

Milton Keynes Catalyst Arts Consortium Evaluation

August 2015

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1. Introduction

This report by Tracey Gregory, TG Consultancy, presents the findings of the evaluation of the Milton Keynes Catalyst Arts Consortium programme. TG Consultancy was commissioned by Milton Keynes Council in November 2014 to carry out the evaluation of the two-year Milton Keynes Catalyst Consortium programme which ran from July 2013 to June 2015. The Milton Keynes Catalyst is one of 62 consortia programmes across England funded through Arts Council England's (ACE) Catalyst Arts Consortia Fund. The aim has been to support consortia of arts organisations to increase capacity and expertise in fundraising and improve their resilience.

Milton Keynes Council led the bid to ACE securing £78,600 Catalyst Arts funding for a programme of development for six arts consortium members: Festive Road, Independent Cinema Milton Keynes, Inter-Action, Islamic Arts and Heritage Alliance, Milton Keynes Arts and Heritage Alliance and Milton Keynes Fringe Festival. External consultants Abigail Branagan and Diana Hatton were appointed to project manage and co-ordinate the delivery of the programme, in association with the Council.

In addition to the six consortium partner organisations, 25 people from 19 other Milton Keynes arts organisations have participated in training sessions offered through the programme. These have included training on crowdfunding, audience loyalty schemes, board development and dealing with growth. (A list of participating organisations is included in Appendix 1).

The programme has played an important role in helping to achieve Milton Keynes Council's and the arts and heritage sectors ambitions for:

"Milton Keynes to be recognised internationally for its distinctive arts and heritage." Milton Keynes Council Corporate Plan 2012-2016

Catalyst has come at an important time as the town prepares for its 50th anniversary celebrations in 2017 and is a host of the Rugby World Cup in 2015. As the Catalyst programme comes to an end Milton Keynes Council has announced it intends to bid to become European Capital of Culture 2023.

1.1 Background and context to the national Catalyst Arts Consortia programme

The UK has a relatively under-developed culture of private giving to arts and culture when compared to countries such as the US. In recent years the Government has placed private giving at the heart of their policies for supporting art and culture, with the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) launching a 10-point plan in 2012 to increase philanthropic giving to the sector. The £100 million Catalyst programme is a key element of the DCMS plan that is co-financed by DCMS, Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund.

Catalyst is also a central strand of Arts Council England's interventions to help create a more sustainable, resilient and innovative arts sector, one of the five goals set out in ACE's 10-year framework for the arts - *Great art and culture for*

everyone.

The £68 million Catalyst Arts fund has three tiers or funding strands:

- Tier 1: Endowments, offer match funding to arts organisations with a successful track record of fundraising to help them build endowments to provide an annual income. 18 arts applicants were awarded £30,500,000 in total in 2012. This element of Catalyst is co-funded by ACE and DCMS.
- Tier 2: Capacity building and match. A £30 million scheme to support organisations to build their fundraising capacity and capability over a three-year period. Grants of between £120,000 and £240,000 have been awarded to 173 organisations from 350 applications. The expectation was that the funds would be used in the first year to build capacity and put the necessary structures in place to increase private giving. In the second and third years, funding was to be used to incentivise donations on a match-funding basis.
- Tier 3: Building fundraising capacity among consortia of organisations aimed to enable arts organisations with an underdeveloped fundraising model to increase capacity and expertise in this area and improve their resilience. 62 awards were made of between £60,000 and £150,000 to consortia benefitting 217 organisations in total. **Milton Keynes Catalyst Arts Consortium was one of the tier 3 awards.**

There is also a £36 million Catalyst Heritage endowment fund awarded to 31 heritage organisations (The Milton Keynes heritage sector has not been a part of this).

The interim evaluation of the national Catalyst Arts Tier 2 and 3 programmes found encouraging signs that the investments are supporting the kinds of the changes the Catalyst investment is aiming for. These include:

- Catalyst beneficiaries accessing and developing new fundraising expertise: 82 per cent of tier 3 organisations have hired external consultants and 90 per cent have had fundraising training.
- 85 per cent had piloted new fundraising methods: 30 per cent had established new membership schemes and 19 per cent had tried crowdfunding.
- 88 per cent of organisations had approached new donors.
- Other key changes for organisations across the national programme include organisations making changes to their boards bringing in specific fundraising skills; becoming more proactive with fundraising, having more confidence in their fundraising ability and having a better understanding of donor motivations¹.

All of the above changes can also be seen among the Milton Keynes Catalyst Arts Consortium partners.

Interestingly, the national evaluation found that less than half of the national Catalyst Arts beneficiaries (43 per cent) had clarified their vision and mission before embarking on new fundraising approaches. The report highlights that clarity of vision and mission is one the 'primary enablers of positive change for arts organisations' seeking to diversify their funding and increase support from private

¹ BOP Consulting (March 2015) Catalyst Evaluation Year One, Arts Council England

donors. The Milton Keynes Catalyst started from this premise, with a focus in the early stages on clarifying organisational vision, putting the organisations in a stronger position to bring about changes and increase and diversify funding.

1.2 The Milton Keynes Catalyst evaluation

This evaluation aims to assess how the Catalyst programme has delivered against the two broad aims and a set of specific outcomes for the Milton Keynes Catalyst Arts Consortium. These were agreed with the programme managers and the partners as part of the evaluation planning in November 2014.

The aims of the programme are:

- To build capacity to address both shared and individual fundraising development needs of Catalyst organisations.
- To identify and develop effective fundraising strategies that have a long term impact on the sustainability of Catalyst organisations.

The specific outcomes that the MK Catalyst Arts programme was seeking to achieve are:

- Better governance
- Better strategic planning
- Increased partnership working and shared learning
- Clearer understanding of what funding/income sources to prioritise
- Improved fundraising skills
- More effective marketing of organisations
- Increased confidence in applying skills and strategies developed.

The evaluation of the programme is summarised in the Theory of Change diagramme in Appendix 2.

A set of specific development objectives was also identified for each organisation through the early stage audits. The evaluation has also considered the progress of organisations against these individual objectives. The case studies in Section 4 highlight how each organisation has progressed against their development objectives, outlining the successes and challenges each organisation faced by during the Catalyst programme.

One of the main aims of the MK Catalyst Arts programme has been to capture and reflect back the learning that has taken place both for the consortium members (and their teams) and for the wider arts sector in Milton Keynes. This has been an ongoing process throughout the programme supported through the peer learning sessions and training. This evaluation report is a key tool for sharing the learning. Key findings from the evaluation were disseminated at a learning event in July 2015 hosted by the Milton Keynes Arts and Heritage Alliance (AHA-MK). The case studies and a toolkit of training resources from the Milton Keynes Catalyst will be made available online to the wider Milton Keynes Arts Sector through AHA-MKs online platforms.

1.2.1 Methodology

The evaluation has taken a mixed method approach including the following:

- A review of all programme documents including the ACE application and

interim report; audits and early stage case studies of consortium partners and; all monitoring and evaluation data collected by the programme team including questionnaires completed by participants at each of the training sessions.

- Focus groups with consortium partners.
- Interviews with the lead person from each of the consortium organisation and board members, plus interviews with the consultant programme managers, Milton Keynes Council Arts Development Officer, and programme trainers and mentors. (See Appendix 3 for a list of interviewees).
- An online survey was sent 10 training participants by AHA-MK. Three surveys were completed.

2. The Catalyst Arts Consortium Programme in Milton Keynes

The Catalyst Arts programme in Milton Keynes was developed from the standpoint that organisations need to have a clear direction and strong governance in order to identify and focus on fundraising activity. The six consortium members were selected to participate in the programme based on their needs and potential to develop and grow. All six organisations had been involved in the successful 2012 *Summer of Culture* celebrations in Milton Keynes and had been recipients of ACE funding in the two years prior to the start of Catalyst - a key criteria set down by ACE for participation. Having the criteria that all participating consortium members had to be recent ACE funding recipients actually excluded a number of arts organisations in Milton Keynes that would otherwise have qualified to be part of the consortium, based on their potential to benefit from the support and develop. This was a missed opportunity for those organisations and for the Milton Keynes arts sector as a whole.

2.1 What Milton Keynes Catalyst Arts programme involved

The MK Catalyst Arts programme was divided into four stages designed to meet the specific needs of the six consortium members:

Stage 1: Appraisal - September 2013. The project managers worked with the six organisations on detailed audits. These identified where development support was most needed individually and collectively. From these audits the support programme was developed. (A summary of the key development objectives for each organisation can be found below and in the individual case studies). A research challenge day was also held with speakers Vanessa Swann, Chief Executive of Cockpit Art and Philip Spedding, former Director of Arts & Business, which challenged the consortium partners to set themselves a series of research actions aligned with the audit outcomes.

Stage 2: Research and development - October 2013 to February 2014 - Intensive training and peer-to-peer learning. This stage included consortium partner training and regular group meetings to reflect on the learning.

Consortium group training included:

- Being Heard - how to communicate clearly
- Introduction to Fundraising - with a focus on Trust and Foundation funding
- Sponsorship parts 1 and 2
- Making the most of your website and using social media.

A number of the training sessions were opened up to the wider Milton Keynes arts and heritage sector. These included:

- Introduction to Audience Loyalty Schemes
- Board development
- Crowdfunding
- Dealing with growth

(A full list of training participants is included in Appendix 1 and further details about each training session can be found in Appendix 4).

As part of the board development, an evening for board members was hosted by the consortium at the MK Dons Stadium with refreshments, networking and a tour of the stadium following a training event. The event was attended by five Catalyst Consortium Directors plus 14 board members from Catalyst organisations and six other Milton Keynes cultural organisations.

The Catalyst funding also supported online funder finding resources, which are now hosted by AHA-MK and open to their membership.

Stage 3: Intervention and implementation - March 2014 to January 2015 - A programme of 'go and see' visits and mentoring support. Catalyst consortium members also worked on their vision documents to articulate clearly their mission, goals, strengths and weaknesses.

Stage 4: Review and legacy intervention - January to June 2015 - Peer group reviews and one-to-one reviews were held with final intervention support identified. This included a final training session on Dealing with Growth in March 2015 and bespoke interventions such as ongoing support with branding for Islamic Arts and Heritage from Amy Morgan, The Brand Architect.

A crucial element of the Milton Keynes Catalyst programme was the buy back of time element. With all the consortium organisations, bar one, being run by volunteers or freelance Directors or programme managers being paid on a project basis, a budget was set aside to pay for their time to attend some of the Catalyst meetings. Of course, the participating organisations also put in a huge investment of their own time over and above the time they were paid for.

3. Milton Keynes Catalyst Arts Consortium: What changes has the programme brought about?

"There was a huge amount of trust in the group. Because we were all at similar stages of development we were able to help each other and support each other. There was a lot of problem solving that went on in the joint meetings which was hugely positive." MK Catalyst consortium member

The Milton Keynes Catalyst programme has supported some really positive development changes for the six participating organisations. All the organisations were at a similar stage in their development, in need of stronger governance and more formal management structures to enable them to grow. Being part of the programme has given them a focus and time to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, time that can be hard to set aside for very small organisations, like the consortium partners, with very few or no paid staff. The external facilitators – the Project Managers, trainers and mentors – have played an important role in stimulating the reflective process. The support from and reflection with peers from the other consortium organisations has also been instrumental in enabling the organisations to make changes they have. As one of the trainers explains:

"They were a really good group. They had clearly bonded and supported each other. They had prepared before the training, so came with questions to ask. As a trainer it was a really good experience as you can get so much more out of the session for the participants if they are all engaged and at the same stage".

The organisations have given a huge commitment to the programme in terms of their time to attend meetings and training. This has been matched with the specialist expertise and training that they have been able to access through their individual mentors, the 'go and see' visits and the high-quality training programme developed to respond to their needs.

"The training and trainers were so inspiring and refreshing." MK Catalyst consortium member

The ongoing support and understanding from Project Managers Diana Hatton and Abigail Branagan, who have themselves acted as additional mentors, has been really valuable for the organisations.

"They (Abigail and Diana) really understood who we were and what our challenges are as organisations. They developed a brilliant programme that reflected what we needed but were flexible which is needed over a two year programme". MK Catalyst consortium member

The overall impact of Catalyst on the sustainability of the organisations will not be evident for some time. However, during the lifetime of the programme the organisations have made considerable changes to their management structures, greatly improved governance, developed fundraising skills and tried new ways of fundraising. The organisations that put in most time have taken the most from the programme.

On the whole, the Catalyst programme has given the organisations confidence to

talk about what they do and the value that their work has for individuals and Milton Keynes as a whole. The training and support has provided a set of tools to be used in the future. These range from the very practical, such as template policies, to tips and guidance on mounting effective crowdfunding campaigns and summaries of their organisations that have been used in business plans and funding applications.

While the MK Catalyst programme was developed to focus on the six consortium partners, there was an ambition for the impact to be felt beyond the core group. Opening up some of the training sessions to the wider arts and heritage sector has allowed more organisations some access to the programme, but the wider impact has been limited.

A Catalyst training resource will be shared through Arts and Heritage Alliance MK² to enable the wider Milton Keynes Arts sector to benefit from the tips and guidance the Catalyst consortium members have had access to.

3.1 The outcomes

The evaluation has sought to identify how effective Catalyst has been in delivering a core set of outcomes or changes that aimed to place the organisations in a much stronger position for a sustainable future. A summary of how the programme has delivered against each of the outcomes is provided below.

3.1.1 Better governance

There has been significant development in overall governance among the consortium members. At the start of the Catalyst programme only four of the six organisations had any kind of board. All have recruited new board members during Catalyst. Festive Road, which had no board at the start, has identified an interim Chair who is actively working with them to establish a board and review management structures. MK Fringe has transitioned from having an advisory board to a formal Board structure. Independent Cinema MK (ICMK) is exploring merger with MK Gallery and the potential of bringing newly recruited board members onto a shared board. MK Islamic Arts and Culture are setting up a new Board, having previously been managed by a committee of volunteers, with an inaugural board meeting in September 2015. Arts and Heritage Alliance (AHA-MK) has set up a new Board and governance structures and has registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Inter-Action has started the process to reposition the organisation and is exploring a new structure or potential merger with board succession plans now in place to support any future organisational model.

The move to establish more effective boards has not been an easy process. Founding Directors and some long-standing board members have felt that changes might force the organisations to move away from their core values. With the training, one-to-one advice and support provided through Catalyst, all now realise that greater accountability and strategic planning are a necessary part of growth and that bringing new people to board can bring new skills in fundraising, marketing and financial planning to the organisation.

Board training held early on in the Catalyst programme was a valuable part of the

² See case study 1 page 13 for further details about Arts and Heritage Alliance.

board development process. The organisations are keen to repeat this so their new board members can benefit from the learning around governance that the training provided for trustees.

The benefits of board development support were not limited to the Catalyst partners. The board development training session was opened up to the wider Milton Keynes arts and heritage sector and as one non-Catalyst member explains:

"We held a very successful visioning session with a facilitator which helped the Board to explore individual's beliefs and assumptions and enabled us to reach a consensus." Board development training participant, non-Catalyst member

3.1.2 Better strategic planning

The strengthening of the boards (and in some cases setting up new boards) has brought new skills to the organisations that are supporting more effective strategic planning. For example, at Festive Road regular 'strategic' planning meetings are now held, with programme planning and day-to-day operational issues now discussed at separate meetings. AHA-MK is developing its new business plan and ICMK is poised to develop theirs once its partnership with the Gallery has been formalised.

Despite the more strategic approach and organisations being better placed to attract and generate more diverse sources of income, the organisations are still largely reliant on project funding. Securing core income is still a challenge so they are not yet able to employ additional staff and have only limited resources for bringing in the skills needed, such as marketing.

"It's a hard balance to strike, you are what you do and stepping away from some project delivery to focus on strategic development is a tough call to make for small organisations and you can't do it all." MK Catalyst partner

3.1.3 Improved fundraising skills and a clearer understanding of what funding and income sources to prioritise

The training and specialist support from the programme managers, consultants and mentors has allowed the Catalyst organisations to explore a range of options for raising funds and generating revenue. For example, AHA-MK developed and trialed approaches to corporate donors with the support of their mentor, arts and heritage fundraising consultant, Wendy Smithers. The approaches did not result in any additional funding or support, but the experience has confirmed for AHA that their volunteer board and part-time programme manager should focus on raising project funding from trusts and foundations. Festive Road is focusing on increasing revenue from their existing products and services and now has a better understanding of how to cost and charge for their services. Festival Fringe is developing a membership scheme, Fringe Kin, as part of their audience development programme, but also as part of their strategy to raise funds from individual donors in the future. Islamic Arts and Heritage Alliance are exploring the potential of becoming an ACE NPO but are also looking a packaging and charging for their schools programmes. ICMK is also looking to increase their earned income - box office revenue through their partnership with the MK Gallery. They continue to seek core and project funding but are now willing to say no to funding that will

take them away from their core ambitions.

The consortium partners have developed new skills and understanding in fundraising. The crowdfunding training was a real inspiration and Festive Road has already run a successful campaign exceeding the target set for raising funds to send the Director on a professional development trip to the Rio Carnival. A number of the other organisations are keen to try crowdfunding but are aware of the importance of a good database of contacts through which to promote any crowdfunding campaign and these are still a work in progress.

Because there is now strategic direction, more effective management and governance, there is a strong base from which to expect increased and more diverse funding. As yet there has not been a significant shift towards funding from private sources but all the organisations have increased their annual funding since the start of the project. The six organisations together have more than doubled their income since the start of Catalyst from £275,500 in 2011-12 to £562,000 in 2014-15.

AHA-MK, Islamic Arts and Heritage Alliance and ICMK have had significant successes in securing larger grants from public sector bodies including ACE, Heritage Lottery and BFI³. Festive Road is the one organisation that has successfully reduced its income from the public sector, largely through increasing income from commissions as they have successfully raised the profile of their work and organisation. 76 per cent of Festive Road income came from public sector grants in 2011-12, down to 42 per cent in 2013-14.

3.1.4 More effective marketing of organisations

"One of the main things that has come out of Catalyst for us is being able to communicate what we do...knowing how to ask for things is really important. If you don't ask you don't get". MK Catalyst partner

All the organisations have gained a much better understanding and ability to communicate messages about their work through Catalyst. Throughout the process, the focusing on clear messaging, whether approaching trust funders, individual donors or audiences, has given the partners the ability to talk more confidently and concisely about what they do. They have made practical changes to the ways they communicate with a range of audiences through their websites, a key communication tool. Early reviews of their websites led to all organisations making some changes. These ranged from a complete change in layout to implementing more regular updates of images and messages. The branding session towards the end of the Catalyst process left each organisation with an action plan for increasing their brand profile.

Despite the improvement, really effective marketing still remains a challenge for the organisations, primarily due to lack of capacity with the very small teams focused on delivery.

³ AHA submitted its application to Heritage Lottery Fund for the three year World War 1 project as Catalyst began.

3.1.5 Increased confidence in applying skills and strategies developed

"Catalyst has given us more confidence with developing our strategies and presenting what we do." MK Catalyst partner

The Catalyst programme has supported the development of new skills but crucially has given some of the partners the reassurance and confidence that their plans for growing their organisations are the right ones. The core Catalyst partners have become more confident in presenting and talking about their work to a whole range of audiences. Festive Road's Director joined the local Chamber of Commerce where he first met and 'pitched' the organisations to their new Chair.

"Catalyst has taught us to access opportunities and that opportunities are not always about getting funding". MK Catalyst partner

3.1.6 Increased partnership working and shared learning

"We have gone through this (Catalyst) together and have really supported each other... everyone has been really open and shared problems and worked together on solutions". MK Catalyst partner

The peer support among the core group of consortium members has been a real strength of the MK Catalyst programme. Particularly in the earlier stages of the programme when the group were meeting regularly, they were collectively reflecting on and preparing for the training sessions and testing out ideas for implementing what they had learnt.

However, the shared learning within the organisations and across the wider arts sector has been limited. The Catalyst participants have not, on the whole, shared what they have learnt with other members of their small teams and volunteers. This is largely due to lack of time and structures within the organisations through which to cascade the learning.

While a small number of training sessions were opened up to the wider arts and heritage sector, there was no other mechanism to share the learning with the wider network of Milton Keynes arts and cultural organisations during the programme. However, a non-Catalyst participant at the board training did report a greater willingness across the sector with work together due to Catalyst:

"I think there is more willingness to share and work together..... Quality of programmes and activities are also getting higher I think". Board development training participant

There is a real desire to continue to build on the work of Catalyst among the six core organisations and the wider arts and heritage sector. The organisations have developed to a point individually and collectively. They are now in a position to start applying the learning more widely than they have been able to date and diversifying their funding further. To do this collectively will be a challenge without an incentive to come together. There is also a huge opportunity for core consortium partners to link with and learn from some of the more established arts organisations in Milton Keynes and share their own learning from Catalyst more widely with the sector.

4. Milton Keynes Catalyst Arts Consortium partner case studies

These short case studies summarise the consortium partners' development through Catalyst. They highlight how each organisations has progressed against the key priorities identified for them through the early stage organisational audits.

Arts and Heritage Alliance MK



AHA-MK is a forum of 35 organisations that work together to position the arts and heritage sectors as strategic contributors to the community and economy of Milton Keynes. AHA-MK has a successful track record of lobbying and providing a unified voice for the sectors. The small AHA team operates a highly valued training, professional development and networking programme for the members. They also co-ordinate partnership projects with their members. *Great War MK: Conflict to Cosmopolis* is their latest collaborative project involving

nine AHA members. Funded by Heritage Lottery, the project commemorates the centenary of WW1 and its legacy for a modern Milton Keynes through film screenings, music, dance, performances, exhibitions and installations <https://greatwarmk.wordpress.com>.

Priority focus for Catalyst support and development

The organisational audit at the start of Catalyst identified a number of key areas the support and development should focus on for AHA. These were:

- **Developing communication and marketing – making the case for support.** 'Quick wins' rather than detailed strategies were identified as being needed to be practical for delivery by the part-time officer and volunteers.
- **Guidance on fundraising from a range of sources** including Trusts and Foundations, sponsorship and the public - such as through crowdfunding – all with a view to securing funding for core staff.
- **Developing membership services and exploring best practice.** Supported through the 'Go and See visits' and advice and support from consultants.

Interventions to support the development

In addition to attending all the Catalyst training, peer to peer sessions and ongoing support from the programme consultants:

- Wendy Smithers (from the hub), worked with AHA researching and making the case for support from businesses.

Outcomes for AHA at the end of Catalyst

"The training was really useful and of an excellent standard. It perhaps didn't cascade as widely as we would have liked at AHA, but some sessions were open to organisations outside the consortium, which was good.....What was really useful for us was learning from the group what the issues are for growing arts organisations. This is helping to inform the development of our programme for supporting our members." AHA-MK board member

Catalyst has provided AHA with the time and space to focus on the important aspects of organisational development and fundraising. Catalyst came at an ideal time for AHA as they had already started to review their governance and structure before joining the

programme. At the start of Catalyst AHA was an unincorporated association run by volunteer officers and governed by a Terms of Reference agreed by members. As the Catalyst programme ends AHA has registered as Charitable Incorporated Organisation with a constitution and they have a new a board with clear roles and responsibilities and a part-time co-ordinator. Catalyst training and 1-2-1 support gave AHA volunteers and the Programme Manager, who came on board at the start of the programme, additional knowledge and templates for moving the organisational change forward more quickly.

The organisational strategy developed through Catalyst to articulate AHA's vision and strengths and weaknesses, has informed their new business plan. Working as part of the Catalyst consortium gave AHA the opportunity to test their thinking and get feedback on their emerging vision and brand with a small group of their own members, the other consortium members. Internally AHA has been using three themes to develop its work: Represent, develop, promote. These will now be used as part of the overall brand external messaging of what the organisation does.

Marketing quick win

On a practical level, Catalyst spurred AHA to redevelop their website after the very first training session. The format was simplified the format and the messages being communicated about who the organisation is and what they do were made clearer. This has been helpful for members but also, importantly, for any potential funders or donors. Brand specialist Amy Morgan has now suggested more ways to clarify the AHA brand including creating a 'value proposition' - a statement or statements showing members and potential supporters what value AHA offers.

Fundraising from a range of sources

The Catalyst process has clarified for AHA that they should focus, at least in the short to medium term, on applications to Trust and Foundations and generating income for their membership. AHA has secured two grants to co-ordinate partnerships projects: The Heritage Lottery grant for the WW1 project with 10 AHA members and an Arts Council England grant for audience development work with members.

Through Catalyst AHA explored the potential for commercial sponsorship. With increasing competition for commercial sponsorship, the board feel that as a membership organisation, with a strategic focus, AHA does not have the immediate necessary appeal to attract business supporters. They understand that time and resources would need to be invested in developing the appeal and nurturing the business relationships, so with limited capacity pursuing commercial sponsorship and donors is not felt to be a priority in the immediate future.

Exploring best practice for membership organisations

AHA is developing their membership offer and programme of training and continuing professional development (CPD) with additional support from Catalyst consultant Abigail Branagan. They are considering applying for funding to build into their CPD programme Catalyst model elements of Go and Sees, mentoring and surgeries. With current staffing levels and the size of membership limited by the number of organisations in Milton Keynes, the membership services need to remain simple. A tiered approach to membership, suggested by consultants was not felt to be appropriate.

"We've learnt a lot and had some really interesting discussions and thinking time. Time out to focus is really important. Many things we have done during Catalyst we were already thinking about doing, Catalyst has supported the process and given us tools and templates." AHA Programme Manager, Lallie Davis



www.aha-mk.org

AHA-MK Catalyst contacts: Jacky Scott, Vice Chair and Lallie Davis, Programme Manager

Festive Road



Set up in 2005, Festive Road is a Community Interest Company specialising in outdoor arts and physical theatre, such as carnival parades, that engage communities as audiences and participants. The company's latest outdoor theatre show, *Best Company*, will be touring between June and September 2015.

This comic theatre show with an amusing take on a very real struggle as four friends in WW1, includes a replica Mark 1 tank. The company also be returned to the streets of Milton Keynes in July *Walking with Giants* again in their street parade of live music, stilt walkers, dance, giant puppets and theatrical sculptures.

Alongside its touring shows and walkabout characters and giant puppets, Festive Road run creative, participatory workshops and activities in educational and community settings. The company is increasingly being commissioned to produce theatrical sculptures for carnivals and festivals around the country, recently creating giant puppets for celebrations of 800 years of the Magna Carta in Salisbury.

Priority focus for Catalyst support and development

The organisational audit at the start of Catalyst identified a number of key areas the support and development should focus on for Festive Road. These were:

- **Recruiting and managing a skilled board.** The organisation had no board and was run by the three Directors who also managed and delivered much of the work.
- **Securing core funding to allow Directors time to develop the organisation** including guidance on fundraising from Trusts, through sponsorship and from individual supporters (e.g. through crowdfunding).
- **Exploring best practice and organisational structure**, supported through the 'Go and See visits'
- **Generating additional income from existing products and services.**
- **Developing effective communication with a focus on social media.**

Interventions to support the development

In addition to attending all the Catalyst training, peer to peer sessions and ongoing support from the programme consultants:

- Festive Road Director went on a Go and See to Brazil- co-funded through Catalyst and a successful crowdfunding campaign.
- The company worked with Debbie Read from Read Consultancy as mentor on governance and board development.

Outcomes for Festive Road at the end of Catalyst

"Catalyst has been just that, a catalyst for Festive Road's development. It has given us the focus to concentrate on the things that needed to be done to move the organisation forward onto a more secure footing". Festive Road Director, Simon Tipping

Festive Road has professionalised their operations through Catalyst and feel the organisation is now moving in the right direction towards a more sustainable future. They are more confident in presenting the organisation and talking about the work they do. This new confidence is translating into new forms of support from individuals and new work in the form of commissions. The Directors and the new shadow interim Chair are working with a Business Growth Coach to further develop the business.

Catalyst helped the Festive Road Directors to understand the important role a skilled and effective board can play in developing the organisation at a time when the work-load, through new commissions, was becoming untenable for the existing small team.

Director Simon Tipping joined the Milton Keynes Chamber of Commerce following the Catalyst training on sponsorship and it was here that he met and approached the new shadow interim Chair.

Recruiting and managing a skilled board

As Catalyst ends, Festive Road has transitioned from an organisation with three part-time Directors responsible for the strategic and operational management of the company to having an emerging board with an active shadow interim Chair from the corporate sector. The interim board will be formalised in October/November, with the recruitment of a full board to follow.

Exploring best practice and organisational structure

Director, Simon Tipping went on Go and See to trip Brazil where he met with large carnival organisations to explore new creative developments for future work and commissions. The trip was match funded with monies from the Catalyst programme and a successful crowdfunding campaign, developed following Catalyst training on crowdfunding. The campaign achieved above its target of £500.

Ongoing work with the shadow interim Chair is looking at repurposing the existing the management structure. Policy and programme meetings have now been split with project staff no longer attending policy and strategy meetings, separating the day-to-day management, so the shadow board can focus on strategic planning.

Securing core funding to allow Directors time to develop the organisation

The work to secure core funding is ongoing. The structural review and the work with the Business Growth Coach is continuing to focus on ensuring the company has a secure financial base from which to develop and grow.

Festive Road has been most successful among the Catalyst organisations in increasing income from sources other than public sector funding. 76% of their income came from the public sector in 2011-12. This had reduced to 42% in 2014-15. The biggest increase has been in ***generating additional income from existing products and services***. Income here more than quadrupled between 2011-12 and 2014-15. The ambition is to grow generated income further, to provide a stable financial base. The company is working on a new pricing structure for products and services that reflect the full costs of delivery, including all overheads. A budget template has been developed for use on all future projects.

Developing effective communication with a focus on social media.

The Catalyst branding session, with consultant Amy Morgan, really helped focus the organisation. Having recently secured funding for additional marketing the company is now working on the development of new a website with clear messaging about who they are and the products and services they provide.

There is still a task to bring all the different databases the organisation has into one place to facilitate effective communication and social media campaigns. However, they have a new administrator in place and have secured pro bono support for a social media campaign for the forthcoming summer events.



<http://festiveroad.org>

Catalyst contacts: Simon Tipping and Jessica Rost, Directors.

Independent Cinema MK



Independent Cinema MK aims to entertain, educate and enliven, bringing the best film and cinema experiences to the widest range of people.

ICMK has a strong and developing partnership with MK Gallery in Central Milton Keynes. From there it runs the *Friday Night Film Programme*, its outreach and education projects and after the Gallery's major refurbishment is working on extending its programming at the Gallery.

ICMK also runs *Vagabond Cinema* that uses unusual spaces to screen films, working with organisations and communities to create individually tailored events. In the last year ICMK screened 96 films across Milton Keynes attended by nearly 4000 people. They worked with 33 artists, filmmakers and musicians, 14 local groups and 52 volunteers.

ICMK has two key priorities:

- Growing and developing an audience for a diverse range of films
- Encouraging and supporting filmmaking talent.

Priority focus for Catalyst support and development

The organisational audit at the start of Catalyst identified a number of key areas the support and development should focus on for Independent Cinema. These were:

- **Board development** – identifying skills gaps, recruiting new board members and more effectively utilising the skills of the eight existing board members.
- **Securing core funding to employ staff and cover Directors time to develop the organisation** including guidance on fundraising from Trusts, businesses and public (e.g. through crowdfunding and friends and membership schemes).
- **Developing effective communication, branding and marketing and skills to make the case for support.**
- **Models of best practice for partnership working and exploring best practice in the film festival and other film exhibition sectors.**
- **More effective monitoring and evaluation** – developing systems.
- **Fundraising through Friends and membership schemes.**

Interventions to support the development

In addition to attending all the Catalyst training, peer to peer sessions and ongoing support from the programme consultants:

- Consultant Fred Brookes worked as a mentor with ICMK to support the Director and Board to explore the potential of a merger or an affiliation with MK Gallery

Outcomes for ICMK at the end of Catalyst

"Catalyst has helped to clarify the thinking of where the organisation needed to be... The branding session was really, really useful... The support from our mentor helped focus on the merger options with the Gallery.... We now have a renewed sense of direction that can be written into our business plan." ICMK Director Ursula White

ICMK found the organisational audits, Catalyst training, mentoring and peer reflection sessions really valuable. However, the organisation has not seen the step-change in funding that was hoped for through Catalyst, despite the efforts of the Director and board. A number of partnership projects have not worked out as planned and the Director continues to work on a project funding basis with the organisation still largely relying on volunteers, having not secured the additional funding they were seeking. Despite the

challenges with some projects, the training and support through Catalyst has been really valuable for the organisation giving the Director the drive to continue to focus on strategic planning and think about issues of branding and what their unique offer is.

Board development

The clarity of roles of responsibilities of board members given through the board training really helped ICMK to understand the executive role of the board.

Three new board members have been recruited: One with a film background, one from the wider business community and a legal professional.

Securing core funding to employ staff and cover Directors time to develop the organisation

In the early stages of Catalyst, ICMK invested considerable time in writing significant funding applications to MK Community Foundation and in response to project calls from the BFI (British Film Institute). The applications to the MK Community Foundation got through to the third round but were unsuccessful in the public vote. Funding for two regional partnership projects was secured through BFI. These projects have enabled ICMK to learn a great deal about working in partnership and the challenges this can bring, especially when partners are based elsewhere in the region. They have also made it clear that delivering projects of scale should not be undertaken lightly by small organisations where the overhead costs won't be covered. This has led ICMK to refocus on its partnership with the local MK Gallery and what form this will take and how projects undertaken jointly could be attractive to trusts and foundations

In terms of garnering support from individuals, ICMK held a VIP event at the start of their 2014 Sci-fi season attended by 75 people. This was the start of the presenting the work of the organisation with a view to securing support from key individuals in the future. Some of the contacts made have been followed up but with the focus on the Gallery and projects including the *Great War MK* with AHA, capacity is limited to dedicate the time needed to build relationships.

ICMK's income from the public sector has actually increased during Catalyst having secured funding from the BFI. As the screening programme with the Gallery increases, bringing in a share of the box office, and funding is secured from sources such as the Community Foundation – ICMK has been invited to submit an Extraordinary Grant application – the organisation is set to see an increase in income from non-public sector sources.

Developing effective communication, branding and marketing and skills to make the case for support

Marketing is still a challenge mainly due to lack of staff and resources. ICMK has made some small, quick alterations to the website and facebook page, such as changing pictures regularly. Tips taken from the Catalyst marketing training.

Models of best practice for partnership working

ICMK is also repositioning the organisation to be a connector organisation, offering a service to connect communities with cultural organisations, focusing on the outreach. Communicating this new emphasis will form part of a rebranding exercise to take place over the next 18months.

More effective monitoring and evaluation

ICMK has also introduced systems to more effectively collect monitoring data on audience numbers, partners and clients which is used in reports to funders but is also helping in monitoring their own performance and setting targets within the business plan.



www.ic-mk.org

Catalyst contact: Ursula White, ICMK Director

Inter-Action MK



Inter-Action MK is a community arts charity improving the life chances of people with support needs or disabilities. Their programme of activities helps participants to develop creative, personal and social skills. A key programme is the legendary *Groovy Gecko* club, a nightclub run by and for learning disabled adults at The Slug & Lettuce in Milton Keynes. Other activities include creative workshops for young

people with disabilities called *Laugh Out Loud* plus workshops for adults, children and short creative courses for people of all ages. They also have a programme of inclusive exhibitions by local, regional and nationally known artists and have a permanent display of sculptures in the grounds of their base at the Old Rectory. Space at the Old Rectory is rented out to other arts organisations and artists.

Priority focus for Catalyst support and development

The organisational audit at the start of Catalyst identified a number of key areas the support and development should focus on for Inter-Action. These were:

- **Board development** – developing understanding of roles and responsibilities for the existing seven board members and bringing new members to the board that could support a Capital funding bid to further develop the Inter-action building into a creative hub.
- **Developing brand, communication and marketing skills to making the case for support.**
- **Guidance on fundraising from a range of sources** including Trusts and Foundations, sponsorship and the public (such as through crowdfunding) with a view to securing funding for development staff to support the Capital bid, in particular.
- **Fundraising through Friends and Membership schemes.**
- **Exploring best practice in studio provision and space management** – to be supported through Go and Sees.

Interventions to support the development

In addition to attending all the Catalyst training, peer to peer sessions and ongoing support from the programme consultants:

- Inter-Action worked with Vanessa Swan Cockpit Arts Director as their mentor. Vanessa researched potential donors and sponsors for the capital build aspirations at Inter-Action and helped the Inter-Action Director build a case for support.
- An away day was held with the board towards the end of the Catalyst programme.

Outcomes for Inter-Action at the end of Catalyst

"We are on the verge of making some big decisions about the future of the organisation, a positive outcome from the away day." Inter-Action Interim Director, Sharon Paulger

In the early stages of Catalyst Inter-Action was an active partner and there was real commitment to use the Catalyst programme to drive up support from individuals and businesses and to raise the profile of the organisation and other Catalyst partners. To support this, Inter-Action started hosting regular business breakfasts. It was from these breakfast meetings that the organisation identified and recruited a new board member. However, as Catalyst progressed the involvement waned and the reviews of the organisation began to uncover some of the challenges it was facing.

The Inter-Action Director left towards the end of the Catalyst programme and the board decided to appoint Sharon Paulger as Interim Director, working 2 days a week, while they carried out an audit of the organisation and made plans for its future. Sharon is also part-time Director of MK Arts for Health.

Board development

The final intervention from Catalyst has been an away day with the Board and interim Director to review the current position of the organisation and explore options for the future. This has resulted in some significant changes to the board with some board members stepping down to make way for new trustees with the skills necessary to guide the organisation through the review and possible merger phase.

The new board member recruited during the earlier part of the Catalyst process will be actively involved in planning the future of the organisation along with the existing members.

Making the case for support

The business breakfasts were an excellent step in making the case for support to businesses and individuals. Work was also done on refreshing and clarifying the messages on the website.

Other developments to maximise and diversify income were not realised, due to the challenges faced with the Director's full participation in the programme.

Organisational Development

Through the Catalyst programme and the away day Inter-Action has become aware that it needs to make some significant organisational changes to ensure the future of the charity. The board are currently looking at options for the future including the possibility of a merger with another MK arts organisation and moving to new premises.



www.interactionmk.org.uk

Catalyst contact: Adrian Pinckard, Director (Adrian has recently been replaced by a new Interim Director Sharon Paulger)

Milton Keynes Islamic Arts Heritage & Culture Group



The Milton Keynes Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture (MKIAC) group aims to promote Islamic arts, heritage and culture through education. The organisation was set up following the 9/11. They work through education and the study of art and culture to transcend ethnic, linguistic and religious division and bring about a greater understanding between communities.

MKIAC hold an annual arts and culture festival at Campbell Park, Milton Keynes in July. They also run a week-long residency at Milton Hall in partnership with Milton Keynes College, where they are based. The organisation is run by a Committee of volunteers and a group of freelancers who provide workshops at the college, in schools and in the community.

Priority focus for Catalyst support and development

The organisational audit at the start of Catalyst identified a number of key areas the support and development should focus on for MKIAC. These were:

- **Board development** – establish a board recruiting new people and skills. The organisation was run by a group of seven core volunteer committee members.
- **Mentoring to support the current Director and core volunteer committee with organisational development.**
- **Guidance on fundraising from a range of sources** including Trusts and Foundations, sponsorship and fundraising through individual giving - such as through crowdfunding. An introduction to funding the arts and how to apply.
- **Developing effective communication skills and profile building through effective marketing, branding to make the case for support.**
- **Maximising arts education and outreach with a focus on national curriculum programming.**

Interventions to support the development

In addition to attending all the Catalyst training, peer to peer sessions and ongoing support from the programme consultants:

- MKIAC's Director and committee members went on a Go and See to New Arts Exchange (NAE) Nottingham.
- Sukhi Johal, NAE Director ran a board/organisational development session with the MKIAC committee
- MKIAC brought ArtReach on board to support the project management of the festival. ArtReach's Director is now supporting the establishment of the MKIAC board.
- Amy Morgan, The Brand Architect, is providing additional support to implement the actions for MKIAC identified through her surgery with each of the Catalyst partners.

Outcomes for Milton Keynes Islamic Arts Heritage & Culture Group at the end of Catalyst

"I have really benefitted from Catalyst and so has the organisation. I will have withdrawal symptoms when it stops without the support of the partners and programme.. We are not there yet but we now have the foundations in place to develop."

MKIAC is poised to move to the next stage of development as Catalyst ends. Lack of capacity, with a purely volunteer management structure, has been a barrier to moving the organisation on. Work is set to continue on developing the organisational structure and rebranding for a relaunch in the future.

Board development

MKIAC has identified three people to join a board alongside some of the existing committee: representatives from education, business and the police. A meeting is scheduled for September 2015 to formalise the board with Milton Keynes Council and Arts Council of England also invited.

Board meetings will be held quarterly moving from the operational monthly committee meetings.

Mentoring to support the current Director and core volunteer committee with organisational development

ArtsReach Director has agreed to continue working with MKIAC to support the development of effective governance structures and strategic plans for future activities.

Fundraising from a range of sources

MKIAC has seen a 200% increase in their income, primarily through securing additional funding from Arts Council of England. They have maintained the same level of funding from small trusts, namely the Milton Keynes Community Foundation and slightly reduced income from individual giving compared to the start of the programme.

MKIAC has been proactive in exploring individual giving and will be trialling a new fundraising partnership through a joint fundraising campaign during their festival in July. This is with a local hospice that is looking to raise its profile among the BME community. The two organisations will divide the proceeds from the campaign that will be run by the volunteers of both organisations.

MKIAC had developed a funding relationship with a local business. However, following the kidnap of girls in Nigeria by Boko Haram, the business withdrew their support as they feared their shareholders would not want them to support an Islamic organisation.

Developing effective communication skills and profile building through effective marketing, branding to make the case for support

The organisation is now looking to rebrand itself and will be working with Amy Morgan of The Brand Architect to decide on a new name and identity. Amy will build on the work done in the brand review surgery and focus on setting practical objectives for a website refresh to reflect the brand. She will also work with the board on a business funding campaign and develop schools packages building on MKIAC's **existing workshops to fit the school curriculum.**



www.mkiac.org

Catalyst contact: Anouar Kassim, Director, Milton Keynes Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture Group

Milton Keynes Festival Fringe



Milton Keynes Festival Fringe is a festival of new and experimental street arts, performance, comedy, outdoor theatre, visual arts, music and dance. Started in 2012 as an annual festival, MK Fringe has now moved to being a bi-annual event having been recognised by Milton Keynes International Festival as being the official Fringe to their biannual festival.

Through a programme that balances a mix of invited national and international artists with work by locally based artists in unusual spaces, MK Fringe aims to entertain whilst challenging people's perceptions and expectations of the arts. Through local commissions and mentoring they provide a platform for emerging artists and new work, aiming to attract and retain artistic talent in Milton Keynes.

Priority focus for Catalyst support and development

The organisational audit at the start of Catalyst identified a number of key areas the support and development should focus on for MK Festival Fringe. These were:

- **Guidance on fundraising from a range of sources** including approaching Trusts and Foundations, sponsorship and the public - such as through crowdfunding and friends, membership and audience schemes. The aim was to secure funding for a Producer and marketing roles.
- **Developing effective communication skills and profile building through effective marketing, branding to make the case for support.**

Interventions to support the development

In addition to attending all the Catalyst training, peer to peer sessions and ongoing support from the programme consultants:

- Director Jessica Rost went on a Go and See to Edinburgh Festival and is now working with other Fringe Festivals to set up a UK Fringe network.
- As Director of both Festive Road and MK Fringe, mentoring from Debbie Read on governance was applied to both organisations. Debbie also worked with Jessica on the development of an application to Esmee Fairbairn, which unfortunately wasn't successful.

Outcomes for Milton Keynes Festival Fringe at the end of Catalyst

"We are thinking more strategically now and are clear about what we are doing and where we are going...We are getting ready to deliver on the big opportunities in Milton Keynes the 50th anniversary and the Rugby World Cup." Jessica Rost, Director

"Being part of Catalyst has probably saved us two or three years in development time. We have got to the stage we are at much faster than we would have done otherwise". Jacky Scott, former interim Chair

MK Fringe is now in a strong position to grow and develop. Catalyst came at an ideal time for the organisation. As it entered its third year as an annual festival in 2013-14 the Director knew changes were needed to raise the profile and ensure the Fringe could be sustained into the future. Now the Fringe has moved to being a bi-annual festival, 2015 has been a year for taking stock, building on much of the learning from Catalyst. The bi-annual approach in the future will allow for a critical planning and development year in between each Festival, which will help to ensure greater quality through longer lead times and more planning time.

The new board and the Director have been working hard to put strong foundations in place, with infrastructure and systems to grow the Fringe and secure funding and support. The 1-2-1 support from the Catalyst consultants and the peer group have played a vital role in enabling MK Fringe to make the changes it has and have confirmed they are taking the right approach. As the Director explains: *"Catalyst has been reaffirming too – we are doing things right. We might be overworked and not doing everything right now, but we know what we should be doing"*.

Board development

Although board development was not identified as a specific priority for MK Fringe at the start of Catalyst, new board members have been recruited. The Catalyst board development training helped the Director and former interim Chair strengthen the governance and ensure the right policies were in place and were being implemented. It also helped them identify the skills and types of people that were needed on the board. There are now two producers on the board and a new Chair from a commercial background. There is still a gap in financial skills and they are looking for someone with social media and marketing skills. A plan of work for the board has been developed around marketing and communications, fundraising and identifying venues for the next Fringe. The new Chair has been working with the Director and other board members to implement the plan.

There are now plans for the board to 'Go and See' other festivals to develop their learning.

Fundraising from a range of sources

The audit and early case study on the organisations were really useful for MK Fringe as it helped them to think about and summarise who they are and what they did and use that in funding applications. However, funding is still a challenge and a key priority for the board. A *Fringe Kin* membership was piloted in 2014 and the aim now is to build on that in the run up to the 2016 Festival. MK Fringe will also be trialling crowdfunding, approaching businesses and continuing to approach trusts and foundations.

Catalyst has helped MK Fringe to think about ways to diversify their income.

Developing effective communication skills and profile building through effective marketing, branding to make the case for support.

With one part-time administrator, a part-time Creative Director and a volunteer board, time to implement effective marketing strategies is a challenge. However, the Catalyst training has provided some 'quick wins'. The training session on making the most of your website provided practical tips on presenting information more clearly and using images more effectively, that were easy to implement straight away. Longer term, MK Fringe has plans to redesign the website and make it more interactive. They also plan to increase the use of social media to engage audiences.



<http://mkfestivalfringe.com>

Catalyst contact: Jessica Rost, Director

5. Conclusions

The Milton Keynes Arts Catalyst has played a valuable role in supporting the development of the six core consortium members, increasing their fundraising skills and ability to promote their organisations to a range of potential funders. All have reviewed, or are in the process of reviewing their organisational structures, with two partners exploring potential mergers. The focus of the MK Catalyst programme on organisational review, as well as funding diversification, has been a real strength for these very small organisations. Other key strengths of the programme have been:

- **Having external specialist consultants to run the programme:** Almost without exception, the programme participants highlighted the choice of the programme management consultants as a fundamental element underpinning the successes of the MK Catalyst programme. The combined skills and knowledge of two the Project Managers and their access to other skilled professionals that they were able to bring to the programme, was felt to be invaluable. Their dedication to keeping the programme relevant to the organisations and being aware of and sensitive to other things that were happening for the organisations, outside the Catalyst programme, was also really valued and the reason why the majority of the organisations gave the commitment they did to the programme.

"I've never been part of a programme where all the participants were so full of praise for the people running it." MK Catalyst partner

- **The peer-to-peer element:** A huge trust was built among the consortium partners. They problem solved together, took the learning from the training sessions and reflected on this in the group sessions they had in between the training.

"It is hard to imagine where we would be with out Catalyst and particularly without the support from our peers and the consultants who acted as critical friends." MK Catalyst partner

- **The length of the programme:** Two years is long time to commit to being part of a development programme. However, the length has allowed for additional elements to be built into the programme to respond to the participants needs as they have developed. For example, the mentoring element was introduced to give organisations additional support and external expertise with specific areas such as branding and sponsorship.
- **Giving the organisations a focus on development:** Catalyst has provided a flexible framework within which organisations have dedicated the time and space to reflect on key areas for development and fundraising. The collective discussion and support of peers and external specialists has enabled the organisations to move more quickly on formalising their governance and structure and diversifying funding, than they would have done without Catalyst.

"Catalyst was good at helping you identify what you should be doing but didn't have the time to focus on". MK Catalyst partner

- **The buy back element:** Having a budget set aside to pay for some of the time of unpaid or freelance staff, in particular, to participate was an incentive for participation at the outset. It was the freelance and unpaid staff who contributed much more of their time as they, potentially, had more invested as the people who had started their organisations and really wanted them to succeed.

"The ones that stayed the course were mainly the ones doing it on their own time unpaid because they felt it was worthwhile for themselves and the organisations." MK Catalyst partner

Despite the successes, the programme was not without its challenges. These included:

- **Cascading the learning:** The participating organisations were small with no or few paid staff and mainly largely volunteer run. Only one or two members of the teams attended Catalyst training and meetings and there was little in the way of the cascaded learning to other members of the teams. Also as the organisations developed during Catalyst and new volunteer board members were brought on board, they were unable to benefit from the training delivered in the early stages of the programme.

There has only been limited sharing of the learning with the wider arts and heritage sector in Milton Keynes, although a training resource pack from the programme will be distributed by AHA-MK which is also looking at introducing elements of Catalyst support, such as mentoring, into their future professional development activities.

- **External factors:** There will always be external factors that prevent people from fully participating and benefiting from the opportunities presented by a programme such as Catalyst. Illness prevented some members from participating fully. For others, despite huge efforts to put in place recommendations and learning from the programme, factors beyond their control meant they weren't able to progress along planned paths of development.

As the Catalyst programme ends the partner organisations are poised to move to their next phase of development. There is a real opportunity to continue the strong consortium partnership and expand this to bring in other organisations that could benefit from the experience of the original partners. AHA-MK is well placed to lead on a funded programme of professional development or shared learning. The consortium partners are now in a position where they could benefit from ACE's tier 2 Catalyst Arts programme – capacity building and match – should this programme be repeated.

Appendix 1: Organisations participating in the Milton Keynes Catalyst training sessions.

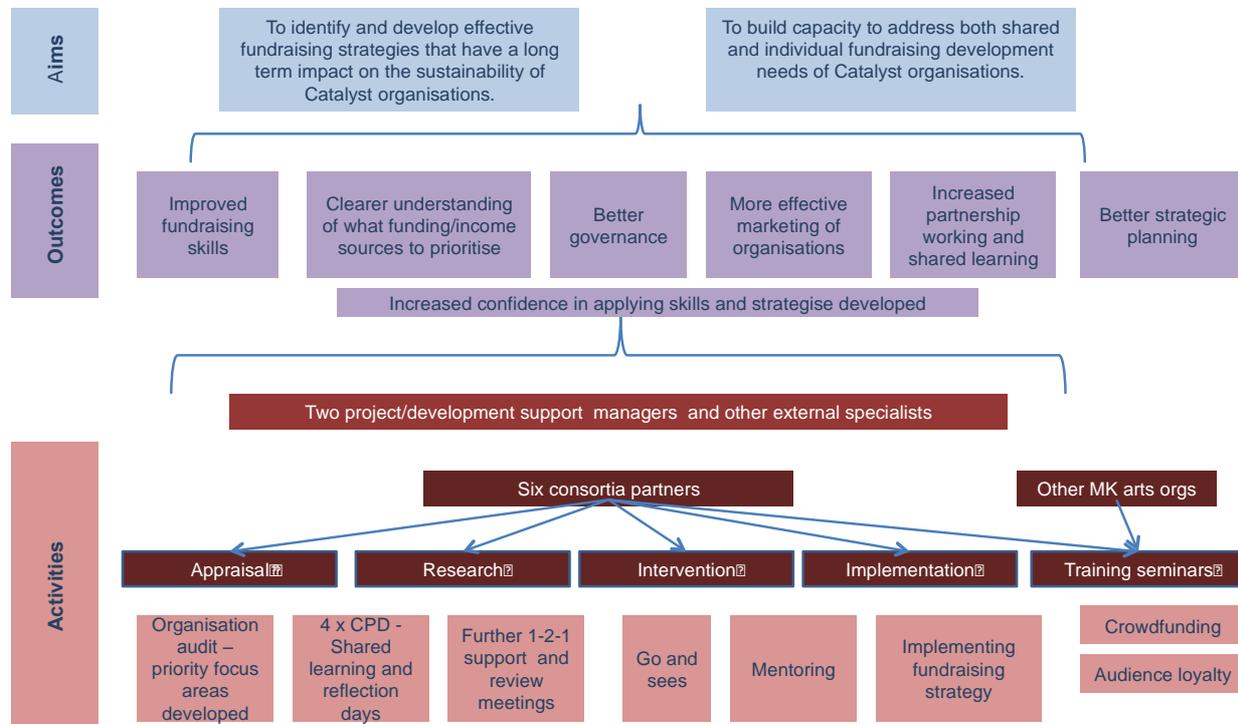
	Being Heard - how to communicate clearly	Introduction to Fundraising - focus on Trust/Foundation Funding	Sponsorship part 1	Making the most of your website and using social media	Sponsorship Part 2	Board development	Crowdfunding for beginners	Training for board members	Introduction to customer loyalty	Dealing with growth – the challenges of success
Consortium members										
Lallie Davies, Co-ordinator AHA-MK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Jacky Scott, Vice Chair, AHA-MK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Euan Henderson, Chair AHA								✓		
Jessica Rost, Director Festive Road and MK Fringe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Simon Tipping, Director Festive Road	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Paul Smith A director – Festive Road								✓		
Ursula White, Director Independent Cinema	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Helaine Griffin Trustee ICMK								✓		
Adrian Pinckard, Director Interaction	✓	✓					✓		✓	

	Being Heard - how to communicate clearly	Introduction to Fundraising - focus on Trust/Foundation Funding	Sponsorship part 1	Making the most of your website and using social media	Sponsorship Part 2	Board development	Crowdfunding for beginners	Training for board members	Introduction to customer loyalty	Dealing with growth – the challenges of success
Anouar Kassim, Director Islamic Arts, Heritage and Culture Group	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓
Other MK arts organisations										
Sharon Paulger, Arts for Health							✓			
John Best, Arts Gateway							✓			
Liz McCaffry Payne, Bletchley Park Trust							✓			
Michelle Kopczyk, Community Foundation								✓		
Roger Kitchen, Living Architecture							✓			
Georgina Reilly, Living Archive								✓		
Tim Hill, Living Archive								✓		
Dave Ronalds, MK Arts Centre									✓	
Emma- Jane Taylor MK Arts Centre										✓
Carola Holz, MKCDC								✓		
Marian Livingstone MK City Orchestra								✓		✓
Peter Barnes MK City Orchestra										✓
Aimee Holmes, Milton Keynes									✓	

	Being Heard - how to communicate clearly	Introduction to Fundraising - focus on Trust/Foundation Funding	Sponsorship part 1	Making the most of your website and using social media	Sponsorship Part 2	Board development	Crowdfunding for beginners	Training for board members	Introduction to customer loyalty	Dealing with growth – the challenges of success
Gallery										
Jill Stansfield, MK Gallery								✓		
Keith Baker, MK Gallery								✓		
Helen Bowlt MK Council									✓	
Paula Ballard, MKSAC								✓		
Helen Parlor MOTUS										✓
Erica McDonald, Stables							✓			
Hilary Rhodes Stantonbury Campus Theatre									✓	
Ruth Peters, Stowe									✓	
Rosemary Hill The Play's the Thing										✓
Caroline Malone, Westury Arts Centre								✓		
Kirsteen Holuju, Westury Arts Centre								✓		
Ronny Kimbell								✓	✓	

Appendix 2: Theory of change

To achieve the Catalyst project aims activities have been designed to deliver a set of outcomes for the participating organisations.



Tracey Gregory, TG Consultancy

Appendix 3: Interviewees

Arts and Heritage Alliance – MK

Lallie Davies, Co-ordinator
Euan Henderson, Chair
Jacky Scott, Vice Chair

Festive Road

Jessica Rost, Director
Simon Tipping, Director
Yvette Lamidey, Chair

Independent Cinema MK

Ursula White, Director
Andrew Armes, Chair

Islamic Arts and Heritage Culture Group

Anouar Kassim, Director

Milton Keynes Festival Fringe

Jessica Rost, Director
Jacky Scott, former Chair
Emma Brookes, new Chair

Other interviewees

Lucy Bedford, Arts Development Officer, Milton Keynes Council
Abigail Branagan, Project Manager
Diana Hatton, Project Manager
Wendy Smithers, Director the hub, AHA mentor and sponsorship trainer for consortium member
Debbie Read, Read Consultancy, Festive Road mentor and board development trainer

Appendix 4: Training session – what and when

Date	Session	Outline
2013		
Tuesday 19 Nov 10am-4pm Milton Keynes Gallery	Being Heard - how to communicate clearly	Day-long session that looked at how to pitch and present your organisation effectively. It also covered understanding your organisational values and looking at how well these are communicated across all promotional activities (such as marketing materials). Led by Diana Hatton, Abigail Branagan with guest speaker, graphic designer Fraser Muggerridge.
Wed 27 Nov 10am-4pm Arts Central	Introduction to Fundraising - with focus on Trust and Foundation Funding	Introduction to what's out there, presenting your case for funding and the importance of monitoring and evaluation. The afternoon focussed on Trusts and Foundations funding. Led by Debbie Reid (Reid Consultants)
Wed 11 Dec 9.30am - 12.30pm, Arts Central	Sponsorship part 1	Introduction to sponsorship – looking at who to approach and how. The session was also used to identify a sponsor and start putting together their case, ready to present at the second session. Led by Wendy Smithers (Arts and heritage fundraising consultant).
Wed 11 Dec 1.30pm - 4.30pm Arts Central	Making the most of your website and using social media	Looking at how effective organisation's websites are in terms of connecting with audiences. Practical top tips for maximising sites and social media training. Led by Sinead MacMannus (Eightfold)
Wed 18 Dec 10am Arts Central	Sponsorship Part 2	Hands-on follow up session, which the group used to present their individual sponsorship pitches. Led by Wendy Smithers (Arts and heritage fundraising consultant).
2014		
Wed 15 January 10am-4pm - Arts Central	Running Friends, Patrons and Membership Schemes	Day-long introduction to setting up (and looking at the benefits of) Friends, Patrons and Membership scheme including a short section on legacy giving and on-line giving. Led by consultant Heather Maitland.
Wed 22 Jan 10am-1pm, Arts Central	Board development	Guidance on how to get the most out of your board, board responsibilities, what makes a strong board, etc. Led by Debbie Reid (Reid Consultants)
Wed 29 Jan 10am-1pm, Arts Central	Crowdfunding for beginners	Introduction to crowdfunding with led by Tarkan Ahmet for Zequus and photographer Marc Wilson who successfully used crowdfunding to fund a project.
Wed 7 May from 5.30pm to 7.30pm at Stadium MK	Training for board members	Specific training for board members looking at their roles and responsibilities and what they can do to support their organisation. Led by Debbie Reid (Reid Consultants)
2015		
Thus 15 Jan 15 10am to 4pm Arts Central	Introduction to Audience Loyalty	
24 March 2015	Dealing with growth – the challenges of success	