. Those organisations not funded by ACE adopt a more political stance when it comes to messaging. All of the organisations serve a specific region or place, with brand positioning and offerings centred around those location. Mental health and wellbeing were key themes for five of the organisations, with many acting as a central hub for the areas.

Current research activity through the Creative Mentoring programme is seeking to identify competitors in the Creative Mentoring space.

Stakeholder Research

Our stakeholder research project (online survey and focus groups) was conducted from October 2021-January 2022. The research focused on our three key stakeholder groups: young people, education settings and cultural organisations (those who work with young people), and funders.

The online survey identified that 56% of respondents suggested that TMC is best described as a ‘Bridge organisation’; however, 19% did not know how to define the organisation, while 10% said TMC is best described as a ‘commissioning organisation’. This highlights the need for our brand repositioning to communicate a clearer identity to stakeholders as we look to rebuild.

In terms of familiarity of our charity and programmes, our research showed an average familiarity score of 3.2 (on a scale of 1-5). Respondents were most familiar with our cultural education work and least familiar with our Creative Mentoring and employability offerings. Based on this finding, there is an urgent need to raise the profile of our Creative Mentoring work given the focus for the future.

Strategic Marketing Approach

“The best marketing strategy ever: care.” – Gary Vaynerchuk, Entrepreneur, Author, Speaker
 Implementing a marketing strategy for nonprofit organisations is crucial. Strategic marketing is a continual process which helps an organisation to establish a clear focus that moves its mission and vision forwards. It supports an organisation to review its strengths and needs, while evaluating progress, so that services can be improved in response to the changing external (micro and macro) environment and the needs of beneficiaries.

Our need for a well-considered marketing strategy is no different to other nonprofits. At a critical time for the organisation, the context to this is complex and myriad, but it can be summarised into two main challenges:

- The evolving needs of the CYP we serve: social deprivation, poverty of access to cultural opportunities, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and their mental health and wellbeing.
- The end of the Bridge contract with Arts Council England, the charity’s primary funder since 2009, and unsuccessful NPO application to secure future funding.

While planning is vital, a marketing strategy should be viewed as very much the ‘doing’ rather than the planning.

Strategic Marketing Aim

TMC’s core strategic marketing aim for 2023-2026 is to:

Increase brand awareness, reposition the charity as the ‘go-to’ provider of Creative Mentoring, and provide a platform for young people’s voices.

Storytelling will sit at the heart of this strategy, employing an ‘audience first’ approach, and using our own impact and data alongside wider research to raise our profile; communicate our messaging aligned to political and social topics; promote our cause; and to fulfil our Youth Voice strategy.

Objectives

The SMART marketing objectives are aligned to the 5 strategic outcomes.

SMART marketing objectives for April 2023-April 2024.

The ‘short-term’ SMART marketing objectives for April 2023-April 2024 in support of this aim are as follows:

SMART Marketing Objective	Supported Business Objectives
Conduct a brand review and work with a branding agency to remove the strand-specific ‘sub-brand’ logos, and reimagine the brand colour palette to reflect the refocused business plan. Implement updated branding across the website and all branded marketing ‘key essentials’ (templates, pull up banners, marketing literature etc) – by August 2023 .	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Rewrite the website’s copy to reflect the new vision, Creative Mentoring service focus, and brand positioning – by May 2023 .	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Implement a new website page hierarchy to depict the updated service focus (Creative Mentoring), leading with audience segments – by May 2023 .	2,3,4,5
Phase out the Creative Mentoring sub-branding in line with the aforementioned brand review/update – by December 2023 .	1,2,3

Implement a storytelling strategy that places youth voice at the centre to support the strategic marketing aim, inform the promotional mix, and provide a platform for CYP's voices to grow engagement with key stakeholders by 10% – by August 2023 and April 2024 respectively.	1,2,3,4,5
Publish at least one Creative Mentoring advocacy story on the website each month – ongoing until April 2024.	1,2,3,4,5
Introduce a new report for tracking key marketing metrics and ROI of marketing activity by August 2023.	1,2,3,4,5,
Conduct a social media audit and implement a new social media strategy that places youth voice at the centre to attract 300 new 'young' followers – by April 2024.	1,3,4,5
Enter at least four charity/industry/sector awards (one per quarter) across the first year – by April 2024.	1,2,3,4,5
Implement a new TMC e-newsletter to sustain existing relationships with relevant subscribers and grow our audience of relevant stakeholders by 15% – by June 2023.	2,3,4
Continue to increase traffic to the website by 30% in comparison to end of March 2023 figures by April 2024.	1,2,3,4,5,
Implement a quarterly tactical campaign plan each quarter (at least one month before the start of the next quarter), for the upcoming quarter by April 2023 (ongoing).	1,2,3,4,5

SMART marketing objectives for April 2024 – April 2026

The long-term SMART marketing objectives for April 2024-2026 are as follows:

SMART Marketing Objectives (2023-2026)	Supported Business Objectives
Secure 3 pieces of TV coverage, including one national TV broadcast – by April 2026.	1,2,3,4,5
Implement a sound plan for using young people and self-generated content, i.e. our Youth Board, to support our storytelling by running at least one social media takeover per quarter – by September 2024.	1,2,3,4,5
Improve website bounce rate by 10% year-on-year – April 2026 (ongoing) (ongoing).	2,3,4,5
Secure four pieces of thought leadership media coverage each year by April 2026.	1,2,3,4,5
On-board a young ambassador/patron with similar lived experience to our beneficiaries to act as the 'face' of the charity – by September 2024.	1,2,3,4,5

Positioning

The positioning of a nonprofit organisation is crucial. As the lines between sectors continue to blur, and with nonprofits often fighting for the same funding and contracts, this has become an increasing threat for TMC. An unsuccessful application to secure ACE funding beyond March 2023, following a significantly competitive funding round, means a clear and coherent position regarding TMC's mission and values is essential for the charity to differentiate itself in the marketplace.

The proposed positioning statement, to be used internally and to inform messaging, is:

“For children and young people ‘in need’... our Creative Mentoring programme... is a tried and tested model of creative intervention based on a person-centred approach... that helps to support their personal, social and emotional development, and education attainment... to transform their lives.”

The Marketing Mix (7 Ps)

The extended marketing mix (also known as the 7 Ps) is a framework used by organisations to help realise marketing objectives. Traditionally, the marketing mix comprised of just four elements (product, place, price, promotion), but a modernised version has been extended (people, process, physical evidence) to reflect a customer-centric approach to modern industry.

Marketing Mix element	Details
Product (service)	TMC's service portfolio will focus on Creative Mentoring, growing this programme to stabilize the organisation. The proposed brand review will support this by leading with a clearer visual identity that supports the new brand positioning.
Price	While the cost to beneficiaries is zero, the cost of TMC's services is not. Marketing activity will be tracked in terms of ROI, identifying a unit cost for each activity, and reporting on the return (e.g., conversions). Marketing efforts will support the pricing element of the extended marketing mix in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligning marketing and communications activity to income generation targets. Producing high-quality stories, and impact and advocacy materials, to support funding bids, raise the charity's profile, and provide a platform for CYP's voices. Supporting income generation through fundraising promotion, aligned to a calendar of key awareness days.
Place	TMC's approach to 'place' is two-fold: the needs of our beneficiaries 'on the ground' (where they are located geographically, and how they will access our programme/s), and how supporters can donate to the cause. <p>TMC will continue to deliver its Creative Mentoring service in the East Midlands. Recent growth of the programme has seen markets expand beyond the East Midlands region into the West Midlands, with some beneficiaries located outside of the Midlands entirely. This presents an opportunity for TMC to reposition itself as a national organisation, particularly considering plans for a National Centre of Creative Mentoring.</p> <p>The promotion and delivery of Creative Mentoring, and any future programmes, across geographical areas should be subject to research and identified in response to beneficiaries' needs.</p>
Promotion	A storytelling strategy will be the core driver for all promotional activity. A master schedule of activity will be planned following the outcome of the ACE transition fund. Plan will be developed each quarter, in line with an emergent strategic approach, so that activity can be scaled up or scaled down in response to funding.
Process	Process centres on how services or programmes are delivered, and how TMC's processes will ensure a consistent message to stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing campaign planning – the Marketing and Communications Manager will own all marketing activity and drive the quarterly campaigns. Ad-hoc requests made by the Programme team will follow the 'Ad-hoc marketing request' process, which requires the use of a form to make the request which can then be actioned and tracked. Customer/audience journey – Audiences engaging with TMC will either liaise directly with a staff member; request information/contact/submit a form via the website, social media, or generic email. CRM – the impact and data evidence will be identified in the CRM and used to support storytelling strategies and PR efforts that reinforce the brand positioning.
People	This element of the marketing mix is vital since 'people' (TMC staff, Creative Mentors, Youth Board etc) are as much a part of the organisation as the services on offer. The focus for 'people' will be our beneficiaries, using their stories and voices to promote our cause.
Physical evidence	The intangible nature of TMC's programme offerings and wider services means that physical evidence is a crucial element of the marketing mix. It is important that TMC's physical evidence reflects the new positioning of the brand for both staff and external stakeholders. Physical evidence will support the brand positioning and values in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Branded materials – branded marketing materials, in line with the updated brand referred to in the short-term objectives, will help to ensure consistency and present TMC as a reliable and trustworthy organisation. This approach will also support the brand repositioning, presenting a consistent brand identity will establish that TMC has longevity and alleviate any concerns about the charity's sustainability. Content and storytelling – content (including marketing literature, case studies, infographics, reports and guides, impact reports, videos etc) will reassure funders and donors Website – The website serves as a strong form of physical evidence for our audiences. Although digital, the website is typically the first exposure of TMC for our audiences. Through storytelling strategies, our A clear and professional design, with playful elements to reflect the CYP that TMC supports, presents the charity as an approachable, knowledgeable, and trustworthy organisation.

Audience

Children and young people defined as 'in need'	Supporting adults (foster carers, residential home staff, social workers, teachers)
	Local Authorities
	Virtual Schools
Funders	
Artists and creative practitioners	
Supporters	
Young people	

The Promotional Mix

A storytelling strategy will drive all planned activity using the promotional mix model (also known as The Marketing Communications Mix). This will enable our promotional activity to be delivered with authenticity.

Promotional Tactic	Details
Website	The website will serve as the main method for promoting TMC's cause, service offering (Creative Mentoring) and fundraising activity to our audiences. The updated website will serve to support the customer journey through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear CTAs for Creative Mentoring interest. • Clear CTAs for income generation. • Blog section – regular blog posts to position TMC as thought-leaders in the Creative Mentoring and Youth Voice space. • Stories section – sharing first-hand accounts from CYP, Creative Mentors and the adults around care-experienced CYP. • Impact section – highlighting the difference Creative Mentoring makes to care-experienced young people to develop brand credibility and trust. • A resources section providing research, publications, press releases etc • Access to the learning platform to access the Employ ME course.
Public relations	PR efforts will be focused on using our own data to comment on topical political, economic, social etc issues in the media through press releases and broadcast media. Award entries will help to build credibility and trust in the brand and our programme offerings, especially given the sensitive nature of the work. Thought leadership articles attributed to the CEO will support the proposed brand positioning.
Content	Our cause will be promoted through a content strategy, using the stories and voices of CYP. Blogs, reports, research, videos, case studies, podcasts, guides, impact reports, infographics etc will be accessed via our core website.
Direct email marketing	Direct email marketing will be used to engage with existing audiences to generate interest in cause and engage with potential fundraisers.
Events	Key industry and sector events where we can promote our programmes to our key audiences will be researched, and plans devised for presenting and/or attending these events.
Social media	Social media will be used as a central platform for CYP's voices and stories. This will be aligned to the storytelling objective, with social media takeovers led by CYP helping to raise awareness of the needs of our beneficiaries.
Advertising	Sponsored social media adverts will help to reach our audience of young people, while Google ads will be used to engage with those interested in work. These can be tailored to location so

7. Financial Strategy

“Young people often have a unique outlook and perspective on the world, bringing new and exciting developments in every industry.... it is important young people have a say in anything relating to them, their future and the world as a whole”

Youth Board Member, The Mighty Creatives

Our financial ambition is built upon achieving the following goals:

1. Regrow the charity within a financially sound and sustainable framework.
2. Achievable, realistic diversification of investment base.
3. Maintain our reserves policy at three months running costs.

We will be focusing on four strands of income generation:

1. Institutional, Trust and Foundation Grant Funding
2. Individual Giving (Campaign and Major Donations)
3. Corporate Partnerships
4. Traded Services (Sales)

After an intensive period of organisational development over the past five years, we are now in a strong position to develop our income generation activities to support our future growth and sustainability.

Our Income Generation Strategy is a fundamental component of our development. The principle aims of the strategy are to diversify the charity's income in order to improve its financial sustainability; and put procedures in place for effective long-term fundraising management.

Growth of the charity is not a matter of increasing turnover and profitability although these 'bottom lines' are important factors to consider when planning for growth.

We have also developed a **High Level Gateway for Development** which provides a compass for how we consider which growth opportunities we should explore:

- Any development work must go through The Mighty Creatives High Level Gateway to ensure the work being developed is aligned to our core values and strategic outcomes. So far, we will ensure:
 - Work must include Youth Voice methodology as outlined in our Youth Voice Strategy.
 - Any children or young people we work with must be identified as living in need as outlined in The Mighty Creatives definition.
 - Any new work must align to at least one of The Mighty Creatives strategic outcomes:
 - SOC1. Children and young people living in need will have experienced a cultural intervention designed to improve their life chances.
 - SOC2. Children and young people are visible and audible in the leadership of services that impact them.
 - SOC3. Creative practitioners, educator and employers have a deeper understanding of the 'lived life of a child in need' and have developed the skills to support their development needs.
 - SOC4. Investment in our work has increased to support the sustainability and growth of the charity.
 - SOC5. Adoption and delivery of Creative Mentoring practice has been embraced nationally and internationally through the leadership of the National Centre for Creative Mentoring.

Our planned turnover over the course of this Business Plan is c.£680,000 per annum. A breakdown can be found in Appendix 2.

A five-year forecast has been prepared to align with the delivery of this Business Plan as well as an action plan aligned to our Income Generation Strategy.

8. What's the team?

My Creative Coach was really helpful, especially since we were in the midst of lockdown. They ensured I was on the right track and were always there to say 'you can do this' whenever I doubted myself. They were able to help in areas I wasn't confident with but gave support to enable me to grow and develop in those areas, which I'm so grateful for. I really want to say thank you to everyone involved in the project. It provided me with so much motivation and helped me to realise that I can still do things. The Mighty Creatives made me feel so at peace during such a strange time – a time where no one knew what was going to happen.

(Josh, YCLF recipient)

We are governed by a Board of Trustees, who are also the directors of the limited company. Trustees can serve from the age of sixteen. The Board is responsible for the scrutiny and examination of organisational performance. Trustees meet quarterly to monitor risk, agree strategic direction, approve budgets and finance reports and endorse new and review existing policies. The Board ensures The Mighty Creatives reporting obligations to the Charity Commission and Companies House are met.

Sub-Committees, Policies and Processes

Our policies and processes are reviewed in line with our policy matrix and signed off by the Board. We have a measured and thorough approach to safeguarding, ensuring all staff and Board receive training from NSPCC and regular briefings.

Safeguarding and EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) are standing items on our agenda and are overseen by a designated member of the Board, as is our assessment of risks.

The Mighty Creatives Operations and Finance sub-committee scrutinises the charity's approach to finance, staffing and operations. The committee meets separately, feeding into the main Board for sign off on a quarterly basis.

A Programme sub-committee was launched in 2022 and follows the same approach. It will be expanded in 2023 to include expertise from the Health and Social services sectors to reflect the vision and mission of the organisation

Led by Felicity Woolf, Chair of Trustees and Vivek Malhotra, Deputy Chair and Chair of Finance, our trustees have extensive experience and expertise in the arts and cultural sector, education, local authorities and private sector and bring a wide range of governance skills to bear: leadership, fundraising and financial control, marketing, pedagogy, innovation, cultural educational practice, artist development, collective impact modelling, heritage, theatre and product development. They also reflect the geographical diversity of the region which the company serves.

Over the course of 2018–2024 we have refreshed the Board to ensure it truly reflects the region's diversity.

The Trustees delegate the authority of running the company to the senior leadership team of Chief Executive, Dr. Nick Owen MBE and Deputy Chief Executive, Emily Bowman. They lead the Business Development Team of Business Manager and Communications/Marketing Manager. The full staff structure is shown in Appendix 3 and a current staff list is available on our website.

9. Our track record

“It’s given me confidence and enabled me to go forward, do an audition and get into college” – Creative Mentoring recipient.

Since 2018, we have delivered an ambitious and stretching set of nineteen key performance indicators which are shown on the following page. As at the end of December 2022, seventeen of these KPIs have hit or achieved higher than their original target as follows:

Organisational KPIs	Target	Total to date	% delivered
Engage 50% of the region’s schools (2220 in total)	1110	1193	107%
Meaningful engagement with 30% of cultural organisations in the region - including Freelancers	735	1119	152%
Oversee 20,000 creative qualifications awarded through the Arts Award programme	20,000	23,192	116%
Support the development and delivery of 200 creative projects (the projects that can be counted must have produced a creative output)	200	208	104%
Support 50 emerging artists	50	164	328%
Develop 50 creative enterprises	50	87	174%
Create 100 new jobs	100	545	545%
with 50% of participants moving from NEET to EET	50	530	1060%
Support 2 creative apprenticeships	2	2	100%
Develop and deliver 300 training, events, workshops and networking opportunities	300	850	283%
Provide support for 20 networks, focusing on early years, SEND, creative schools and children looked after	20	20	100%
Issue 200 bursaries and 150 project grants	350	517	148%
Deliver 6 conferences	6	6	100%
Develop 10 resources which offer access to a directory of assets, advice and support	10	11	110%
Engage 2000 CYP through direct delivery	2,000	2402	120%
Achieve 80% match for Cultural Life Fund investments	£1,200,000	£1,372,418	114%
Reach 10,000 attendees through our largescale events and conferences	10,000	10,342	103%

Our success stems from our unique expertise in championing, developing, delivering and growing:

- Co-created services with children and young people and other stakeholders that can be scaled up, demonstrate reach and result in significant and measurable impact.
- Investment in children and young people's creative skills, knowledge and practice.
- Capacity in the cultural and education sectors to support the infrastructure of the region.

Since 2009 we have been delivering work to support both direct delivery with children and young people and those working with them across the education and cultural sectors. We have always had a commitment to improving access and empowering others to create more opportunities for children and young people to engage with arts, culture and creativity.

We are renowned for leading strategic partnerships, engaging stakeholders, designing and managing programmes of work, undertaking research and evaluation directly and as a commissioner. We have a skilled and knowledgeable board and staff team who have considerable expertise and experience in the fields of education, culture, youth engagement and co-production. We hold strong partnerships across the region and are able to deliver tried and tested, scalable programmes that contribute to positive and lasting transformation for children and young people.¹⁰

10. What's our ask?

*That's all we're doing, really –
passing on the things we've learnt, the love we believe,
and what our mighty vision hopes to achieve.
And you, my love, for reading this, are mighty too.
You feel our fight, hear our voice,
and we hope you will fall in love with our story.*

Charley Genever
Emerge Young Artist 2017
Peterborough Poet Laureate 2016

Arts, creativity and cultural practice have a vital role in contributing to the health and well being of our children and young people in need: and the need for cultural and creative opportunities for children and young people is more pressing than ever.

This business plan describes how we intend to do that.

We welcome your support and endorsement of our vision. If you would like to help our mission, please contact us. We very much look forward to working with you.

¹⁰ For a more detailed outline of our achievements please see Appendix 4.

Appendices

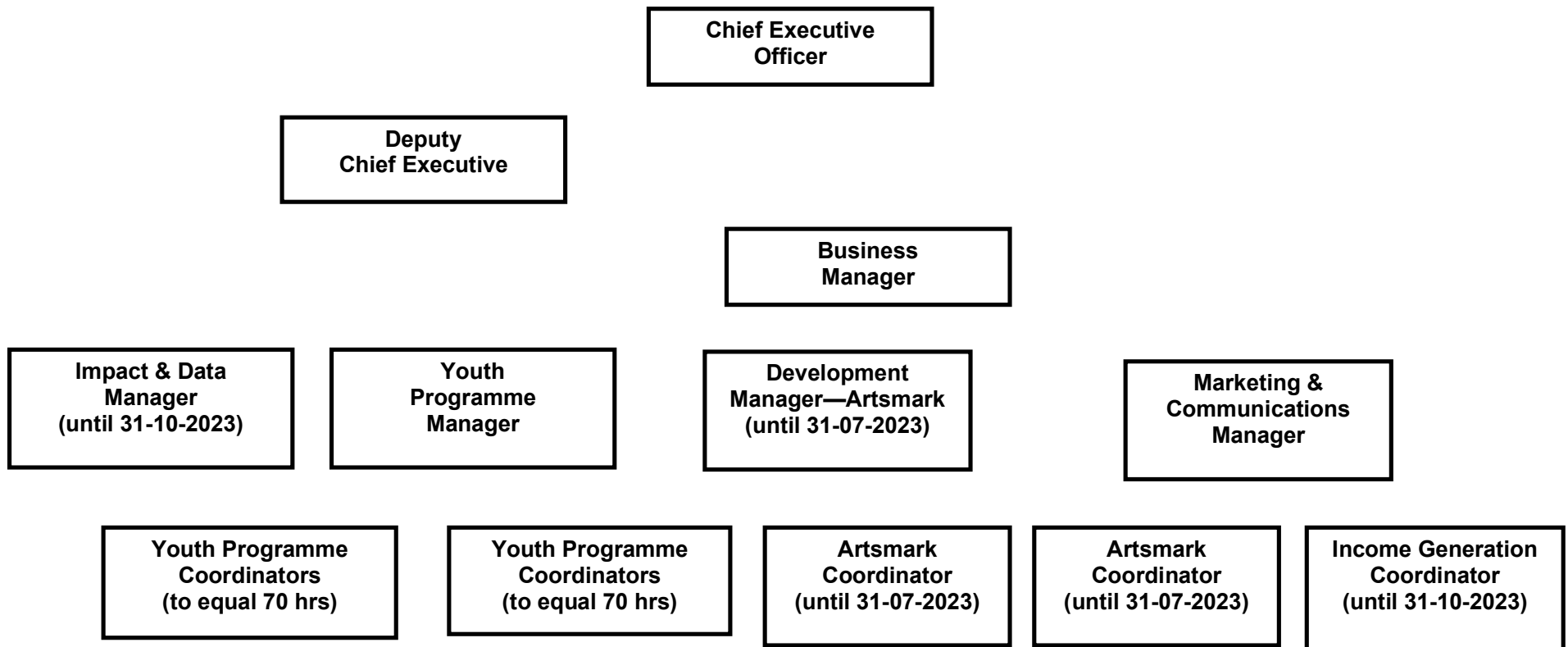
Appendix 1 – Theory of Change

Problem Statement: <i>"Children and young people living in challenging circumstances experience significant disproportionate disadvantage, including heightened isolation, lack of stability, compromised mental health, lower attainment and lack of opportunities and do not have equitable access to experience the social, educational and economic benefits of the arts, culture and creativity".</i>				
Resources	Mechanisms	Activities	Strategic outputs: <i>what will arise as a result of delivering our outcomes.</i>	Organisational strategic Outcomes
Skilled People (trustees, staff and stakeholders) Established partnerships Effective CRM system and website Sustainable funding Knowledge of beneficiary and supporter markets Access to data Productive processes and clear systems for planning and evaluation	Creative Mentoring practice and methodology Youth Voice practice Development of skills and expertise to deliver Established systems and processes to Plan for Delivery Marketing Strategy Digital Strategy Youth Voice Strategy Environmental Strategy EDI Strategy Investment Strategy Targeted products and service offer Impact & Evaluation Strategy	Creative Mentoring 1:1 targeted service Youth Voice and leadership Creative Mentoring group work in schools Creative Mentoring group work in community spaces Employ Me Supporting care experienced CYP into work National Centre for Creative Mentoring Including training, supervision and research	SO1. Engaged 3500 CYP as participants, in line with commitments set out in our ED&I Policy. SO2. Of those 3500, 40% (1400) young people who are NEET (not in education employment or training) move from NEET to EET (being in education employment or training). SO3. Of those 3500, 20% (700) will be empowered to lead cultural change in their lives, using their creative leadership skills to improve their life chances. SO4. See a 50% increase of registered children and young people in need engaging with Creative Mentoring between 2023 - 2028. SO5. 100% of our engagements will be with children and young people in need by 2028 as defined in our 2023-28 Business Plan. SO6. 60 CPD sessions developed and delivered. Including training and development opportunities, workshops and networking sessions for educators and creative practitioners to develop their child/youth-led creative practice. SO7. Sustained and grown our pool of Creative Mentors through targeted recruitment supporting 100 creative practitioners to develop their practice working specifically with CYP in need. SO8. Grown a youth voice community of practice network, delivering high-quality child/youth-led approaches across the region, resulting in an increase of youth-led interventions. SO9. Delivered 3 youth-led events in partnership with the youth voice network, embedding youth voice practice through partnership. SO10. Diversify our income sources so no one funder is more than 50% on our overall income.	SOC1. Children and young people living in need will have experienced a cultural intervention designed to improve their life chances. SOC2. Children and young people are visible and audible in the leadership of services that impact them. SOC3. Creative practitioners, educator and employers have a deeper understanding of the 'lived life of a child in need' and have developed the skills to support their development needs. SOC4. Investment in our work has increased to support the sustainability and growth of the charity. SOC5. Adoption and delivery of Creative Mentoring practice has been embraced nationally and internationally through the leadership of the National Centre for Creative Mentoring.

APPENDIX 2 – 5 YEAR BUDGET

Income	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Estimated Funds brought forward	537,526	473,918	218,623	17,054	-
Raised Income (Confirmed)	511,995	-	-	-	-
Raised Income (Unconfirmed)	195,000	387,500	550,000	826,602	926,598
Investment Income	175	175	175	175	175
Total Income	1,244,696	861,593	768,798	843,831	926,773
Expenditure					
Programme Delivery (Confirmed)	232,137	-	-	-	-
Programme Delivery (Unconfirmed)	135,000	317,500	410,000	485,000	550,000
Operational Costs (Staffing & Overheads)	403,641	325,470	341,744	358,831	376,773
Total Expenditure	770,778	642,970	751,744	843,831	926,773
Balance	473,918	218,623	17,054	-	-

APPENDIX 3 – STAFFING STRUCTURE



APPENDIX 4 SNAPSHOT OF ALL PROGRAMME AREAS

A snapshot on our direct work with children and young people

“Thank you again for all you are doing, I absolutely love your positivity. We support all in financial hardship, so really do work together with so many people that are struggling to purchase items for their families. I've found that the items we've been able to give out from you guys have been a real blessing to some that together with our things have really made a massive difference to people's lives, to the point where some families didn't think they were going to have a Christmas but together we made that happen. So a big thank you for working with us.” - Clifton Foodbank Let's Craft

- Distributed 30,525 Let's Create/Craft Resources to children, young people and their families' visiting foodbanks.
- Created employability opportunities over 545 young people through our Kickstart and Creative Mentoring programmes.
- Supported 288 care experienced young people through our Creative Mentoring programme to improve their social, educational and emotional resilience and supported the strategic development of a creative provision for Virtual Schools.
- Issued 55 micro-grants to young people to develop their own practice and amplify their voices to make positive change for themselves and their communities.
- Delivered two youth-led symposiums through our Change Maker programme and Without Walls.
- Supported 7 young people to develop their leadership skills and influence the strategic development of the charity through our Youth Board.

A snapshot on our work with Schools

“The arts have helped our children find their voice, many children who engage in the arts activities we offer in school are the quiet children who aren't sporty or the loudest in class and they find experiencing the arts is a good way to be more fully involved in school life.” Chris Howarth, Deputy Head, St John's CE Primary School, Ripley

- Supported 482 school through our Artsmark programme creatively impacting 187,295 children and young people across the region.
- 33% of those schools are in the IMD Decile 1-3 (LSOA) where 1 is an LSOA among the 10% most deprived.
- Engaged 53% (1193) of our region's schools and educational settings in cultural activity through direct delivery and in partnership with others, equivalent to reaching 107% of our target of engaging 50% of the region's schools by 2023.
- Delivered a suite of leadership and development programmes to support the delivery and strategic leadership of cultural education in schools.

- Supported 11 Virtual Schools, 1 prevent service, and 2 leaving care services with the delivery of Creative Mentoring for care experienced children and young people.

A snapshot on our partnership work with the cultural sector

“Just to say thank you to The Mighty Creatives - it is such a warm, positive experience working with you, really, an absolute pleasure to be able to discuss this pretty major shift in our organisation and feel a sense of familial feeling and recognition!”

Leicester Print Workshop, Digital Development Grant recipient

- Invested £1Million through grants and Partnership Investment and commissions which leveraged an additional £1.4m in match funding.
- Supported 100% of NPOs across the region (56) to develop their activity and engagement with children and young people either through grants, commissions, CPD or partnership support – exploring diversity, youth voice and sustainability.
- Supported 1063 non NPO cultural partners and freelancers to develop their practice through networking, grants and CPD.
- Delivered over 700 training events and networking opportunities for both the cultural and education sectors and led the delivery and support of 20 networks across the region, sharing practice and learning focused on creative delivery across a range or practice e.g. SEND, Artsmark, Arts Award, LCEPs and partnerships and Creative Mentoring.
- Supported the training and development of 79 Creative Mentors.

A snapshot on our direct work with employers

I've had a very positive experience of The Mighty Creatives – right from start, from just asking questions or needing information. The Kickstart Scheme was so new at this point, and both organisations were trying to work things out, but that was never an issue. I always felt like we were working together. If I had a question, The Mighty Creatives would go and find out the answer and get back to me as soon as possible. I'm very happy with the support; the communication has been great. And there was a lot of communication at the beginning, as we were trying to figure out how everything worked! The Mighty Creatives were great at chasing things up and dealt with any hiccups really well. I'm very happy!

Emma-Sue Prince, Unimenta <https://unimenta.com/podcast/>

Between 2020 and 2022 we worked as a Kickstart Gateway for the DWP which involved:

- Processing 461 employer queries
- Processing 287 Expressions of Interest
- Being contracted by the DWP to offer over 790 jobs, 530 of which were filled during the lifetime of the project

Where the jobs were (By region)

Sector	Approved Employers	Approved Jobs	Jobs as % of total
East Midlands	76	212	27%
London	49	209	27%
South East	37	110	14%
North East	9	73	9%
West Midlands	21	65	8%
East	16	61	8%
North West	3	23	3%
South West	1	8	1%
Yorkshire	7	9	1%
South	2	5	1%
Scotland	1	10	1%
Totals	222	785	

Where the jobs were (By sector)

Sector	Approved Employers	Approved Jobs	Jobs as % of total
Film & Media	45	172	22%
Culture	39	146	19%
Creative & Digital	32	111	14%
Education	23	93	12%
Printing & Marketing	32	86	11%
Hospitality	5	35	4%
Leisure & Sport	7	25	3%
Finance	2	20	3%
Retail	10	22	3%
Leisure & Tourism	3	17	2%
Charity	4	14	2%
Design	5	19	2%
Health & Well Being	5	7	1%
Events	4	11	1%
Travel & Transport	2	2	<1%
Life Sciences	1	1	<1%
Food and Drink	2	3	<1%
Engineering / construction	1	1	<1%
Totals	222	785	

The Mighty Creatives Employ ME course includes over 12 hours of online engagement and provides expert insights from award winning businesses and organisations. Each Kickstarter is also provided with a bespoke planning kit that relates directly to course content. We take young people through an online experience into the working world visiting important topics such as:

- Exploring the Kickstart Scheme
- Planning, Doing & Reviewing
- Health & Safety in the Workplace
- Workplace Induction Good Practice Guide
- Professional Communication and Social Media
- The Intangible Skill Set
- CV Writing & Job Applications
- Interview Techniques and Reflection

APPENDIX 4a: ACHIEVEMENT OF KPIS, 2018 - 2023

KPI No	Organisational KPIS	Target	Total to date	% delivered
1	Engage 50% of the region's schools (2220 in total)	1,110	1,193	107%
2	Meaningful engagement with 30% of cultural organisations in the region - including Freelancers	735	1,119	152%
3	support 10 partnership that support Cultural Education	10	9	90%
4	Oversee 20,000 creative qualifications awarded through the Arts Award programme	20,000	23,192	116%
5	Support the development and delivery of 200 creative projects (the projects that can be counted must have produced a creative output)	200	208	104%
6	Support 50 emerging artists	50	164	328%
7	Develop 50 creative enterprises	50	87	174%
8	Create 100 new jobs	100	545	545%
	with 50% of participants moving from NEET to EET	50	530	1060%
9	Deliver 26,000 hours of mentoring and coaching for children and young people	26,000	5,485	21%
10	Support 2 creative apprenticeships	2	2	100%
11	Develop and deliver 300 training, events, workshops and networking opportunities	300	850	283%
12	Provide support for 20 networks, focusing on early years, SEND, creative schools and children looked after	20	20	100%
13	Deliver 6 conferences	6	6	100%
14	Invest £1.2m from the Cultural Life Fund	£1,200,000	£1,082,064	90%
15	Issue 200 bursaries and 150 project grants	350	517	148%
16	Achieve 80% match for Cultural Life Fund investments	£1,200,000	£1,372,418	114%
17	Develop 10 resources which offer access to a directory of assets, advice and support	10	11	110%
18	Engage 2000 CYP through direct delivery	2,000	2,402	120%
19	Reach 10,000 attendees through our largescale events and conferences	10,000	10,342	103%