

# International collaboration between English cultural and Higher Education institutions

A research report for Arts Council England

November 2018

**SQW**



# 1. Summary of findings

## Synopsis

- 1.1 This research has found evidence of strong collaborations between English HEIs and cultural organisations, with some positive instances of this activity having an international dimension. The focus of collaborative activity ranges from support for civic agendas associated with place-making and sustainability, to provision of opportunities for students studying at HEIs through to longer-term research partnerships. This research revealed that research activities which are HEI led, with essential contributions from cultural organisations as a secondary partner, were especially constructive.
- 1.2 Such partnerships benefit from a supportive policy and organisational infrastructure at national and regional level. Specifically, through provision of strategic leadership, and providing a supportive environment for the personal relationships which sit at the core of the most fruitful partnerships to spark and ignite. This will require closer working with other institutions – notably the Arts and Humanities Research Council – and alignment with broader Government priorities on innovation and public health which advocates, and ensures opportunities, for cultural organisations to contribute to these future-facing challenges.

## Scope of research

- 1.3 SQW was appointed by Arts Council England (ACE) early in 2018 to undertake research into the crossover between the work of English cultural organisations and higher education institutions (HEIs). The research had a specific focus on international collaboration, to source examples of activity and examine what ACE, and others, could do to promote closer working between HEIs and cultural organisations.
- 1.4 The assignment addressed four key research questions:
  - What international activities are UK HEIs currently undertaking in the fields of art and culture?
  - To what extent are ACE supported organisations engaging with the international work of UK HEIs? And what opportunities are there for further, or better, levels of engagement?
  - What business models may be suitable vehicles for collaborations between UK HEIs and ACE supported organisations?
  - What can ACE, as England's responsible body for arts and culture, do to support funded organisations who wish to develop closer working relationships with UK HEIs on international projects?
- 1.5 The research design was informed in its early stages by a series of seven interviews with strategic stakeholders from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the British Council, strategic leads within ACE and two university Deans and Pro-Vice Chancellors. These consultations suggested a strategic disconnect between the primary funders of activity in this field, the AHRC, British Council and ACE. All partners were familiar with each other's

organisations and agendas, and had worked on previous projects or programmes at least bi-laterally together. However, given wider strategic imperatives they were not currently in close collaboration with relation to an internal collaborative agenda

- 1.6 At an organisational level, and despite the potential for alignment, this initial scoping work also suggested an imbalance of scale and resource between HEI partners and cultural organisations that may have slowed the rate of collaboration and co-ordination. Relative to HEIs, cultural partners are relatively small organisations in terms of staffing and other resources and they find it difficult to build relationships at the right level and in the right way with HEIs that create genuinely mutually beneficial outcomes.
- 1.7 The initial hypothesis of the research brief; that international relationships with HEIs may help cultural organisations to become more financially resilient- was therefore adapted. Instead, developing a better understanding of the drivers and motivations for collaboration, and considering how best to support and facilitate became the initial focus for the work, with more in-depth work being taken where these collaborations had an international dimension.

### Motivations for partnership working

- 1.8 The research found that HEIs engage with arts and cultural organisations for a wide range of reasons, including:
- enriching academic practice and research experience through expertise gained by cultural practice in a non-academic environment, and the development of enhanced course and teaching materials
  - enhancing the reputation or profile of an HEI, making it more attractive to potential students (including international) and stakeholders
  - improving the cultural landscape in an area to attract and retain high-quality students and staff to stimulate indirect growth from the institution.
- 1.9 For arts and culture organisations, work with HEIs can provide:
- a source of investment into programmes, infrastructure or the organisation itself
  - student and graduate placements or volunteers from HEIs which may inject new viewpoints and ideas into arts and cultural practice – or simply increase capacity
  - collaborative research which supports development of further breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding within specialist fields and creates opportunities to improve or enhance collections and creative outputs.

### Enabling conditions for collaboration

- 1.10 SQW undertook a survey of HEIs based on initial desk-based research of collaborative activity. This survey received 27 responses from HEIs and offers an insight to the scale and extent of collaboration. The sample is not representative of the whole sector but rather indicates the scale and types of collaborative activity.

- 1.11 The research captured perspectives on enabling conditions. Of these, ‘personal relationships’ was reported to be most important. This is followed by expertise and knowledge of collaborators and reinforced through geographic proximity with collaborators. Many consultees also identified the importance of shared values, the strategic support of the HEI and the role of civic interests in the partnership.
- 1.12 Funding and the intrinsic or reputational value of research excellence were also recognised as drivers by consultees from both the HE and cultural organisations although these were less important. Funding was important to cultural organisations in sustainability terms, but it was recognised as a longer-term hope, rather than a short-term probability – in other words some aspired to sustainability models that included international income streams but were not expecting that this would happen in the short term.

## Spread of collaboration

### By geography

- 1.13 Table 1-1 shows the numbers of cultural organisations that HEIs responding to the survey collaborate with across England. This may be affected by the response rate but Table 1-1 shows there is a concentration of activity in London, but with some collaborative activity across all the regions. This is not surprising as London has a concentration 16% of all UK students studying at 39 HE providers.

**Table 1-1: Key domestic cultural partner organisations for HEIs in each geographic region**

Region	No. of cultural organisations collaborating with HEIs	Proportion of organisations
London	19	24%
West Midlands	13	16%
North West	12	15%
South West	8	10%
Yorkshire and the Humber	8	10%
South East	7	9%
East Midlands	5	6%
East of England	5	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	

Source: SQW HEI survey

### By discipline

- 1.14 Visual Arts was the focus of collaboration for the majority of HEIs engaged, with Theatre the second most popular form of collaboration. HEIs highlighted collaborations with both domestic and international Visual Arts based organisations, including with Yorkshire Sculpture Park, TATE Modern and MACBA in Barcelona, Spain. Theatre was similar, with domestic collaborations including the Everyman Theatre in Liverpool and the Playhouse Theatre in Gloucester, and international collaborations which include Pop-up Globe in New Zealand, and the National Theatre in South Korea.

- 1.15 In contrast, the Library sector, which was the least popular focus of collaboration (seven), was not featured in the international space by any of the HEIs, but was referred to in domestic collaborations, such as the British Library, and Birmingham Library.

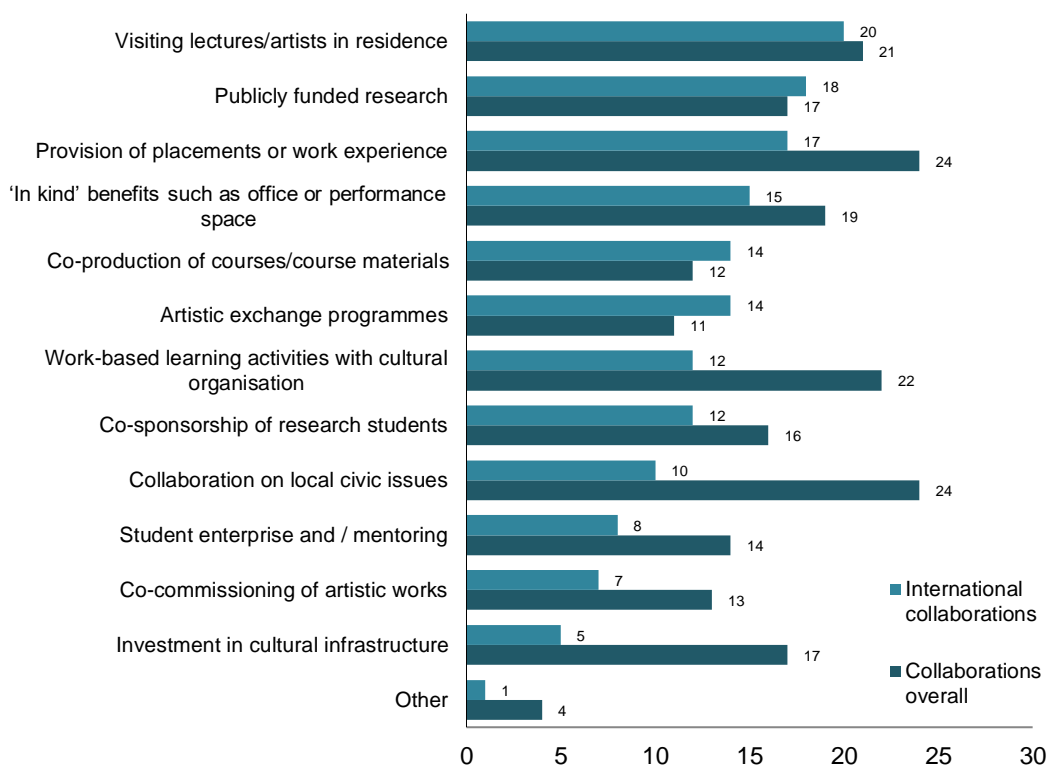
### **By type of activity**

- 1.16 The most popular types of domestic collaboration were the provision of placements or work experience and collaboration on local civic issues. Collaboration on local civic issues tended to involve Local Authorities or Local Enterprise Partnerships, through the development of Regional Cultural Strategies or City Consortiums, with one HEI engaging with a City of Culture bid. Other civic collaborations involved local festivals, exhibitions and community groups.
- 1.17 Investment in cultural infrastructure to support teaching and student experience was also frequent. For some HEIs, this has culminated in new facilities on campus, such as newly built design centres, studios, workshops and a Public Art on Campus Project. Artistic exchange programmes and the co-production of courses or course materials were less frequent, with fewer than half of HEIs undertaking this type of collaboration.
- 1.18 There were relatively few examples of cultural organisations supporting academic research highlighted, although the case study engagement highlighted these activities as the most intensive, deep and broad collaborations with the most scope for internationalisation.

### **International collaboration**

- 1.19 Only one HEI out of all e-survey respondents had no collaborations with an international focus, with all others stating that a few, or more than half of their collaborations had an international focus. Not unexpectedly, the number of international collaborations overall is generally lower than the overall number of collaborations. The survey asked respondents the numbers of international collaborations they were engaged in by banded responses. Eleven of 27 HEIs stated they have over 11 international collaborations, five had between 6 and 10 international collaborations while eight had between three and five. Only one HEI declined to respond to this question.
- 1.20 In terms of partner countries, this showed a truly global outlook with partnerships highlighted in the majority of EU countries and strong links to East Asia, South America and the USA. The majority of these partnerships were, however, driven by university partners and reflect engagement in international cultural research, student and staff exchanges, organisation of shows and exhibitions as well as co-commissioning of course materials or creative works.

**Figure 1-1: Forms of domestic and international collaboration between HEIs and cultural organisations (n=27)**



Source: SQW e-survey analysis

1.21 The most common forms of international collaborations are visiting lectures or artists in residence (20), publicly funded research (18) and the provision of placements or work experience (17). The least frequent form of international collaboration is an investment in cultural infrastructure, possibly because this is more likely to happen on campus.

## Partnership structures

1.22 Although both consultations and survey results noted a number of structured forms of partnership of varying depth and complexity, all of these began as informal relationships which led to joint funding applications. These include:

- Co-funding – in which both HEIs and cultural organisations involved put funding into the ‘pot’ to drive a specific project.
- Co-production – there were several instances where a cultural organisation had lent their expertise to a HEI product (e.g. a Masters course) to help raise revenue designed to support original artistic works.
- ‘In-kind’ support – some HEIs have provided administrative workspace, rehearsal space and access to ‘creative talent’ (students) to smaller arts organisations to help lighten the revenue burden.
- Joint-funded projects – here a HEI and cultural organisation collaborate on a project funded by a third party, usually a research council or foundation.

- NPO spin-outs – several HEI based cultural activities have spawned ‘spin out’ cultural entities, some of which have matured into ACE national portfolio organisations.
- Community projects, with replicability potential – several HEI/cultural partnerships have focussed on social or civic issues, including social engagement, loneliness, placemaking, city twinning etc.
- Memoranda of Understanding – this is a codification of shared objectives and delivery approaches, occasionally co-funded or supported by local authorities where there is a strong level of civic engagement in culture (e.g. Bristol and Leeds).

1.23 There are many examples of creative collaborations between HEIs and ACE funded organisations. Those case studies identified in this research included externally funded projects that existed temporarily to achieve certain creative or knowledge outputs, and the establishment of Trusts to offer the partners access to a separate entity that itself had freedoms that would not have been possible within large organisational structures.

1.24 The fundamental importance of personal connections to form and nurture the creative collaboration was emphasised and this tended to support partnership activity aided through close geographic proximity alongside access to international networks of academics and creative practitioners. These forms of collaboration are extremely agile, and where opportunities are created through national frameworks, policy imperatives and funding incentives they are likely to find rapid responses. However, while financial resources are fundamentally important to both partners, they are necessary but not sufficient enablers. Collaborations featured in the research endure longest and achieve most impact where partners share a passion for their art form and its effect within a particular social context.



## 2. Introduction to the research

### Background

- 2.1 SQW was appointed by Arts Council England (ACE) early in 2018 to undertake research into the crossover between the work of English cultural organisations and higher education institutions (HEIs). The research had a specific focus on international collaboration, to source examples of activity and examine what ACE, and others, could do to promote closer working between HEIs and cultural organisations.
- 2.2 The assignment addressed four key research questions:
- What international activities are UK HEIs currently undertaking in the fields of art and culture?
  - To what extent are ACE supported organisations engaging with the international work of UK HEIs? And what opportunities are there for further, or better, levels of engagement?
  - What business models may be suitable vehicles for collaborations between UK HEIs and ACE supported organisations?
  - What support is needed by funded organisations who wish to develop closer working relationships with UK HEIs on international projects?
- 2.3 These questions were driven by concerns about funding pressures on English arts organisations and an increasing need to diversify funding streams to build a sustainable arts and culture sector. These concerns have been part of an ongoing narrative for many years but recently intensified due to fears about leaving the EU which has accounted for £345million of support to 1,385 cultural projects between 2007 and 2016<sup>1</sup>. This, allied with large-scale cuts to arts funding provided by local and regional authorities in England, and the de-prioritisation of culture in many local industrial and economic strategies, has prompted exploration of development of new, innovative partnerships and other activity.
- 2.4 The following outcomes were anticipated from this research:
- A better understanding of the scale of existing collaborative activity occurring between HEIs and cultural organisations
  - A suite of replicable business models for future collaborations, which may be led locally or supported by ACE
  - Consideration of interventions and policy approaches that support cultural organisations and HEI collaboration
  - Consideration of how this activity might fit within ACE's developing organisational strategy.

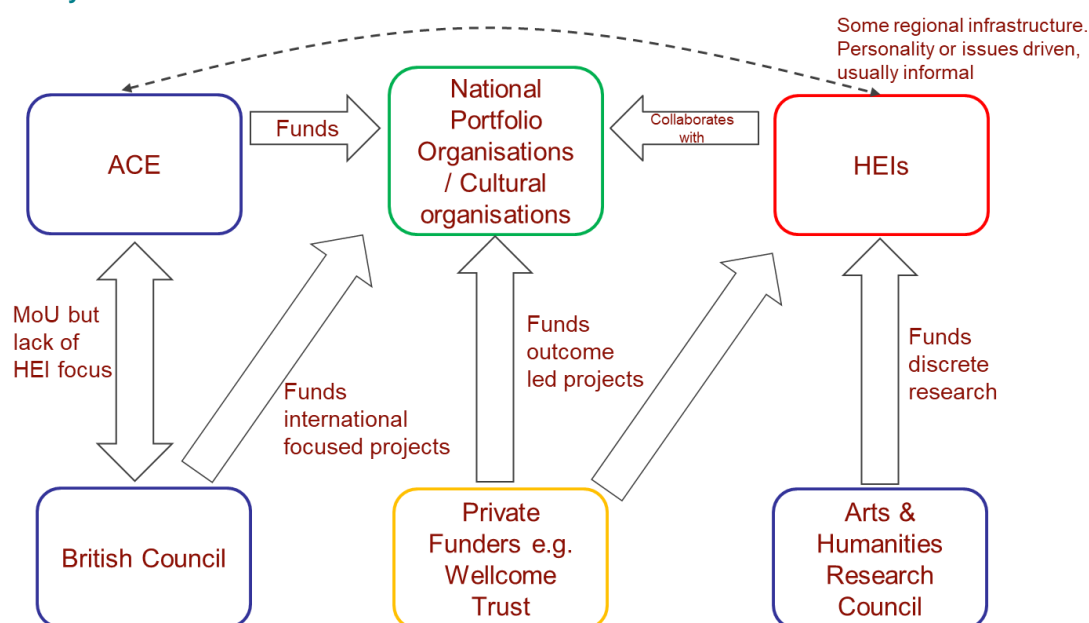
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<sup>1</sup> EUCLID (2017) [http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Euclid\\_summary\\_BREXIT\\_Report.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Euclid_summary_BREXIT_Report.pdf)

## Initial scoping

- 2.5 The research design was informed in its early stages by seven interviews with strategic stakeholders from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the British Council, strategic leads within ACE and two university Deans and Pro-Vice Chancellors. These consultations suggested a strategic disconnect between the primary funders of activity in this field, the AHRC, British Council and ACE. All partners were familiar with each other's organisations and agendas, and had worked on previous projects or programmes at least bi-laterally together. However, given wider strategic imperatives they were not currently in close collaboration with relation to an internal collaborative agenda (see Figure 2-1).

**Figure 2-1: Outline of institutional architecture for HEI / cultural organisation international activity**



Source: SQW

- 2.6 At an organisational level, and despite the potential for alignment, this initial scoping work also suggested an imbalance between the types of organisations may have slowed the rate of collaboration and co-ordination. In general, HEIs are larger and more financially secure institutions than cultural organisations. This leads to a number of issues – notably a difficulty in finding the 'right' collaborators, a disconnect in the amount of time and resource which can be committed by potential partners, and a differentiation in terms of the outputs and outcomes required from collaboration (usually artistic works for cultural organisations and published research for HEIs). HEIs are often open to conversations with cultural partners regarding potential collaborations but they are looking for actions that build on a shared ethos or ambition and that build genuine collaborative advantage. Sponsorship or grant support are unlikely to be the basis of a sustained collaboration.
- 2.7 The initial hypothesis of the research brief – that international relationships with HEIs may help cultural organisations to become more financially resilient– was therefore revised. Instead, developing a better understanding of the drivers and motivations for collaboration, and considering how best to support and facilitate this was more important. Similarly, international collaboration should be a secondary focus as much of this came from initial domestic focussed partnerships and activities.

## Research approach

### **Document and data review**

- 2.8 SQW reviewed a small number of published and grey material to help our understanding of international activity currently undertaken by ACE supported organisations, and the scale of funding which may be 'lost' following EU exit. This review included analysis of HESA statistics relating to international student numbers and the proportion of arts and culture study within English HEIs. This review is summarised in section 3 of this report.

### **Survey with HEIs**

- 2.9 Based on feedback from scoping consultees SQW developed an online survey of HEI culture departments. This was circulated to contacts at England's 78 HEIs and received 27 responses from Pro-Vice Chancellors, Faculty Deans and Assistant Deans, professors and senior leaders in relevant schools or departments. The survey asked for examples of collaboration, motivations for engagement with cultural organisations, the value of collaboration and future plans for further activity.

### **Interviews with HEIs and cultural organisations**

- 2.10 The study team undertook 19 semi-structured consultations with interested parties (11 HEIs and 8 cultural organisations) that covered common themes such as extent of collaborations, motivation, partners, impact, development of international partnerships and future plans. Most interviewees were either self-nominated, or recommended, through the survey process. These consultations sought qualitative feedback on existing relationships, including examples of best practice or replicable business models, and views from consultees as to how and whether further intervention from ACE may add value to existing relationships, or help to develop new ones.

### **Case Studies**

- 2.11 The study team developed case studies of four collaborations which highlight best practice, and which offer insights which may be replicable within other contexts. These are:
- DARE – collaboration between Opera North and the University of Leeds incorporating Culture Forum North with international speakers, audiences and student sponsors
  - Keele University and New Vic Theatre – collaboration based around cultural facilitation, with partnerships in Japan, Canada, France and Denmark
  - People's Palace Projects – NPO based within Queen Mary, University of London which focusses on community engagement and has used activity in East London as a blueprint for work in Brazil, supported by the British Council Newton Fund
  - LT Ranch – collaboration between University of the Arts London and the University of the Creative Arts, based in Lithuania

## Structure of this report

2.12 The report has the following sections:

- Section 3 outlines the context for the research drawn from the review of key reports and ACE data
- Section 4 feeds back from the survey of HEIs and qualitative consultations, showing the volume of existing activity and analysing the drivers of collaboration
- Section 5 examines existing models of collaboration and analyses their replicability
- Section 6 concludes with a summary of reflections from the research for the wider sector.

## 3. HEI and cultural organisation collaboration

### Introduction

- 3.1 HEIs and arts and cultural organisations collaborate for a wide range of reasons and to achieve different but mutually beneficial outcomes. For HEIs, working in partnership with arts and culture organisations can **enrich academic practice and research experience**. This can be through expertise gained through cultural practice in a non-academic environment, and the development of **enhanced course and teaching materials**. Furthermore, engagement with arts and culture organisations can result in an enhanced **reputation or profile for an HEI**, making it more attractive to potential students and stakeholders. Additionally, a strong cultural landscape in an area can **attract and retain both domestic and international students and staff** to the area, stimulating indirect growth from the institution. Some HEIs have developed a 'Cultural Strategy' to articulate these benefits and shape strategic decision making.
- 3.2 For arts and culture organisations, HEIs can be an important source of investment into programmes, infrastructure or the organisation itself. Through **student/graduate placements** or volunteers from HEIs, arts and culture organisations can increase their capacity whilst also injecting **new cultural viewpoints and ideas into arts and cultural practice**. **Collaborative research** with HEIs can provide organisations with further breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding within specialist fields, creating opportunities to **improve or enhance collections and performances and their reach to new audiences**. HEIs can also provide opportunities for staff in arts and culture organisations, through secondment as guest lecturers, which will inevitably improve expertise and raise the profile of their organisation with students.
- 3.3 This section draws on secondary data to provide an overview of the type and scale of HEI collaborative activity internationally as well as domestic collaboration with arts and cultural organisations. It then summarises the perspective from National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) to provide an overview of their activity both internationally and domestically with HEIs.

### HEI international and domestic collaboration

- 3.4 HEIs provide key educational training and development opportunities for young people. Of the 2.2 million students educated by **UK HEIs each year, 166,000 are on specialist creative arts courses**. These students benefit through HEI collaboration with arts and culture, through the ability to experience enriching cultural opportunities, immersive study opportunities and the potential to gain work experience. Any international experience they have is particularly valued by employers<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.5 In 2015-16, the most recent year for available data, UK HEIs admitted 428,010 international students, paying between £11,000 and £35,000 per annum in fees. **Of these international students, 16.9% were enrolled in creative and arts courses**, compared with the most

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<sup>2</sup> LSE Enterprise and CFE Research (2014) Research and Analysis of the Benefits of International Education Opportunities

popular course categories Business and Management (37.6%) and Engineering and Technology (32.5%).

- 3.6 The UK has some of the most internationalised universities in the world. Transnational Education (TNE) is often an integral part of a HEI internationalisation strategy, with over **700,000 students studying for UK degrees outside the UK in 224 countries and territories** globally in 2015-16. Delivery models include overseas campuses, distance learning, online provision, joint and dual degree programmes, ‘fly-in’ faculty, and mixed models. The five countries with the highest rates of TNE were Malaysia, Singapore, China, Hong Kong and Egypt<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.7 **Education, Arts and Humanities was the third most popular TNE subject** delivered in host countries (15%), following Business and Management, and Medicine, however it is currently delivered in a relatively small number of countries and is of modest scale. Since 2010, the number of Arts and Humanities TNE opportunities have increased, with 55% of programmes initiating their first year of delivery between 2012-2014<sup>4</sup>.
- 3.8 For arts and cultural students studying in the UK there are strong links between many HEIs and cultural organisations. For example, in 2011-12, **1,499 higher education placements were offered across 319 arts and cultural organisations**<sup>5</sup>, which although sectorally significant represents fewer than 1% of student numbers. In addition, **national museums have established links with 244 UK universities and 80 overseas universities**, for example, the Natural History Museum has over 100 students in residence at any one time, and the Imperial War Museum hosts PhD students.<sup>6</sup> Students can also benefit from collaborative doctoral awards, funding partnerships between arts and culture organisations and HEIs to create PhD placements between institutions.
- 3.9 Table 3-1 depicts some key examples of collaborations and engagement between HEIs and the arts and cultural sector drawn from online resources.

**Table 3-1: Examples of HEIs collaborating with the arts and cultural sector**

Higher Education Institution	Activity
De Montfort University	Curve Theatre and De Montfort University have a Cultural Partnership deal aimed at creating positive cultural change in Leicester. Students from the University can gain valuable work experience from the centre, and some get the opportunity to work with world class professional directors.
Kings College London	The Opera Group is based at King’s College London, where it works closely with students and faculty, including hosting a PhD student.
Liverpool John Moores University	LJMU works collaboratively with the Tate Liverpool, providing access to students for various work experience and research opportunities. In addition, there is a joint academic post, which generated collaborative research income and enhances educational provision across both institutions
London Contemporary Dance School	The school supports specialist training of around 190 students per year including students from all over the world. Its degrees are validated by the University of Kent. Its theatre, Place, presents over 200 performances per year.

<sup>3</sup> Boe, L. (2018) The Scale of UK Higher Education Transnational Education 2015–16: Trend analysis of HESA data

<sup>4</sup> WECD (2016) The Scale and Scope of UK Higher Education Transnational Education

<sup>5</sup> Centre for Economics and Business Research (2013) The Contribution of the Arts and Culture to the National Economy

<sup>6</sup> Centre for Economics and Business Research (2013) The Contribution of the Arts and Culture to the National Economy

<b>Higher Education Institution</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Manchester Metropolitan University	The Manchester Institute for Research and Innovation in Art and Design, and the Manchester School of Art are both part of the University. At the Manchester Institute, staff exhibit at major galleries worldwide and work with local communities to improve engagement. Art and Design research at MMU was ranked 6 <sup>th</sup> in the UK for research power by the REF.
Norwich University College of the Arts	The rebranding of the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service was undertaken by university students, resulting in mutual benefit. The students gained the opportunity to present their work for review to a client, and NMAS benefitted by being able to roll out its new logo and rebranding.
Teesside University	The university took over the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima) in 2014, allowing the institute to retain its independence, whilst also using it as a teaching environment. Mima utilises a host of student volunteers, who assist in operations, and research fellows, who collaborate on the artistic programmes. Partners have launched a project to encourage education, social and cultural support for refugee and asylum seeker communities. <sup>7</sup> .
University of Bedfordshire	The university and the Royal Opera House Bridge have collaborated to create the TestBeds Programme. The programme, based in Luton, will base local artists into an academic department or research institute to explore the wider social impact of their work as a place maker, or as a catalyst for change.
University of Falmouth	The Academy of Music and Theatre Arts (AMATA) was built by the university to house theatre spaces, performance, rehearsal and recording studios and exhibition areas. AMATA puts on a public programme to increase cultural engagement in the area, as well as undertaking collaborative research into dance.
University of Oxford	The University of Oxford Museums provide outreach in the local community. An AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership was established in 2016, which offers three fully funded doctoral studentships per year, which are delivered in partnership between an Oxford University Museum and a HEI academic. The scheme aims not just to advance research and share knowledge, but to train a new generation of scholars working between the academic and heritage sectors
University of Portsmouth	In partnership with the University of Portsmouth, the Portsmouth New Theatre Royal's building is shared between both organisations. This provides opportunities to students as they have the opportunity to gain work experience and engage in all departments and in-house productions. The Theatre also offers a Creative Exchange Scheme, which will promote exchanges of students and professionals with other Universities.
University of the Arts, London	The university provides an annual internship scheme which places graduates in high-quality internships within London. The aim is to provide a paid role in the industry, to increase diversity and equality of access to jobs for those who cannot afford to undertake unpaid internships.
University of the West of England	The Watershed Pervasive Media Studio was established in partnership with iShed and HP labs. The partnership has enabled partners to explore opportunities and identify shared ambitions and has resulted in successful Knowledge Transfer Projects (e.g. REACT).

*Source: SQW review of online resources*

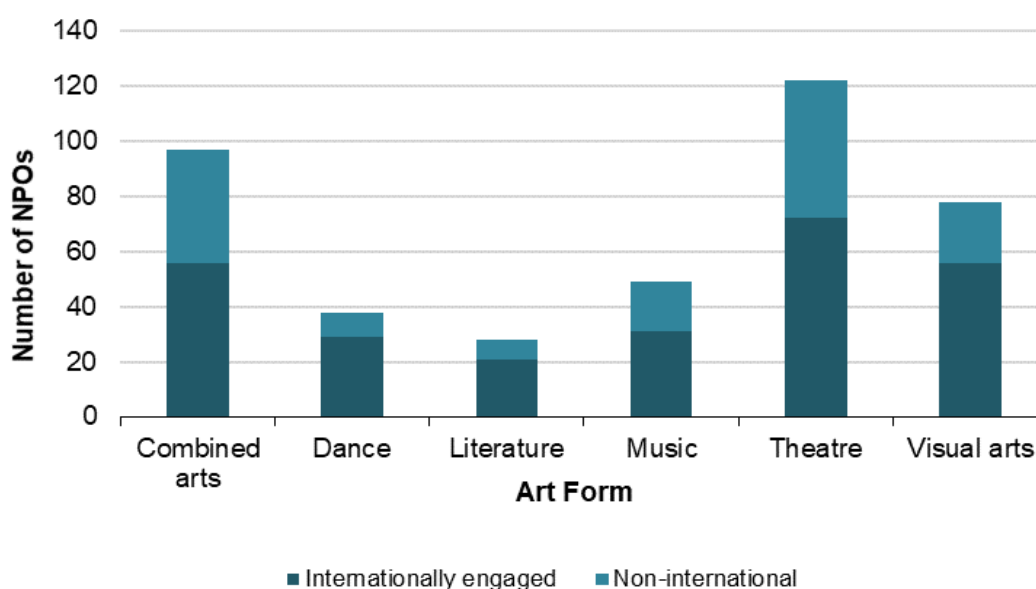
<sup>7</sup> Arts Council England and University Alliance, A Clearer Picture: A guide for arts and cultural organisations engaging with universities.



## NPO international and domestic collaboration

- 3.10 National Portfolio Organisations are also very experienced at both international and domestic collaboration. ACE research<sup>8</sup> has shown that 55% of NPOs had undertaken an international activity in the year 2014/15 (representing 2,200 projects) with a further 10% having done so in previous years. Compared with the survey results this suggests that there is a lot of cultural international activity that does not involve HEIs. These were either inbound or outbound international projects. International activity contributed 7% of NPO's total revenue (£34m), with 2% of NPOs receiving all their income from international activity.
- 3.11 The type of international activity undertaken was wide ranging, and included taking UK artists abroad (61%), undertaking co-productions (59%), touring (47%), hosting foreign artists (46%) and UK artists undertaking residencies abroad (28%). This activity extends across all art forms with theatre and visual arts being especially active internationally (Figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1: NPOs engaged in international activity by art form



Source: SQW analysis of TBR data

- 3.12 NPOs work globally, with the most active partners being Europe and North America. The top four countries for NPO international activity were the USA, France, Germany and Spain. This is most likely due to geographical proximity and shared language and culture. However, the number of countries NPOs work with has expanded in recent years. In 2014-15, 169 NPOs worked in specific countries, with the top four emerging markets noted as Qatar, Hong Kong, Iran and Malaysia.
- 3.13 The research suggested that NPOs are motivated by the opportunity to experience and learn from other cultures, and to place their work in a global context. NPOs consider establishing and maintaining contacts and international partnerships difficult, not least due to resource constraints. Regardless of barriers, NPOs stated that they would be encouraged to undertake more international activity if they received more information about opportunities and markets, and guidance about undertaking international activity.

<sup>8</sup> TBR (2016) International Activity of arts and cultural organisations in 2014-15, Arts Council England.



- 3.14 In addition to international collaboration, NPOs also have a range of domestic collaborations with HEIs. Based on an Arts Council survey of its NPOs 599 NPOs had a relationship with an HEI. Some examples of these relationships are outlined in Table 3-2.

**Table 3-2: Examples of HEIs collaborating with NPOs**

Higher Education Institution	Activity
Arts University Bournemouth	Bridport Arts Centre (NPO) offers opportunities to AUB students such as AUB24, where students from the University had 24 hours to create a short film adaptation to be screened at the Centre's festival. This gave students a chance to experience collaboration and the opportunity to produce real work for a real client.
King's College London	The Southbank Centre (NPO) provides teaching to students on King's College London's MA in Education in Cultural Settings.
Newcastle University	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (NPO) offers placements to about 10 students a year on the Newcastle University Museum Studies masters course.
University of Birmingham	Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust (NPO) works with the University of Birmingham to offer one of the largest postgraduate courses for heritage management in the UK.
University of Derby	The University of Derby are the leaseholders for Derby Theatre (NPO). Students work with world class visiting artists, in a unique learning environment which also provides real life experience. The Theatre also offers graduate internships for students
University of East London	East London Dance (NPO) have collaborated with the university since 2001, with staff from the NPO acting as guest lecturers for the university and taking part in joint productions with students. The UEL and the University of Birkbeck opened a new performing art building close to East London Dance, who gained access to the new facilities.
University of East Anglia	The UEA works with British Centre for Literary Translation (NPO), Britain's leading research centre for the study and support of literary translation. They work in close partnership with international and national organisations to deliver activities to support professional development.  The university also works with the Writers Centre Norwich (NPO), which undertakes pioneering and collaborative projects to explore the artistic and social power of creative writing. The WCN was also a driving force behind Norwich's successful bid to become a UNESCO city of literature. The centre provides support for writers, schools and students at UEA. For example, the Centre hosts UEA Live, which gives students the opportunity to read their work to a live audience and established writers.
University of Kent	The Gulbenkian Theatre (NPO) houses the University's Arts Centre and plays a key role in delivering the university's commitment to public engagement. The University's international campuses in Paris, Brussels, Rome and Athens mean that the expertise of international staff can inform work and develop best practice.

Source: SQW summary of data identified in ACE survey of NPOs

## 4. Scale and range of collaborative activity

### Introduction

- 4.1 While there are many examples of collaboration between cultural organisations and HEIs that may have an international dimension, as outlined in Section 3, relatively little is known about the scale of those collaborations and the models of engagement that have proven effective. In this section we outline the findings from our e-survey of HEIs and consultations to describe in more detail the scale and range of collaborative activity. This survey received 27 responses from HEIs and offers an insight to the scale and extent of collaboration. The sample is not representative of the whole sector but rather indicates the scale and types of collaborative activity. In addition, this section draws on the evidence from nineteen consultations with both HEIs and cultural organisations.

### Partners in collaboration

- 4.2 The research focussed on HEIs partnerships with cultural organisations. During early scoping consultations **several strategic organisations** were identified:

- **Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)** – where collaboration was focussed on research and the development of insights for impact. Several consultees noted that recent AHRC calls, notably their Creative Industries Clusters Call, required close collaboration between HEIs and cultural organisations
- **Other research councils** – both the Engineering and Physical Science Research Council and Economic and Social Research Councils were identified as contributing funders in a small number of projects. These tended to be initiatives using creative practice to explore research questions
- **British Council** – significant partner in several programmes, particularly where there is an international development aim. Influence has waned a little in light of new budgetary approach within the organisation but those countries that are prioritised for Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding encourage arts and cultural engagement
- **Arts Council England** – some collaborations have received a small amount of seed-corn funding from ACE, and others have sought insight and endorsement from specific relationship managers and thematic leads, whilst many of the partners are also NPOs.

- 4.3 Consultees were also asked about who they collaborated with to support the delivery of their HEI and cultural organisation partnership. Partners also included:

- Other HEIs and cultural organisations suggesting a network approach to collaboration and project delivery;
- Public authorities including **local councils and combined authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships**. Some of the larger authorities may have their own cultural strategies including one combined authority that has a Cultural Strategy Board.

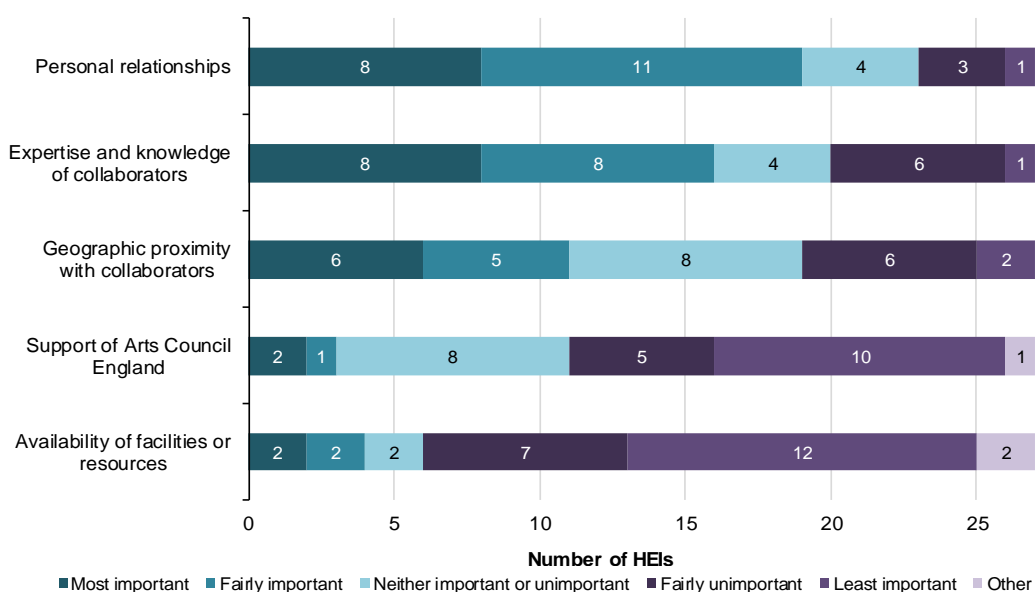
*‘Even though funding is dwindling across the landscape there are still some collaborations between local enterprise partnerships and lots of different arts organisations on projects’ (Cultural Organisation)*

- Other partners including different departments or schools within the HEI or other **not-for-profit or community-based organisations.**

## Enabling conditions for collaboration

4.4 The e-survey captured the 27 HEIs’ perspectives on enabling conditions (Figure4-1). Nineteen stated that ‘personal relationships’ were ‘most important’ or ‘fairly important’ as an enabling condition. This is followed by ‘expertise and knowledge of collaborators’ (16) and ‘geographic proximity with collaborators’ (11) which could explain the higher proportion of domestic collaborations to international collaborations. The condition that most HEIs felt was least important is the ‘availability of facilities or resources’, with 12 HEIs ranking this the lowest. Other conditions that HEIs felt important were shared values, the strategic support of the HEI, and their role as a pioneering civic university.

**Figure 4-1: Most important enabling conditions for supporting collaborations, ranked in order of importance (from most to least important)**



Source: SQW e-survey analysis

4.5 To provide more insights on these conditions, HEI and cultural organisation consultees were asked to reflect on those conditions they considered important.

### **Personal relationships were the most important factor in creating a collaboration....**

4.6 In addition to the e-survey respondents, seven consultees from the qualitative consultations also highlight personal relationships as ‘crucial’ and often leads to a more formal relationship or collaboration over time. One respondent explained that in creative disciplines it is more common to find academics that are also creative practitioners ‘keeping one foot in the creative world...they often have very deep networks in their sector, which they are able to draw on’ to initiate new relationships with the university. One cultural organisation stipulated both trust and long-term relationships between the collaborators are vital. Another cultural

organisation stated personal relationships inform the vision of the of the work as both organisations strive to be world-class resulting in their organisation's missions aligning.

### **...then exchange of expertise and knowledge**

- 4.7 Expertise and knowledge, as identified by four consultees, is crucial to a collaboration as it offers their work credibility and facilitates knowledge exchange. One cultural organisation stated 'academics can provide in-depth evaluation expertise,' conversely, an HEI added that they benefit from their relationship with their cultural partner regarding diversity, inclusiveness and community engagement.

### **...and geographic proximity between collaborators**

- 4.8 Six from the eight consultees who discussed geographic proximity with collaborators believed it to be important as 'it helps to build the relationship' and can contribute to having a presence in the city and responsibility towards the city. Distance does not however preclude positive collaborations from developing as several partners stated they had collaborations across the country.

### **Other factors include funding...**

- 4.9 A handful of HEI and cultural organisation consultees highlighted other conditions that enabled their collaborations including funding. An HEI consultee said that funding helps HEIs and cultural organisations buy-out staff time to undertake collaborative work as without the funding, they would not have the resources to undertake the work on top of their usual commitments.

*'Those institutions/organisations receiving funding from Arts Council have been the most open/ready to talk to collaborate. Funding does help to do collaborations and is needed as people cannot do more work with the same number of people, so funding is needed to buy the staff/time to do the collaborations.'* (HEI consultee)

### **...and a shared commitment to university research.**

- 4.10 **Universities' remit to demonstrate their impact outcomes** through the Research Excellence Framework can encourage collaborations and further knowledge exchange.

*'This is a great opportunity for cultural organisations because HEIs are demonstrating the impact of their research whilst organisations are trying to draw on knowledge. It's a great combination for partnership working. It is important to find ways to add value because of cuts to the arts.'*  
(cultural organisation consultee)

- 4.11 This agenda has supported some academic staff to take a break from teaching to collaborate with cultural organisations on research. Some universities facilitate this through sabbatical or teaching buy-out to allow staff to undertake the necessary basic research and prepare grant and award applications.

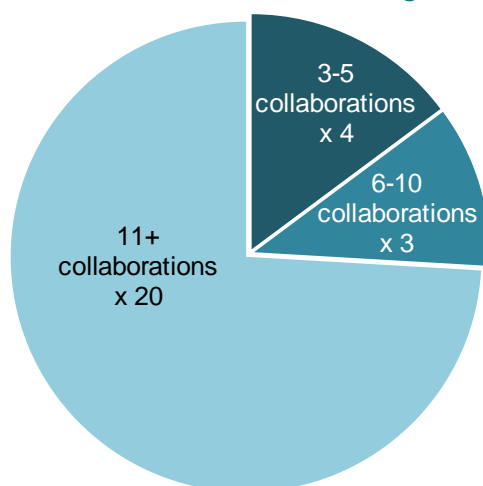
*'When you put together a project with external organisations they do not have critical mass to write the research bid. The bar of doing*

*paperwork is usually on academic institutions and this is where you need more support from school/institutions.’ (HEI consultee).*

## Collaboration between HEIs and cultural organisations

- 4.12 This section explores the collaborative nature between UK HEIs and UK cultural organisations. It will identify the number of collaborations undertaken by the 27 HEI e-survey respondents and 17 qualitative consultations, the geographic spread of those collaborations, the disciplines those collaborations focused on, and the types of activities conducted. It will also present the outcomes and beneficiaries of the collaborations, taken from the HEI and cultural organisation consultations.

**Figure 4-2: Number of HEI collaborations with cultural organisations (2017/18)**

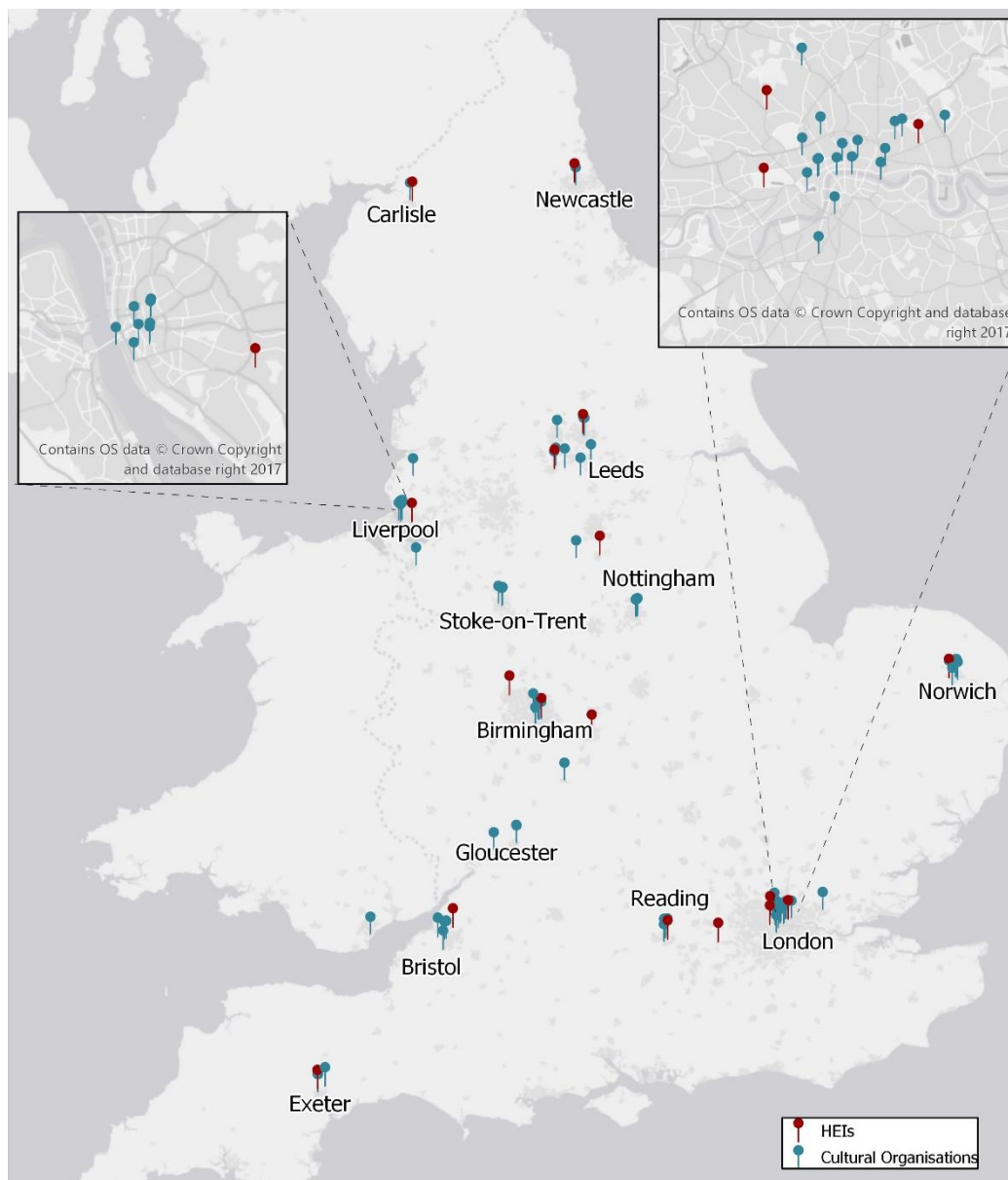


Source: SQW e-survey analysis Baseline = 27

- 4.13 It is likely that the survey responses are biased towards those organisations that are more active. Nevertheless, the survey evidence alongside the secondary research and ACE intelligence from its survey of NPOs suggests that collaborative activity with cultural organisations is important for HEIs. From the 27 HEI e-survey respondents, all have undertaken collaborations with three or more cultural organisations within the last academic year (2017-18). Over two thirds (20) of HEIs estimated that over 11 collaborations have taken place.
- 4.14 This section summarises further the findings from the research and suggests that collaborations are often based initially between partners that are geographically close to HEIs. Visual Arts and Theatre are the most common disciplines for the collaboration with student placements being the most common collaboration activity. Projects are mainly funded by Arts Council England (ACE) and Arts and Humanities Research Council. Projects more commonly have an aim for student or civic outcomes with academic staff and students benefitting the most.

...HEIs collaborate with partners that are geographically close

Figure 4-3: Key domestic cultural partner organisations for HEIs



Note: Eight e-survey respondents did not identify the name of the HEI they work with and therefore are not represented here.  
Source: Produced by SQW 2018. Licence 100030994. Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] [2018]

- 4.15 Evidence from the e-survey (depicted in Figure 4-3) suggests HEIs partner with cultural organisations that are geographically close. Notable exceptions are partner organisations around Stoke-on-Trent, Nottingham and Gloucester, however, eight participating HEIs chose not to identify themselves in the e-survey, and therefore it may be likely that these cultural organisations align with the HEIs in their locality.
- 4.16 In total, 79 domestic cultural partner organisations were highlighted within the e-survey. The highest proportion of cultural partner organisations (24%) are in London, most likely due to the higher concentration of both respondent HEIs and cultural organisations in the area. This is followed by the West Midlands (16%), where there is also a cluster of respondent HEIs, and the North West (15%). Only one named organisation is outside England (in Wales) and has collaborated with the University of the West of England. (Figure 4-3).

**Table 4-1: Key domestic cultural partner organisations for HEIs in each geographic region**

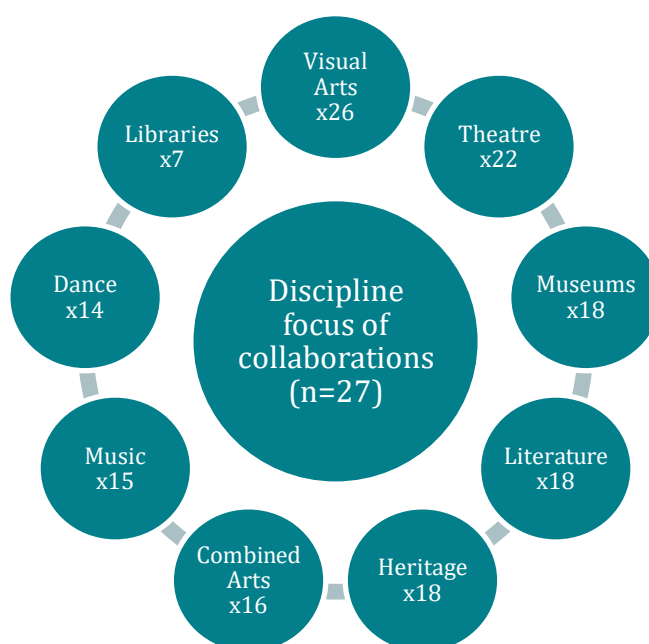
Region	Number of cultural organisations partnering with HEIs	Proportion of total
London	19	24%
West Midlands	13	16%
North West	12	15%
South West	8	10%
Yorkshire and the Humber	8	10%
South East	7	9%
East Midlands	5	6%
East of England	5	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	

Source: SQW e-survey analysis

**...Visual arts and theatre are the most collaborative disciplines...**

4.17 Visual Arts has been the focus of collaboration for the majority (26) of HEIs with Theatre the second most popular form of collaboration (22). This could be due to the nature of the HEIs that responded to the e-survey (several of whom are organisations with the reputations within specific artistic fields). HEIs highlighted collaborations with both domestic and international Visual Arts based organisations, including with Yorkshire Sculpture Park, TATE Modern and MACBA in Barcelona, Spain. Theatre was similar, with domestic collaborations including the Everyman Theatre in Liverpool and the Playhouse Theatre in Gloucester, and international collaborations which include Pop-up Globe in New Zealand, and the National Theatre in South Korea.

**Figure 4-4: Collaboration discipline areas**



Source: SQW e-survey analysis



- 4.18 In contrast, the Library sector, which was the least popular focus of collaboration (seven), was not featured in the international space by any of the HEIs, but was referred to in domestic collaborations, such as the British Library, and Birmingham Library.

### ***The civic agenda and engaging local employers is important...***

- 4.19 Collaboration has taken numerous forms, the most popular in the e-survey being the provision of placements or work experience (24) or on local civic issues (24). Collaboration on local civic issues tended to involve Local Authorities or Local Enterprise Partnerships, such as on Regional Cultural Strategies or City Consortiums, with one HEI engaging with the City of Culture bid. Other civic collaborations involved local festivals, exhibitions and community groups. For example, collaborations in Birmingham have focussed around Birmingham's Culture Central activities and included funding bids with Birmingham Library, several universities noted they were members of sub-regional groups such as Cultural Camden, Reading Cultural Partnership and providing support for civic festivals and events.
- 4.20 Most consultees also thought this was important, with a number citing it as increasingly influential in driving collaboration. For the majority, engaging in cultural activities helps to develop a reputation as a local institution and shows benefit to the community. As one consultee put it:

*'This is the main one for us – to bolster the role of Arts and Culture within the local region – ACE like to use the term 'placemaking' where you see the fortunes of the region as bound with the fortunes of the university as they share similar cultural missions. I'd say we agree with that.'*

### ***.....as is creating new audiences***

- 4.21 For several cultural consultees the opportunity to cultivate new audiences was at the heart of their engagement, especially through targeting of the student body, teaching opportunities and mentoring.

*'we have a captive audience who might come to our exhibitions and buy tickets to events.'*

### ***...and collaborations for enhancing learning and teaching***

- 4.22 Investment in cultural infrastructure to support teaching and student experience is a form of collaboration in 17 HEIs. For some HEIs, this has culminated in new facilities on campus, such as newly built design centres, studios, workshops and a Public Art on Campus Project costing £200k. Two HEIs consulted as part of the scoping process had placed culture and arts at the heart of their offer, using this as a means to attract a greater number of international students. These approaches were codified in Cultural Strategies and delivered through on-campus investment in arts and cultural infrastructure and close partnerships, and investment in, local cultural institutions. A couple of survey respondents and HEI consultees also offered examples of civic investments yielding benefits for the student body and increasing the attractiveness of the university.
- 4.23 Examples include one HEI that is currently planning a '*£75M build that will include culture and creative approaches at its core; film museum on campus; special collections; sculpture walk*', as a result of collaboration. Birmingham City University is also celebrating the recent opening of



its £57 million Royal Birmingham Conservatoire which itself has over 60 formal partnerships with institutions across the world. Additionally, cultural infrastructure is invested off campus, such as the sponsorship of a locally run music festival, through corporate partnerships with arts and cultural organisations.

- 4.24 Twenty-four respondents to the survey noted the importance of work placements and opportunities with cultural organisations as a major motivator for engagement. These were also important to consultees, with over half of those interviewed flagging these as ‘most important’ or ‘*a good selling point*’ for their university
- 4.25 Artistic exchange programmes (11) and the co-production of courses or course materials (12) were the least popular forms of collaboration, with less than half of HEIs undertaking this type of collaboration.
- 4.26 Notably, cultural organisations do a lot of work with students in the form of shaping their Master’s degree, the creation of PhD programmes, financially supporting PhD students, provide mentoring and peer support to students and organisation induction days for students. Two of the cultural organisations also focus their activities on student’s career development. For example, one of the studios do a series of talks to university graduates about where work is, what paid opportunities are available, how to have a portfolio career, successes of being an artist when outside of HEI institution. Another organisation also targets school pupils by jointly hosting ‘Discovery Days’ to develop public speaking for year 10 students; here, pupils receive a lecture from the HEI, explore the gallery, and then present on a particular piece or theme they have looked at. They also host a creative careers day for school pupils to promote opportunities in the creative industry.
- 4.27 Over half of HEI survey respondents (17) stated that collaboration takes the form of publicly funded research. The most accessed source of public funding was from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, with eight HEIs accessing funding this way. Other sources of funding cited (although this question was not limited to research) include Arts Council England (four HEIs), European Research Council (one), British Council (one) the Heritage Lottery Fund (one) and the Economic and Social Research Council (one).
- 4.28 Several consultees mentioned the development and co-sponsorship of PhD placements and bursaries, which support a postgraduate student’s research by offering them practical and hands-on experience within a cultural institution. Several consultees also noted that the Research Excellence Framework increasingly drives collaborative research with a degree of community benefit.
- 4.29 In terms of teaching focussed activities, this was less prevalent but still identified by a little under half of survey respondents (12 noting co-production of teaching or course materials, 11 recognising artistic exchange). Anecdotally, this type of activity seems to be more regular than identified in the survey; the majority of HEI consultees mentioned at least one example of a guest lecture from a cultural organisation, use of a cultural practitioner as a facilitator or supporting artist exchange through artists in residence programmes and cultural dialogue. In several instances (such as that quoted below) the research activity has a direct impact on teaching outcomes:

*‘The research conducted trickles down into teaching and the offer available for students’*

### Collaboration is often supported by externally funded research

- 4.30 Collaboration usually takes the form of publicly funded research (stated by over half of HEIs (17) in the e-survey). The most accessed source of public funding was from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, with eight HEIs accessing funding this way (Table 4-2). Other sources of funding include Arts Council England, Economic and Social Research Council European Research Council, British Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

**Table 4-2: Funding providers for HEIs**

Public funding body	Number
Arts Council England	4
Arts and Humanities Research Council	8
British Council	1
Economic and Social Research Council	1
European Research Council	1
Heritage Lottery Fund	1

Source: SQW e-survey analysis

- 4.31 Furthermore, 19 HEIs offer ‘in-kind’ benefits to cultural organisations. HEI space has been used for cultural events, such as Norwich festival, in addition to rehearsals and productions by local cultural organisations. HEIs also receive ‘in-kind’ benefits from cultural organisations, with one HEI noting that their graduates had made use of performance and rehearsal space on offer. Collaboration regarding ‘in-kind’ benefits can also offer opportunities for both HEIs and cultural organisations, with one HEI stating ‘[we offer] space for a number of charitable organisations in return for opportunities for students’.

#### Who leads the project?

- 4.32 The relationship between the HEI and cultural organisation on projects, regardless of who is leading the project is seen to be ‘balanced’ by HEI and cultural organisation consultees. There seems to be simple rule of who is project lead...

*‘On existing collaborations where there is a good partnership with a longstanding link, usually, if the university is putting in funds then they lead and where the creative/cultural organisations have opportunities for students then those organisations take the lead’ (HEI consultee)*

- 4.33 ...however one consultee implied if the HEI is part of the Russell group then they would be entitled to being the lead...

*‘[Name of university removed] are a junior partner but as they are [part of the] Russell group they will lead’ (cultural organisation consultee).*

- 4.34 The majority of consultees who answered this question (11 from 13 respondents) stated the collaboration between HEIs and cultural organisation, in reality, is more like a partnership

*‘The aim is to avoid duplication of services or if it’s a new project to fill a gap that’s been missing in the arts landscape e.g. one now around temporary jobs for artists’ (cultural organisation consultee)*

### **Outputs of collaboration include new cultural works and research...**

- 4.35 Consultees were asked about what was produced as a consequence of their collaborations and outputs were coded into 'new cultural works', 'new research', 'experience for students or academics', and 'civic outcomes'. Compared with HEIs, cultural organisations were more likely to emphasise the creation of 'new cultural works' as significant.
- 4.36 Although 'new research' was given little attention by both sides, consultees from HEIs and cultural organisations mentioned the creation of academic programmes as part of the 'experiences for students'. Furthermore, at least one consultee from each group mentioned place or space as a civic outcome. Overall, there is agreement but not necessarily in the language used:

*'To create new work, there needs to be a shift on focus to engaging with students and practitioners as well.'* (HEI consultee)

*'What works is universities giving the opportunity, to give a lot more scale, a broader range of expertise, and [to] cross-discipline.'* (cultural organisation consultee)

### **...but HEIs more often said they were the main beneficiary partner**

- 4.37 In a similar fashion to the question on outcomes, the HEIs were evenly divided in their opinion on who the beneficiaries were. Although 'students' and 'academic research staff' were both indicated by six out of the eight HEI consultees, and 'cultural organisations' by only four. This indicates that whilst benefits were not felt to be especially one-sided, the majority of HEIs could appreciate the gains they felt themselves. HEI consultees spoke about how the collaborations provided opportunities for students and more resources for staff.
- 4.38 On the other hand, seven of nine cultural organisations agreed that HEIs were the beneficiaries and only three felt that the artistic practitioners were the main beneficiary. The small sample size makes it difficult to be conclusive, but this may indicate an imbalance of strength in the collaboration. It might also be the case that as students are more visible, consultees tend to attribute benefit to the student organisations.

*'Students benefit through the MA or PhD programmes, as well as, in general, having cultural organisations that make the city a really interesting and fulfilling place to be for those studying and living in the area.'* (cultural organisation consultee)

- 4.39 One cultural organisation reflected a broader view, that everyone benefits as the '*galleries are open and free to the public*', so both practitioners, academics and the wider public (including the student population) stand to gain.

### **International collaboration between HEIs and cultural organisations is active**

- 4.40 Only one HEI out of all e-survey respondents had no collaborations with an international focus, with all others stating that a few, or more than half of their collaborations had an international focus. Not unexpectedly, the number of international collaborations overall is generally lower than the overall number of collaborations. The survey asked respondents the numbers of international collaborations they were engaged in by banded responses. Eleven of 27 HEIs stated they have over 11 international collaborations, five had between six and 10

international collaborations while eight had between three and five. Only one HEI declined to respond to this question.

- 4.41 For all cultural organisations (9) who took part in the qualitative consultations, all except one, were undertaking some form of international work ranging from international production tours, hosting festivals with international acts to literacy and R&D projects. All wanted to develop their international work in the future.

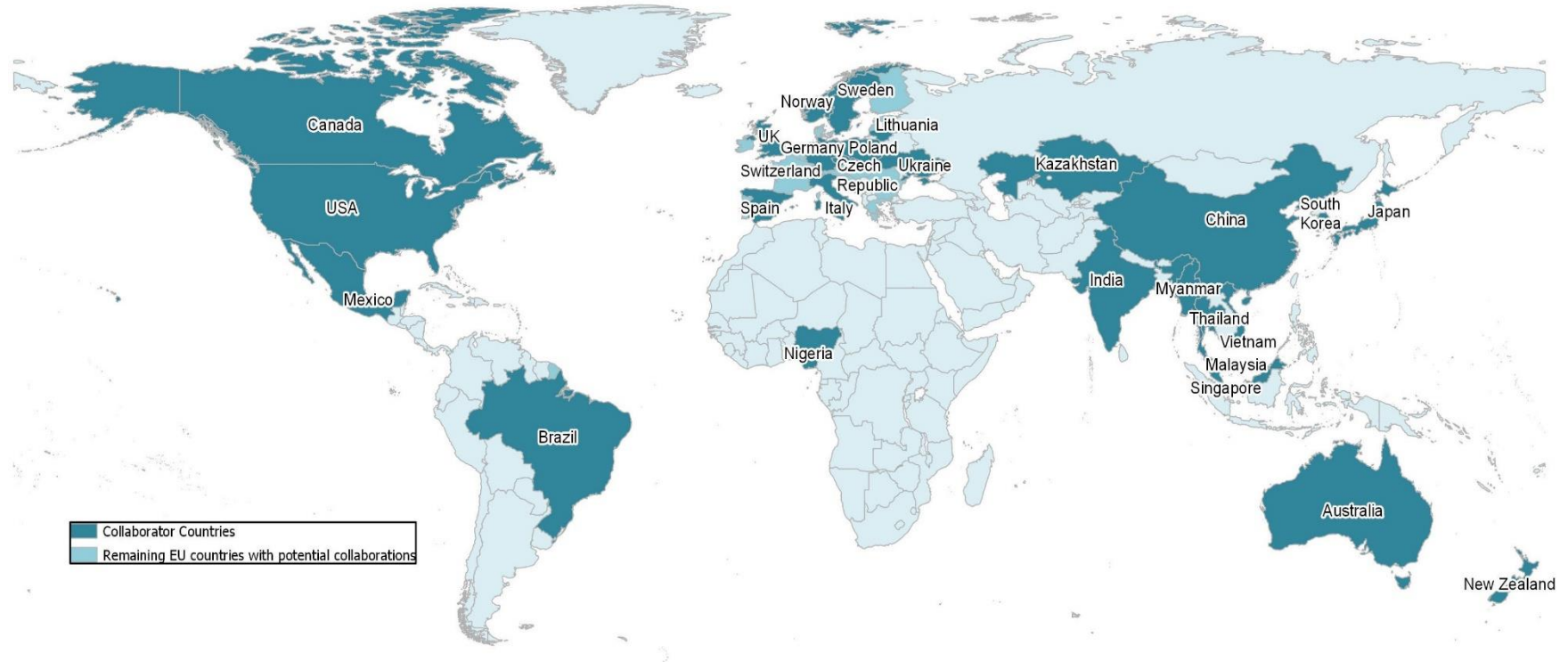
***...and global in reach with a lot of activity in Europe***

- 4.42 Key international partners for both e-survey and qualitative consultations are widespread. Whilst there is a higher proportion of collaborations occurring in Europe, potentially due to geographical proximity and the work of organisations such as Creative Europe, there are also collaborations occurring in North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Most of the collaborations for e-survey HEIs occur in high income economies, possibly due to a bigger emphasis on cultural wellbeing in these areas, with the exceptions of Thailand, India and Brazil as middle-income economies.
- 4.43 Two HEI consultees who have international HEI partners have strategic motives for their collaboration:
- One HEI has academic partners in countries where they are working together on research topics and research challenges
  - one HEI teach a number of students in Malaysia, Singapore and India and stated through this avenue, they aim to develop work through the partner institutions' local networks.
- 4.44 In addition, a network of Universities was highlighted in two different projects which incorporates between 9-13 countries (each) across Europe, but has no geographical base specified.

One cultural organisation works worldwide with partners in Nigeria, Mexico, USA, Sweden and Japan with the aim of exchanging information and to adapt what they are doing in the UK but in relevant international projects.

*'[We are] trying to build a community of global practice rather than a community of local practice' (cultural organisation consultee)*

Figure 4-5: Key international partner countries for HEIs and cultural organisations



Source: Produced by SQW 2018. Licence 100030994

### ***It will remain a future priority***

- 4.45 Only one consultee stated that they were not interested in international collaborations as part of their future work, this was a cultural organisation who was refocusing with London as their target – although they didn't say that international collaborations were ruled out, just that they were now on the periphery. HEIs talk with keen interest, that international collaborations will become more important in the future, concern was expressed about Brexit. Whilst they mostly concur that collaborations will feature in the plans, their rationale for this is varied, including mentions of reputation, competitiveness in the student-market, knowledge transfer, as well as the opinion that collaborations underpin the function of universities:

*'International collaboration is (in part) what universities should be about – learning and developing new and better ways of doing things. Can be good for students and for artists, who can feel very isolated.'* (HEI consultee)

- 4.46 Cultural organisations have similar concerns, frequently mentioning Brexit, though one consultee frames the UK's departure less as a challenge and more as a situation that will require everyone to find new ways to collaborate. In terms of their justification for why collaborations should continue, cultural organisations lean towards ensuring that they represent the diverse experiences of people in their community, something that HEIs didn't mention.

- 4.47 These differences (and similarities) point to a picture of international collaboration being an endeavour to which different parties bring different agendas; HEIs have a motivation that is general to their industry, and cultural organisations when aligns with their activities:

*'it depends on what the opportunity is. It if is something to do with orchestral performance, education, outreach and learning that we would be more than happy to collaborate – not doing international for its own sake but we are open to collaboration.'* (cultural organisation consultee)

## 5. Models of collaboration

### Introduction

- 5.1 Collaborations between universities and creative and cultural partners are many and diverse. Many of those collaborations include an international element although the number of international collaborations is modest compared with those within the UK. In this section we draw further upon information provided in the survey, but also on consultations with nineteen stakeholders from both the cultural and the academic sectors including four case studies. These case studies were chosen to reflect different structural forms, territories and art forms.

### How partnerships form

- 5.2 The research brief asked the study team to seek and analyse potentially replicable business models which may be used by other cultural organisations as a means to pursue common objectives. The research itself has suggested that the best partnerships develop organically – usually as a result of strong institutional leadership, geographic proximity and an openness to risk-taking and innovation. Nevertheless, there are some commonalities in approach amongst the most successful partnerships. This section discusses them as ‘Important Characteristics’ and ‘Partnership Structures’, rather than seeking to offer a shortlist of ‘off the peg’ approaches.

### *Creative environments*

- 5.3 In-depth qualitative engagement with both HEIs and cultural organisations has shown that the majority of collaborations, at their outset, are serendipitous. Drivers of engagement have included introduction by mutual friends, meetings at civic events, shared interests in a specific topic or direct approaches to provide insights or ideas to a specific artistic work or programme of research. In other words, there is little structure or method to engagements. Whilst many have developed into long-term research partnerships or more complex, multi-faceted relationships, even these set-ups are usually born from small beginnings and a degree of ‘test and check’ before the partnership flourishes. It should be noted that much of this ‘serendipity’ is fostered by formal networks, events and structured introductions rather than pure chance.

### *Geographic Proximity*

- 5.4 The most robust and well-structured of partnerships are often founded on a shared ethos and approach to the work in question, but more commonly by shared geography. Indeed, two of the four case studies were based on geographic proximity. For example, the partnership between the University of Leeds and Opera North began from a shared desire to make a civic impact, to highlight Leeds’s cultural offer to visitors and students. This has developed into the delivery of shared postgraduate courses, including a specific HE function within Opera North, a high-profile public lecture series, and ultimately the success of the University’s own Cultural Institute and their jointly-led Culture Forum North programme.



### **LT Ranch, Lithuania**

The LT Ranch Space was initiated by Kristina Kotov, who teaches on the MA Interior & Spatial Design at the University of the Arts London (Chelsea) and the BA Architecture at the University for the Creative Arts (Canterbury). The purpose of the Ranch is to provide a facility for research, experimentation and cultural events related to art, architecture, film and landscape.

It consists of 6.5 hectares of land in Stučiai in Lithuania, with basic accommodation, that is used each summer by students, tutors from both universities, practitioners from a variety of disciplines, and interested individuals to develop small-scale making and building projects. Up to 15 people can be accommodated at a time and they generally stay for up to ten days. Students' projects are not formally assessed, though some choose to include them in their degree portfolios. Student-led summer session catalogues have been published since 2012. Through friendship and professional networks word has spread and, in all, students from 26 countries have attended the summer sessions over the years including students from as far afield as the Bauhaus Weimar and Sydney Technical University, for instance.

The activity has largely been informal to date. The Ranch has received little direct funding so far, relying instead on 'in kind' support from University of the Arts London and the University for the Creative Arts, Kristina, other tutors, the site's neighbours, and subsistence fees charged to the students. However, some individual projects have received support, such as a 3D scanning project with ScanLAB.

As it reaches its tenth anniversary the project is evolving into something more structured. The project has also begun to build links with Lithuanian cultural organisations, including the local Open Air Museum in Rumšiškės and the Vilnius Academy of Art. It also hopes to engage with the European Capital of Culture programme for Kaunas in 2022, drawing on the expertise of colleagues in Paphos, the 2017 European Capital of Culture. It is now established as a not-for-profit organisation in Lithuania with four trustees.

Awareness of the Ranch has been spread through Kristina's networks and those of participants -- and it engages with cultural organisations in Lithuania. Kristina is now exploring ways in which it might expand both its remit and the numbers of participants who visit each year.

*Source: SQW*

- 5.5 Likewise, the work of the New Vic Theatre and Community Animation and Social Innovation Centre (CASIC) at Keele University is rooted in the locality of Stoke-on-Trent, using disciplines from the theatre (including creative workshopping, autoethnography and artistic expression) to explore social challenges facing the city such as food poverty and austerity. The perceived convention that a management school and a theatre might be unusual partners proved no barrier in this instance, in large part owing to the parties' appetite for risk and innovation. The findings of the research have been applied successfully elsewhere in the UK and overseas (in geographies as disparate as Liverpool and Osaka, Japan), but the 'test bed' has been local to the two institutions.



### **DARE: Opera North and University of Leeds**

DARE was formed through a shared passion for creativity by the leaders of both its key partners; University of Leeds and Opera North. As an NPO, it is also financially supported by Arts Council England. Its success however, is built upon the myriad of other networks and relationships that have become established over many years throughout the academic, student and artistic communities and beyond into commercial and public realms. DARE focuses on four areas: research, skills development, public engagement and collaboration – all of which have an international element, whether that be inviting international speakers to present or perform at events or to study.

The DARE partnership came about almost by chance from informal conversations between the General Director of Opera North (Richard Mantle) and the former Vice Chancellor of the University of Leeds (Michael Arthur). The initial motivation was to improve the cultural experience of the city for people living in the city as well as its visitors, aligning organisational objectives with a more civic minded contribution. The partnership has invested in a professional post based in Opera North whose purpose is to connect both partners and create and manage actions that allow them to make the most of the collaboration.

Bringing contemporary themes to opera through public engagement has been one of DARE's notable themes, for example through the 'On Liberty' lecture series, launched in 2011. Initially a one-off event, these lectures invited academics and public figures to explore themes for contemporary opera productions. The talks have centred on freedom and liberty in contemporary society, with previous lecturers including Gareth Peirce, Paul Mason and George Monbiot – and helped to embed the traditional art form in a modern context.

Other partnership work has developed around a skills development theme. This includes the Pettman Fellowship offered to international students (one from Europe and one from New Zealand) undertaking a research and practice based Postgraduate diploma in music education project management. DARE is currently planning to extend this collaboration to Singapore. In addition, each year the Opera hosts 750 university students from a range of disciplines to become immersed in the business and creativity of Opera North through work-based learning projects, workshops or other activities.

But most of the focus is local and regional, and strongly based in the city's civic agenda including DARE seminars and educational projects with over 750 students per year. Subject areas include finance, music, planning and 'technical'. These skills have helped people build careers in academia, in charities and throughout the creative sector. They are illustrative of a range of ways that DARE builds skills for leadership and management in the creative sectors as well as using creative skills to support regional businesses, and build public engagement, research and creative practice that is cross disciplinary supportive of a diverse range of other cultural organisations.

*Source: SQW*

- 5.6 Where inter-geographic relationships do occur, these are usually secondary research partners (either universities or cultural bodies) being used to cross-examine research findings or to use research approaches in new geographic or disciplinary fields. This is common whether these new partnerships are national or international. It is worth noting that the majority of international partnerships are driven on the HE side; usually through conferences and the sharing of internationally interesting research. Even here, collaboration is usually marginal, with a small amount of well-embedded best practice outweighed by those with fertile international contacts and ambitions.

#### *Leadership*

- 5.7 This can be at an institutional or a localised or civic level. In the example of the University of Leeds and Opera North, this was driven by the University's Vice Chancellor and the Director of the Cultural Organisation wishing to partner for civic ends. This built on existing personal links between the organisations such as informal use of academics to explore the themes of productions with artistic players, building a structured partnership designed to benefit the region – the 'end point' of the partnership has been a far closer working bond between the city's cultural and academic institutions (including the West Yorkshire Playhouse, Hepworth Wakefield, Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Leeds Beckett University) which culminated in the city's bid for European Capital of Culture in 2023, and the legacy of that bid.
- 5.8 In other instances, the leadership of the academic and cultural partners is more vital. At the University of Kent, for example, the role of culture in the outlook of the university has been driven by the arts faculty, whilst the success of CASIC, and its approach to research and fieldwork, is now embedded in the strategy of Keele University, despite the team facing criticism that the approach had no place in a management school, and in initial conflict with the University's senior leadership.

#### *Personal relationships*

- 5.9 These were deemed especially important by cultural organisations, with over half of the consultees noting these as the 'most important' factor. The Case Studies, which highlight best practice, show the power of these bonds. The partnership between New Vic Theatre and Keele University was founded via an introduction by a mutual friend which has led to a five year research programme; the structured co-ordination between the University of Leeds and Opera North is the product of a conversation between the former's Vice-Chancellor and the latter's Director at a civic reception; People's Palace Projects successful collaboration with Brazil is a result of the personal passion of its Director for the culture and society of that country, which led to many personal friendships and bonds.
- 5.10 One consultee noted the contrast under successive Deans of the Arts Faculty, with the latest position holder the most engaged and likely to offer opportunities to collaborate, simply through a closer personal connection. Another noted the 'fat and broad' structure of academia, with a large number of individuals pursuing personal research. This makes it difficult for less resourced cultural organisations to engage, other than where there is a personal connection or common interest. Even then, it is more likely that an academic will make the first move.

### **New Vic Theatre and Keele University**

A collaboration between the Management School at Keele University and the New Vic Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent has created such international interest that groups of international visitors regularly visit to learn from and work with the UK partners to apply their cultural animation thinking to a wide range of different settings.

The partnership between Mihaela Kelemen (Keele University) and Sue Moffatt (New Vic Theatre) was established in 2000 after an introduction through a mutual friend. Their shared ethos, values and ambition to focus on marginalised communities has resulted in a lasting partnership. Mihaela's research is based on the notion of American Pragmatism, the idea that there should be no division between academic knowledge and practical experience. This complements Sue's focus on documentary theatre and the impact that it can have on marginalised communities. Through their collaborations, they have developed a creative research methodology named cultural animation which is based on bringing to the fore the day to day experiences of marginalised communities. In 2015 their work was formalised through the establishment of the Community Animation and Social Innovation Centre (CASIC) at the University. Over this time, they have secured over 20 grants in partnership, from funders including the AHRC, ESRC, MRC and EPSRC, each ranging between £10k to £125k. These have also involved multiple international partners, such as Audencia Business School in France, Western University in Canada, Osaka City University and Seinan Gakuin University in Japan.

The partnership's most established collaborations have taken place in Japan. The AHRC Bringing the Gap grant received in 2013 allowed Keele University and the New Vic to transfer the methodology used with marginalised communities in Stoke, to a community in Minamisanriku in Japan where people who were affected by the 2011 Tsunami were still living in temporary accommodation. The research used cultural animation techniques to understand how the community was regenerating itself from within. Tsunami survivors created a living tree out of physical objects and their own stories, which allowed them to surpass language barriers and express similar stories of survival and resilience to economically deprived communities in Stoke. The tree and its stories have travelled widely in the UK, Italy, Canada, France, Greece, Sweden and the Philippines.

The New Vic now has more diverse sources of income, including support through several ACE programmes such as Appetite (Creative People and Places) and Ambition for Excellence and is now a National Portfolio Organisation. But also, the theatre has attracted new visitors through its work with marginalised communities, as it has influenced some in the community to attend productions. The New Vic has also increased its international standing, evidenced by a visiting delegation of MBA students from Japan and a visit by the outreach directors from the Alley Theatre in Houston. Future work will see them exploring mental health through cultural animation with both Japan and the USA.

*Source: SQW*

- 5.11 Several consultees noted that their relationships were founded on ‘luck’ or ‘chance’, with strong professional partnerships founded on introductions by mutual friends or ‘being in the right place at the right time’.

### *Appetite for risk*

- 5.12 The most substantial and clear successes found through the fieldwork show a clear appetite for risk amongst the participants. Consultees at Opera North, New Vic Theatre, Keele University, the University of Kent and Northumbria University for example, noted that there was a degree of risk in these partnerships; that the partners need not be afraid of the activities yielding no results in order to achieve the strongest partnerships or best outcomes. In the best examples – notably the partnerships in Leeds, Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle – shared mistakes, or fear of failure had led to the closest bonds between partners and some of the most striking results and learning.

## Partnership structures

- 5.13 Although both consultations and survey results noted a number of structured forms of partnership of varying depth and complexity, all of these began as informal relationships which led to joint funding applications, and the development of more formal shared objectives and structures. The majority of consultees felt it important to note that the existence of funding and means to source new partners would not, in and of itself, lead to more, stronger collaborations.
- 5.14 The list below is not exhaustive, but represents some of the most prevalent means of codifying partnerships identified throughout the research period (including the scoping period):
- Co-funding – in which both HEIs and cultural organisations involved put funding into the ‘pot’ to drive a specific project. Given the paucity of arts funding, these were quite rare in practice, with the majority of ‘seedcorn’ funding coming from HEIs, with a couple of minor exceptions. This approach provided the groundwork for the relationships between the New Vic and Keele University, and the University of Leeds and Opera North
  - Co-production – there were several instances where a cultural organisation had lent their expertise to a HEI product (e.g. a Masters course) to help raise revenue designed to support original artistic works. The model for delivery varies. In some instances, notably Opera North, the course is co-delivered with the academic institution, whereas in others there is a more light-touch teaching role, or involvement in curriculum construction.
  - ‘In-kind’ support – some HEIs have provided administrative workspace, rehearsal space and access to ‘creative talent’ (students) to smaller arts organisations to help lighten the revenue burden. This was found particularly where culture was embedded in the strategy of the HEI, such as that at the University of Kent. Nottingham Trent and De Montfort Universities both place culture at the core of their ethos, and have thus offered space and support to organisations such as Curve Theatre, Culture Forum Midlands and ACE East Midlands.

### **People's Palace Projects: Queen Mary, University of London**

People's Palace Projects has had an international focus from its inception, with the first project linking to Burkina Faso, West Africa and while its work extends across many nations it is best known for its collaborative work with Brazil. Since its establishment it has had a strong relationship with Arts Council England through a series of grants and funding and is one of the Arts Council's National Portfolio Organisations. In 2010, PPP became the first and only UK arts organisation to become one of the Brazilian Ministry of Culture's International 'Pontos de Cultura'.

The collaboration centres on practice-based research and international brokering often supporting UK cultural organisations looking to work in Brazil. This may sometimes involve showing or touring work there but has also involved research projects, such as *Complicite in the Amazon*, for instance. There were also several 'knowledge transfer' projects involving companies that had worked on the London Olympics and Paralympics handing on their experience to Rio: examples included Graeae and The Lawnmowers Independent Theatre Co. PPP's deep knowledge of Brazil, and the openness of its mission, allows it to respond to a variety of opportunities such as partnering with an offer of detailed on-the-ground support, in a way that is unique in the territories in which it operates. PPP also helps overseas companies to work in the UK: one such, Brazil's AfroReggae, performed at the Barbican and the Southbank Centre.

Based at Queen Mary, University of London's Drama Department the PPP is a full charitable subsidiary of the university. Its core staff are university academics whose time is 'bought out' of teaching commitments by PPP funded projects. This creates a structure that is lean, responsive and firmly connected to both cultural and academic environments in England and in international partners. It was founded by Paul Heritage in 1997 and extends his early interest in arts practice in prisons and probation services, to seek out contexts where art matters most and where it makes a difference to lives. For example, their website states that 'For over a decade, we worked in the Brazilian prison system, seeing prison guards become human rights advocates, ex-prisoners become actors, and a studio theatre built in a Federal prison complex in Brasília. We have created projects including the negotiation of ceasefires between rival drug gangs in Rio de Janeiro and the improvement of degraded environments in the communities of Acre, Brazil.'

Future developments are planned to extend their work with communities in other countries that are part of Britain's Official Development Assistance programme and support the university's new international vice-principal to reach other countries and to deliver the university's cultural strategy. More generally, Heritage feels that the arts are increasingly being asked to help address big issues, from human rights to health or the creative economy. Achieving this requires a positive and proactive approach to 'crossover' work across discipline or funding-stream boundaries to enable university and cultural collaborations to use artistic practice to make a real difference to people's lives.

*Source: SQW*

- Joint-funded projects – here a HEI and cultural organisation collaborate on a project funded by a third party, usually a research council or foundation. There is usually a mix of outcomes, including social outcomes and qualitative cultural ones. Examples of this type of activity were less prevalent than anticipated, but usually highlighted the strongest partnerships where they were in place.
- NPO spin-outs – some HEI based cultural activities have spawned ‘spin out’ cultural entities, some of which have matured into ACE national portfolio organisations, these include People’s Palace Projects (Queen Mary).
- Community projects, with replicability potential – several HEI/cultural partnerships have focussed on social or civic issues, including social engagement, loneliness, placemaking, city twinning etc. Most notable amongst consultees is the partnership between New Vic Theatre and Keele University which has addressed issues such as austerity and food poverty in Stoke-on-Trent using creative facilitation – including those led by People’s Palace Projects, Creative Fuse in the North East (whose partners include Northumbria University and the BAL TIC Centre for Contemporary Art) and the partnership between Keele University and the New Vic Theatre.
- Memoranda of Understanding – this is a codification of shared objectives and delivery approaches, occasionally co-funded or supported by local authorities where there is a strong level of civic engagement in culture (e.g. Bristol and Leeds). Even where these governance arrangements exist there is little evidence from this research of their being able to deliver outcomes over and above those driven at micro level.

## Summary

- 5.15 The core learning of this research is that international collaboration is usually achieved as an end of close local and national collaboration, diffusion of ideas and engagement on the part of international parties. There are exceptions to this rule – People’s Palace Projects, for example, was founded with a purpose to encourage dialogue between the UK and Brazil – but these are rare, and usually founded on a central premise of international collaboration.
- 5.16 As in other places, the best and most successful international collaboration has been a product of chance, which has transformed into personal relationships. Opera North and the University of Leeds work closely with the University of Auckland owing to the patronage of a benefactor shared between them and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, for example.
- 5.17 The major exception to this is where funded academic research has international dialogue and knowledge exchange at its core. Several institutions noted their engagement with the Newton Fund which is administered through the British Council. Although primarily focussed on scientific activities, there are some grounds for, and examples of, HEIs working with cultural partners to deliver activities in developing countries supported by the Fund – People’s Palace Projects being one such case in which the cultural organisation and other partners from within Queen Mary facilitate creative activities, authorship and development activity, pairing parties from London’s East End and the favelas of major Brazilian cities.
- 5.18 Access to talent was recognised by many as a reason to engage internationally. This included access to schemes such as the EU backed Erasmus+ which supports exchange arrangements

for HEIs and cultural practitioners (occasionally within the same project), and 'free movement' of talented researchers and creative practitioners. Although not a core driver of collaboration itself, consultees noted that exposure to differing cultural or academic practice and the 'diaspora effect' of paired researchers and cultural practitioners returning home and becoming 'new partners' were noted as both current and potential future benefits of these activities.



## 6. Reflections

### How collaborations develop

- 6.1 UK universities are internationally engaged. Indeed, it is embedded within the ethos and culture of universities that they have a global outlook to exchange knowledge and ideas as part of the enquiry process to create new knowledge and insights. Partly this is achieved through staff and student exchange, international networking and conferences and, increasingly, through multi-disciplinary enquiry. HEIs are therefore driven by a research agenda that encourages globally significant research that has impact well beyond the walls of academia and so encourage academics to connect internationally.
- 6.2 Cultural organisations also have a strong international outlook and several NPOs and larger organisations have an international dimension to their work through creation of new cultural works or activities that reach an international audience by international tours, artists in residences or internationally recognised creative works.

Figure 6-1: Drivers of collaborative projects



Source: SQW

- 6.3 Figure 6-1 describes the different communities that exist within these two organisational types and how international aspects can connect with them all. Groups of **artists and academics, students and audiences intersect** in many ways – and these groups are not self-contained. It is not uncommon to find that academics are also creative practitioners and students are also audiences for example. Where these groups intersect with an international dimension, the opportunities and experiences of collaboration develop and grow. Most of the examples of HEI and cultural organisation collaboration featured in this report have developed through personal or community connections, some start with an international focus whilst others move into the international sphere over time. Some collaborations exist as discrete projects, whilst others have developed more formal structures designed to build sustainability and continuity.
- 6.4 In this section we review the implications of these drivers of collaboration in terms of strengths and weaknesses, national strategic oversight and regional leadership, and ways to accelerate or incentivise international collaboration.



## Enabling and limited factors in driving collaboration

- 6.5 The research has revealed a rich network of collaborative work between HEIs and cultural organisations – with an international dimension. The volume and geographic spread of collaboration between HEIs and cultural organisations is significant, with over one third of English university arts faculties responding to the SQW survey to flag some form of collaboration, with the average number of collaborative projects being at least ten per university in the 2017/2018 academic year. The best quality, and most successful **collaborations are driven by a combination of factors**– geographic proximity, individual and institutional leadership and professional relationships that are often built over long periods of time that establish a high degree of trust, shared values and mutual objectives. This appears to be true also for international collaboration where the best quality work derives from diffusion, knowledge exchange and approaches for further collaboration.
- 6.6 Whilst these factors of success are associated with strong collaborations there are **drawbacks**; they rely on happenstance, too often rely on single individuals and can take a long time to develop into activity. In addition, organisational collaboration can be subject to changes in one partners’ policy, we heard of instances where one partner in a wide collaboration became ‘dormant’ for a while as their funding was withdrawn. Other partners spoke of the risks of linking with a single university whose international strategy could move at pace leaving cultural partners vulnerable if they had invested in working in countries that were no longer the university’s priority.
- 6.7 At present, the large resource imbalance between HEIs and cultural organisations means that there is limited agency on the part of the arts and cultural partners. Particularly for smaller organisations, they are more often the ‘object’ of research or opportunities or play a supporting role in larger consortia and research bids, than seen as a core partner.
- 6.8 Different partners have unequal access to information and knowledge about innovative approaches to collaboration, new research ideas and potential partnerships. Whilst HEIs have ‘time to think’ and incentives to innovate and research provided by the availability (and inherent competition within) research grants, this is not the case for arts organisations. Similarly, whilst sustainability is increasingly important to arts organisations, in many instances this is limited to commercial forms of diversification (e.g. sponsorship or retail) with little support or time devoted to the opportunities presented by academic collaboration.

## National strategic frameworks

- 6.9 There is already evidence of collaboration between HEIs and cultural organisations, including on international projects where the conditions are favourable, and the concept has been proven to work and generate positive outcomes. These collaborations benefit from national strategic frameworks to indicate the types of activity that are likely to be supported and the **infrastructure which can support partners** (such as funding, physical space, advocacy, promotion and fostering networks). These are important for national collaborations, but they become more so with the added risks of international ventures.
- 6.10 Three strategic organisation sectors are particularly influential in this regard; research councils, the British Council and ACE. AHRC for example have recently run a Creative Clusters Fund call which encourages collaborative activity between HEIs and creative organisations,

and ACE has supported this by advocating on behalf of creative organisations that were included in collaborative bids. However, some of the consultees from the creative sector were disappointed with the guidance that accompanied this fund and the poor definition of roles for organisations such as themselves within funding proposals and would have welcomed a more strategically balanced approach to project support.

- 6.11 Likewise, opportunities exist for cultural organisations to join partnerships for funding through the British Council. But there seemed to be an opportunity missed in co-ordinating and encouraging responses from the cultural and creative sectors that actively brought together academics and creative practitioners to support British Council objectives (and their policy drivers). A consideration for the future could be to develop shared objectives of the three organisations, such that they make the system of fostering and supporting collaboration both more open and more navigable. This is especially important for cultural organisations.

### Regional leadership

- 6.12 HEIs and some NPOs share a regional prosperity or civic partnership agenda. Some combined authorities and LEPs focus on the **cultural sector as a key priority within their area**, to be a driver of economic growth, or as a factor to deliver a broader well-being and inclusive society agenda. These agendas need to be able to connect with both HEIs which are often sufficiently large and well-resourced to be able to respond and, cultural organisations which face greater challenges in this regard.
- 6.13 **Culture forums** can be both intrinsically valuable to their members, but also appreciated by their external partners as a way to engage a diverse and dispersed sector. Where these were functioning (notably in the North), consultees highlighted the importance of the Culture Forums in bringing together potential partners from each discipline to share ideas and perspectives, without pressure on outputs or deliverables. The impact of Culture Forum North can be seen in the desire from other areas to replicate this experiment, with Culture Forum Midlands in its infancy and Culture Forum South in the pipeline. At present most of the resource behind Culture Forums is based on goodwill and 'in-kind' support, with a small amount of ACE seed funding.
- 6.14 There may be scope to formalise the expectations of these bodies. In the spirit of HEI/cultural collaboration, they should continue to be led by their constituents, with a continued commitment to engaging new partners, and to established set piece thematic events or 'sandpits' designed to provoke ideas that accelerate collaboration.
- 6.15 A theme of many consultations at scoping and substantive phase was the 'orphaning' of higher education as a theme both with ACE itself, and in its funded organisations. Within ACE itself the brief falls between the core work of the education team, and that of the research team (with interests from international, skills and policy), whilst in cultural organisations engagement with HEIs is not usually part of an individual's responsibilities (and where it is present, this is usually under the guise of 'development'). Opera North gives a strong counterpoint – the organisation has a named lead for higher education and is one of the most active ACE supported organisations in the co-production of diplomas and courses, and the lead partner of ACE's Culture Forum North.

- 6.16 ACE could consider a permanent home for the higher education brief within their structure. Building responsibility for HE engagement into the roles of **Regional Relationship Managers** may help to draw together new partnerships and opportunities. Several ACE colleagues interviewed for this research already engage effectively, but coverage is patchy and led by individual interest, with pockets of best practice mirroring those where there is a high volume of good quality work in play – the North West, Yorkshire, the South West and South East especially. It is difficult to prove causation, but this correlation may suggest that an active ACE role in localities helps bring parties together.

### Incentivising cultural organisations

- 6.17 Whilst funding for collaboration was deemed important by the majority of survey respondents and consultees, when pressed for more detail about what type of resource the majority felt that time and resources were more important. In those organisations where funding allows time to think and to devote human and capital resources to explore partnerships and opportunities, the most fertile ideas for collaboration occur. In other words – **HEI funding incentivises engagement and partnership, whilst the resource pressures on cultural organisations have the opposite effect**, making them organisationally more risk averse and leading to a focus on bottom line business imperatives.
- 6.18 Where pressed on funding, cultural organisations stated that this was important, but only insofar as it offered the space to take artistic and creative risks and pursue opportunities which may diversify their organisation or support its sustainability. At present this **'risk/reward' profile** is slightly out of balance.
- 6.19 ACE programmes may already exist that help to support sustainability and diversification including Catalyst: Evolve focussed on private giving and Elevate, focussed on diversity. These aim to deliver ACE Goal 3 on the building of resilient and sustainable arts organisations. In addition, in the most recent funding period ACE committed £1.1m to a specialised Research Grants Programme to *'...deepen knowledge and understanding of the impact of art and culture, and the complex role it plays in our experience as individuals and a society.'* One other solution to the funding of 'thinking' alongside HEIs, or encouraging cultural organisations to work on local or international research may be to incentivise this through existing funding protocols and guidance. For example, there may be some means by which National Portfolio Organisations might be incentivised to partner with HEIs as part of broader civic agenda, (although this might prove difficult to monitor and evaluate).
- 6.20 Partners were also not clear whether other **ACE funding programmes**, notably Grants for the Arts and Programme Funds, recognised 'research' as a secondary output or outcome. Clarification within ACE's funding guidelines might encourage a small number of the best quality collaborations between HEIs and cultural organisations within the existing funding envelope whilst ensuring that artistic merit, and cultural outputs and themes remain at the core of the activity supported. This could ultimately support research outcomes and help improve understanding of the broader social impacts of arts and culture on people, places and lives. It would also serve to better incentivise cultural organisations to engage as full partners to a bid or project, rather than signatories to a broader programme with little formal role or active engagement in the research programme itself.

## Forms of governance

- 6.21 Collaborations have used a range of different structures. Some cultural organisations said that they valued the use of Memoranda of Understanding early in their discussions with universities. Some then evolved into charitable trusts (in their own right, or more usually, owned by one or more of the partners) or a non-profit making body. These are important where one or more of the partners are contributing in kind or cash resources, or where there is an element of co-production that does not necessarily specify costs and revenues.
- 6.22 Those collaborations that are jointly funded through a third party can be temporary as they are focussed on achieving specific objectives. These are bound by rules of funding and engagement set by other partners, such as the research councils or Newton Fund.
- 6.23 Consultees involved in this research agreed that a system seeking to overlay existing clusters of best practice with new forms of governance would not be welcome. Most partners utilise the expertise of their parent organisation to construct an appropriate vehicle for their partnership activities. Smaller cultural organisations may experience difficulty with this, but this was not identified as a significant issue during the course of the research.