

Art & Power: empowering more people to participate in the sector

Background

Motivations for involvement in C3

Art & Power wanted to get involved in C3 because they wanted all staff and members to develop their understanding of what the organisation does and why. Understanding why helps to define outcomes and impact. They were particularly interested in the advisor facilitated discursive rather than tick box approach of C3, and in the opportunities for members to talk about their understanding of the organisation.

Process

C3Perform was conducted with all staff in a single efficient afternoon. A version of workshop perform was conducted with selected members over two 1.5 hour sessions. The format for this workshop perform was heavily simplified. The perform statements were translated into a series of prompts, supported by some simple images. These prompts were then used by the advisor to encourage the members to talk about their understanding and experience of the organisation.

This member discourse was recorded over both sessions and drafted into a report with several key improvement ideas.

Improvements made

The organisation chose to prioritise those improvements that impacted directly on member participation and engagement with the organisation. This has focused on improving the structure of member meetings; developing opportunities for members to make active resource procurement decisions; enabling members to have an active role in inducting new volunteers and creative mentors and to provide clearer information to members about the day to day staffing of the organisation.

Other improvements include all staff being more engaged in monitoring and reviewing leading to more realistic data collection and analysis and a general improvement in the efficiency of the organisation; Making workers' skills and knowledge about certain aspects of the organisation more accessible to everyone (i.e. not safeguarding information with one person); and explicitly addressing questions of equal opportunities by providing training for all members and staff.

Feedback from participants

Art + Power were particularly pleased with the way in which Perform was flexible enough an approach to enable the learning disabled members to be active in the process. Director David Richmond comments that this was “a rare opportunity (for members) to give feedback about the organisation to external facilitators”.

Furthermore, following their perform sessions more members have taken up the member spaces on the Board of Governors, suggesting that they are now more confident about their understanding of Art + Power and feel able to participate at a governance level.

Next steps

Continue to develop impact measurements through a variety of means.
Continue to develop & deliver equalities training for all members and staff
To provide governance training for members in order to build on the new enthusiasm shown for governance amongst the members.
To return to & complete PQASSO