



Unlimited Impact Spirit of 2012



UNLIMITED...
Impact



Onyema Ibe
Blake Stevenson Ltd





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction and Context

In summer 2015, Blake Stevenson Ltd completed a case study evaluation of Unlimited Impact in its first of three years of funding from Spirit of 2012. The Unlimited Impact Programme extends and complements a programme, called Unlimited, which is being funded by the Arts Council England that encourages and strengthens collaborations and partnerships between disability arts organisations, established disabled artists, producers and mainstream organisations. Shape and Artsadmin, who also deliver the main programme, designed Unlimited Impact to inspire a new generation of young and emerging disabled artists, social activists and art enthusiasts to promote a more positive public perception of disabled people.

There are two strands to the Unlimited Impact Programme:

- **Allies:** this strand intends to create and extend strategic alliances with cultural venues and festivals so that they engage with disabled artists', develop strong links with disabled communities in their localities and develop new audiences. In the first year, nine ally projects were identified.
- **Ambassadors:** this strand works with young disabled artists, art activists and art enthusiasts to develop and present high quality artwork, learn and develop new skills in arts marketing, increase access to support and boost their confidence to develop their careers in the arts. In the first year, eight ambassador projects were identified.



Four outcomes were identified for the Unlimited Impact Programme:

- **Outcome 1:** Over 20 arts and cultural venues from all over the UK demonstrate improved confidence in showcasing and supporting disabled artists, and attracting and responding to disabled audiences' access needs;
- **Outcome 2:** Up to 50 young disabled people developing and presenting high quality artwork, learning and developing new skills in arts marketing, increased access support, and have their confidence boosted to develop their careers in the arts;
- **Outcome 3:** Over 10,000 members of the public are inspired by directly experiencing high quality work by disabled artists all across England and Scotland; and
- **Outcome 4:** Up to 20 million people across the UK experience the great work of disabled artists through an extensive Marketing and PR strategy resulting in national television and radio broadcast coverage.

The evaluation focuses around discussions with Unlimited Impact and draws on background documents and reports from Spirit of 2012 and Unlimited Impact, interviews with Janice Parker who works with artist Craig Simpson (Ambassador) and Sam Gough at Summerhall (Ally), interviews with two Unlimited Impact staff and a Spirit of 2012 member of staff and data analysis.

Mechanism

Rather than an open application process, Allies and Ambassadors are identified strategically so that aspects like art form and geographical location are a key consideration. Specifically, Allies are identified through general callouts, promotion to the wider network of contacts involved with Shape or Unlimited, or by artists who require additional support in order to establish their work. For Ambassadors, identification mainly takes place through the Unlimited programme, or through proposals by companies working with disabled young people.

Identified Allies and Ambassadors undergo a general discussion to establish a formalised proposal, which involves a short written narrative of the project, a budget breakdown, in kind contributions and match funding, and milestones and outcomes. Once funded, Allies and Ambassadors have access to an array of support and development opportunities that utilise Shape and Artadmin's knowledge and experience.

The Year 1 evidence gathering approach has largely revolved around four surveys, but due to the mid-year implementation of the surveys, only a minority of projects in Year 1 completed their baseline surveys, and as yet, no evaluation surveys have been received. The evidence gathering requirements have evolved with the introduction of the outcomes pathways and the team at Unlimited Impact are still refining the data collection processes so that they can ensure that they gather consistent baseline and end of project information to evidence the outcomes and impact of the projects and Unlimited Impact as a whole.



To date, there are a number of learning points about the management of the programme:

- In future, there should be a focus on larger grants to fewer projects;
- Allow sufficient time and realistic lifecycles for projects to design and deliver their work;
- While some aspects of the programme have taken longer to establish, there is now a better understanding of the types of support required;
- The team recognise the need to be clearer about the amount of flexibility surrounding delivery and milestones;
- The team have also adapted contracts and information required from projects in order to better meet the requirements of Spirit and Unlimited Impact;
- A number of factors - lack of consistent data, the number and range of projects, the introduction of outcomes pathways after Unlimited Impact had been funded - has posed challenges to evidencing the effects of the programme.

Outcomes

This project targets Spirit's outcome areas listed below:

- Empowering Young People
- Empowering Disabled People
- Challenging the Perceptions of Disability

In this case study evaluation report we apply a realist approach which focuses on understanding why particular mechanisms work in given contexts that result in particular outcomes, 'Context + Mechanism = Outcome'.

The quarterly reports and the end of Year 1 report captured the progress and achievements of the Allies and Ambassadors, as well as the plans for the projects in Year 2.

All the Ambassadors projects are designed to support young people to express themselves and communicate their ideas, feelings or messages through their art of performances. This focus addresses the key outcomes in the pathway designed to empower young people. All the projects are very different and capturing the breadth, variety and impact is challenging without looking at each one in detail.

Both Ambassadors and Allies address outcome pathways that relate to empowering disabled people and challenging perceptions of disability. The Allies projects in particular have increased infrastructure and services in many of their sites and addressed the physical barriers to attending events or activities. Access audits, in particular, have proved to be very successful with the walk and talk approach, encouraging discussions that develop knowledge and understanding of accessibility issues.

Conclusions

The Unlimited Impact Programme has encountered a number of successes in the initial years of funding, generally delivering on its original funded outcomes and milestones while addressing outcomes in the thematic pathways. The programme is effective in creating a network of venues and festivals more knowledgeable about supporting disabled artists and audiences – including introducing changes to support this – and providing disabled young people unique opportunities to develop skills, experience and ambitions in the field.

However, as a result of the tailored nature and diversity between projects, the close and often symbiotic relationship with the main Unlimited programme, in its first year it has been a challenge to clearly evidence its impact. There needs to be a more robust evidence base to support the programme's achievements, supported by continued development in data monitoring and self-evaluation tools within the Unlimited Impact team. This includes strengthening operational systems, reviewing and clarifying the existing outcomes and sub-outcomes, and more effectively gathering evidence indicating the benefits of the programme.

These measures will reinforce the identification of Allies and Ambassadors and aid the management of those relationships so that the Unlimited Impact programme can continue to support and inspire disabled young people, venues, audiences, and festivals in showcasing the work of disabled artists.

Recommendations

The Year 1 evaluation of Unlimited Impact identifies the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: the data monitoring and self-evaluation tools initiated during Year 1 should be further developed and embedded in Unlimited Impact activity, in order to better evidence the outcomes being achieved.

Recommendation 2: Unlimited Impact should consider how to effectively gather evidence from audiences, which demonstrates benefits resulting from increased accessibility of venues and programme content.

Recommendation 3: the Unlimited Impact team might consider reviewing the applicability of outcomes and sub-outcomes to better capture the wide impact of the programme.

Recommendation 4: the team should look to understand and address the gaps in information that currently exist, both in terms of evidence gathering to demonstrate the programme's effect, and information about the projects gathered through contracts.

1. INTRODUCTION

The early discussions with Unlimited Impact identified that there was limited quantitative data to analyse as part of this evaluation, and that two projects, both in Scotland, would be visited to give a qualitative insight into the work.

In this case study evaluation report we apply a realist approach which focuses on understanding why particular mechanisms work in given contexts that result in particular outcomes, 'Context + Mechanism = Outcome' (CMO), see Figure 1.

In the Outcomes chapter, we report on the outcomes that are evident from reviewing the progress of all projects and the interviews with the two projects we visited. The case study draws on:

- Relevant background documents and monitoring reports from Spirit of 2012 and Unlimited Impact;
- Interviews with Janice Parker, who works with artist Craig Simpson (Ambassador), and Sam Gough at Summerhall (Ally);
- Interviews with two Unlimited Impact staff and a Spirit of 2012 member of staff; and
- Data analysis which included mapping the surveys to the Spirit indicator questions, reviewing the six responses to the Allies Access survey, reviewing the recorded interviews.



Ful Monty, People Dancing, 11 Million Reasons
Photograph by Sean Goldthorpe

The Unlimited Impact Programme funds all of the ‘Allies’ and ‘Ambassadors’ distinct projects, on different scales and with varying geographical reach. Therefore the two Scotland-based projects interviewed as part of this case study, Summerhall and Janice Parker, provide a qualitative insight but are not representative of the progress, outcomes and potential impact of the other projects across England, Wales and Scotland.

Finally, it is important to note Unlimited Impact is intertwined with the Unlimited programme, funded by Arts Council England (ACE). Its structures and influences shape the Unlimited Programme, and the work of both programmes reinforces and strengthens the activity and impact of the other. In some cases it is not possible to untangle the separate effects that each programme has on those it works with and supports.

- Appendices (in a separate document) provide the survey and question mapping exercise

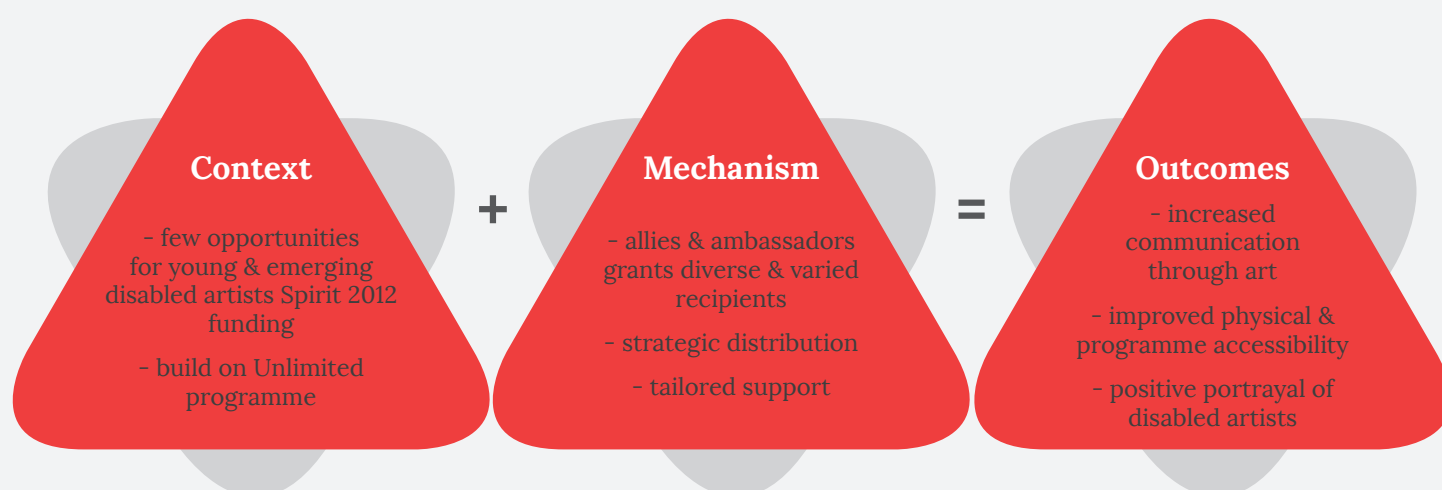


Figure 1: Methodological approach - ‘Context + Mechanism = Outcome’ (CMO)

2. CONTEXT

2.1 The History and Origins of Unlimited Impact

The Unlimited Programme builds on the success and extends the legacy of the original Cultural Olympiad project, which encouraged collaborations and partnerships between disability arts organisations, disabled artists, producers and mainstream organisations. This three-year programme is delivered by Shape, an organisation that works to ensure that disabled people participate fully in the arts and cultural sector, and Artsadmin, who as well as producing work, support artists through mentoring, personal development and providing showcasing opportunities. Together with funding from Arts Council England (ACE), the Unlimited programme commission high quality artwork by established disabled artists.

The Unlimited Impact programme, funded through Spirit of 2012 for a 32-month period, expands the reach of Unlimited to communities across England, Scotland and Wales. It is designed to challenge expectations around disability and arts to inspire a new generation of emerging disabled artists, social activists and art enthusiasts to promote a more positive public perception of disabled people.

2.2 The Two Strands of the Unlimited Impact Programme

One strand of the programme creates and extends strategic alliances with cultural venues and festivals so that they engage with disabled artists, develop strong links with disabled communities in their localities and develop new audiences. These are the Unlimited Impact Allies, and the programme expects these arts and cultural venues to demonstrate improved confidence in showcasing and supporting disabled artists, and attracting and responding to disabled audiences' access needs.

The second strand, Unlimited Impact Ambassadors, works with young disabled artists, art activists and art enthusiasts to develop and present high quality artwork, learn and develop new skills in arts marketing, increase access to support and boost their confidence to develop their careers in the arts. For young emerging artists it provides the opportunity to develop and showcase their work, with support from Unlimited Allies, alongside Unlimited events and activities.

Unlimited Impact is managed by Shape and Artsadmin and they direct their expertise to each strand, with Shape leading on geographic reach and Artsadmin leading on the work with disabled young people.



2.3 Unlimited Impact Programme Outcomes

Unlimited Impact received £500,000 to deliver a programme that incrementally works with over 20 arts and cultural venues (in areas beyond the usual geographic centres of activity) and works with up to 50 young disabled artists, arts activists and art enthusiasts.

The funding is intended to deliver the following outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Over 20 arts and cultural venues from all over the UK demonstrate improved confidence in showcasing and supporting disabled artists, and attracting and responding to disabled audiences' access needs;
- **Outcome 2:** Up to 50 young disabled people developing and presenting high quality artwork, learning and developing new skills in arts marketing, increased access support, and have their confidence boosted to develop their careers in the arts;
- **Outcome 3:** Over 10,000 members of the public are inspired by directly experiencing high quality work by disabled artists all across England and Scotland; and
- **Outcome 4:** Up to 20 million people across the UK experience the great work of disabled artists through an extensive Marketing and PR strategy resulting in national television and radio broadcast coverage.

Unlimited Impact was one of the first programmes funded through Spirit of 2012 and since receiving the award, Spirit has undertaken a Theory of Change exercise to develop individual outcome pathways for its nine thematic areas.

This has meant that Unlimited Impact is applying the new approach retrospectively and embedding the outcomes where they can, rather than designing their programme around the thematic areas. In liaison with Spirit, Unlimited Impact identified the relevant pathways for the programme. In addition to the mainstreamed areas that all Spirit projects address (Challenging the Perceptions of Disability and Improving Wellbeing), Unlimited Impact identified Empowering Young People, and Empowering Disabled People and, from Year 2, Inspiring Events as their thematic outcome pathways.

2.4 Funded Projects in Year 1 of the Unlimited Impact Programme

Small awards are made to young disabled artists, art activists and art enthusiasts to develop their ideas, confidence, skills and experience. Table 1 identifies the Ambassadors and the amount of funding that they received in Year 1 of the programme.

Table 1. Unlimited Impact Ambassadors

NAME OF AMBASSADOR AND PROJECT	AMOUNT AWARDED	FUNDING DATES
DaDaFest – Creative Words	£3,000	November 2014 – July 2015
Janice Parker Projects – Craig Simpson	£5,000	September 2014 – May 2015
Touretteshero CIC – The Idea Amplifier	£5,000	December 2014 – April 2015
Laura Dajao – Low on Fuel	£5,000	February 2015 – September 2015
Diverse City – Touched	£5,000	July 2014 – November 2014
11 Million Reasons	£5,000	September 2014 – December 2015
Richard Newnham/HiJinx – Flatmates	£5,000	February 2015 – September 2015
Solar Bear – Birthday of the Infanta	£5,000	January 2015 – September 2015

The Allies receive a package of tailored support and some funding to help build their offer to disabled artists and audiences. As highlighted in Table 2, nine Allies received support in Year 1.

Table 2. Unlimited Impact Allies

NAME OF ALLY	AMOUNT AWARDED	FUNDING DATES
Battersea Arts Centre	£6,000	March 2015 – July 2016
Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival	£5,000	March 2015 – September 2015
DaDaFest	£5,500	September 2014 – January 2015
Farnham Maltings	£3,000	October 2014 – November 2015
Fierce Festival	£6,000	July 2014 – October 2014
Freedom Festival	£5,000	March 2015 – November 2015
Luminate Festival	£4,000	July 2014 – April 2015
Summerhall	£3,000	January 2015 – September 2015

In addition to the ambassadors and allies outlined above, Unlimited Impact issues an array of mentoring support to developing artists. In year one, five mentees were engaged for support by Unlimited Impact:

1. Stopgap Dance Company and Andy Trust
2. Candoco and Layla-Marie Hall
3. Extant and Lucy Hayward
4. Birds of Paradise and Jodie Taylor
5. Diverse City and Dave Young

Plans are underway to issue support to more mentoring projects in Year 2.



Billy Elliot, People Dancing, 11 Million Reasons
Photograph by Sean Goldthorpe

3. MECHANISM

The proposal for Spirit funding outlined that, rather than an open application process, Allies and Ambassadors for the programme would be identified through a range of activities and selected on a strategic basis to address gaps in geographical areas, art form and size and scale of organisation, venue or festival.



Janice Parker Projects – Craig Simpson
Photographs by Brian Hartley

3.1 Identifying Allies & Ambassadors

To date the Ambassadors have been approached because they have been:

- Identified through the Unlimited programme either as emerging or younger artists and so more suited to Unlimited Impact; or
- Proposed by companies who are working with them.

Allies have also been identified through several routes:

- A general call out to venues and festivals inviting interested parties to get in touch;
- Promotion to the wide network of contacts involved with Shape or the Unlimited; or
- By artists who would like to showcase their work at particular venues or festivals but need additional support to enable this.

Once identified, a general discussion to work through ideas and clarify outcomes leads to the formalised proposal. This is captured in a short written submission that provides a narrative of the project, details the budget, in kind contributions and match funding, as well as milestones and outcomes.

3.2 Support to Allies & Ambassadors

The Allies benefit from Shape and Artadmin's knowledge and experience and can access support and undertake activities that best meet their development needs. This could range from having an audit of a site, for example, an access consultant doing a 'walk and talk' advising on access improvements and writing a short report with recommendations. Or it could be staff training like basic disability and equality training or audience development. Each venue contributes in kind or with match funding to enhance and expand the reach of the Spirit investment.

Ambassadors have access to development opportunities in the form of training, networking and mentoring. This is offered through existing support resources and programmes delivered by Shape or Artsadmin.

3.3 Approach to Data Gathering

The evidence gathering requirements have evolved with the introduction of the outcomes pathways and the team at Unlimited Impact are still refining the data collection processes so that they can ensure that they gather consistent baseline and end of project information to evidence the outcomes and impact of the projects and Unlimited Impact as a whole.

During Year 1, four surveys were introduced for use with the Allies and Ambassadors, which will help evaluate and track project progress. The design and content of the surveys was based on some of the questions in the Spirit of 2012 Outcomes and Indicator Framework (detailed in a separate appendix document, maps the survey questions against the framework). Whilst the surveys are now being used, the mid-year implementation meant that a minority of projects in Year 1 completed the baseline surveys and, although some have been issued, no evaluation surveys for Allies or Ambassadors had been received.



Throughout Year 1 there has been regular contact with all the projects through catch up discussions, emails to check on progress and address queries and, to date, this has captured a detailed picture of activity and achievements. The consistent use of the surveys, a greater clarity about the outcomes that future projects need to deliver will provide a more systematic approach to gathering baseline and end of project data and this will further help to embed the new evaluation framework and understand the wider effects of Unlimited Impact.

3.4 Key Learning about the Operation of the Programme

There are several learning points about the management of the programme which will inform and shape the operational processes for Year 2:

- Managing many small projects is resource intensive and in future years there will be a focus on slightly larger grants with fewer projects;
- Projects need sufficient time to design and deliver their work and the length of a project lifecycle needs to be realistic;
- Elements of the programme, for example the mentoring, has taken more time to establish but moving forward, there is a better understanding of the gaps and the types of support required;
- The team have been flexible about milestones and delivery with some projects but now recognise the need to be clearer about the extent of this flexibility within certain parameters;
- The team also recognise the need for more information about elements of the projects, such as match funding, and they have adapted contracts and the information required from projects so that this is captured in a way that better meets Spirit's requirements and their own; and
- A lack of consistent data, the number and range of projects, coupled with the introduction of the outcomes pathways after Unlimited Impact had been funded, has restricted the ability to evidence the extent of the Programmes effect.

4. OUTCOMES

The quarterly reports and the end of Year 1 report have captured the progress and achievements of the Allies and Ambassadors, as well as the plans for the projects in Year 2. This information has been used to inform this chapter alongside interviews with Unlimited Impact staff and the two project visits to Janice Parker, Ambassadors project, and Summerhall, Allies project.

4.1 Empowering Young People

All the Ambassadors projects are designed to support young people to express themselves and communicate their ideas, feelings or messages through their art or performances. This addresses the key outcomes in the pathway for this theme. All the projects are very different and capturing the breadth, variety and impact is challenging without looking at each one in detail.

DaDaFest (Creative Words): is a disability arts organisation based in Liverpool, which aims to promote, support and celebrate high quality disability and deaf arts. DaDaFest coordinates The Creative Words workshop and project which, using funding from Unlimited Impact, endeavours to develop and support a community of disabled and deaf young creative writers, poets, songs, storytellers and rappers. This has the ultimate aim of improving the confidence and mental health of young disabled people through art. The funding for this organisation has financed five workshops, which completed in July 2015, with participants in the final workshop creating a piece for the Young DaDaFest event with the poet/rapper James Taylor. The launch event attracted attendance by 25-30 individuals, and up to 15 people are able to attend each workshop. The workshops were designed to build towards a young people's event on 25th June in Liverpool, with potential for a small publication to follow.

Touretteshero CIC (The Idea Amplifier): This grant funds a creative collaboration, 'The Idea Amplifier', between Touretteshero and six disabled young people to produce a film through a series of four workshops, discussions and creative encounters. This took place over two days. The final edited film and blog piece was shared on the Touretteshero website, social media, by Unlimited and other partners. Young people will also have the opportunity to engage in follow-up mentoring support sessions.

Laura Dajao (Low on Fuel) uses the Unlimited Impact grant to fund the research and development of a new dance work exploring what experiences of 'running out of fuel', either emotionally, physically, environmentally, or psychologically. This has been explored using a range of dance styles, in collaboration with musicians and singers, and the two-week long process has been filmed by Producer Louise Wildish, from People Dancing, for public dissemination and a scratch performance at Stratford Circus.

Diverse City (Touched): is a performance production company showcasing the work of artists from diverse groups. Remix Gold is an integrated youth performance company operating within Diverse City, and the Unlimited Impact grant has allowed members of Remix Gold to undertake three months of training in order to make a 15 minute performance at the Southbank Centre during the Unlimited Festival. Following this performance, the show toured two other venues and generated a total of 700 audience members across the three performances. Since this, Dave Young (one of the Remix Gold performers) has been engaged in the Unlimited Impact mentoring scheme.

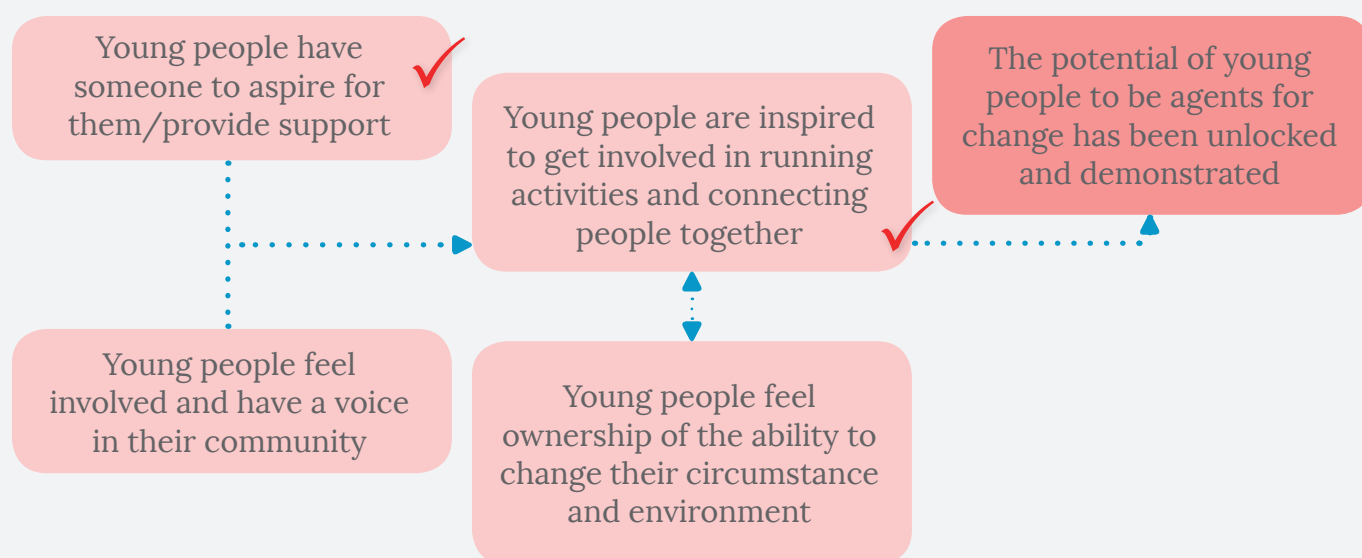


Figure 3. Spirit's 'Empowering Young People' Outcomes Pathway

Note: The ticks indicate where evidence was found of progression through the pathway

Foundation for Community Dance/ 11 Million Reasons: the grant is supporting the touring exhibition which includes photographs of people with disabilities dancing in iconic moments in film and cinema; this ranges from community groups, volunteer dance groups, and working disabled dancers. The grant also supports the commissioning of an emerging disabled photographers, alongside a mentor, in order to facilitate this. The exhibition launch took place on 8th May 2015 at the Curve Theatre Leicester.

Richard Newnham / Hijinx (Flatmates): Richard is an actor, writer and stand-up comedian who collaborates with Hijinx Cardiff, a small scale theatre company who work with actors with learning disabilities. 'Flatmates' is a comedy written by Richard, which he now hopes to involve other acting students from Hijinx's Cardiff Academy to play the other roles in the production. The Unlimited grant has helped to facilitate this and throughout summer 2015, Richard made a series of 5 minute films 'Flatmates', which are available on YouTube and the Hijinx and Unlimited Impact websites.

Solar Bear Deaf Youth Theatre (Birthday of the Infanta): provides accessible theatre and training opportunities to the young Deaf community. The grant will support the production, “Birthday of the Infanta”, including reworking the original, a two week rehearsal period which took place during July in Glasgow, and then a performance at the Youth Arts Festival in Battersea Arts Centre in London.

Janice Parker Projects – Craig Simpson

Craig Simpson is a performance artist and learning disabled person who, for the past six years, has collaborated with Janice Parker, a professional choreographer, dance-maker and facilitator. Unlimited Impact funding has enabled Craig and Janice to work in partnership on their most recent production, “It’s like...” a dance film involving six other male performance artists.

The idea for Craig’s new performance built on an earlier piece entitled, “Private Party”. Craig had enjoyed working with a male quartet of performers in this earlier piece and wanted to reproduce and recreate this idea as a dance film. The Unlimited Impact funding enabled Craig to create the dance film performed and recorded at the Festival Theatre in Edinburgh and showcasing at Summerhall throughout the 2015 Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

During our interview with Janice, she praised the ease and support received throughout the funding application process. Janice was approached based on their “Private Party” performance piece, at which point Janice was informed of both the organisation and method of application. In Janice’s view, the application procedure was less burdensome than most grant applications and importantly it allowed Craig to express his views and speak his own voice; and she felt contact with Unlimited Impact, “*couldn’t have been easier*”.

The benefits to Craig that Unlimited Impact has afforded are far-reaching. Beyond scale of the production and the showcase opportunities both currently at Summerhall and nationally and internationally in the future. Janice described this latest production as pushing Craig’s work to another level, in a professional capacity. Furthermore, the other dancers working with Craig in the production expressed the impact on them:

“THANK YOU AND CRAIG for the chance to dance in such a way. I came home saying to myself, now that’s what I want to spend my days doing more of.”

“Craig’s words about dream and love, really did help bring a focus to the group and I believe everyone was moved by these words and the insight it gave to how much the process and experience meant to him.”

This example of one of the Ambassadors projects provides anecdotal evidence of how support to an emerging artist can empower a young person and how they can inspire others to do more and better.

4.2 Empowering Disabled People and Challenging the Perceptions of Disability

Both Ambassadors and Allies address core and sub outcomes from the relevant outcome pathways. The Allies projects in particular have increased infrastructure and services in many of these sites and addressed the physical barriers to attending events or activities. As the descriptions of project activities will show, the Access audits have proved to be very successful with the walk and talk approach encouraging discussions that develop knowledge and understanding. This is reinforced by the report that produced recommendations that include practical and the easy to fix solutions.

The progress of the Allies projects are addressed in turn.

Battersea Arts Centre: Battersea Arts Centre is one of seven promoters within the Collaborative Touring Network (CTN) who aim to inspire a new generation of audiences through touring performances across the UK. Battersea Arts Centre is project coordinating the six CTN festivals and this role includes fundraising for the project and facilitating the ongoing evaluation. The grant enabled use of the Self-Assessment Access Checklists, training offered to all producers and funding for each of the six to develop their access offer through programming and content.



Battersea Arts Centre, CTN training day illustrations

The festivals completed the Allies Access survey which revealed that: 83 per cent felt that there was 'room for improvement' in the physical access and accessible content of their festivals; 75 per cent stated that none of their online or printed materials were accessible to disabled audiences; 50 per cent had already worked with or programmed the work of disabled artists before. To date, the network has responded positively to the impact of the funding, and a producer from 'Strike a Light Festival' has expressed an interest in creating a related programme of events.

Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival: Established in 1967, the Festival is a leading event in the UK's cultural calendar. This grant is providing support to increase access programming, marketing and fund audio description for some performance to improve access and audience development at the festival.

DIY Colchester Arts Centre and LADA: DIY was established to address the needs of artists working in Live Art, appreciating that the development of Live Art practice should incorporate the exploration of ideas and experiences alongside training in skills and techniques. LADA oversees the project delivery. The grant supports a collaboration between Unlimited Impact and Colchester Arts Centre, to invite proposals for DIY projects that are disabled-led and taking place in Colchester. Performer Katherine Araniello with 'I Can't Dance', was the recipient of the grant.

DaDaFest: is a disability arts organisation based in Liverpool, which aims to promote, support and celebrate high quality disability and deaf arts. This includes establishing opportunities for disabled and deaf people to access the arts. This grant enabled DaDaFest to showcase the work of four Unlimited 2014 Research and Development Artists during the 2014 festival edition to evaluate experiences and motivations of those visiting and gather feedback from performers taking part. Unlimited also supports the organisation in making their work accessible to a diverse audience.

Farnham Maltings: operates in the South East of England, to encourage people to make, see and enjoy art by working with artists and local communities. Farnham Maltings offers a grant scheme called 'No strings attached', which seeks to assist young people across the south east region in making their first piece of theatre through grants ranging from £500 to £1,000. The partnership with Unlimited Impact is designed to encourage disabled people to apply through specific grants, and Unlimited Impact will also involve a young disabled person to make contributions to the selection panel.

The support from Unlimited Impact resulted in three out of the possible seven awarded grants went to recipients identified as disabled, as well as engaging a young disabled person on the panel. This activity has led to the Farnham Maltings Marketing and Engagement Coordinator approaching Unlimited Impact about sharing blogs in their in-house marketing content.

Fierce Festival: is an international performance art festival located in Birmingham, involving theatre, dance, music, installations, and activism. The grant supported the Festival to showcase Unlimited Impact supported commissioned artists and for access to be provided for audiences (for example, providing their first ever sign language interpreted work). In total, there were 112 audience members at performances by Ian Johnson, Gary Gardner, Jo Bannon and the vacuum cleaner. 18 people attended the R&D Salon, also supported by the grant funding.

Freedom Festival: is Hull's largest multi-faceted arts festival, involving street theatre, music, comedy, performance and visual arts. The grant financed a Walk and Talk Access Audit in order to evaluate the access infrastructure in the festival's outdoor spaces to develop access recommendations and opportunities, and broaden their network of disabled artists.

Luminate Festival is a Scotland-based festival designed to celebrate creative lives as we age through new work, collaborations and international projects. The grant enabled the Unlimited Commission, 'Let it Stay' to tour around the Highlands and Islands; 86 audience members attended the performances, which is a slightly lower turnout than expected due to poor weather. 'Let Me' Stay is currently touring the work in Recife, Brazil, as a result of her involvement with Unlimited and Luminate.

Additionally, the grant supports the collaboration between Unlimited Impact, Luminate, and the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival to produce an access guide. When completed, this guide will be disseminated to partner organisations, and is designed to assist individuals, venues and festivals in their access confidence.

Summerhall: is an Edinburgh-based arts venue, hosting theatre and gallery spaces, libraries and small museums, educational and research programmes, studios and workshops. Building on a Walk and Talk Access audit by Nick Goss, the grant has enabled Summerhall to build on these recommendations in order to improve access provision. Among a number of recommendations, this included improving signage, enhancing the access webpage, and improving accessible toilet provisions. The General Manager who was involved in the walk and talk said "In terms of what Nick has suggested, we have been and continue to work on that list...we are constantly developing the space". He commented that,

“ the key things that Nick brought up was that the human element of what we do here is really good, ”

“ some of Nicks great ideas we wouldn't have even thought about...what Nick came up and did was brilliant. ”

In addition to completing the audit and starting to implement the recommendations from this, Summerhall is developing a closer relationship with Unlimited. For example, Summerhall will be an Unlimited exhibition venue during the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2015.

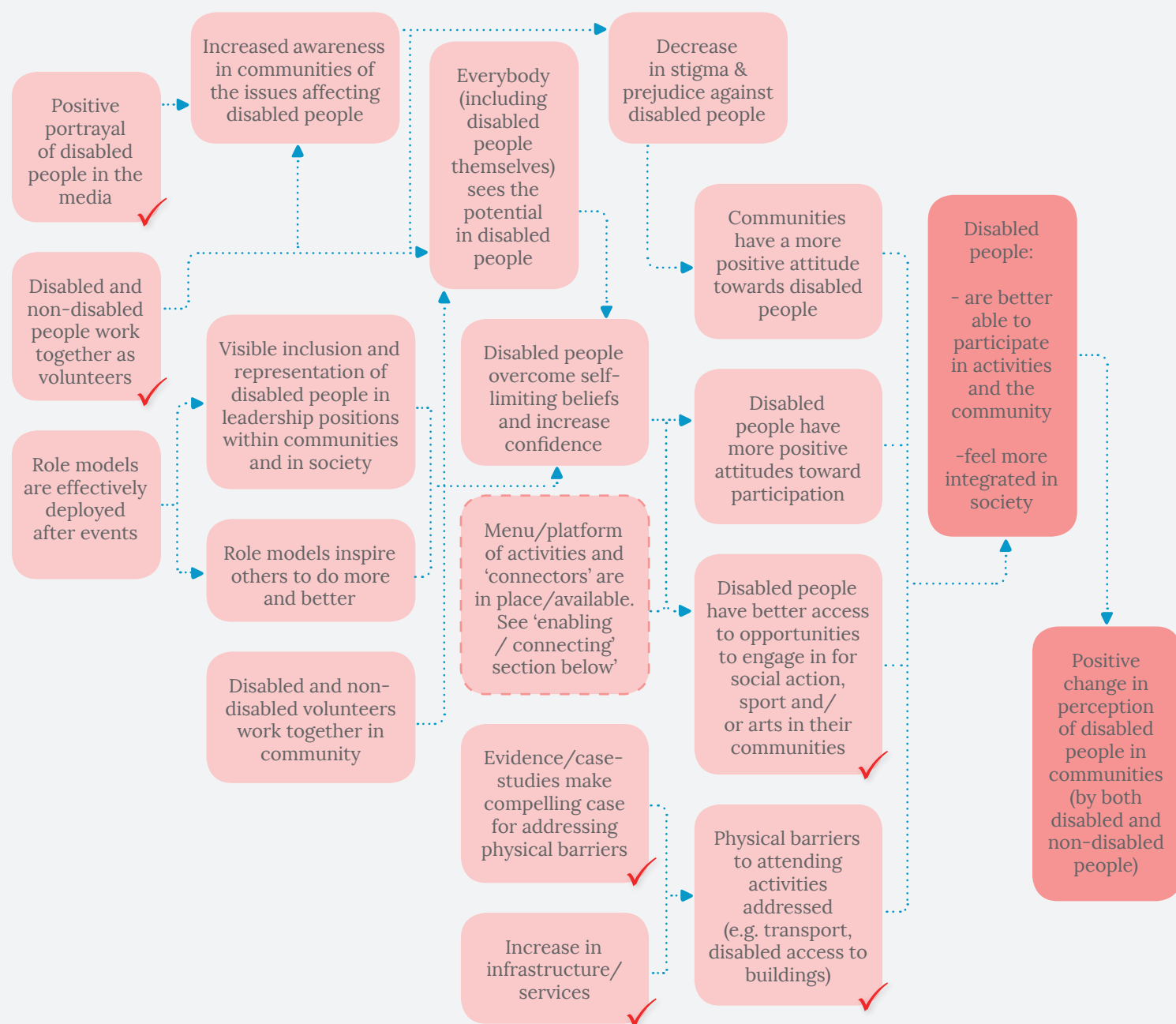


Figure 3. 'Empowering Disabled People & Challenging Perceptions of Disability' Outcomes Pathway

Note: The ticks indicate where evidence was found of progression through the pathway.

5. CONCLUSION

The Unlimited Impact Programme is establishing a network of venues and festivals that are becoming more knowledgeable about supporting disabled artists and audiences, and introducing changes to improve the accessibility of buildings, facilities and programme content. It is also providing disabled young people with unique opportunities to develop their skills, experience and ambitions in the arts.

The tailored nature of the projects and diversity amongst both Allies and Ambassadors creates challenges for comprehensively capturing the evidence of impact. The changes in Spirit's evaluation model add a further complexity, along with the symbiotic relationship between the Unlimited and Unlimited Impact programmes.

Nevertheless, from the descriptions of the projects and the opportunities and changes that have resulted for young disabled people, disabled artists, disabled audiences and art activists, Unlimited Impact appears to be:

- Delivering on its original funded outcomes and milestones; and
- Addressing several outcomes in the thematic pathways relating to empowering disabled people and challenging perceptions of disability, empowering young people.

However, there needs to be a more robust evidence base to support this, and the Unlimited Impact team should continue to develop the data monitoring and self-evaluation tools that will embed, where possible, the Spirit outcomes from the pathway. It is important that the outcomes and sub-outcomes currently identified are clarified as most appropriate for the programme, and in doing so, it may be necessary to review them for sense and applicability across the range of projects supported. There are opportunities to gather evidence from audiences benefitting from the increased accessibility of venues and programme content and, although it is challenging to gather, Unlimited Impact should consider how this could be done effectively.

The strengthening of the operational systems – for example, greater clarity about contract expectations – will reinforce the identification of Allies and Ambassadors. In addition, this will aid the management of those relationships so that the Unlimited Impact programme can continue to inspire disabled young people enthusiastic about art and support venues, and assist festivals to showcase the work of disabled artists whilst building a more diverse audience base.



6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The exploration and evaluation of Year 1 activity by Unlimited Impact leads to the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: the data monitoring and self-evaluation tools initiated during Year 1 should be further developed and embedded in Unlimited Impact activity, in order to better evidence the outcomes being achieved.

Recommendation 2: in connection with Recommendation 1, Unlimited Impact should consider how to effectively gather evidence from audiences, which demonstrates benefits resulting from increased accessibility of venues and programme content.

Recommendation 3: the Unlimited Impact team might consider reviewing the applicability of outcomes and sub-outcomes to better capture the wide impact of the programme.

Recommendation 4: the team should look to understand and address the gaps in information that currently exist, both in terms of evidence gathering to demonstrate the programme's effect, and information about the projects gathered through contracts.



Strictly Come Dancing, People Dancing, 11 Million Reasons
Photograph by Sean Goldthorpe