



External Evaluation Report

DISRUPT 2021

Prepared for

Guildhall School of Music & Drama

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DISRUPT 2021 - Evaluation Report

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Summary

DISRUPT was co-ordinated by the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Barbican in partnership with seven other organisations/individuals. It sought to explore and promote how the performing arts sector has collaborated with communities during the time of a global pandemic.

DISRUPT commissioned 16 performing arts projects and awarded each funding of up to £5,000. Commissions were chosen by a diverse panel of Programme Selectors made up of 14 community members, artists and community practitioners, each nominated by a DISRUPT main partner.

The commissioned projects formed the basis of a new digital festival held on 8th and 9th July 2021 that intended to draw out cross-cutting themes for the performing arts sector.

DISRUPT as a Concept

The evaluation found DISRUPT to be a potentially unique undertaking that was applauded by individuals in all stakeholder groups for actively addressing themes of equality, inclusion and diversity.

Having two prestigious organisations to coordinate DISRUPT gave weight and credibility, but it was also acknowledged that, because of their size and reputations, they may not be able to risk highly disruptive or radical actions.

Some confusion was expressed about which audience groups might be the main priorities or targets for DISRUPT leading to some uncertainty as to how successful DISRUPT was in terms of audience engagement.

Process and Partnerships

The decision to have a commissioning panel made up solely of 'community' representatives, rather than the main partners, was widely praised as a step towards democratising the arts commissioning process. The fact that members of the panel received a fee was much appreciated and deemed vital in enabling inclusive and diverse involvement, although it did not cover the time involved in selection.

The facilitator employed to guide the selection process was praised for their inclusive approach; the pace at which they moved through the initial stages of the process; and their clarity about the selection objectives were deemed particularly successful.

A number of refinements to enhance the accessibility of the process were identified.

Main partners generally appreciated the opportunity to be part of DISRUPT, although there was a general sense that the full potential of the partners had not been fully realised. This was attributed to uncertainty about the expected role of main partners.

Feedback about the partnerships within each commission was almost entirely positive and highlighted the opportunity that DISRUPT provided for organisations to develop and grow existing relationships.

Participants in commissioned projects indicated that they enjoyed their involvement and demonstrated an appetite for there to be more time within projects for communities to work with artists and performers.

Festival Feedback

Audience feedback was very positive, with 100% of survey respondents choosing one of the two highest rating categories of 'Very good' (41.7%) and 'Good' (58.3%). The major success factor was the breadth and balance of content, with technical constraints of the online platform and content being less radical than expected being cited as potential areas for improvement.

Around 150 community members and 35 artists were involved in creating content for the DISRUPT festival. Artists and community partners who contributed to festival events appreciated the opportunity to showcase their work on a national level. They cited a lack of interactivity and not being able to see audiences, or not knowing how many people were in the audience as challenges, particularly when wanting to stimulate audience discussion or input.

Producing and delivering DISRUPT was a significant learning experience for the Guildhall co-ordinating and technical teams.

Outcomes

Commissioned projects appear to be the primary beneficiary from DISRUPT to date. Almost all reported that DISRUPT successfully met their expectations and had positive impacts on their practice and community partnerships. Many described how DISRUPT delivered positive outcomes for the partner communities involved in their commissions. Participant feedback reported feelings of greater personal confidence and learning new skills.

Festival audiences reported enhanced appreciation of the DISRUPT main partners' attitudes towards democratising the performing arts and greater awareness of partners' inclusivity towards under-represented communities.

Selection panel members described outcomes in three main categories: feelings of enjoyment; the opportunity to learn about or be exposed to a wide variety of artists and creative ideas; and learning that could inform their own funding applications.

Main partners were less likely than other stakeholder groups to describe direct impacts from DISRUPT, although association with prestigious institutions that have a national profile was deemed to be the major outcome by some partners.

Conclusions and Recommendations

DISRUPT should be deemed a successful pilot or exploratory undertaking, which identified important learning: specifically for its continuation including future iterations of any similar festival; and more generally for the performing arts and arts education sectors.

DISRUPT achieved significantly more than programming a two-day festival. It stimulated or supported a number of partnerships and collaborations that addressed issues of democracy within the performing arts and identified important lessons, which are worthy of wider dissemination, particularly to leaders in arts and arts education.

A great strength is the support DISRUPT has given to community/creative partnerships throughout the UK and involving a range of different communities that are traditionally under-represented in performing arts.

The festival in July 2021 provided a focus for DISRUPT to support and fund community/creative partnerships. However, the festival itself should be regarded as only one element in the overall DISRUPT concept.

Generally, DISRUPT would benefit from greater clarity about its purpose, particularly with regards to target audiences, but with the caveat that clarity ought not to compromise any flexibility that is essential to improve fairness and inclusion in all processes.

A range of success factors, learning points and outcomes have been identified that can inform future partnerships, and be shared more widely within the arts and higher education sectors.

The evaluation identified three main recommendations:

1. Rather than rushing headlong into planning another festival, time and resources should be allocated to effectively disseminating and embedding the learning from DISRUPT.
2. DISRUPT's emphasis on partnership work at all levels – main partners, selection panel and commissioned partners – has created a network with the potential to become a 'community of practice' for arts equity and inclusion. If a DISRUPT community of practice is to be established, then existing partners and commissions should be included in developing a framework for its membership and remit, to ensure it is informed by and builds upon existing experiences.
3. The involvement of Guildhall in a key role in DISRUPT should be capitalised upon to bring arts practice and education together to address equality, inclusion and diversity.

1. Introduction

1.1. DISRUPT aims

DISRUPT was a new digital festival that took place on 8th and 9th July 2021. It was co-ordinated by the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Barbican in partnership with seven other organisations/individuals (collectively referred to as the main partners). DISRUPT sought to explore and promote how the performing arts sector has supported communities during the time of a global pandemic, including showcasing new ways of working created in response to uncertainty and social distancing. It had the following aims:

1. Commission new and experimental performance-based projects created with, by and for communities during the pandemic.
2. Build skills on new or different ways of working in the performing arts, including practical steps on how communities, artists and organisations can collaborate more equally.
3. Explore alternative and more democratic futures for the performing arts.

To achieve these aims, DISRUPT commissioned 16 performing arts projects and awarded each funding of up to £5,000. Commissions were chosen by a diverse panel of Programme Selectors made up of 14 community members, artists and community practitioners, each nominated by a DISRUPT main partner.

The commissioned projects, each of which was required to be a co-development between a cultural partner and a community partner, formed the basis of a 2-day festival programme, which included workshops, discussions and panels developed around each project and intended to draw out cross-cutting themes for the performing arts sector.



1.2. Evaluation aims

The Guildhall School of Music appointed Jenesys Associates to conduct an external evaluation of DISRUPT that aimed to:

- Understand to what extent and in what ways DISRUPT's aims were met.
- Assess the effectiveness of the DISRUPT partnership and the process used to commission and select projects.
- Determine experiences and outcomes for all stakeholders involved.
- Identify learning and recommendations for future iterations.

2. Evaluation of DISRUPT

2.1. Evaluation methods and metrics

The following table outlines the various methods that were used to obtain feedback from each of the stakeholder groups involved in DISRUPT:

Stakeholder Group	Evaluation Method/s and Metrics
DISRUPT Main Partners	Post-festival interview n= 8
Commission Selection Panel	Post-festival interview n= 12
Commissioned Projects	Project Evaluation Report n= 14 projects Post-festival interview with creative leads n= 6 projects Project participant survey n= 8
Attendees at DISRUPT festival	Online Survey n= 36 valid ¹ responses (11% response rate based on 327 tickets issued)

A total of 26 semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide based upon the aims of DISRUPT and the evaluation questions outlined above. Apart from this guide, interviewees had the freedom to articulate issues as they saw fit. The evaluator prepared a survey to capture the experiences and opinions of participants in each of the commissioned projects. Unfortunately, this survey was not used on a sufficiently regular basis to enable a thorough appraisal of participant outcomes.

2.2. Analysis and reporting

Notes of interviews were subject to thematic analysis. The interviews were conducted in confidence and interviewees are not identified in this report. Quotations from interviews are used to illustrate crucial points that were made consistently. They have been anonymised and are shown in *blue italics*.

The findings are presented as follows: section 3 – DISRUPT as a concept; section 4 – process and partnerships; section 5 – the event experience. Sections 3, 4 and 5 conclude with a summary of success factors and challenges. Section 6 summarises the outcomes for each stakeholder group; Section 7 presents conclusions and recommendations.

¹ Valid = 3 or more questions answered

3. Findings: The DISRUPT Concept

This section presents feedback from commissioned projects, selection panel members and main partners about the purpose and aims of DISRUPT as a project concept expressed as the aims it was intending to address; the audiences it was seeking to attract or influence; and the extent to which it met the commissioned projects' expectations.

3.1. Aims of DISRUPT

No stakeholders were aware of a direct competitor to DISRUPT, or of any other initiative that they thought of as identical in format, structure, or partnership composition. Members of all stakeholder groups described DISRUPT as a potentially unique undertaking that was aiming to address imbalances in equality, diversity and inclusion for the arts, particularly the performing arts.

An opportunity for community organisations to partner with artists and seeing the benefits of creative collaboration to vulnerable groups who may not otherwise have these opportunities, and for the products of their work to be shared with a wide audience. A showcase for what can be achieved and created together with very little, but meaning a lot.

It was an exploration of participatory community involvement in the arts, looking at new ways of working and bringing new artists into the Guildhall Barbican fold.

Among all stakeholder groups, there was some variation in the extent to which stakeholders thought that DISRUPT was addressing such imbalances or increasing equity in the arts primarily as a festival 'event' or as a broader 'supporting' initiative, sometimes described as a project or intervention and comprised of activities that went wider than the two-day festival programme.

It was primarily a digital festival to showcase a new way of working, but I think it could be, or may be actually was more than that. An intervention, if you like, that was looking to support community participation in the arts.

Was it a 2-day festival? Or was it really more than that – a system of support? I don't think the messaging was really clear about the main purpose.

Project leads and participants within commissions were more likely than other stakeholder groups to express the view that DISRUPT was specifically aiming to highlight work created during, or in response to, the COVID-19 pandemic. This is consistent with promotional material that described DISRUPT as 'created in response to the global pandemic'.

DISRUPT is a digital arts festival that aspires to bring artistic communities together after the splintering effects of the pandemic

DISRUPT was created in response to the pandemic, the event explored how the arts has supported communities during this time and inspired new ways of working.

Stakeholders' descriptions of DISRUPT varied in the way in which the main partnership was acknowledged or described. When the main partners or partnership were mentioned, DISRUPT was most commonly referred to as a partnership between Guildhall and the Barbican, with Guildhall often being cited as the lead partner. In general, stakeholders were of the opinion that having two prestigious organisations to lead DISRUPT was a positive feature that gave weight and credibility to the undertaking, with potential to increase its publicity and profile.

To most people DISRUPT would be perceived to be a Guildhall, or maybe a Guildhall-Barbican, event. I don't think the other partners were really visible. But I guess they'd have less public visibility anyway.

Guildhall and Barbican were the most obvious partners, it's not clear what the other partners' involvement was.

DISRUPT was applauded by individuals in all stakeholder groups for actively addressing themes of equality, inclusion and diversity, and the view was strongly and consistently expressed there is considerable scope for the performing arts sector in general to improve in all these aspects, with the potential to disrupt norms being warmly welcomed. Questions were raised about how radical or challenging DISRUPT could be, particularly by individuals with lived experience of exclusion, but also by others, due to it being led by two institutions, in Guildhall and The Barbican, which because of their size and prestigious reputations may not be able to risk highly disruptive or radical actions.

There was a void between expectation and delivery. I felt the aspirations to be disruptive were diluted by the corporate attitude to risk of the behemoths that are the Barbican and Guildhall.

When I first heard about it I felt it was going to be a real change for the sector. In the end I am not sure the ambitions were realised. Disruption is very messy and will fail, and I got the feeling that Guildhall and Barbican were cautious about this, which constrained what was delivered.

3.2. DISRUPT target audiences

All stakeholder groups were generally uncertain or lacked clarity about the target audiences for both the DISRUPT festival 'event' and the messages DISRUPT was seeking to communicate. Stakeholder feedback identified a number of different audience groups for DISRUPT, with some confusion being expressed about which audience groups might be the main priorities or targets.

When I first was approached I thought 'this sounds like a good thing'. My next thought was 'who are the audiences?' but no one ever answered this question satisfactorily. It's hard to select or develop content for a festival when you don't know who the audience is.

I really hoped that DISRUPT would be speaking to other festival organisers and producers, showing them what is possible and the high quality of community art. To be honest, I don't think that was the real audience, as the timing and scheduling of live events felt more like an academic conference.

'Internal' audiences in the form of Barbican and Guildhall leadership teams and Guildhall students were often mentioned as important target audience groups for DISRUPT's messages, with there being some uncertainty as to how successfully DISRUPT had reached these groups.

There is a real need for practice and training of practitioners to come together, and it seems to me that DISRUPT could do that. So I would have expected Guildhall students to be an audience, but I am not sure the timing or publicity would have attracted them.

The top level of Guildhall and Barbican, who have the power to address institutional privilege and imbalances in the arts, should have been an audience, but DISRUPT probably wasn't even on their radar.

3.3. Commissioned projects' motivations

The evaluation explored the motivations of commissioned projects to obtain further insight about perceptions relating to the aims of DISRUPT. Project leads' reported a variety of reasons for wanting to participate, which is indicative of DISRUPT having a broad remit and the flexibility to accommodate multiple ambitions. Their feedback highlighted the main motivation as an opportunity to showcase work and to share learning about community inclusion in the performing arts.

We had very open expectations, and just simply wanted to see where families and artists would go with the brief. We wanted to bring the experiences of these families to other audiences - not as victims, but as participants and creative artists in their own rights.

To platform our project and share the learning more widely. To showcase our project as part of a wider event.

We wanted to share the extraordinary journey we have been on as we pivoted into the digital space and see how other community artists and organisations have responded to the pandemic. We wanted to showcase our practice and take part in conversations with likeminded others.

An important factor for commissioned projects' participation was a desire to develop existing material further or to create new works.

In our prototyping and trialling phase we were looking for funding to support further work to refine the Feedback Machine, which is a tool in development.

To enable us to create a film (and so commission an artist) about the project and the learning we gained.

I had already gained ACE funding for my project [the DISRUPT commission] was an experiment of creating a wrestling show in an experimental format, using online/distanced methods. We wanted to experiment, and showcase a new way of seeing wrestling to theatre audiences.

Another significant ambition for project leads can be categorised as wanting to celebrate and demonstrate the achievements of the community members who had taken part in creating a project's outputs or performances.

As the community partner our main reason was to showcase the work of our members and the outcomes of wellbeing they have achieved from taking part. We are pleased the learning from this project can be shared, and possibly replicated by other community arts organisations.

We wanted to offer the families who use our project an opportunity to 'escape' while stuck in lockdown, through music, collaboration, a shared vision, a simple action that could give focus to a day and brighten a moment in otherwise gloom.

3.4. Concept of DISRUPT – success factors and challenges

DISRUPT Concept – Success Factors and Challenges	
Success Factors	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived by all to be a unique and very necessary undertaking. • Addresses vitally important issues in the performing arts. • Highly credible and led by prestigious organisations. • Inclusive of commissions with a range of specific motivations and aims relating to inclusion and fairness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DISRUPT festival event would have benefitted from more detailed definition of target audience groups to aid publicity and promotion. • Defining specific aims around target audience groups would help partners and commissioned projects to assess the value of their own input in relation to reaching relevant audiences. • The extent to which DISRUPT's is perceived to be radically disruptive could be compromised by managing

	any potential risk to the reputations of the main co-ordinating partners.
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4. Findings: Process and Partnerships

The section explores key elements of the way in which DISRUPT was planned and delivered. It focuses on the commissioning and selection process and partnership aspects, both within the main DISRUPT partnership and partnerships within the commissioned projects.

4.1. DISRUPT commissioning process

Selection panel members praised the interesting types and variety and quality of applications received by DISRUPT. Significant highlights were deemed to be geographic breadth, particularly the fact that applications were received from outside London, and the overall quality of proposals. These highlights were often reported as being a consequence of the ways and routes through which the DISRUPT co-ordinating team had publicised the opportunity and funding, although those routes were not known to panel members.

[The panel] were quite pleased with the breadth of applications that we saw geographically and all the different types of projects. So I think that DISRUPT's advertising worked really well.

I don't know what they did, but yeah the range of applications and the fact loads were outside London was great. That it attracted a really wide selection of applications really gave a sense of it being an opportunity for us all.

The decision to have a commissioning panel made up solely of 'community' representatives, rather than the main partners, was widely praised as a step towards democratising the arts commissioning process. The fact that members of the panel received a fee was much appreciated and deemed vital in enabling inclusive and diverse involvement, particularly as many panel members are freelancers or represent very small organisations.

But it's good that we were paid. For in in our freelance world that can be the difference between being able to participate or not. So they could advertise that on a wider basis to get an even more diverse panel – be more inclusive.

Definitely, definitely paying a fee was so important, otherwise it would have been a panel of the same old faces.

Members of the selection panel frequently praised the facilitator employed to guide the selection process. This individual's inclusive approach; the pace at which they moved through the initial stages of the process; and their clarity about the selection objectives were deemed particularly successful. A very small number of comments expressed concern about the extent to which facilitation could have undue influence over decisions, particularly with regards to the later stages of selection.

I learnt a lot from [the facilitator]. [They were] a fantastic host and facilitator who got the balance of giving us a framework and flexibility to have meaningful input just right. [They] took it in a very relaxed way and broke it down so we could all get involved in the initial stages, but that did seem to drop-off a bit later on.

The facilitation in the first stage was really good, the whole thing felt enjoyable and it felt like we owned the decisions. The second stage was more rushed, like [the facilitator] had a deadline and I think some of us felt unsure about that like almost pressure to decide and who was controlling almost the decisions was made. [The process] felt quite controlled towards the end.

Panel members expressed some concerns about the accessibility of the application process to under-represented communities, as it was widely felt that, even with audio and video applications being accepted, the process as it stood would still favour organisations and individuals who are experienced in applying for funding, which could result in the most-excluded communities feeling unable to apply. It was suggested that providing pre-application development workshops or sessions could be a way of mitigating this.

I know they tried really hard to make sure it felt like anyone could apply, in the wording for example. It needs something more to really, really make it accessible. Perhaps the offer to workshop ideas for those who lack the confidence or experience.

I know they tried hard to make it [the application process] more inclusive and accessible, but it still felt like it could have been better, as it still favoured people who know how to do it – apply for funding. The really disruptive thing would be to get rid of the forms altogether.

Consistency of application information and guidance was cited as a challenge by some selection panel members, who felt that applicants may have had different information to the panel about the selection criteria, or that the criteria were more accessible to ‘experienced’ applicants. They said that this made selection decisions challenging, as sometimes the most interesting proposals did not address particular criteria the panel had been given, or interpreted them very differently.

I had a nagging doubt from reading applications that they may not have had the same criteria as we did.

Maybe some of them who applied, who know less about the funding game than others, didn't understand the funding speak or funding jargon in the same way as others – including us on the panel. There were great ideas but they didn't say or express them in a way we could choose them.

A few panel members felt the objectives and criteria for the ‘Tools and Tactics’ strand of DISRUPT funding in particular could have been clearer for both applicants and those selecting them.

The phrasing of criteria and guidance for the ‘Tools and Tactics’ submissions was a bit vague. It was hard to know what we were looking for and what the submissions were really aiming to do.

Whilst the fee for panel members was very much appreciated, there was consistent feedback that the time involvement needed to review applications was far greater than the fee could cover and greater than that anticipated from the briefing information that DISRUPT provided. As members of the panel were mostly freelancers or self-employed this is an issue of particular significance.

The willingness to pay us was good, and unusual. It was great that we were paid, but it nowhere near covered the time, when one application could take 2 hours to go through.

Yes, it was great to be paid to work with the Barbican which is so prestigious, but the fee didn't come close to covering the time we had to spend. That's something to think about if you want the selection panel to be truly representative of inclusivity.

The spreadsheet format in which applications were presented to members of the selection panel was reported to be overly-complicated and deemed particularly inaccessible for individuals who have cognitive or neurological differences. It was suggested that an on-call support line could have helped recipients to interpret what they had been sent, but the timing of the spreadsheet's distribution late on a Friday meant panel members had to work on it at the weekend, when there was no immediate access to the co-ordinating team for advice or answers to queries

That spreadsheet. I didn't have a clue. I got it on the Friday evening – so I couldn't contact the Guildhall for help straightaway. I spent the whole weekend trying to work it out.

The format that they sent the applications in was an excel sheet that took ages to understand. We could have done with an orientation session just to interpret it. It felt very academic and incongruous with the purpose of DISRUPT to be inclusive. A lot of us felt the same about it, because we talked about it.

A small number of panel members wondered if applications had been screened by Guildhall before being presented to the panel, suggesting some uncertainty about the transparency and authenticity of the selection process. In fact, the only applications that Guildhall did not send to the panel were ineligible, e.g. incomplete submissions.

I did wonder if there had been any pre-screening of the applications before we saw them. If there wasn't it should be made much obvious that we were seeing all the applications and it was democratic in that way.

Some members of the selection panel found the two-stage process adopted for selection to be slightly frustrating. As mentioned above, they felt the second-step to be rushed and over-controlled. Individuals were disappointed that they could not influence final decisions about applications that they had researched in detail, but instead were making final decisions on applications about which they knew far less. This was due to the second stage requiring them to review applications that had been short-listed by a different group of panel members.

The start of the process was really fascinating and a pleasure to be part of. The second round flipped everything over and a bit of me felt all that work done on understanding applications in the first round was wasted. I know some of the others were feeling the same.

Basically the second round needed a better framework, we couldn't really read the applications we had in the time we had available. I felt it really didn't allow us to do those applications justice. There was no chance to recalibrate decisions or consolidate views from the first round, which had been so considered.

Several commissioned project leads found the requirement to name one creative and one community partner in an application to be a constraint and not a true reflection of their community collaborations, which often involve more than one community group. It was also deemed suggestive of a hierarchy among community partners. They recommended that requiring a minimum of one community partner and allowing more to be named would be more closely aligned to what happens in practice.

Can I just reflect on one thing about the application process, which because actually in an ideal world, we would have been able to name more than one community partner, because that is the reality of our work. But we had to name one, and all our community partners are equally important.

4.2. Being a DISRUPT main partner

Main partners were mostly positive about their DISRUPT experiences, although there was some frustration expressed about how radical and democratic any outputs could be, due to DISRUPT being led by major institutions with reputations to protect. In one case, this frustration contributed to a main partner reducing their involvement.

The range of partners was good and we could all have our say at meetings, but still it felt a bit like the smaller partners were naturally drowned by the behemoths of the Barbican and the Guildhall.

Main partners generally appreciated the opportunity to be part of DISRUPT, with some individuals particularly valuing the acknowledgement they or their organisations were given in festival publicity, even in cases where they felt their input had been somewhat limited.

It felt a very polite partnership. I don't think [we] really contributed as much as we could, but no-one talked about that. It was great that we were named in the publicity, but we didn't do much for it to be honest.

I was delighted that they felt they could acknowledge us and were naming us as a partner, but I am a bit guilty about what we actually did or didn't do for DISRUPT.

Whilst main partners welcomed the flexible approach adopted by Guildhall in overseeing the partnership, which meant each partner could contribute as little or as much as practical, there was a general sense that the full potential of the partners had not been fully realised. This was overwhelmingly attributed to uncertainty about the expected role of main partners. In this context, specific reference was made to the difference between being an active, integral part of the DISRUPT planning process and merely being expected to provide comment on Guildhall's plans. It was suggested that having a clearer framework for partner involvement and expectations, including what this would mean in practice, could provide the clarity needed for partners to fulfil their role as effectively as possible.

I really kind of felt like DISRUPT was a mechanism that was set up to run within itself rather than all of us [main partners] making big decisions. So in a way, I feel a bit like we were on the periphery. But I also hope we offered what they needed to support what they did, which in the end was mainly recommendation, getting the word out, I think, but I am not certain.

I would say for me, learning might be that what would probably strengthen the partnership relationship would be a clear framework around what's happening and maybe some clear expectations of each partner, so we contribute as meaningfully as we could.

We didn't have right at the beginning anything about where and what and how [main partner] input would be and what the function of the partners was. Was the function of the partner to just offer expertise and advice, or was it to actually contribute, or was it purely to come to a meeting? It would be so sensible to have this from the outset as it would help DISRUPT and we as partners could contribute more effectively.

Other than the Guildhall and Barbican, the main partnership mostly comprised very small organisations or individuals. Some of these partners were concerned about whether they had contributed meaningfully or apologised for being less able to allocate resources to DISRUPT, despite feeling highly supportive about its aims and ethos. Recognising the input from small organisations or freelance partners in the form of a fee or honorarium, similar to that paid to selection panel members, could have helped to optimise these partners' contributions in particular. The co-ordinating team reported that all main partners were offered payment to cover costs, but this offer was not taken up.

I think it's sort of an example of where larger entities maybe have more time. I think maybe they could think about how they might play a sort of supportive role or cover costs for smaller partners like us. But we were included in the press release, which is no small thing, we don't have marketing budgets, anything that this helps us get our brand into the world is really useful.

DISRUPT were very generous about naming us as a partner, which was great for us. But I think it made me realise that I have to be very cautious about taking on partnerships, especially if there's no funding attached to a partnership. We'd like to be active partners but in reality, because we are so small, we need to be paid something to count on our involvement

Observations were made about the high number of Guildhall staff, compared to other partners, who were present at an early main partner meeting, which it was felt contributed to a sense of hierarchy within the partnership. This sense was perhaps exacerbated by the fact that the role of many of these individuals within DISRUPT was not obviously clear to the other partners. The inclusion of Guildhall staff in this particular meeting was an attempt to improve efficiency by combining internal and external stakeholder engagement, which on reflection may have been more effectively addressed separately.

So I guess it felt it certainly I felt like [Guildhall] were the drivers, which they were. But it certainly was a lot of Guildhall people at the first meeting, which isn't a bad thing I guess. But I'm questioning their contribution - knowing why they were there and contributing.

I really didn't know what the first meeting was doing – it was overwhelmed by Guildhall people, which was a bit unbalancing.

Partners of all sizes indicated that the main partnership could have benefitted from scheduled reflection points, and even light-touch facilitation, to help maintain partner interest and momentum within the partnership, and to ensure the partnership as a whole was continually improving and contributing as meaningfully as possible to DISRUPT.

I don't feel like there was necessarily to touch points or sharing of how things were going in the process of DISRUPT happening. So we weren't being informed about how our input was contributing or being received or needed to improve or be optimised.

It would have been really interesting for Guildhall to have some time in each meeting to reflect on this is how that's actually going and does anyone have any comments or questions on that or know anyone who could help with any issues or challenges - a channel for the partners' own networks to be included.

4.3. Partnerships within commissions

Feedback about the partnerships within each commission was almost entirely positive. It highlighted the opportunity that DISRUPT provided for organisations to develop and grow existing relationships, including some that were in the embryonic stages and others that were already well-established.

We have worked very well together. We were familiar with each other beforehand so there was already a great deal of trust, and we also shared a similar vision and approach to the work - to be open, non-prescriptive, gentle, responsive, flexible, intuitive, family-led - which was clear from when we first started to discuss and plan the work. We have both trusted the other side to deliver on their commitments and to support where needed.

We worked well together as the project was already established and running, this definitely helped things run more smoothly. It was difficult with our differing time commitments to get the project together working with people from different organisations- however we found the time in the end.

Other successful aspects of partnership working included: the importance of creative and community partners having aims that are closely aligned or complementary; and the value of having a single nominated lead for a project for clarity of purpose.

DISRUPT's flexibility in allowing substitution of the partners named in applications was welcomed, particularly at a time of heightened uncertainty caused by the pandemic.

It was challenging to find our initial partnership as we had a fantastic connection with Lincolnshire County Council and SHINE on applying, and then the two people we had made the

connection with both left! SHINE then felt our 'child focused' project wasn't quite right for them and it took time to connect with the right partners. However now that we have a strong connection in place with the 3 partners, I feel we are in a good place to do some good with the book/film/pack and hopefully to continue to work with our community partners in the future.

Some project leads would have preferred clearer channels of communication between their projects and DISRUPT.

The only slight creak in the process has been in the relationship and communication with DISRUPT- it hasn't always been clear which messages have gone out to everyone involved (community partner and creative partner) so there have been emails shared unnecessarily, and some others missed because there was an assumption it had gone to everyone. In future it could be clearer how things will be communicated with projects.

Feedback reported from participants in commissioned projects indicated that they enjoyed their involvement. They demonstrated an appetite for there to be more time within projects for communities to work with artists and performers.

Participant feedback questionnaires highlighted a desire for more rehearsal time- and having more and longer sessions to complete the activities in sessions although participants did reference how nice it was to have something to work on at home that was just for them.

They young people said they wanted it to go on and that the sessions could have been longer and more frequent.

4.4. Process and partnerships – success factors and challenges

DISRUPT Process and Partnerships – Success Factors and Challenges	
Success Factors	Challenges
<p>Commissioning Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility for selection given to community representatives. • High quality facilitation to assist the process. • The wide range and high quality of applications received. • Rewarding panel members financially for their involvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time required from panel members was significantly greater than anticipated or covered by the fee paid. • Format in which applications were presented to panel members could be made more accessible. • Consideration could be given to ensure the application process does not exclude organisations or individuals who are inexperienced in applying for funds. • Applications should allow for more than one community partner to be named, reflecting what happens in practice. • The process could be refined to ensure research carried out by panel members in the first stage is used to inform second stage decision making.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure applicants and panel members have the same criteria and guidelines and that these are expressed as clearly as possible, particularly around the 'Tools and Tactics' strand.
<p>Main Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership was inclusive of smaller organisations. • Flexible approach allowed partners to be as involved as their resources allowed. • All partners were recognised equally in all publicity and communications, even if involvement was at lower level than others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater clarity about the role of partners and expectations could increase their involvement. • A fee to cover time could optimise contribution from smaller organisations/ freelancers. • Allocating time to reflect on the partnership and how it is working could optimise its effectiveness and value.
<p>Partnerships in Commissioned Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility allowed substitution of nominated partners. • Opportunity for partners to build on embryonic or existing partnerships or to present new work. • Clear alignment between community and artistic partner aims is essential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraint of naming one community partner could create a false sense of hierarchy. • Communication from DISRUPT to projects could be confusing if not channelled through a single partner or individual

5. Findings: 'Event' Experiences

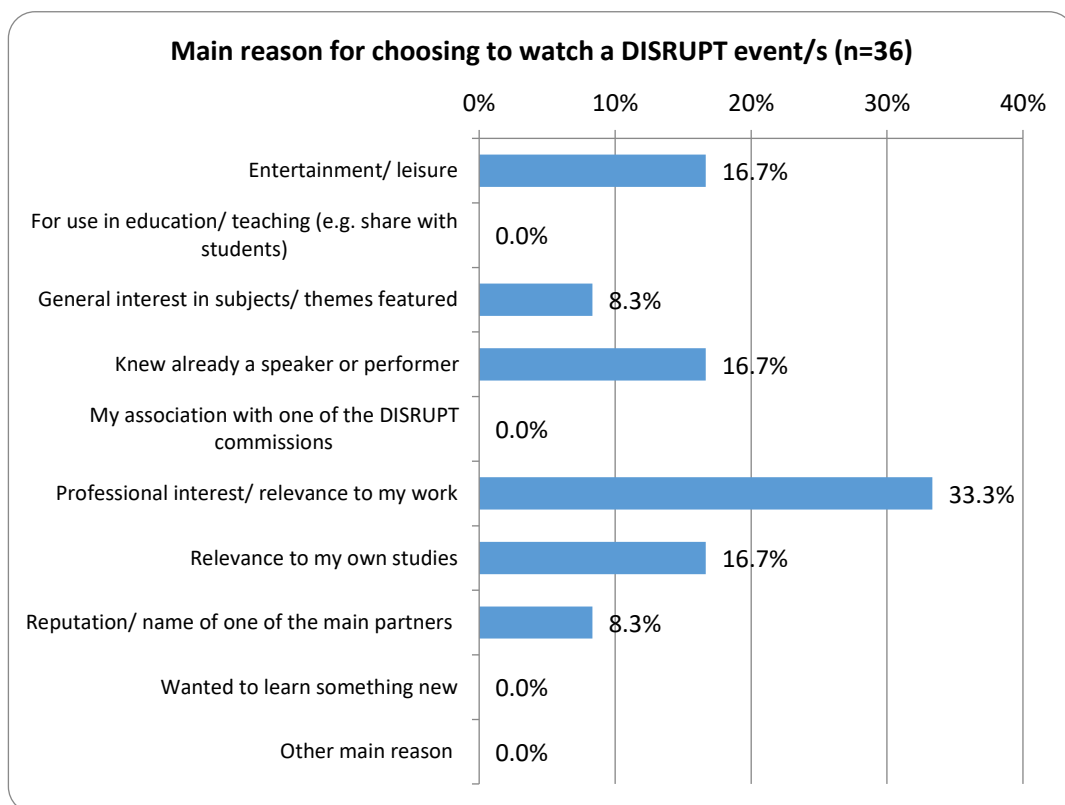
This section draws mostly on feedback from attendees who completed the DISRUPT audience survey and interviews with commissioned projects, since very few main partners and members of the selection panel had managed to watch any of the festival sessions at the time of their evaluation interviews.

5.1. Attendee feedback about events

The audience survey asked attendees demographic profiling questions to gain an understanding of who attended and their reasons.

- No respondents were age 24 or less; 41.7% (15) were age under 35; 25% (9) were age 35 to 44; and 33.0% (12) were age 55 or older.
- 83.3% (30) identify as women, 8.3% (3) identify as men and 8.3% (3) prefer not to report their gender.
- 8.3% (3) identify as a D/deaf or disabled person or have a long-term health condition that impacts on their daily life.
- 50.0% (18) reported that they live in London, with 25.0% (9) living elsewhere in England; and 16.7% (6) living in either Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. 8.3% (3) live outside the UK.
- Attendees living in the UK were asked to report their ethnic group using categories from the 2021 UK census: 60.6% (20) reported that they are white; 30.3% (10) reported another ethnic group; and 9.1% (3) did not disclose their ethnicity.

Reported reasons for attending a DISRUPT event or events indicate that professional interest/relevance to study at 50.0% (18) in total, and prior awareness of speakers/performers/main partners (33.3%, 12 in total) were the main motivations for attendance.



Attendee ratings of DISRUPT festival events were all positive, with 100% of survey respondents choosing one of the two highest rating categories of 'Very good' (41.7%, 15) and 'Good' (58.3%, 21). Explanations for these ratings identified the breadth and balance of content as a major success factor, with technical constraints of the online platform and content being less radical or disruptive than expected cited as main areas for improvement.

Well produced and balanced opinions expressed. Very entertaining and informative.

It had such an array of mediums that everyone could relate to some parts of it. A very inclusive production in what is, a very unusual climate. Well done.

In some talks or panels, especially everyone in the same space, the sounds from different panellists weren't balance.

I watched two panel discussions and I thought it would be a bit more daring and audacious in the thinking as I had great expectations from the topics and guests.

Further evidence of a positive audience experience came from all respondents giving a positive net promoter score² by choosing '7' or above when asked on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being extremely likely and 0 being not at all likely, how likely is it that they would recommend DISRUPT. 41.7% (15) gave a net promoter score of '10' or '9', which is indicative of them being extremely likely to recommend DISRUPT.

There was a correlation between reasons for attending and the groups to which respondents would promote DISRUPT. Those attending for professional interest/study reasons all nominated colleagues or peers.

Funders, other arts professionals, students.

Work colleagues, young artists, people interested in digital festivals and films.

Those attending for leisure or entertainment reasons reported they were most likely to recommend DISRUPT to friends or family.

Attendees' main suggestion to enhance the audience experience of DISRUPT was to improve technical aspects, mainly enhancing the online presentation and accessibility of the programme, and incorporating greater interactivity during live events.

The display on the website was not so clear as to how to watch the events while they were live. A more intuitive display on the days of the events would be a good thing. Also being able to see the whole programme on one screen could have helped me 'plan' what I would watch.

It was a bit frustrating that the only interaction was through written chat. I also had no idea of who else was watching or what their background interests might be.

This area for improvement was confirmed in feedback from main partners and selection panel members who had seen events – either live or via YouTube - and by the evaluator's own experience of watching events live.

For some reason I could not log onto events on the second day, nor could my colleagues. It seemed to be a problem with the platform.

I didn't find out until the second day how to join the chat. Also I think I was expecting more interaction generally, particularly for something that was billed as a workshop. I think the presenters were too, from their comments.

² <https://www.netpromoter.com/know/> Net Promoter Score measures customer experience and predicts growth. It is commonly used as a KPI for assessing customer experience.

Generally, main partners and selection panel members reported that the DISRUPT festival was not particularly easy or intuitive to access, which they felt would be a particular problem if it was seeking to reach under-represented communities or audiences.

The festival itself and its presentation felt like it had a very traditional cultural orientation in contrast to its aims. I can't imagine it would appeal to any of the community groups that featured.

As an event it didn't come to me, I had to invest in it and proactively seek it out. How many of the target audience would have done that? You had to be in the know to be there.

Delivery of the festival was supported by the Guildhall technical team. From this, they and the coordinating team have learnt a considerable amount about producing an online festival.

5.2. Event experiences of commissioned projects

Artists and community partners who contributed to events in the DISRUPT festival programme appreciated the opportunity to showcase their work on a national level. However, the limitations of the online platform selected for DISRUPT were a source of frustration to many involved in 'live' events. Comments cited a lack of interactivity and not being able to see audiences, or not knowing how many people were in the audience as challenges, particularly when wanting to stimulate audience discussion or input.

It was nice to be part of a national event, with the prestige of the Barbican and Guildhall. But the actual format was a disappointment. I couldn't tell who was listening and the chat format was difficult to interact with. I thought we were going to be using Zoom until a few weeks before where you can see who is watching, which is much better.

To be honest the platform was really difficult as we couldn't see the audience at all, I had no idea who was watching or how many and I couldn't respond or react as I would have liked.

I mean, there are some nice points made in the chat that was coming through. But again, it was an anonymous chat. So you didn't know where the point was coming from – the context for it.

Frustration with the chosen platform appears to have been heightened by the fact that many interviewees indicated that they were expecting to use the more familiar Zoom until relatively late in the preparation stages. This could be due to the fact that the platform had been described as 'like Zoom' although the co-ordinating team reported that they did not mention Zoom specifically.

It was widely suggested that holding detailed technical rehearsal sessions in advance of the festival would have improved the experiences for both contributors and audiences. It would have prepared contributors for the festival experience. Also suggested was presenters being given information about the audience number during their events.

I got the feeling it was the first time [they] had done this from a technical standpoint. I think on reflection, they might choose a better platform and have a better structure for rehearsals. Other events offer technical rehearsal slots a couple of weeks in advance, which really helps you to prepare.

When I've done other online events there's been a full technical rehearsal, so we all know exactly what will happen on the day, including any limitations. I think they should do that in future DISRUPTs.

With a few exceptions, event contributors were satisfied with the technical support they received during events. Those who were less satisfied suggested there should be a nominated technical facilitator on hand for each session who could deal with technical problems or issues as they arose.

One session faced technical difficulties, and all staff were on board to quickly rectify the situation and make us feel supported.

I was actually having to email [them when we had an issue] as the session was happening. There should have been direct contact with someone who could help within the event platform itself. I know other events have done that.

In terms of programme content and structure, feedback focused on the desire for an opportunity for the various commissions to discuss their specific experiences with one another and identify sector-wide learning, e.g. plenary sessions or cross-project discussion sessions.

I think that that the big missing ingredient was sharing from the different commissions. I was hoping to learn from them too. There was no space in the programme for us to reflect together, which I think is a missed opportunity.

I was surprised, because there was something said about drawing out themes for the sector, that there wasn't somewhere in the programme for us to share our learning from our work.

5.3. DISRUPT 'event' experiences – success factors and challenges

DISRUPT Event Experiences – Success Factors and Challenges	
Success Factors	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of event formats provided. • Appeal to audiences with professional and entertainment interests. • 50% of audience live outside London. • Positive audience experience. • Rewarding panel members financially for their involvement. • Opportunity to showcase community arts work on a national platform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraints of the online platform, particularly limitations on audience interactivity. • Presenters not having the opportunity to rehearse fully on the platform, which meant their expectations were not always met. • Some potential attendees were unable to access live events. • In some cases, a perceived lack of in-event technical support. • Online programme could be more intuitive/accessible. • No defined opportunity programmed for cross-commissions' sharing of experiences and learning.

6. Findings: Outcomes

This section presents outcomes reported by DISRUPT stakeholders in the following order: commissioned projects; festival attendees; selection panel members; and main partners.

6.1. Commissioned project outcomes

Information collected through commissioned projects' evaluation reporting indicated that c.150 community members and c.35 artists were involved in creating content for the DISRUPT festival.

Commissioned projects appear to be the primary beneficiary from DISRUPT to date. Most project leads reported that DISRUPT successfully met their expectations and had positive impacts on their practice and community partnerships.

It really enabled us to celebrate our existing project and embed the learning. It also created further momentum and impetus for participants to come together, so we set up some additional phone calls and a group session in order to create the film. The panel discussion was a great way to bring together evaluation and learning from the project.

Giving the show another platform outside of our own marketing/ audience reach was a spectacular opportunity to reach new audience members. The support & validation from the DISRUPT team was huge momentum for me to make a really great show, as someone who is really only just starting to make performance art, I still have a lot of insecurities about my work as 'art' - but the space to show the piece, and the Q&A afterwards that allowed me to explain my work to theatre professionals exceeded my expectations in terms of being a community artist breaking out in to the world of theatre.

We have found the experience of being part of the DISRUPT festival very positive. As the community partner, the expectations on us have been very low (simply to show up and make sure some families did too!) and we have been guided and coached by our artist partners in everything else, so in that sense we are only representing one element of the experience. However, we have seen how the festival brief has given space for our creative partners to be intuitive and responsive throughout the process to the experiences of the families taking part, and that in turn has created a safe and welcoming space for families to come out of their shells and invest in the process themselves.

Many project leads described how DISRUPT delivered positive outcomes for the partner communities involved in their commissions.

DISRUPT was such an incredible opportunity for the participants involved, all of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds or are facing difficulties at school. Over the course of the project and the event at the festival, each participant grew in confidence; during the Q&A, students contributed to the discussion more so than ever seen in sessions! This increase in confidence displayed just how beneficial and invaluable these opportunities can be.

We have been really moved by the trust placed in the process by some of the participating women, and also blown away by the creative talents that have come out of the woodwork as a result.

The participants loved the project, and have enjoyed being filmed for the DISRUPT festival. It made our members feel special and part of the process.

Community impact for participants of all ages and diverse ethnicities was confirmed in the small amount of participant feedback reported directly to the evaluation. Notable in this feedback were feelings of greater personal confidence and learning new skills.

Taking on something that was entirely new to me made me nervous, but the project brought out skills I didn't know I had and left me with a feeling of immense satisfaction in how the project turned out.

I've learnt how to make consecutive and hard decisions. I learnt how to properly speak in public and so much more

I've made life- long friends and boosted my confidence so much

There were several examples where DISRUPT was thought to have generated legacy impact for the commissioned organisations, including creative outputs, continued partnerships, increased confidence or learning to inform future work.

Our stop motion animation has been created. We will adapt the stop motion and create a second version that edits out the suicide references and focuses more on loss for a more general teachers pack as our partners feel that working with some children around suicide may be too raw.

The film itself is an excellent record of the experience for participants. We also create an audio outcome of the project which includes the impact our phone project had on people.

We would like to continue to work in partnership with these arts organisations.

We learned the importance of: planning and practicing technology ahead of time; and being clear when outlining expectations, aims and objectives.

For me this whole experience has been really dignified and validating. I feel a lot more confident about my work for being featured in such a prestigious partnership.

Only one project did not describe any positive impact on themselves. They reported that their experience of DISRUPT lacked clarity about what they were being commissioned to deliver, which they found challenging and frustrating.

6.2. Festival audience outcomes

The festival audience survey invited respondents to describe if DISRUPT had any impact on their views or understanding of the main partners. Responses indicate that the main impact was greater awareness of the partners for attendees with both professional and leisure motivations.

Just greater awareness of these organisations and their great work.

It's brought Guildhall back to my attention, as previously I'd associate it just with a place of education rather than a place which produces work. It's also put Maya and Slung low back on my radar.

Another audience impact was enhanced appreciation among all types of attendees of the DISRUPT main partners' attitudes towards democratising the performing arts and their inclusivity towards under-represented communities.

I was able to learn more about such an array of different art organisations that I would not have done before in one place online. Although each is widely different with they all seem to have the same ethos - arts for everyone. Not elitist

A better insight into these arts organisations that I would not normally have access to. I had no idea before how inclusive they are trying to being – especially the Barbican and Guildhall.

6.3. Selection panel outcomes

Selection panel members described outcomes in three main categories: feelings of enjoyment; the opportunity to learn about or be exposed to a wide variety of artists and creative ideas; and learning that could inform their own funding applications.

Overall, it was a positive experience and seeing what's going on everywhere in the UK was particularly brilliant.

I really did enjoy coming together with the other panel members. It made me think about how people apply for funding. Actually reading through the applications made me think about how I apply in future for grants.

Being part of the panel made me ask questions that will help my own practice and requests for funding.

6.4. Main partner outcomes

Main partners were less likely than other stakeholder groups to describe direct impacts from DISRUPT, which was often attributed to uncertainty about the main partner role, as discussed in section 4.2 of this report. Association with prestigious institutions that have a national profile was deemed to be the major outcome for some partners.

The main thing was for our name to be included alongside the Barbican and Guildhall.

I suppose the impact was just being a part of it and mentioned in all the publicity.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

This section presents a general concluding statement followed by conclusions for each of the themes that were outlined in the DISRUPT evaluation brief and recommendations to help ensure DISRUPT delivers a meaningful legacy.

Concluding Statement

If DISRUPT is regarded to be a pilot undertaking and the initiation of an innovative concept for addressing inequity in the performing arts, then based on the evaluation findings it should be deemed a success, which has identified important learning: specifically for its continuation including future iterations of any similar festival; and more generally for the performing arts and arts education sectors.

DISRUPT achieved significantly more than programming a two-day festival. It stimulated or supported a number of partnerships and collaborations that addressed issues of democracy within the performing arts and identified important lessons, which are worthy of wider dissemination, particularly to leaders in the arts and arts education. The recommendations below include suggestions for how DISRUPT learning and messages could be more widely shared, including through the partners and relationships that were involved in the festival planning, commissioning and delivery, with the aim of reaching leaders and leveraging significant change across the performing arts sector.

DISRUPT as a Project Concept

- DISRUPT is a valuable and unique concept that has begun to make a contribution towards addressing inequities in the performing arts.
- DISRUPT's great strength is in the support it has given to community/creative partnerships from throughout the UK and involving a range of different communities that are traditionally under-represented in performing arts.
- The festival in July 2021 provided a focus for DISRUPT to support and fund community/creative partnerships. However, the festival itself should be regarded as only one element in the overall DISRUPT concept.
- Recognition has to be given to the reality that DISRUPT's capacity to be radically disrupting must be balanced with management of any potential risk to the reputations of partners, particularly the two co-ordinating partners. However any constraints of this nature need to be balanced with the potential for Guildhall and Barbican, as major arts institutions, to play a leading role in driving sectoral change.

DISRUPT Success vs. Stated Aims

Aims 1: Commission new and experimental performance-based projects created with, by and for communities during the pandemic.

- This aim was met. DISRUPT commissioned 16 projects, each of which featured at least one community group. Collectively the commissions represented a range of communities and local interests.

Aim 2: Build skills on new or different ways of working in the performing arts, including practical steps on how communities, artists and organisations can collaborate more equally.

- This aim was met. Creative and artistic partners in commissioned projects, along with members of the DISRUPT selection panel, reported learning points about creating equitable partnerships and collaborations.

Aim 3: Explore alternative and more democratic futures for the performing arts.

- This aim was partially met. Foundations are in place to explore such futures drawing on the experiences of both the projects commissioned, and the processes used to plan, coordinate and implement DISRUPT. It should be noted that exploration during festival events was to some extent affected by limitations to interactivity, which was a factor of events having to be wholly online, and further dissemination work is needed to engage arts practitioners, students and educators as fully as possible.

DISRUPT's position as an alliance bridging project for the Guildhall School and Barbican

- At a strategic level, there are many internal and external factors which affect the extent to which DISRUPT could fulfil a role as an alliance bridging project and this evaluation cannot make any firm conclusions about it having such value, other than it being generally positive.
- It was originally planned that the Barbican would host in-person events as part of the DISRUPT festival programme, which was not possible due to the pandemic. Despite this, at an operational level both partners fulfilled complementary roles within the project, building relationships and connections which can be applied in future collaborations.

Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement/ Management

- The composition of both the main partnership and the selection panel reflected DISRUPT's aims, with the selection panel being identified as a major success factor.
- The main partnership would have benefited from a framework to explain what was expected from partners.
- Individuals from both these stakeholder groups and the commissioned partners possess networks and connections which mean they could fulfil a significant role in disseminating DISRUPT outcomes and learning. Realising this potential may require new partnership roles to be identified.
- Overall, the need for DISRUPT to have greater clarity of purpose has been highlighted, particularly with regards to target audiences, but with the caveat that clarity ought not to compromise any flexibility that is essential to improve fairness and inclusion in all processes.
- A range of success factors, learning points and outcomes have been identified that can inform future partnerships, and be shared more widely within the arts and higher education sectors.

Internal Collaboration

- On reflection, it would have been more democratic to address internal stakeholders as a specific DISRUPT audience group and engage with them once the main partnership had been established, rather than the chosen approach which attempted to combine internal stakeholder engagement with initiating the main partnership.

Commissioning, curation and programming

- The call for applications successfully elicited submissions that covered a wide range of communities and broad geographic distribution.
- The selection process could be refined slightly to optimise aspects of its accessibility for both applicants and members of the selection panel. E.g. offer the opportunity for

applicants to workshop ideas prior to application, and allocate more time to the second-step of the process to ensure panel members feel they have considered all applications as fully as possible.

- The delivery and presentation of the two-day festival would have benefitted from clearer audience definition and targeting; the programming of dedicated sessions for learning or sharing; and a technical platform that allowed for greater audience interactivity and involvement.
- Curation and programming required significant resourcing from Guildhall, in the form of the DISRUPT co-ordinating team and technical support for the festival. It is unclear if all partners were made fully aware of the extent of the resourcing that was required.

Festival Audience Engagement

- Audience feedback indicates that the themes of the festival and individual events were well received and had positive audience impact.
- The festival would have benefited from clearer definition of both the target audiences and the intended outcomes for those audiences, to allow its impact to be more effectively assessed.
- DISRUPT has significant potential to extend its reach beyond those who attended festival events, particularly with regards to sharing learning and outcomes with a wider audience, which should include higher education students and lecturers, thus helping to ensure equality, inclusion and diversity are embedded in all performing arts teaching, as well as in practice.

Recommendations

The evaluation has identified three main recommendations for DISRUPT:

1. Rather than rushing headlong into planning another festival, time and resources should be allocated to effectively disseminating and embedding the learning from DISRUPT. Consideration should be given as to the structure, including the composition of any partnership, and processes created to implement any dissemination and embedding processes. Main partners, selection panel members and commissioned partners should be canvassed for their ideas on how best to disseminate and embed learning to sector leaders.
2. DISRUPT provides a strong starting point for creating a more democratic future for the performing arts. Its emphasis on partnership work at all levels – main partners, selection panel and commissioned partners – has created a network with the potential to become a ‘community of practice’ for arts equity and inclusion. Communities of practice are usually described as *groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly*. If a DISRUPT community of practice is to be established, then existing partners and commissions should be included in developing a framework for its membership and remit, to ensure it is informed by and builds upon existing experiences.
3. The involvement of Guildhall in a key role in DISRUPT means arts educators can be included in dissemination and embedding alongside practitioners. Any future developments should

capitalise on this opportunity to bring practice and education together on addressing issues of equality, inclusion and diversity.