**Research Wales Innovation Fund**

**Civic Mission and Public Engagement: template for case studies**

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| **Institution:** | Bangor University |
| **Civic Mission Theme (select from drop down list) :**  | Leading place |
| **Vision for Research and Innovation Pillars (select those that apply):** | [x]  Excellence[x]  Place[x]  Innovation[x]  Collaboration  |
| **Title of case study / project / initiative:** | In the Moment / Yn Y Foment – Engaging Local Teenagers through the Arts |
| **Summary description: (max 150 words)**[Briefly describe the project, including groups within the community who were engaged and how it was funded. Was the project evidence-based / informed by research?] HEFCW through civic mission funding helped support an innovative pilot (bilingual) drop-in project at BU Pontio Arts and Innovation Centre’s Studio Theatre for local disadvantaged young people, giving them a chance to access performing arts and develop new skills – whilst also relaxing in a safe and creative environment. This was a response to groups of young people’s negative engagement with the centre. With Pontio one of the only free wet-weather shelters in Bangor, many come there to relax on weekends and school holidays, with behaviour sometimes turning bad, disrupting other centre users as boredom sets in. The project was peer-led, involving young people from the outset and engaging with circus performers, student volunteers and researchers from Bangor’s school of Psychology, the latter investigating the effectiveness of behavioural interventions, with specific interest in measuring the impact of arts-based interventions on well-being.  |
| **Project / initiative impact: (max 200 words)**[Describe the actual impact of initiative, including insights gained, and positive outcomes (whether planned or unforeseen)] On arrival attendees are invited to join the Pontio team in the Studio, usually around eighteen young people. Members of the front-of-house, community engagement and artistic teams set out the Studio Theatre as a relaxing space with creative facilities and props. When asked the question ‘what would you like to do?’ young people often express surprise as most have never been asked that before. Over the first year between May 2018 and Oct 2019, 11 sessions were held with over 160 young people attending. Ages range from 10 to 17 and while most are from Bangor, others travel considerable distances to be there. There has been no ‘marketing’ of the events, but peer communication has driven attendance. Some young people have displayed obvious leadership characteristics. From the outset a significant improvement in relationships with centre staff and visitors, and a marked reduction in disruptive behaviour were observed.As well as building skills amongst attendees, BU student volunteers have gained new skills and a new youth engagement role has been created to support this work (through Big Lottery funding, see below). In addition, the project has also consulted with the Inclusive Education Manager at Gwynedd Council, youth clubs and schools to ensure it has long-lasting impact. Finally, the project is working with Bangor’s Centre for Widening Access, providing a vital link between the University and its surrounding community/schools. |
| **Future activity: (max 150 words)**[Is the project now sustainable, or are there plans for follow-on projects – if so how will these be funded?] The HEFCW funded pilot led to a recent successful £100k Big Lottery application which will now allow the project to continue for three more years. This has also helped secure the role of Pontio’s community/business engagement and fundraising officer, herself a Bangor Graduate who had initially been awarded an internship via Arts and Business. There is an additional project ‘BLAS/Taste’ which engages more formally with young people through drama and performing arts, which is a natural progression route for young people engaged through In the Moment / Yn Y Foment.In addition, links have been made with other successful youth projects in Republic of Ireland, leading to a joint Erasmus+ bid being submitted (currently in assessment). |
| **Quote(s) e.g. from external project partner: (around 60 words)**[There is potential for HEFCW to publish this case study – please provide a quote that helps demonstrate the impact of engagement]When asked ‘why do you like coming to Pontio:’“The vibe. It’s not just a theatre or cinema but different groups / worlds in one space.” Young workshop attendee.“Receiving this Big Lottery funding means we can now offer these opportunities more regularly. Pontio will now be appointing a co-ordinator for the project…which will help point teenagers in the direction of other services they may be interested in, including where they can sign up to more formal classes. Bangor University’s Psychology department will also be taking part to find out what the young people think of this type of activity.” Osian Gwynne, Artistic Director Pontio. |
| **Contacts:** **(website; contact name; email; phone)** |  Link to press release: <https://shar.es/abmRYm> James Goodman; j.f.goodman@bangor.ac.uk, 07920 245429 |

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| **How did the activity help support the Well-being of Future Generations Act goals (select those that apply):** | [ ]  A prosperous Wales[x]  A resilient Wales[x]  A healthier Wales[x]  A more equal Wales[x]  A Wales of cohesive communities[x]  A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language[ ]  A globally responsible Wales |
| [Briefly outline how the project helped support the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015]The project helps to encourage young people towards a positive engagement with both the centre staff and the performing arts, and widens their horizons thus contributing to personal resilience through healthy activities such as circus skills, and equality through inclusion (attendance is free). It helps to foster cohesion through creating an environment where young people from different groups respect each other, their trainers, the centre staff, such as security personnel and other visitors. Young people have participated in planning meetings and helped inform the grant application, fostering inclusion. Workshops are carried out bilingually, and although not all young people are confident speakers, this introduces Welsh language together with arts and culture in a natural way, outside the classroom. Some young people have grown in confidence in their use of Welsh through attending In the Moment / Yn Y Foment. |