

Evaluation Report (compiled by ARCADE)

Creative Connections was a one-day symposium for creative people that took place at the Stephen Joseph Theatre on 11.11.24.

The day offered an exciting programme of specialist industry speakers, practical workshops, taster sessions and accessible networking.

We wanted to create a space where creative people, artists, and freelancers could develop, nurture and refresh their skills.

Artists and freelancers at all stages of their creative journeys came together for a day of connection, support, inspiration and learning.

Headlines

100 creatives attended Creative Connections as participants.

79.4% of attendees highly enjoyed Creative Connections.

100% of attendees would recommend Creative Connections to a friend.

63.4% of attendees were residents of Scarborough or North Yorkshire.



Audience Feedback

We gathered post-its at the end of the day asking for what the audience / delegates enjoyed, prompting them to share any 'magic moments' with us.

What did you enjoy?

- Having time to do something creative.
- Really fab day, Inspired! X
- Coming together with so many creatives and being inspired by conversations
- Chatting and meeting people
- Jason Wilsher-Mills' panel!
- Ceramics with Rebecca! <3
- Openness of levels of practice
- Having a non-judgemental environment to discuss difficult / challenging topics.
- Lunch!
- Elizabeth Boag's workshop!
- The open aspect and freedom of the talks
- Elizabeth Boag!
- The theatre Q&A
- Distinct differences between sessions, genuinely useful
- Listening
- Options to talk AND do
- Clay Time with Rebecca
- Everyone coming together, full use of space in theatre, varied symposium
- Working with ARCADE & connecting

What was your magic moment?

- Feeling I 'belonged' here!
- Keynote talk was so inspiring and important!
- Getting to see how other creatives work in a room (strengths and weaknesses)
- Seeing all the amazing pottery animals.
- Very informative day!
- Having the chance to create
- Great food for the lunch buffet
- Connecting with all the artists

- Jess Thom's keynote
- Chatting to 'Middle Child' - new friendships
- Working with ARCADE and being very helpful
- Getting the gist of clay!
- The opening panel was truly magical
- Being part of a thriving community. I haven't felt this way since before the pandemic.

We also asked our delegates what we could have done better.

What can we do better?

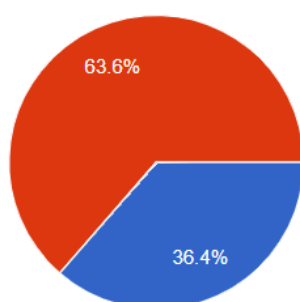
- Make more 'freelancer relevant' - the SJT admin piece felt very 'organisational'
- Clearer organisation at the start (where to go, etc)
- Stagger the lunches
- More interactivity
- More time in each workshop with the artists
- Recorded media focus - more of it! (e.g. Film workshop, adverts, television, etc)
- Coat Storage
- Staggering lunches to make it easier
- Some sound in Eat Me space hard to listen
- The same but with longer days (e.g. two days convention)



Access

Do you identify as neurodivergent? Dyslexia, ADHD, etc.

33 responses

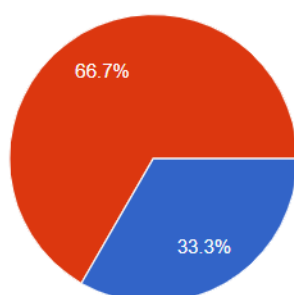


● Yes
● No

With a third of Create Connections attendees identifying as Neurodivergent, and a third of attendees identifying as Deaf, Disabled or having a long term health condition, the importance of access for both attendees and artist facilitators was essential.

Do you identify as Deaf / Disabled or have a long term health condition?

33 responses



● Yes
● No

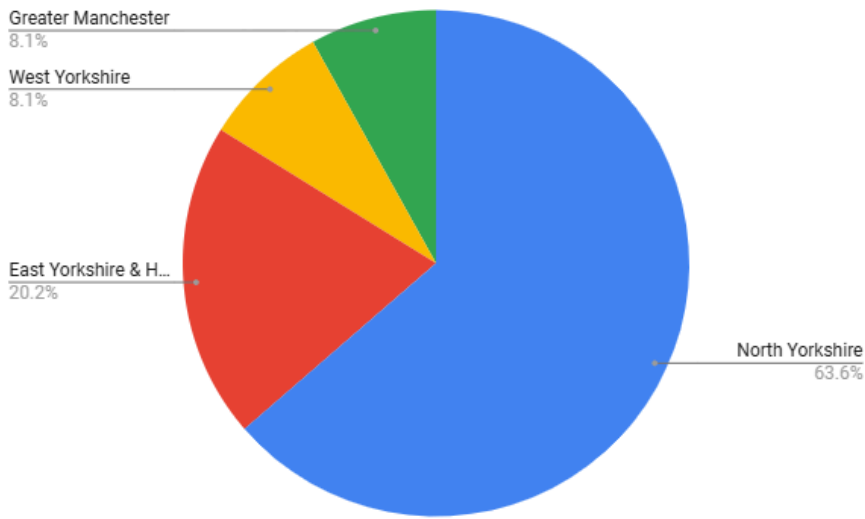
Feedback from attendees highlighted the accessibility and inclusivity of Creative Connections Symposium with 80% of attendees expressing positive feedback on access and inclusion.

However there were highlighted issues noted from attendees, and artist facilitators that we need to reflect on for future development and delivery of Creative Connections Symposium.

From feedback this includes:

- BSL Interpreters (at least two) and Captioning.
- Stable wheelchair ramps wide enough for all wheelchair users to access on- stage. To be reviewed by wheelchair users before use in this context.
- All spaces accessible for wheelchair users and those who use mobility aids. Roll through the venue prior to access.
- Longer breaks between each session to allow toilet and sensory breaks, and to support wheelchair users, those with mobility issues, and anxiety sufferers.
- A designated 100% quiet space to only be used for this purpose.

Audience

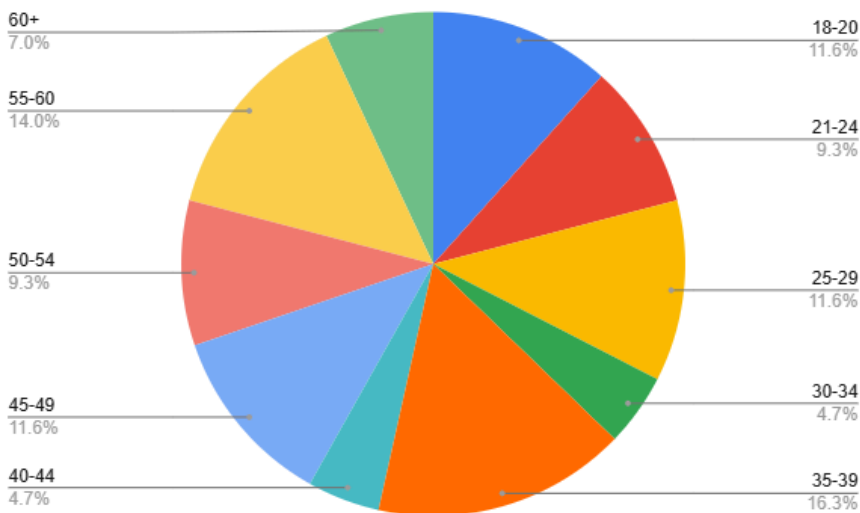


Utilizing postcode data from post Creative Connections feedback, we found:

63 % of attendees reside in Scarborough & North Yorkshire.

20.2% of attendees reside in East Yorkshire & Humberside.

Creative Connections attendees even travelled from West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester to access the Creative Connections Symposium!



Feedback evaluation on attendees age brackets also showed:

The largest age demographic for attendees were those aged 35-39 at 16.3%,

Closely followed by those aged 55-60 at 14%.



Space To Be

Space To Be is a community space within Scarborough Art Gallery. Space to Be was established to support Scarborough Museums and Galleries to become a more democratic, inclusive and relevant space for everyone. We will work collaboratively with local community groups to develop the space, with a real focus on community wellbeing.

Space To Be is run by Jayne Shipley who delivered a workshop at Creative Connections talking about her practice, the importance of community arts and the impact it has on community.

Jayne brought a participant from her Space To Be sessions at Scarborough Gallery and shared:

A participant from Space to Be offered to help in our workshop. She had 'never done anything like this before' and really excelled in the session. She'd obviously practised what she wanted to say about our project and it felt fabulous to see her motivated enough to do something that was not in her comfort zone, and achieve. She has since told me that she really enjoyed the talks she attended and would want to do it again.



Artist Feedback

How has working with ARCADE and Stephen Joseph Theatre on Creative Connections valued, supported or developed your creative practice?

Really positive experience, I felt valued and informed at every stage

It has led to great connections made during the session, and finding development opportunities

By including my voice and giving me a platform to reach new people.

It was really great to be part of the local cultural ecology and connect with others and share skills.

They have given me an opportunity to step outside my comfort zone and to develop/hone new skills and gain experience in an area I didn't think I would otherwise be able to participate in. Additionally, my creative practice has been supported by the networking opportunities participation in this event has enabled.

In a direct way, it's provided financial support to me as a freelancer, paying for expertise. Indirectly it's put me in touch with many more northern artists with practices i wouldn't have come across without the creative connections event

Given me more confidence as a facilitator

Working [on Creative Connections] has increased my confidence as a practitioner and pushed me to think about my role from a different perspective and use my growing knowledge and expertise to support freelancers.

Talking about our project (Space to Be) really helped me to review how I felt about the project. Having the opportunity to explain its ethos and our journey to other creatives, I felt a sense of pride that I hadn't felt in a while. The whole event was of such a high standard with some incredible speakers, so that made me and our project feel really valued too.

How do you feel this project has contributed to building a vibrant and resilient community of artists in the area?

It certainly has contributed positively to this and I believe similar projects will continue to support this!

It was a great opportunity to network and find out about other artist's work in a really supportive environment.

Networking events are vital! It was a brilliant event to bring artists together, with really important and relevant knowledge shared around access, inclusion

Very much so!

and diversity in particular.

The event was absolutely buzzing and people are still talking about it! It was great to see so many artists and community representatives in one place and realise how much talent is here, but also to know that artists from further afield are wanting to connect.

The workshops were all really relevant and the impact of sharing the knowledge will no doubt have an impact beyond the participants who came, as they cascade and feel confident about sharing new knowledge.

For example, I learned some new information from the anti-racism talk and was reminded to address certain things with my organisation and ask to put important training back on the agenda. This helps us to be more resilient, to be more knowledgeable, mindful and ready to learn.

Are there any special moments you would like to share with us?

The guest speaker Jess was amazing and the way the day was set out was great

The key speakers were really inspiring and helped set the tone for the day.

The text on screen interpreting people was a good addition, if you can read ok of course.

Just how inspired I felt by the whole thing.

Seeing the students' excitement at being involved in the community.

The keynote speech was so inspiring!

I really enjoyed the social aspect at the end of the day and being able to speak with the cultural leaders as well as other participants.

Is there anything we could have done better in the lead up to the event or on the day?

I think the catering, although the food was lovely, needed to be better laid out there was a massive queue maybe the times could have been staggered

I think the event was well organised but could have been advertised further and earlier, as it seemed only people very local to the area were aware of the project.

I think there was a bit of confusion on arrival where to go and what was happening when we arrived.

Longer breaks between each activity. Very little time to set up as a facilitator. It was a struggle for my volunteer who had mobility issues to get from one session to the next in time. Although there are lifts, they are a trek to get to and from.

CU Scarborough BA Acting Students Feedback



‘The Workshops and talks yesterday were a great way of giving insight into what working professionally in the creative industry is like and were a brilliant time to listen to and get advice from.’

‘From a working the workshop perspective it was great seeing how different creatives (artist, actors, photographers, digital designers etc.) work/interact/learn/think in the room. Also was interesting to see that a lot of the arts people are more expressive with gestures, physical in the way they speak and were more visual learners.’

‘Absolutely Fantastic!!!! - It was brilliant to network with so many different and varied creatives, along with having the multiple option

choice for which workshop we wanted to attend based on what would be the most useful for us as a creative.'

Conclusion

It is clear there is an appetite for this type of in -person, artist led event for creatives across the coast and in North Yorkshire. There were issues around practicality, overly optimistic set-up time and get in.

Attendance

Artists and speakers	
Total across the day	26
Women	20
Men	5
Global Majority	5
Disabled artists	2
Audience	
Total across the day	100
CU Scarborough Students in attendance (as part of total)	13