



# Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Programme

## Final Evaluation Report

### Executive Summary

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July 2016

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# 1. Introduction

The Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Programme was the result of an Arts Council England commissioned grant and has been developed and is led by the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Consortium. Delivery partners within the Consortium include Opera North, the University of Leeds, Cause4 and the Arts Marketing Association (AMA).

Over three years (2013-16) the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Programme has created and supported an England-wide programme of training, fellowships, coaching, education, digital skills and innovative practice for the arts sector. Working with training and fundraising organisations, ACE National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) and the wider arts sector, the programme has sought to influence individuals and organisations at all levels from new graduates and emerging talent to trustees, CEOs and senior managers in order to create a cultural shift within the sector and to ensure the training and development of a professional arts fundraising workforce.

The AFP Programme's stated aims and objectives were articulated as follows:

- To develop an enterprising culture in which income generation is placed at the heart of an arts organisation's business model and ethos
- To ensure more income is generated for the arts from private giving and businesses
- To develop the skills of individuals and organisations seeking to fundraise from the private sector and individual donors
- To achieve a demonstrable change in the professionalism of the arts fundraising sector by building on, and sharing, existing good practice across the third sector
- To build a peer-to-peer leadership community which positions arts fundraising as a desirable career and which retains and develops talent
- To maximise learning through knowledge-exchange, resources and thought leadership

This report is intended to address these objectives and provide a summary of the key findings of the evaluation of the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy (AFP) programme, which was led by Dr Ben Walmsley and conducted over the past three years by a small team of University of Leeds academics in partnership with Praxis (represented by Paul Kyprianou and Kate Rodenhurst), who conducted the evaluation of certain strands of the Year Two programme, including the National Summer School.<sup>1</sup> The findings reflect on the overall performance and impact of the programme's achievements against its original KPIs and objectives, as outlined by the programme funders, Arts Council England, as well as summarising the successes and challenges experienced by the consortium partners over the lifetime of the project.

This final report has been produced by the University Leeds and follows on from the Year 2 Evaluation Report produced in March 2015, which evaluated the second full year of AFP activity, and from the Year 1 report, produced in December 2014. Two further reports relating to the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Programme have been produced by other parties to complement this evaluation: an evaluation of the Year Three AFP Fellowship conducted by Business of Culture; and an evaluation of the AFP governance, conducted by Dr Karen Smith.

## 1.1 Evaluating the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Programme

The evaluation team at the University of Leeds has followed the programme development and delivery from the outset. The aim of the evaluation process was to be distinct from any project monitoring or advocacy processes and to provide a 360-degree assessment of the outcomes and impact of the AFP programme based on rich, meaningful data garnered from all key stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> Praxis was commissioned by the University of Leeds to evaluate the National Summer School in Arts Fundraising and Leadership in Year 2 in order to remove any potential conflict of interest, as the National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership programme is delivered by the University of Leeds.

Data and/or feedback was gathered from key stakeholder groups including:

- AFP consortium partners (AMA, Cause4, Opera North/DARE and University of Leeds)
- Arts organisations across England engaged in different strands of the programme including the Fellowship scheme, Networks Programme, National Training Programme, Coaching and Action Learning programmes
- Individual Fellows, training participants and conference delegates
- Training providers and coaches
- AFP Regional Co-ordinators
- Arts Council England

The evaluation has taken both a formative and summative methodology over the period of the programme. Key research questions at different levels were established in the first instance and a mixed-methods approach of quantitative and qualitative methods were used to capture, measure and analyse the programme's impact. Methods deployed included surveys, feedback questionnaires, depth interviews, participant observation, web analytics and case studies. This approach enabled triangulation of data to provide the richest and most comprehensive picture of what participants have thought, felt, written and said about the AFP programme and to evaluate the ultimate impact it has had on key stakeholders, including delivery partners, funders and the arts and cultural sector itself.

The evaluative judgements provided in this report are based on a meta-analysis of the data from the previous reports and on a comparative analysis of two sector-wide surveys: one carried out towards the beginning of the programme, and the second conducted in the final months of the programme. These findings are complemented by some rich new qualitative insights from questionnaires and interviews with key stakeholders.

## 1.3 Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the participants who have contributed towards this evaluation, especially the Fellows, trainers, host organisations and regional co-ordinators who have offered up their time so generously for interviews and/or focus groups. We would also like to thank our key consortium partners (Cause4, Opera North/DARE and AMA) for generously giving of their time for interviews and for working in partnership with the evaluation team to share evaluation data. Finally, we would like to thank Clare Titley, Director of Philanthropy at Arts Council England, for contributing to the stakeholder reflections that informed this final report and for her role as a valued critical friend over the past three years.

## 2. AFP's impact on the arts and cultural sector

### 2.1 Key facts and figures

The following facts and figures highlight the key quantitative achievements of the AFP programme. Over its three-year funding period (2013- 2016) AFP has:

- Reached an estimated **4,000 people** through its strategic networks and partnerships
- Delivered **149 training sessions to 2,467 delegates** from a representative range of regions and artforms, achieving an average satisfaction rate of **91%**
- Created a cohort of **55 Arts Fundraising Fellows** from over 420 applications, who were hosted in an arts organisation for an intensive year of work-based and academic learning
- Helped to raise **an extra £1.6m of income** through its groundbreaking Fellowship scheme
- Run two successful **national summer schools** focussing on arts fundraising and leadership which attracted 45 delegates

- Accredited the **first ever postgraduate programme** in Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy, which has already celebrated 25 successful graduations
- Established **CulturePro**: a brand new self-assessment tool for arts fundraisers based on a newly commissioned set of **National Organisational Standards**, which has already attracted 442 fundraisers
- Funded **20 regional arts fundraising networks** from Dorset to Tyneside, engaging 719 delegates and created **17 new Regional Co-ordinator roles**
- Run **10 online fundraising workshops** with 129 participants
- Created **five online training videos and 175 new fundraising resources** on CultureHive, which were downloaded **12,094** times
- Collaborated with the European Sponsorship Association (ESA) to launch the first-ever dedicated arts and culture **certificate in sponsorship**, resulting in 9 students successfully completing the programme
- Worked intensively with **36 participants on its Coaching Programme**
- Run **3 action learning training sessions** and facilitated 2 new action learning sets
- Funded 174 subsidized places for fundraisers at the annual **Arts Marketing Association conference**
- Published **155 blog posts** that were viewed nearly **11,000** times
- Developed a clearly branded **website that attracted 61,822 users** and received **312,089** page views
- Sent nearly **5,800 tweets** and attracted **3,282** followers
- Attracted **570** members to its **LinkedIn group**
- Developed a **successful media partnership with Arts Professional** to disseminate its activities and spark sector debate

## 2.2 Reach and significance of the programme

The AFP programme was launched in 2013 and described as “a massive opportunity that will benefit the wider arts and culture sector” (Peter Bazalgette, Chair of Arts Council England, June 2013). The overall reach of the programme in the sector has been extensive: for example, an estimated 4,000 people have been actively involved with the programme through AFP’s strategic networks and partnerships with high profile bodies including Arts Council England (ACE), Dance UK (now One Dance), ABO, UK Theatres, the Association of Independent Museums, The Audience Agency, British Arts Festivals Association, Contemporary Visual Arts Network, Independent Theatre Council, Museums Association and the Society of Chief Librarians. By recruiting a new cohort of Regional Network Co-ordinators, it has funded 20 new regional arts fundraising networks from Dorset to Tyneside, which are likely to provide a sustainable peer-led national legacy of the programme for many years to come.

Despite encountering significant challenges in selling places for the National Training Programme courses in the first year of the programme, the key focus of AFP has been on delivering high quality training and development opportunities for the arts fundraising community. To that end, AFP has delivered 149 training sessions to 2,467 delegates from a representative range of regions and art forms, achieving an extraordinary average satisfaction rate of 91%.<sup>2</sup> From a demand base of over 420 applicants, it has created a new community of 55 Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Fellows, who have all been hosted in an arts organisation for an intensive year of work-based and academic learning. These Fellows have directly raised or helped to raise an extra £1.6m of income and, according to their host organisations, tangibly influenced more confident, innovative and effective

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<sup>2</sup> The closest published benchmark for this figure is probably the National Student Survey (NSS), which is conducted annually amongst all final year students at UK universities. To be included in the top ten for overall satisfaction, universities need to score an average satisfaction of 92% minimum. The AFP result of 91% would place AFP in 13<sup>th</sup> position, although it should be noted that the NSS survey also takes into account the overall student experience.

ways of fundraising.

In 2014 and 2015, AFP delivered two successful National Summer Schools focussing on arts fundraising and leadership, the first of their kind in Europe, attracting 45 delegates (including the first two cohorts of Fellows). AFP will run a third National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership in July 2016, which will welcome the third cohort of 25 Fellows plus up to 10 independent delegates. As part of this activity, it has accredited the first ever postgraduate programme in Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy, a Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert), which has already celebrated 25 successful graduations. In a successful attempt to certify aspects of the programme beyond the UK, AFP has collaborated with the European Sponsorship Association (ESA) to launch the first-ever dedicated arts and culture certificate in sponsorship, attracting 9 successful participants. AFP has also worked intensively over a longer time period with 36 participants on its Coaching Programme; run 3 action learning training sessions; and facilitated 2 new action learning sets.

Digital learning has also been an important strand of delivering accessible and responsive training to the sector. As part of its Digital Learning Programme, AFP has successfully established Fundraising-Pro: a brand new self-assessment tool for arts fundraisers based on a newly commissioned set of National Organisational Standards, which has already attracted 442 fundraisers. It has designed, commissioned and edited 5 online training videos and sourced 175 new fundraising resources and disseminated these on CultureHive, where they have been downloaded 12,094 times. The Digital Learning Programme has also included 10 online fundraising workshops with 129 participants.

Although the AFP programme's marketing has at times struggled to communicate a differentiated offer and to cross-promote activity across the various strands of the programme, overall the marketing activity has succeeded in achieving some significant goals and targets, particularly through an impressively co-ordinated digital and social media marketing effort. This has culminated in 155 blogs that were viewed over the period of the funding almost 11,000 times and in 5,800 tweets that attracted almost 3,300 followers. This high social media presence represents interactive engagement with audiences that has led to discussion and debate and disseminates emerging thinking and practice. Alongside this activity, AFP has developed a well branded website that has attracted 61,822 users and received 312,089 page views. AFP has also attracted 570 members to its LinkedIn group, thus building a new online community as a virtual presence for promotion, networking, dialogue and debate. In terms of media presence, AFP has notably developed a successful media partnership with *Arts Professional* to disseminate its activities and spark sector-level debate.

## 2.3 The Programme's impact on the sector

**“Changing the game for arts fundraising as Clore did for leadership.”**

(Phil Gibby, Area Director, South West, Arts Council England, July 2015)

### 2.3.1 Income generation and diversification

It is challenging to prove any direct cause and effect regarding income generation and diversification as a result of the AFP programme alone. However, there are clear indications that the Fellowship programme has generated a significant return on investment – with the first two cohorts of Fellows bringing in over **£1.6m** to their host organisations. It is worth highlighting here that Fellows have also added value in many other ways by building capacity for, and in some cases establishing an infrastructure and positive culture of fundraising in their host organisations.

It is still too soon to say whether there are any tangible impacts on the fundraising income raised as a result of the programme's interventions through the National Training Programme, AMA Conference, Digital Learning, Coaching and Networks programmes. However, feedback from delegates engaged in these strands indicate that the AFP programme has resulted in a positive impact on their fundraising practices. This finding is also reflected in comparative national sector survey results conducted by the evaluation team. For example, at the outset of the programme, the 2013/14 national sector survey conducted by the evaluation team indicated that 21% of

organisations relied on ACE for over 50% of their funding and 37.5% of respondents reported that they received no corporate sponsorship. **By 2016, the survey reported that the proportion of organisations receiving no corporate sponsorship had risen to 44%, while only 16% received over 50% of their funding from ACE** indicating that English arts organisations are now less reliant on ACE funding. According to the 2015/16 survey these **funding gaps have been met through greater diversification of income sources**. Income from trusts and foundations remains buoyant (28% of respondents reported receiving over 25% of their income from this source) but gaps are being met particularly by **individual giving, legacies, membership fees and earned income**. These findings reflect existing studies into the steady decline in corporate sponsorship, especially in the regions, and whilst again, the overall trend cannot be attributed directly to the AFP programme, in tandem with ACE's Catalyst scheme, it seems that the AFP programme has increased capacity to fundraise and encouraged innovation, but that **there is a lot more work to do to change traditional practices and approaches for more innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to arts fundraising and for more focus on the wider resilience agenda**.

### 2.3.2 Skills development

There is strong evidence that the programme has exerted a significant impact on skills development and working practices in the sector. Year on year, all of the programme KPIs have been met or exceeded for this objective. Over the lifetime of the programme, an aggregated average of **91%** of the National Training Programme delegates agreed that their training was of high quality. **91%** agreed that it would improve their working practices and **94%** of delegates agreed that the training would have a positive impact on their professional development. It is also worth noting that over the lifetime of the programme, the KPI benchmarks rose from an initial 70% satisfaction to a benchmark of 80% in Year Two, and then finally to a challenging 90% in the final year. The fact that even this challenging benchmark has been met evidences the exceptionally high quality of the delivery.

Reflecting this quantitative evaluation, participants interviewed over the course of the evaluation were generally very positive about the short training courses, seeing them as both informative and relevant, indicating that the AFP programme has generated appropriate learning tools and resources that will leave a positive legacy on the sector:

*"I had no expectations, I don't have much fundraising experience so I don't feel like I'm being talked down to and I don't feel that I know, so it's the perfect one for me. [...] I can come back to the organisation with sheets so I can explain to people what I've learned so that's really useful."*

The training (formal, informal, vocational, academic and experiential) received by the Fellows has also been of a perceptibly high quality. Fellows and their hosts concur that the AFP programme has been extremely successful in intensively developing technical fundraising skills and practices, both for the Fellows and for their wider host organisations. However, there are indications that the Fellowship was less successful at developing the soft skills of successful fundraisers such as confidence, networking and communications skills. The National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership went some way to compensating for this, focusing on networking, reflective practice and critical thinking skills. For this reason, the National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership was regarded as a very positive experience by Fellows and independent students alike, attracting **100% satisfaction** with the quality and relevance of the sessions. To date, **25 students have progressed to graduate with a Postgraduate Certificate in Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy, accredited by the University of Leeds**. Some of these graduates are now seeking to progress onto Master's and/or doctoral level study.

The combined contribution of the Coaching, Digital Learning and Networks programmes has also indisputably developed the skills of a further cohort of participants and driven up the quality of basic, advanced and innovative working practices of their wider organisations. This is evident not only from the high rates of interest, engagement and completion (where relevant) but also in the responses to the sector survey, which evidenced a high and productive engagement with the various strands of the programme.

### 2.3.3 Leadership and Organisational Development

The results of the sector surveys highlighted that arts organisations in the UK are going through a period of major change, and while some of them are adapting rapidly and effectively, others are not. Responses reflected extreme variance in attitudes, resources and practices pertaining to arts fundraising. However, the comparative findings between the two surveys do indicate signs of meaningful organisational development. For example, **in the 2015/6 survey, 81% of respondents reported that they had a fundraising strategy compared with only 75% in 2014.** This gradual increase is perhaps in part linked to the accessibility of free, quality and relevant resources through the CultureHive website. Their case study on ‘developing a fundraising strategy’ was one of the most frequently downloaded resources.

Confirming existing articles and studies, the evaluation of the AFP programme has highlighted the **need to urgently address leadership** through board members’ engagement with fundraising in order to galvanise the sector. Despite a hunger for more entrepreneurial approaches to fundraising, **the arts sector has been slow to adopt innovative approaches and practices.** While AFP has definitely *addressed* this issue across the different strands of its programme, it has not succeeded in *driving* cultural change within organisations as quickly as it intended to do. The likely cause of this is the very low fundraising level at which the majority of the sector was operating at the time when the AFP programme was launched, which is evidenced by the seemingly insatiable demand over the three years for basic fundraising courses. As discussed above, the AFP programme has done much to raise the baseline skills of the sector over the last three years, and any future programme therefore could capitalise on the solid platform provided by the AFP programme to enable the sector to become more innovative and entrepreneurial. However there are indications that this shift will require a different more holistic, organisational approach – possibly through development of a mid to senior level Fellowship scheme. There are indications that the existing Fellowships scheme has been too short and pitched at too junior a level to enable the AFP Fellows to engage in any meaningful relationship building with donors or to lead organisational change. Furthermore, there is a view within ACE that the resource intensity of the Fellowships is not sustainable for a rolling one-year programme.

Despite these apparent shortcomings, evidence has continued to accumulate that **the AFP programme has steadily impacted on the cultures of organisations** that have engaged with the programme, especially through the Fellowship and Coaching strands. As one Fellowship host put it:

*“It is really refreshing to find individuals who are passionate about good fundraising, and best practice in fundraising, and about the art. And if that’s the starting point, then thank you AFP, ’cos you’ve kind of instilled that.”*

Whilst this does not provide concrete evidence that the AFP programme has impacted on business models *per se*, there are clear signs from the sector survey that arts organisations are starting to adopt a more strategic approach to fundraising. Indications are that as the number of direct beneficiaries of the AFP programme reaches a critical mass, the impact on organisational culture across the sector could eventually reach a tipping point and effect the all-important culture shift anticipated by ACE.

Regarding the Coaching Programme and action learning sets, it seems that the impact of these strands has been most profound in aspects of leadership, strategic development and organisational change. The focus on personal development and support required by these particular approaches will inevitably require a longer-term evaluation, but this should not undermine their value in terms of addressing ACE objectives related to developing leadership skills, development capacity and resilience of organisations in the sector. These strands of the programme could be fruitfully integrated into a more senior level fellowship scheme. Furthermore, the National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership and Postgraduate Certificate specifically and successfully addressed the need for leadership skills amongst fundraisers.

### 2.3.4 Professionalization and dissemination

The Postgraduate Certificate in Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy represents the first formally accredited academic arts fundraising programme in Europe and provides a strong indication that the

programme is continuing to professionalize the way that arts fundraising is understood and delivered. The reflections of an independent learner on the PG Cert bears testament to the finding that the AFP programme has increased professionalism and employability, which in this case was associated with “intellectual rigour” and “a new confidence in my abilities”. Unconsciously addressing the objective to disseminate best practice, this senior fundraiser also explained that she had shared her learning with her team and other colleagues. This provides further indication of the “trickle-down” nature of much of the training and development opportunities delivered by the AFP programme.

The case studies conducted over the past three years of AFP Fellows and their respective host organisations have provided rich narrative evidence that AFP has created tangible pathways to increased professionalism. This professional development is not only evidenced by the income earned by the Fellows and by their strong career trajectories and destinations, but also by the ongoing investment that arts organisations are willing to allocate to fundraising roles beyond the lifetime of the Fellowship.

The Digital Learning Programme and the National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership were shaped and influenced by the new National Occupational Standards (NOSs) that were developed at the start of the AFP Programme. These standards marked a significant step in formalising the sector’s expectations of well-trained fundraisers and served to professionalize and provide recognizable benchmarks for the discipline within and beyond the sector. FundraisingPro, which is based directly on the NOSs, is attracting growing numbers of new and established fundraisers to its training needs analysis, which is subsequently signposting them to the growing body of free digital resources on CultureHive. This increasingly international bank of case studies is continuing to facilitate dissemination, while collaborations with professional organisations like the European Sponsorship Association are responding to growing international demand.

The Networks Programme, the action learning sets and the fundraising strand of the annual AMA Conference all demonstrate **the traction that arts fundraising is gaining as a recognised area of professional practice in the arts**, thanks in large part to the AFP programme. These initiatives present ideal opportunities for formal and informal dissemination via expert and peer networking and facilitate the exchange of best and emerging good practice in arts fundraising.

### 2.3.5 Fundraising Infrastructure

**Opinions on whether the AFP programme has increased the infrastructure for arts fundraising remain mixed.** AFP regional coordinators were divided on the issue with some appreciating the input and focus that the AFP programme provided while other co-ordinators pointed out that very active regional networks of arts fundraisers already exist in their part of the country. This perspective was borne out by the findings of the sector survey, where almost **61% of respondents said that they were members of a fundraising forum or network.** The most common networks listed included Institute of Fundraising (29%), AFP (21%) and AMA (12%). This suggests that while AFP and AMA combined have become the go-to regional source for arts fundraising support and development, IoF retains a relatively large market share and is ahead of AFP as a sole brand. It was interesting to note the large number of regional networks listed by respondents. This suggests that AFP’s relatively new Regional Networking Scheme could help it to take hold in the regions and provide the tailored support often required by arts organisations. It is suggested that going forward these peer networks could gain more influence by engaging more proactively with artists and general managers, and with other stakeholders for whom fundraising is only part of a much wider focus and remit.

At this closing stage of the programme, there is growing evidence that initiatives such as the National Training Programme and the Fellowship Programme have made a quick and significant contribution to the infrastructure for arts fundraising in England. This is perhaps most tangibly and visibly apparent in the Fellowship programme, where the third cohort of 25 Fellows is now successfully in place, heralding a future combined alumni group of 55. The destination data of the first two cohorts of Fellows demonstrate how highly they are regarded in the sector, with some reaching managerial and even director levels less than three months after the completion of their Fellowships. This tangible evidence of success is supported by the softer narrative endorsements of the programme provided by the host organisations, which, despite certain reservations about the

intensive management time that the Fellowship demands, nevertheless feel that the contribution of the Fellows has been significant.

### 2.3.5 Fundraising challenges

In the 2013/14 survey the most significant challenges in fundraising were identified as organisational capacity, competition, local economic climate, perceived negative views of art forms as ‘elitist’, and lack of audience data. Whilst these issues were still prevalent in 2016, concerns seem to have become more internal, with respondents focusing on issues of **organisational culture and support from senior managers and boards**. For a significant minority of organisations, the challenge is to develop fundraising activity (and a fundraising strategy) from scratch. Another emerging issue seems to be perceptions of **a general lack of wealth in certain regions and a lack of philanthropic culture amongst potential donors**. This suggests an increase in donor engagement over the past two years, but highlights the challenges of making this activity actually pay off. Both ACE and the AFP programme consortium have acknowledged the risk of over-relying on emerging initiatives like The Audience Agency’s Donor Finder to achieve this particular objective.

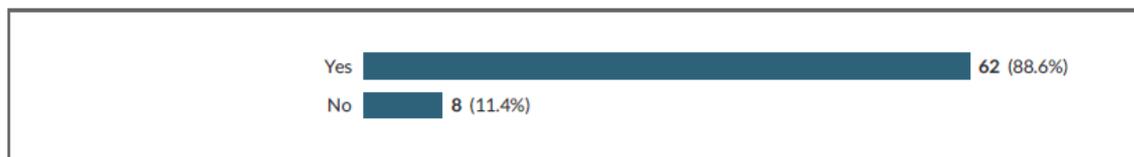
However, greater focus on donor cultivation and management was provided in the Year 3 training programme and the findings of the sector survey indicate that between them, AFP and the Catalyst programme have indeed raised awareness in the sector about the need to target individual giving and to improve donor relations. It was noteworthy in the survey that **44% of respondents mentioned individual giving as a key future source of their fundraising**. Indeed the key area for growth was identified as individual giving, with legacies and major gifts representing an increasingly popular objective. Despite these positive signs of future focus on donor targeting, cultivation and management, it seems at the moment that this area of practice remains largely aspirational.

### 2.3.6 Awareness and knowledge exchange

In the 2015/16 survey, **over 88% of respondents said they were aware of the AFP programme**, compared with just 58% in 2014. This suggests that AFP’s marketing has reached the vast majority of organisations across the arts sector and developed its brand significantly over the past 18 months.

**Figure 2.2: Sector awareness of AFP**

Are you aware of the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy programme?



When asked how they had primarily engaged with the AFP programme, it transpired that **over 31% of respondents to the sector survey had sent a delegate or delegates to a National Training Programme course**. Whilst 23% had not engaged in any AFP activities to date, over 11% had been represented at the AMA conference and over 8% had sent participants to a trustee training course. Under 7% said they had engaged with CultureHive’s online resources, and even fewer with the Fellowship programme and the National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership. While this of course reflects the relatively small number of places available on these targeted schemes, it also leads to the conclusion that while awareness of the AFP programme has risen significantly over the three years of the programme, there remains further potential to penetrate the core market in a much more significant way.

Regarding the *depth* of engagement, there is now significant evidence that the Fellowship Programme, the National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership (and PG Certificate), the Digital Learning Programme, the AMA Conference and the Networks Programme have harnessed and facilitated knowledge exchange and developed and disseminated field-leading discussion and debate. For example, the National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership hosted the first of a series of recorded national debates (on artist-led philanthropy). To

date, 26 academic essays on a range of topics pertaining to arts fundraising and leadership have been submitted in partial fulfilment of the PG Certificate, and these essays are continuing to build a bank of academic resources, which will be made available to the sector through CultureHive and CultureCase to develop the still emerging academic field of arts fundraising and philanthropy. Following on from the success of the National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership, the academic publisher Routledge is interested in publishing a textbook on arts fundraising and philanthropy. On 10 June 2015, the University of Leeds hosted a symposium with academics from Cass Business School (City University, London) and Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh and regional arts partners (including Opera North, Yorkshire Dance and Northern Ballet) to explore how universities could most effectively develop and contribute to the field of arts fundraising and take this publishing offer forward. Academic colleagues from Sheffield Management School, University of Manchester, University of Kent and Kings College London are also interested in exploring this opportunity further.

### 2.3.7 Future trends and innovation

When asked in the survey where they saw their future sources of fundraising coming from, **44% of organisations mentioned individual giving**. Allied comments indicated that respondents were picturing a gradual increase in small individual giving, alongside a balanced continuation of other key areas of income such as trusts and foundations, sponsorship, ACE and local government funding. But the key area for growth was clearly identified as individual giving, with **legacies and major gifts representing an increasingly popular aspiration**. Other recurrent responses included corporate partnerships, crowdfunding, online giving, EU funding and commissions from the health sector. This highlights the potentially negative impact of the EU referendum result to income generation in the arts and also illustrates **the need for arts organisations to engage in partnership working and development**. Any future programme might benefit therefore from focussing on this area of activity in future delivery.

Qualitative analysis of responses to the question of which new approaches to fundraising organisations had adopted over the past two years indicated a significant rise in crowdfunding. More tentative forays into innovative approaches included a young patrons' scheme, mobile giving and even a lottery scheme. ACE's Catalyst scheme was mentioned repeatedly as the key driver or inspiration behind the adoption of new methods (by 19% of respondents), but it was noteworthy that many responses here cited quite traditional approaches such as trusts and foundations, venue hire, capital campaigns and sponsorship, as being innovative to their organisations, suggesting that **a strong focus on innovation might be a worthwhile strategy in any future programme**.

## 3. Stakeholder reflections

### 3.1 Introduction

This section is based on reflections from a cross-section of key stakeholders of the AFP programme. A short questionnaire was sent out to representatives of the following stakeholder groups:

- AFP consortium partners (AMA, Cause4, Opera North/DARE and University of Leeds)
- AFP trainers
- AFP host organisations
- AFP learners

Responses were received from all four of the AFP consortium partners. We also received six responses from trainers, two from host organisations and one from an independent National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership participant who subsequently enrolled on the Postgraduate Certificate. In addition, a telephone interview was conducted with Clare Titley, Director of Philanthropy at ACE. The following section provides an analytical summary of their responses.

### 3.2 Key findings and analysis

#### 3.2.1 Planning and development

One of the most significant findings from these reflections transpired to be the **need to build in much more time for planning in future national initiatives of this nature** – perhaps most importantly so that market research can be undertaken and so that legal agreements can be established to manage and spread financial risk. For example, the National Training Programme had to deliver before the market had been properly analysed, so in effect the first 18 months of the programme became essentially a process of action research.

Planning time would also help consortium partners to get to know each other and understand each other's working practices, which could help to:

- clarify roles and task allocation;
- establish and manage mutual expectations;
- explore opportunities for co-working and co-delivery / working across discrete programme strands.

#### 3.2.2 Consortium working

While all of the partners highlighted the **positive aspects of consortium working**, such as **professional development, complementarity, national reach, networking and peer learning**, this approach to programme management does present a particular set of legal and operational challenges. At times, governance seems to have been either too restrictive or too loose, and the lack of regular face-to-face communication appears to have hampered some crossover and innovation. Even more significantly, one of the partners felt that the knowledge and experience of the individual partners was not fully exploited and combined, and therefore that the programme was not always “collectively owned”.

A lesson to learn here is perhaps to return to the core values of the consortium both regularly and explicitly to ensure that collaboration is based on a genuine spirit of partnership. It is perhaps fair to conclude from the AFP consortium partners' experiences that **although most arts and cultural organisations are used to collaborating and co-producing, the vast majority of them are not constituted in a way that facilitates the management of a significant national programme like AFP**. They also lack training and experience in this type of delivery. ACE might therefore consider offering (or outsourcing) development opportunities for consortia members to support similar programmes in the future.

### 3.2.3 Effective Delivery

There was a strong consensus in the stakeholder reflections that **the AFP programme delivered effectively within each of its discreet strands**. The relatively small scale of some of the partners (notably Cause4 and AMA) enabled the consortium to be agile and to respond with impressive rapidity to feedback and iterative evaluation in order to implement positive change almost immediately. However, it was also noted that **opportunities were missed in this approach to collaborate and cross-fertilise across the different strands to establish a more holistic offer**.

### 3.2.4 Budgeting

Another common issue highlighted by the partners was the tendency to under-budget: all partners appear to have spent significantly more time on the programme than they initially budgeted for. This seems to have induced opportunity costs for consortium members, as time which should have been allocated to other activity was lost on working on the AFP programme. This issue is perhaps a direct result of **the tendering process, which can encourage a culture of under-costing in order to get the tender and which places a disproportionate focus on delivery, as opposed to planning, market analysis, reflection and financial/operational management**.

### 3.2.5 Accreditation

Both Opera North and the University of Leeds mentioned how the **AFP programme fostered the development of new higher education accredited programmes**. It seems that the commitment built in to the Fellowship programme to accredit part of the Fellow's learning has also broken down both perceived and real barriers to the wider accreditation of what has previously been vocational or work-based learning in the arts sector. This development is evidenced beyond AFP by the accreditation of the Pettman DARE Scholarships, whereby two scholars are hosted each year by Opera North. Since participating in the AFP Programme, from 2016 the scholars have also been enrolled as part of their scholarship on a postgraduate diploma at the University of Leeds.

However, it is important to note the ambivalence with which the National Training Programme trainers responded to the question of accreditation. **For many arts workers, academic study is still regarded as overly theoretical and as an unwelcome distraction, or at least peripheral, to learning on the job**. This view was also communicated clearly during an initial 'hopes and fears' exercise at the second National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership; but as the ensuing evaluation highlighted, by the end of the week, delegates felt that the balance between academic and vocational learning was about right and the false dichotomy between the two started to disappear. Whilst there remains a concern about the profile given to academic or accredited learning by arts leaders, and this ambivalence is often manifest in employees (or Fellows) not being given sufficient time to study and reflect on their practice feedback, from the learner's perspective, academic study can facilitate career development and provide "higher visibility" within their organisation. **It is to be hoped that more partnership working between HE and the sector will continue to influence the co-delivery of research-led but vocationally orientated learning**.

### 3.2.6 Learning organisations

**A common positive outcome of the programme for the consortium partners transpired to be their increased confidence and self-awareness of themselves as effective learning and teaching organisations**. While this is fundamentally important for University of Leeds (for whom education is of course a core activity), it is interesting to note this positive impact on the other partners. From the University's perspective, the responsibility of delivering an effective and high quality programme that combined aspects of distance, blended and executive learning forced the institution to reconsider its approach to and support for non-traditional learners. Similarly, the AMA and the University of Leeds shared a common experience in developing online learning content. Whilst the AMA learnt that content development and audience engagement sometimes requires a commissioning editor, the University of Leeds realised that alternative forms of learning demand regular online communication and moderation, and often challenge standard university practices and procedures. This lack of foresight translated into unanticipated costs (in time and money) for

both organisations and suggests that future interventions that incorporate digital learning should cost in supporting activities such as commissioning, editing, moderating and extra tutoring from the outset. But the payoff for appropriate investment in these supporting activities can be significant on a strategic level: as the AMA discovered, when online content is right, this can deliver comparatively high levels of sector engagement and help to develop an appetite for knowledge exchange and disseminate best practice more widely. For the University of Leeds, this experience is likely to position it well over the next ten years, as these types of learning continue to proliferate. What was also highlighted here was the positive impact that learning collaborations between HE and the arts and cultural sector can effect. This confirms recent studies into partnership working (e.g. Comunion & Gilmore, 2016<sup>3</sup>) and perhaps suggests that the **AFP programme foreshadows a future where co-delivery of further and higher education will become more commonplace.**

### 3.2.7 Culture shift

Regarding the impact of AFP on the sector, the evaluation indicated that **while the programme had certainly developed learners' hard skills, it had not placed sufficient focus on soft skills and not yet impacted significantly on arts leaders and trustees, and therefore failed to effect a tangible culture shift.** Reflecting on this, consortium partners felt that perhaps sector change was always going to be far too ambitious for an initial three-year programme. Host organisations who fed into this final evaluation clearly had positive experiences of the AFP programme though they also agreed that while it effected significant change on a micro level, **only a longer-term approach would engender sector-level change.** The AMA discussed **the need to continue to break down silos and join-up thinking across the sector.** This has been a recurrent theme in the evaluation.

Arts fundraising is developing and maturing as both a professional practice and an emerging academic discipline, and it is slowly challenging pernicious perceptions of commercialism, illegitimacy and amateurism. As it grows in confidence and in professional legitimacy, like arts marketing before it, it is seeping outside of functional and departmental silos and slowly taking root across entire organisations. As one group articulated it at the first National Summer School for Arts Fundraising and Leadership: "We're all fundraisers now!". This suggests that **arts organisations, together with their funders and other supporters, need to take a more holistic view and maybe consider fundraising in broader terms of income/organisational development.** This in turn implies a more immersive, organisational approach to training and development that might arguably be better served by a consultancy model that focusses on change management and organisation development. Online resources and virtual networks clearly have a significant role to play in supporting and disseminating the learning from any such approach.

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<sup>3</sup> Comunion, R. and Gilmore, A. 2016. *Higher education and the creative economy: beyond the campus.* Abingdon: Routledge.

## 4. Conclusions and final reflections

This evaluation has demonstrated that overall, **the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Programme has operated extremely successfully and met, if not exceeded, almost all of its original KPIs.** The only objectives that were not fully met were related to aspects of changing working practices with donors and driving positive, entrepreneurial change in organisational cultures of fundraising. The impressive quantitative data illustrated in Section 2 testify to the AFP Programme's contribution towards developing a more fundraising conscious and up-skilled sector. Perhaps even more gratifying are the signs that **the AFP Programme seems to have developed arts fundraisers who are not just experienced in, but also passionate about, fundraising and development. As well as developing a sustainable legacy of case studies and complementary digital learning resources, the AFP Programme has also facilitated a burgeoning network of peer support across England, and fostered a culture of coaching and action learning that is having a broader influence on developmental practice in the arts.**

**The overall impact of the AFP programme therefore has been significant.** The programme has gained a very strong level of recognition across the arts sector (88% awareness) and beyond (notably in local government and other voluntary sectors<sup>4</sup>) and satisfaction rates across the programme have been outstanding. The programme has successfully met its objective of accrediting part of the Fellowship Programme and is now delivering a ground-breaking postgraduate academic course, which complements the vocational aspects of the other strands of the programme. The Digital Learning Programme has engaged (and continues to engage) with a rapidly growing cohort of online learners, despite the fact that its resources were not always marketed effectively across the programme. The Coaching Programme has had a high impact on those who completed it, but this impact was slow to emerge, broad, predominantly personal and limited to a small number of participants. It might in future be more fruitfully rolled into a more senior fellowship programme and/or focussed on arts and cultural leaders. As a direct result of the AFP Programme, the AMA Conference has expanded successfully into arts fundraising and the Regional Co-ordinators Programme is working alongside existing regional fundraising networks to embed the programme activity across England.

**What remains unclear at this stage is how the AFP Programme might be influencing bigger shifts in practice and culture** – It is self-evident that arts organisations are enduring a period of rapid change and that they need to change their approach to income generation very quickly in order to survive, never mind thrive. **Whilst there are certainly nascent indications of a more entrepreneurial fundraising culture in the arts, alongside a desire to focus on individual giving, much more work remains to be done in these areas.** One of the key learning points from this programme is that it takes a significant amount of time and effort (certainly longer than three years) to promote and develop innovative new working practices and effect a tangible shift in organisation culture for example by facilitating the development of more creative fundraising techniques and more resilient business models. There remains arguably insufficient focus on alternative methods and approaches such as consultancy and change management, which might foster bigger picture changes and ultimately effect the desired culture shift. **This suggests that the arts sector needs another intervention such as the AFP programme more than ever and that these areas should thus be foregrounded in any future arts fundraising programme.**

The strand that perhaps requires the most attention going forward is the Fellowship Programme. Despite the resounding success of the overall Fellowship programme, **serious concerns remain regarding the lack of diversity across the programme.** Fellows represented a very poor gender, ethnic and educational mix, particularly in the first two years. This highlights the challenges involved in recruiting and selecting a diverse field of candidates in the arts in the UK, and indicates the need to at least consider possible remedies such as targeted recruitment and minimum quotas in any future fellowship or internship schemes beyond the lifetime of this programme. There is also some consensus amongst the myriad voices that contributed to this evaluation that the Fellowship scheme was too short and Fellows did not always develop the soft skills that would enable them to develop

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<sup>4</sup> This wider recognition could prove significant in the newly restructured DCMS, which now oversees the entire voluntary sector.

meaningful relationships with potential donors and apply for the managerial and leadership roles to which many of them aspire. This begs the question of whether **it might be more beneficial to focus any future fellowship programme on mid-career and senior fundraisers, while directing more organisational development predominantly towards senior managers and trustees.**

Another rationale for focussing on more senior staff is that the sector now boasts a fresh cohort of 55 early-mid career fundraisers who have received an unprecedented amount and level of development and who now constitute a critical mass of growing expertise. Perhaps the activity at the entry-level of the profession needs to focus more on the short course delivery of basic fundraising skills as offered by the National Training Programme, while more senior staff are encouraged to take a broader approach to fundraising through an organisational development approach that might better address ACE's objectives to up-skill arts managers and leaders and increase organisational resilience. With this in mind, **a future Fellowship Programme and National Summer School/PG Certificate might focus more broadly on organisational development and leadership rather than solely arts fundraising.** This would also be more likely to attract fellows and delegates for whom fundraising is not a core function and therefore broaden the market and impact.

Regarding the consortium itself, the partners' reflections communicated the huge benefits they all derived from working with new organisations that complemented and enhanced their own skills and strengths. However, the consortium's structure and governance represented a discernible weakness of the programme, particularly during the first two years. **The funding model and timeframe imposed by ACE on the consortium meant that delivery had to begin before robust financial, legal and management structures were in place. This caused the partners a significant amount of stress and led to an understandable prioritisation of delivery at the expense of planning, market analysis and relationship building.** The first two years of working appear to have been characterized by a lack of collectivity and connectivity and hampered by a failure to always work in a spirit of equal partnership. This was perhaps a combined result of the geographic spread, differences in organisational culture, weak governance, insufficient planning time, and over-commitment (and significant under-budgeting) of human and financial resources.

However, the delivery itself does not appear to have suffered at any point in this process, and the consortium responded very rapidly to almost all of the recommendations stemming from the evaluation. This may be in part due to having the evaluation team embedded in the consortium. Although in hindsight it would have been cleaner to structurally separate delivery from evaluation, it did certainly facilitate a genuinely iterative approach, which meant that arising issues were dealt with almost immediately. This in turn led the programme to be flexible and to be able to 'pivot'. All of the consortium partners worked hard to resolve partnership issues throughout the programme and the final year has witnessed a more settled and collective approach. From the consortium's perspective this meant that **the AFP Programme has acted as an effective form of action research, which has developed all of the partners individually into more effective and efficient learning organisations.**

Despite these significant challenges, in the final analysis, it can only be concluded that **AFP has been a ground-breaking intervention that has left behind a legacy of skilled, engaged and connected fundraisers; robust academic and vocational learning programmes; a bespoke training needs analysis; a significant body of online learning materials; and an effective consortium of training deliverers.** As the AMA articulated it:

*"The AFP programme has contributed hugely to the professionalization of fundraising within the sector. The profile, scale and endorsement from across the sector has been important in raising awareness of the need for this initiative. In turn, we believe this has driven interest in improving capabilities and capacity within arts organisations and fundraising teams."*