Culture

Cultural Value Scoping Project

Report by Dr Patrycja Kaszynska

King's College LONDON

Arts & Humanities Research Council

phf Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Contents

Executive summary

Why does it matter that we understand cultural value? Why is it important not just for research professionals, but for those actively 'making', debating and assessing this value, i.e. for people working in arts and culture and their funders, for policy makers and academics? What sort of support might be needed to further their understanding?

This report outlines the results of the Cultural Value Scoping Project (CVSP) which was set up in September 2016 by the Arts & Humanities Research Council, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and King's College London working in partnership with Arts Council England. It follows the publication in April 2016 of the Report *Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture,* which culminated the work of the AHRC Cultural Value Project.

The purpose of the scoping project has been to explore the legacy of the AHRC Cultural Value Project and to investigate:

- how an **improved understanding** of the value of participation in the arts and engagement with culture might benefit people working in arts and culture and their funders, policy makers and academics;
- what **kind of resources and infrastructure** would be most useful and relevant to support these distinct but overlapping constituencies.

The key issue that unfolded during the project's various consultations was not about providing an encyclopaedic compendium of facts about cultural value. Neither was it about supplying more ammunition to win short-term advocacy arguments. The single biggest and most pressing challenge that emerged was to **create communities of understanding and practice** for people across the sectors – the arts and culture, funders and the voluntary sector, academia and policy. This would involve bringing these people together to talk to each other, hear each other's points of view, acknowledge mutual concerns, agree on shared evidence, work together on methodologies and build a shared sense of purpose. It was this that emerged as **the single intervention that would make the most difference to all these groups.**

As a result, this report recommends that a new entity – a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value – is set up. Its purpose would be not only to **consolidate and communicate what we know about cultural value**, but also to **broker and facilitate new ways of thinking and working across the sectors**. This approach would ground the conversations in a **better understanding of the evidence base** (the 'facts' about the effects of engaging in culture) *and also* raise awareness of **how understanding is produced** – how conversations about cultural value are framed and what is at stake for the different groups involved.

The starting point should be exactly **where these different viewpoints collide**, in what this report dubs the 'node challenges'. Node challenges are problems where different objectives and agendas clash to the extent that, although they can be managed, they cannot be resolved. Instead of trying to side-step or diffuse these problems, our key recommendation is to tackle these nodes head-on. This report offers three illustrative examples of node challenges: cultural value and social justice; innovation, risk-taking and the creative economy; and bringing together the micro/individual-level outputs and the macro/society-level outputs. These examples might provide points of focus for the future work, but it is also possible that other challenges will be chosen.

What is to be gained from pursuing this approach? Most obviously, we are likely to **build a better, more stable knowledge base, which will achieve greater recognition across sectors**. We will help the different but connected constituencies with a stake in cultural value to be **clearer and more confident** when speaking to each other and communicating externally. The practice of making ungrounded

assertions will be replaced by acknowledging commonly shared points of interests and areas where the evidence is robust. Those working in arts and culture will be able to **be more effective** – focusing on whatever practices maximise the delivery of their cultural value; research will benefit from **insights from the observed (those participating in the arts and, crucially, those producing and amplifying cultural value),** rather than privileging the observer's perspective; and those driving, shaping and challenging policy will have **a more credible and more secure base for their decision making and an improved awareness of the key concerns of those working in the arts**. Above all, there will be a better understanding of what constitutes common agreement and where expectations diverge. In short, we will pre-empt the needless wheel-spinning, data-churning and combative cross-talking which has characterised much of the past debate. The ultimate prize will be **more effective practice, and greater long-term stability and sustainability** for all cultural value stakeholders.

This report is divided into five chapters:

Chapter 1 discusses the continuities and differences between the CVSP and the **AHRC Cultural Value Project** itself. It highlights three lines of continuity where the CVSP is firmly and palpably building on the legacy of the AHRC initiative: **from advocacy to honest debate; broadening our 'definition' of culture; placing individual experience at the heart of our thinking.**

Chapter 2 presents examples of the **existing information research infrastructures in the US, continental Europe and the UK**. Part of the brief for the CVSP was to avoid duplication and capitalise on work done elsewhere, and this selective overview includes lessons learned from these initiatives and 'do's and don'ts' for any new infrastructure. This chapter is also useful as a way of showcasing the already existing resources – many of these are neither well known nor sufficiently used in the UK.

Chapter 3 considers **the existing knowledge base** (in contrast to the knowledge infrastructure discussed in the previous chapter). In doing so, it distinguishes between two dimensions of understanding: 1) **the evidence base** (the knowledge of the effects of cultural engagement) and 2) **the way cultural value is currently framed** (the processes, procedures and exchanges that underpin how cultural value is articulated in the first place). The former has significantly improved over the last 30 years, the latter remains neglected, at least outside of academia. This is surprising, because our knowledge of cultural value is not just made by research professionals but is continuously created by all the groups converging on cultural value – those thinking about, making and participating in culture. Understanding these exchanges is thus crucial. This chapter suggests that the resource recommended by this report should **promote collaborative ways of working and tackle what the report dubs the 'node challenges'** of cultural value – those areas where very distinctive and complex agendas collide and converge.

Chapter 4 recommends that a **Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value** is established. The purpose will be not just to **build a knowledge base that creates institutional memory**, but also to **explore connections between policy, research and practice** and **foster communities of practice and understanding**. There are currently no platforms where the groups with a stake in cultural value in the UK can interact in a meaningful way (specifically, to discuss the challenges and opportunities, and interact for periods long enough to develop a shared language and methodologies). We recommend in this chapter that a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value establishes itself as a 'specialist' in the node challenge areas and takes a lead on **mobilising people** to create a shared understanding of issues across different constituencies. Importantly, it would encourage people to commit to possible ways of working together – both conceptually and methodologically.

Chapter 5 outlines the report's conclusions and recommendations.

11 May 2017

1. About the Cultural Value Scoping Project

1.1. What is this report about?

When the Report *Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture* – the AHRC Cultural Value Project – was published in April 2016, it was well received. There was some consensus that it consolidated our thinking about the value of arts and culture without being unduly rigid. It brought a bundle of issues, including some previously overlooked areas, into one frame of reference. It also prepared the ground for future work, without prescriptively pre-empting what could or should be done. There was enough positive momentum to seriously consider the suggestion made in the Report that 'there is a need to maintain the critical academic research focus in this area' (Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016 (henceforth CVP), p.157):

> With this in mind, we conclude by recommending that the AHRC consider establishing something that might be thought of as an Observatory for Cultural Value. This would be located in a university and, with modest staffing, be tasked with identifying the research activities, outputs and needs in the areas covered by this Report; publishing surveys and overviews, maintaining a database of relevant work (taking into account existing activities in this area, and ensuring that these are embraced rather than duplicated); and recommending to the AHRC and other funders initiatives for further research that may be needed. This Observatory for Cultural Value need not constitute a major resource commitment, and could perhaps be undertaken with one or more partners drawn from the cultural sector or the research sectors. Its character would make it necessarily an interdisciplinary initiative led by the arts and humanities. In the context of the broadening of interest in this area in recent years, we believe that the AHRC could, through establishing such an Observatory, effectively continue the lead that it has given with the publication of this Report. (CVP, pp.157–158)

This provided an impetus for this scoping project. The Cultural Value Scoping Project was set up by the Arts & Humanities Research Council, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and King's College London – working in partnership with Arts Council England – to explore what preserving the legacy of the Cultural Value Project (CVP) might mean in practice.

The stated objective of the CVP was to advance our knowledge, i.e., to improve our understanding of what the value of arts and culture is and how this value might be captured. The challenge at hand in the scoping project became to explore the consequences of pursuing this agenda for the various groups with a stake in cultural value. Why would it be valuable to have a better knowledge base for those thinking about and practising cultural value? What kind of information or knowledge matters most and what is to be gained by investing in this agenda from the point of view of these connected constituencies?

Specifically, the objective of the scoping project was to investigate whether the arts and research communities and related sectors would welcome a more long-term structure to take the cultural value work forward. Speaking to people who might be potentially interested in using this resource was the starting point for this exercise (see the discussion of the consultation process at the end of this chapter).

1.2. Who might be interested and why should they care?

So, who are the potential users for this new resource – the stakeholders of the cultural value debate? The groups in question are many and varied, and include: those working in the arts and cultural sector (here it is very important to account for the entire arts sector ecology – the big and the small; the socially-engaged and the commercially-driven; voluntary and professional); those making and influencing cultural policy, deciding on funding allocation for the arts and shaping the policy discourse more broadly; funders supporting cultural engagement, e.g., foundations and trusts, arm-length bodies, ESG (environmental, social and governance) programmes in the commercial sector; those researching cultural value inside of the academic sector but also beyond; those thinking about cultural value through practice and doing the arts.

As will become apparent, what has emerged from the consultation is that rather than approaching these groups as sectoral and institutional silos, it is essential that any new resource for cultural value builds a shared sense of purpose – membership in the cultural value community of understanding and practice.

The consultation and workshops we carried out for this scoping project showed that there is not enough shared understanding, practice and resources between these constituencies, but there are some points of agreement. For example, it quickly transpired that the 'observatory' suggested in the CVP Report was not the right term. Being observed had the negative connotations of lab-like experimentation and control for nearly all the groups involved. Instead, we are proposing a different name: a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value. More substantially, it became clear that, although the ramifications of the CVP had a wide range of interpretations, there are three lines of continuity from the CVP along which the scoping project builds the legacy.

1.3. Lines of continuity with the AHRC Cultural Value Project

From advocacy towards honest debate

The first line of continuity is around advocacy. While stakeholders recognised that any abrupt and radical rejection of advocacy might carry short-term risks, they felt that moving away from the advocacy goals should be a long-term ambition insofar as the objectives of the future Centre are concerned. There was a shared sense – including among the policy makers and politicians – that it could be liberating to have a better foothold in relevant evidence and perhaps more importantly the means and language to reflect on it in an intellectually honest way. There was also a sense that this would improve the quality of conversations to be had across the constituencies as well as the quality of work within individual groups. In short, there was a shared recognition that the planned entity might benefit the related sectors best if it were to focus less on box-ticking and data-spinning and engage more in a genuine exploration of the questions that arise out of the work converging on cultural value, thus avoiding questions dictated by external circumstances and objectives. This finding should not be surprising given that most people naturally feel curious about the value of their work and would welcome an opportunity to reflect thoughtfully on their practice.

In a nutshell, the consultation highlighted the need for a more grounded understanding of cultural value, free from 'overclaiming' and 'caving into external pressures'. It also presented a more nuanced picture of what is at issue – in particular, why many arts and cultural sector organisations might be kept hostage to advocacy because of the prevailing managerial, funding and institutional practices. This report responds by proposing a resource which promotes the long-term ambition of moving away from advocacy-research, while maintaining the involvement of policy makers. This

sentiment chimes well with the point of view expressed in the CVP Report which argued that the debate about cultural value was 'distorted by the wish to protect public funding and to influence policy' (CVP, p.7).

Broadening our 'definition' of culture

The second continuity is the need to broaden the scope of the discussion. The starting point for the CVP was to cast the net wider than previous studies of the subject in order to consider as wide a range of cultural practice and forms of cultural value as we were able. It considers not only the subsidised cultural sector but also the commercial, amateur and participatory which, after all, are where most people find their cultural engagement. (CVP, p.7)

A broader lens is needed not least because it allows us to appreciate the complexity and richness of the cultural value landscape. For instance, there are many overlooked areas where we are simply seeing the tip of the iceberg (such as the relationship between popular culture and behavioural change mentioned later in this report – p.21). We are also only starting to learn about the many intricate connections between publicly-subsidised, voluntary and commercial culture (indeed, our grasp of what became known as the 'cultural value ecologies' remains limited and this report suggests how creating better data-sets might improve our understanding – p.29, fn.87).

We also need to embrace the more fluid and holistic way of thinking about cultural value so that we can reject the persistent, perhaps unconscious, bias towards the publicly subsidised sector. The question of why cultural engagement matters ('What is the significance for society and individuals of arts participation?') has become conflated with the question of how public money is allocated ('Is it a good way of spending the taxpayers' money?') and accounted-for ('How do we demonstrate that this is public money well spent?'). These questions are all legitimate, but clearly different. Untangling knots like this emerged as one of the key priorities for a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value and adopting the wider lens to look at the value of commercial and voluntary arts participation will no doubt help.

Placing individual experience at the heart of our thinking

A third most important conceptual continuity concerns the need to 'reposition first-hand, individual experience of arts and culture at the heart of enquiry into cultural value' (CVP, p.7). As the CVP Report argued, thinking about cultural value needs to give far more attention to the way people experience their engagement with arts and culture, to be grounded in what it means to produce or consume them or, increasingly as digital technologies advance as part of people's lives, to do both at the same time. (CVP, p.7)

Paying closer attention to how culture is experienced means refining and revising many of the inherited theoretical and methodological frameworks which are solely preoccupied with auxiliary, instrumental effects (e.g., some economic impact studies, or studies proving that a particular arts practice produces a specific outcome). Work on methods and frameworks (including the bridging of the individual-level and society-level effects – see p.31) needs to be firmly on the agenda of a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value.

It also leads us to consider how the debate about cultural value is framed – i.e., how it is articulated and contested. As one of the scoping project's workshop participants put it, 'Placing the individual experience at the centre of the discussion necessitates a concern with the very act of judging value, of apportioning what one perceives the worth of something to be'. Bringing into a spotlight the

converging but distinct agendas and objectives of those who participate in the conversations will be central to the work of a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value.

1.4. Where is this leading – what does this report propose?

With these three points in mind, we can go back to the question at the heart of the scoping project: why would it be valuable to have a better knowledge base for those thinking about cultural value and those 'doing' cultural value?

The answer was partially suggested by the consultees. Many people felt that embracing the licence to be curious and honest, to think outside the institutional and sectoral silos, developing more reliable methods and having more transparency about how the decisions about cultural value are made, all carried the promise of making the stakeholders in the debate more stable, resilient and sustainable. Sustainability in this context does not mean the preservation of the status quo, but becoming more surefooted and adaptive – both as individual organisations and sectors, and as one community. It means having both the resources and strategy to be able to deliver on objectives, to respond to new challenges and to invest for the future.

This report proposes that a new entity dedicated to collaborative thinking about cultural value – a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value – might play a pivotal role in solidifying what we know about cultural value as well as brokering new ways of working. Chapter 4 lays down specific proposals and presents an options analysis for what functions, activities and structures might be considered to take this work forward. Chapters 2 and 3 set out the context and explain the thinking behind the proposals – why we felt that some but not all options were appropriate and needed. Chapter 5 summarises these through conclusions and recommendations.

This report is underpinned by consultation conversations with 126 individuals, further enhanced and refined through four workshops which provided an invaluable source of insight (see the list of the consultees and the workshop agendas in the Appendices). This information was supplemented by desk research and analysed by the project manager.

2. Research and information infrastructures: learning from the past

2.1. An overview of the landscape

The scoping project asked what resources would be most useful and relevant for those thinking about as well as 'doing' cultural value. This is not the first time in history that this question has been asked; nor is the UK a unique location for the question. Over the years, there have been many – successful and unsuccessful – attempts at setting up cultural value observatories, hubs, centres, archives, documentation consortia, networks, etc. As shown by J. Mark Schuster in his *Informing Cultural Policy: The Research and Information Infrastructure* (which presents probably the most comprehensive attempt to make sense of the actual resource landscape in a systematic way) the research and information infrastructure for cultural policy was already a crowded territory 15 years ago, when his book was first published.[1]

The phrase 'research and information infrastructure' is a good one because it suggests that research and analysis are often interconnected and always embedded in the geographical and political contexts from which they emerge. This phrase also expresses well the difficulty of finding one term to capture the variety of structures collating, cataloguing, generating and communicating information concerning cultural value (hence the generic 'infrastructure'). Indeed, Schuster himself proposes a complex typology (i.e., categorisation by types) of **institution-based models**, such as: university-based research centres, independent non-profit research institutes, private consulting firms, research divisions of government cultural funding agencies, national statistics agencies; **non-institution-based models** which include networks, programme models, and relevant journals and periodicals; and **hybrids**, e.g., cultural observatories (which might have some characteristics of centres and networks).

Although some examples given by Schuster are understandably dated, his taxonomy (i.e., scheme of classification) is still useful and overlaps to a large extent with the categories we might identify today.[2] For this reason – and recognising that a comprehensive mapping of the existing infrastructure would in itself be a book-length endeavour – rather than presenting an extensive typology, the following section focuses on the genealogy (i.e., tracing of how a thing came to be and how it evolved over time) of some recent attempts to build research and analysis support in three different locations and attempts to summarise what worked and, crucially, what did not and why.

2.2. The US – a tradition of collaborative initiatives

Although the US context differs in a number of ways from European circumstances, there are useful lessons to be learned. The crucial moment in this trajectory was 1999, which is when the

---

[1] Cultural policy is of course not synonymous with research into cultural value and yet – in line with the argument of the CVP Report that the very term 'cultural value' has been used more frequently (if not consistently) in policy talk than in academic discourse – the distinction is difficult to draw in practice. Many, in particular publicly accessible, resources dedicated to cultural policy bring together academic and policy sources and materials without making differentiations, so the focus on cultural policy in Schuster's book should not concern us too much.

[2] There are some differences – of both kind and emphasis – comparing Schuster's account and the situation today. For instance, the importance of the infrastructure created by universities is very much downplayed in Schuster's book (he gives only isolated examples of the government-designated university-based research centres, such as those funded by the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* in France, and the University of Westminster which purchased the Policy Studies Institute). It is clear that academic research departments have been playing an active role in the shaping of the research landscape, acting alone and in collaboration. Schuster is also strangely silent about the significance of research departments within cultural organisations and some NGOs. Admittedly, many of these developments only gained pace in recent years.

Pew Charitable Trusts launched an initiative to 'foster broader public appreciation of non-profit arts and culture and its role in American society'. The initiative – Optimizing America's Cultural Resources – was largely premised on the idea that developing supportive cultural policies depended on providing more and better information on arts and culture to policymakers. As we will see, this is only partially true. In 2000, J. Mark Schuster was commissioned to carry out an overview of the existing international models in order to identify a template for what might be tried in the American context. Reporting at a meeting convened at Rutgers University in December 2001, he concluded that no single model was appropriate as a template that would suit the decentralised cultural policy scene in the US. In this context, Schuster also emphasised the importance of built-in provisions for communication, interaction and comparative analysis – which will become a vital lesson.

CPANDA and NADAC

In the years that followed, the Pew Charitable Trusts supported a web of activities. Princeton University received a $1.9 million grant to create a national data archive for policy and the arts, which was to become the country's first interactive digital archive of policy-relevant data and statistics on arts and culture, with data on artists, arts and cultural organisations, audiences and funding for arts and culture. The initiative – known as the Cultural Policy and the Arts National Data Archive (CPANDA) – was expanded and refined over the years and eventually transferred to the National Archive of Data on Arts and Culture (NADAC). NADAC is now one of several topical archives hosted by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) – the largest social science data archive in the world and part of the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. It can be used at no charge thanks to support from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and offers a range of services (such as data analysis online and a search function by questions) tailored to three different groups: researchers and students, policy makers and the general public.[3]

The Cultural Data Project, now DataArts

The Pew Charitable Trusts, together with a number of local funders, were also involved in the setting up of the Cultural Data Project, which was launched in Pennsylvania in 2004. The aspiration was 'to address a longstanding need for detailed, reliable information on non-profit arts, culture, and humanities organizations, and by doing so, strengthen management, philanthropy, research, and public policy'.[4]

Over the years, the data collection and reporting effort started in Pennsylvania, then housed within the Pew Charitable Trusts, had been replicated in 13 states and Washington, DC and in 2013 (with further support from a number of foundations) the Project became an independent non-profit organisation. It is still operating under the changed name of DataArts.[5] As the current website explains, 'the new name reflects our evolution beyond data collection and reporting to something bigger: advancing a new field of practice and sharing resources for data-savvy cultural leadership in the twenty-first century'.[6] This effort – which is in practice a data management platform and an online benchmarking tool – is used by arts and cultural organisations to submit customised reports

---

[3] icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/NADAC/index.jsp
[4] culturaldata.org/about/history/
[5] culturaldata.org/about/
[6] culturaldata.org/about/history/

to multiple funders, as well as to monitor and compare their financial and service performance (based on their financial audit and quantitative programme data).

Princeton Centre for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies

These two complementary platforms evolved in the US alongside and sometimes in conjunction with more traditional academic centres. The Princeton Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies – which was involved in the setting up of CAPANDA – was founded in 1994 with the expressed aim 'to improve the clarity, accuracy and sophistication of discourse about the nation's artistic and cultural life'.[7] Its focus is scholarly activities and it runs a programme of research (working with affiliates) and events. With its broad interests, including a range of social issues concerning cultural value, and funding support from a number of national foundations and government agencies, it has survived to this day relatively unchanged.

Chicago Harris' Cultural Policy Center, now Place Lab

The same cannot be said of Chicago Harris' Cultural Policy Center which in 2016 merged with Arts + Public Life, an initiative of UChicago Arts, to form Place Lab.[8] The joint enterprise departs in many ways from the traditional model of a university research centre. In this working model, a team of professionals from the diverse fields of law, urban planning, architecture, design, social work, arts administration, and gender and cultural studies work together to foster a fundamental shift in urban development policies in the US as well as to practically advance arts and culture place-based projects on the mid-South Side of Chicago.

The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise & Public Policy, Vanderbilt University

Similarly, the Curb Center for Art, Enterprise & Public Policy at Vanderbilt University – set up to advance 'public dialogue on issues, policies, and organizational structures affecting artists, creative endeavors, and individuals' expressive lives, build capacity and knowledge around the issues of cultural expression in in matters of public policy, civic engagement, and enterprise'[9] – has been marked to undergo a significant transformation. It was chosen as one of the four locations to be funded through a new programme initiated by the National Endowment for Arts – NEA Research Labs. The NEA Research Labs programme[10] was set up to investigate the value of arts in non-art sectors – health, learning and business. As part of this scheme, the Curb Center for Art is to partner with the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago and with the Arts & Business Council of Greater Nashville to study the arts, creativity, cognition and learning.

> Through the lab, researchers will conduct a nationally representative survey to test the relationship between arts-based creativity and broader types of creativity such as problem-solving, entrepreneurship, and social networking. Furthermore, researchers will conduct a mixed-methods study of Nashville artists to understand how their activities and proclivities intersect with other domains of creativity.[11]

---

[7] princeton.edu/pr/news/02/q3/0930-culture.htm

[8] placelab.uchicago.edu/

[9] vanderbilt.edu/curbcenter/about-the-center/

[10] arts.gov/sites/default/files/nea-research-labs-program-solicitation.pdf

[11] news.vanderbilt.edu/2016/12/12/nea-to-fund-vanderbilt-lab-study-on-arts-and-creativity/

This multi-disciplinary and cross-sector approach departs in a number of significant ways from the old models of traditional research and knowledge transfer.

Sustain Arts

This is a project of the Hauser Institute for Civil Society at Harvard University, in partnership with the Foundation Center and Fractured Atlas. The platform specialises in providing easily accessible aggregations of the existing data concerning the location of arts venues, the demographic of the participants or the details of funding. The strength of the resource comes from its local focus: currently the platform offers information on three localities – Bay Area, Detroit and Chicago – but the ambition is to engage 'a total of six regions over the next three years, laying the groundwork for regional and national policy conversations'.[12]

Other online platforms and research programmes

The selective examples of university-based initiatives (and there are many more, for instance the Social Impact of the Arts Project at the University of Pennsylvania[13] which was discussed in the Cultural Value Project Report) co-exist with a number of non-university based initiatives in the US, for example, the resources made available through the Americans for the Arts organisation,[14] the Getty Research Institute[15] and a number of online platforms including: the Arts Education Partnership's ArtsEdSearch tool;[16] The CultureLab Library;[17] and CreateEquity[18] as well as an online discussion group, Cultural Research Network (CRN).[19]

In addition, it is useful to take note of some long-term research programmes such as ArtPlace America:

> a ten-year collaboration among a number of foundations, federal agencies, and financial institutions that works to position arts and culture as a core sector of comprehensive community planning and development in order to help strengthen the social, physical, and economic fabric of communities.[20]

This collaborative programme was successful not only at articulating and popularising a new approach to studying the effects of place-based cultural engagement but also at creating and ring-

---

[12] sustainarts.org/about/

[13] repository.upenn.edu/siap/

[14] Americans for the Arts – a non-profit organisation founded in 1996 as a result of the merger between the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies (NALAA) and the American Council for the Arts (ACA); currently working with 150,000 organisational and individual members. Its self-proclaimed functions are: advocate, research, connect, lead: americansforthearts.org/

[15] The Getty Research Institute – 'dedicated to furthering knowledge and advancing understanding of the visual arts'. It maintains a research library, organises exhibitions and other events, sponsors a residential scholars programme, publishes books and produces electronic databases (Getty Publications): getty.edu/research/

[16] ArtsEdSearch – 'an online clearing house that collects and summarizes high quality research studies on the impacts of arts education and analyses their implications for educational policy and practice': artsedsearch.org/browse-research

[17] CultureLab – a partnership between the Cultural Policy Center at the University of Chicago and an international consortium of arts consultants who aim to build a bridge between academic research and everyday practice, and to speed the diffusion of promising practice into the cultural sector: culturelab.net

[18] CreateEquity – an online platform with an editorial team (supported by, among others, CultureLab, The AW Mellon Foundation, Robert W Deutsch Foundation) carrying out in-depth reviews and commentaries of new research in cultural value: createquity.com/

[19] CRN – an online platform and a mailing list, a community of practice for arts and culture researchers. culturalresearchnetwork.org

[20] artplaceamerica.org/about/introduction

fencing a new area in the policy discourse: creative place-making.[21] It is good to be aware of these examples not just to make recommendations for the CCV (and so to avoid duplication and to emulate good models), but also because these are genuinely useful resources for those interested in understanding cultural value.

2.3. Europe – a story of networks

There is a long tradition of thinking about the value of arts and culture in continental Europe. There are many academic centres across Europe and the approaches taken are tinted by local/national circumstances.[22] There are a number of well-established academic centres, for instance, the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam, and also some area-specific academic collaborations, such as the Social Impact of Making Music research centre (SIMM) of the Ghent University Association. Compared to the US university-based research centres, many but not all of the European academic research centres fit more neatly into existing university structures. However, the one infrastructural form that has been uniquely developed in Europe in relation to cultural value is a network.

Why did networks form?

In order to understand why, an apt place to start is with the huge rise in the demand for comparative cultural policy research- and information-sharing driven by a number of transnational governmental organisations such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

A huge number of co-existing, collaborating and competing structures emerged at one time[23] as well as two 'networks of networks', with the Council of Europe supporting the **Forum of European Cultural Networks** and UNESCO funding **Culturelink,** the Network of Networks for Research and Cooperation in Cultural Development. The Council of Europe also supported arguably the most influential network, the **Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe**, known as the CIRCLE network, which transformed into an independent thinktank and no longer has an online presence.

Another interesting and instructive development was UNESCO's aborted attempt to unite a number of co-existing, self-proclaimed cultural observatories (e.g., INTERARTS Foundation: European Observatory for Cultural Research and International Cultural Co-operation in Barcelona,[24] the Observatoire des Politiques Culturelles in Grenoble,[25] the European Audiovisual Observatory in Strasbourg,[26] the Regional Observatory of Financing Culture in East-Central Europe in Budapest,[27] etc.) under one banner of an **International Network of Observatories in Cultural Policies**. Although UNESCO is still supporting some individual observatories on a very modest scale, notably the Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa (OCPA),[28] its commitment to building a network ultimately faltered. A number of observatories still surviving today have little in common beyond the name (for instance, the entity in Grenoble has a strong focus on the delivery

[21] arts.gov/news/2016/how-do-creative-placemaking

[22] ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_278_en.pdf

[23] eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/cebooklet2016_web.pdf

[24] interarts.net/en/

[25] observatoire-culture.net/

[26] obs.coe.int/en/about;jsessionid=EA3F2D5CF28D5436CD4D03464119E1C7

[27] budobs.org/

[28] ocpanet.org/

of education programmes, whereas the one in Strasburg is almost chiefly preoccupied with the legalities, finances and economies of the audio-visual industries in Europe).

What was their legacy?

It could be argued that networks will inevitably perish after a while. But if so, it is still interesting to look at their legacy. What appears to have happened is that many turned into even looser, decentred structures with no agreed set of objectives to fulfil. For instance, it is said that the attempt to set up the observatories network led to the creation of the **Laboratory of European Cultural Cooperation: the LabforCulture**[29] – now the **European Cultural Foundation (ECF) Labs** which is effectively a crowd-sourced, open discussion forum arranged around specific topics.[30]

More commonly, networks spawned counter-reactions leading to the creation of more centralised structures. For instance, it might be argued that the **European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research (ERICArts)**[31] was set up as a response to the perceived failures of the networks, aiming to create a permanent European-level cultural policy research institute run as a managed, non-profit consortium of research bodies. Resources such as the European Commission's **Eurostat**[32] and UNESCO's **Institute for Statistics**[33] could also be seen as more centralised, and more effective, answers to the problem of benchmarking.

What appears to be the case is that the networks failed to deliver the promised 'long term, comprehensive, independent information on the sector, to contribute to the development of consistent survey instruments, to develop a comprehensive analytic framework' (Schuster, 2002, p.33). Does this mean that all networks will fail in this way?

Not necessarily. It might be said that the networks created by the EU funding context and the transnational way of working were unique. Schuster himself argues that they were a quasi-managerial way of managing competing demands on finite resources and also a way to reduce the bureaucratic burden of processing funding applications. Some cynics would add that the European networks were a political tool and a means of promoting if not integration, then federalism.

This might be true and yet there are lessons to be learned about the limitations of networks. There is a danger that because they devolve responsibility in favour of sharing information, they will not be effective at delivering research and building a knowledge base. Indeed, although there are some examples of networks which are propelled by research ideas, most function well if they act more like membership bodies, devoted to campaigning and advocacy, networking and knowledge dissemination through events, with a small mixture of reseach. This is true of many contemporary European networks such as the European Network on Cultural Management and Policy

---

[29] budobs.org/former-events/buda-castle-retreat/report-buda-retreat.html - _ftn11

[30] ecflabs.org/

[31] ericarts.org/web/index.php

[32] Eurostat – a body working under the European Commission whose responsibilities are to provide statistical information to the institutions of the European Union (EU) and to promote the harmonisation of statistical methods across its member states and candidates for accession as well as EFTA countries: ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/main/home

[33] UIS – the statistical office of UNESCO and the primary UN depository for cross-nationally comparable statistics on education, science and technology, culture and communication covering more than 200 countries and territories: uis.unesco.org/

(ENCATC),[34] International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts (IETM)[35] or Culture Action Europe.[36]

2.4. The UK – a quest for institutional memory

Turning to the UK context provides a good opportunity to reflect on the findings from the consultation: what sources are being used and, perhaps more importantly, not being used? The first thing we have observed is that there is little institutional memory and a limited awareness of many past developments.

Cultural observatories and collaborative working

For instance, it was not commonly known that the format of cultural observatories thrived in the UK once upon a time. Between 2006 and 2009 a number of these appeared across the English regions, there was also a regional cultural research network and a number of regional cultural data frameworks. The observatories were set up to 'support research, evaluation and data access for the cultural sector which would enable policy-making, strategic development, and case making for further investment and advocacy'.[37] Many observatories championed collaborative working (for instance bringing consultants and academics together on the Impacts 08 programme in Liverpool). While their 'trade mark' was economic impact studies, they also pioneered many, now mainstream, approaches in Social Return on Investment (SROI), compensation modelling for subjective wellbeing, folksonomy and crowd-sourcing. They were also jointly funded (e.g., the Northwest Culture Observatory was jointly funded by the DCMS, ACE, Sport England, the MLA and English Heritage).

Their downfall and disappearance come down to a number of factors but the most obvious were: the change in the political climate and the bonfire of quangos under the Coalition Government after 2010; insufficient distance from the goals of advocacy and the perception that these structures were complacent with policy-based evidence making; overreliance on commissioning private consultancies which often led to 'idiosyncratic' methodologies and failure to produce reliable and robust frameworks.

Although it might be argued that some effects of this regional work persist (e.g., the prominence of the approaches which were pioneered and, also, the work done by the regional cultural research network is said to have influenced the development of the creative industries estimates provided by DCMS), the structures themselves seem very much forgotten.

Current state of affairs

Indeed, as we have mentioned, the respondents in our consultation named very few historical examples of research and information infrastructures. The two sources of information for cultural

---

[34] ENCATC – established in 1992, a network of more than 100 member institutions and professionals in over 40 countries active in education, training and research within the broad field of cultural management and policy: encatc.org/en/about-us/

[35] IETM – a network of over 500 performing arts organisations and individual members working in the contemporary performing arts worldwide: theatre, dance, circus, interdisciplinary live art forms, new media: ietm.org/

[36] It is worth noting that Culture Action Europe has been runing a crowdsourcing platform – Measuring the Impact of the Arts in Society – which is effectively an online space to upload practitioners' evidences, where 'stories of social impact of the arts can be told, multimedia documented and collected': cultureactioneurope.org/news/social-impact-of-the-arts-tell-us-your-story/

[37] Transcript of a presentation given in a workshop organised by the Cultural Value Scoping Project.

value referred to by a significant number of the consultees were recent. These were the Cultural Value Project and the Warwick Commission. It is interesting to note that there was rarely recognition that the two initiatives were very different in character and purpose (with the Warwick Commission being much more policy-facing, media savvy and impact-driven).

Looking at the large-scale initiatives where some analogies can be drawn with the models existing in the US: there was even less awareness of **DCMS's CASE programme**[38] (not dissimilar in its ambition to NADAC) and the platform of the **Audience Agency**[39] (emulating some features of DataArts) although it was not entirely negligible. It is interesting that the published releases, reviews and digests from the CASE database – such as *A review of the Social Impacts of Culture and Sport* or *Understanding the Drivers, Impacts and Value of Engagement in Culture and Sport: An Over-arching Summary of the Research* – were better known than the online platform. The **Taking Part survey**,[40] together with its concomitant publications, was cited on a number of occasions as a source of statistical data. While Taking Part was generally seen as a 'crude' instrument which had very limited usefulness for specific localities and specific issues, and did not 'truly explore/document people's responses, experiences and engagement', very few respondents realised that Taking Part was in fact the source of the 8 per cent figure[41] which became notorious because of the way it was used by the Warwick Commission.

Arts Council England was named as a source of information on a number of occasions. Other sources mentioned in the consultation were: **Heritage Lottery Fund**, **Education Endowment Foundation** and, internationally, the **OECD** and **Arts Edserch (US)**. King's College London's **CultureCase** was also identified as a useful resource but, in its current form, not something to be treated as a comprehensive solution. A number of subject/area-specific platforms have been named by individual consultees, notably: the **Arts Alliance evidence library**,[42] the **National Alliance for Arts, Health & Wellbeing**,[43] the **LIFT Living Archive**[44] and the **National Disability Arts Collection and Archive** (NDACA).[45] (It is interesting to note that, rather than being traditional depositories, LIFT and NDACA are intended to be a learning resource, offering an interactive 'adventure' through documents, photographs, objects and recordings.) A number of platforms publishing cultural content were named in the consultation, e.g.: artuk.org/; culture24.org.uk/home; artsprofessional.co.uk/. Regarding sites used specifically by the makers of cultural value, engage.org/ and the ArtWorks Navigator: Good Practice Gets Better (artworksalliance.org.uk/awa-resource/artworks-navigator-good-practice-gets-better) were mentioned; and culturehive.co.uk/ was named as an example of a networking site used by arts professionals.

---

[38] gov.uk/guidance/case-programme

[39] theaudienceagency.org/

[40] gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-survey

[41] 'The wealthiest, better educated and least ethnically diverse 8% of the population forms the most culturally active segment of all: between 2012 and 2015 they accounted (in the most conservative estimate possible) for at least 28% of live attendance to theatre, thus benefiting directly from an estimated £85 per head of Arts Council England funding to theatre. The same 8% of the population also accounted for 44% of attendances to live music, benefiting from £94 per head of Arts Council music funding' (Warwick Commission Report, p.33).

[42] An online library housing the key research and evaluation documents on the impact of arts-based projects, programmes and interventions within the Criminal Justice System: artsevidence.org.uk/

[43] A hub for information and research on arts and health work in England and further afield: artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/recent-developments/national-alliance-arts-health-and-wellbeing

[44] liftfest.org.uk/living-archive

[45] ndaca.org.uk/

Working with academics

Most of the non-academic consultees had some experience of working with academics. These encounters tended to be positive and impactful, even if short-lived and limited to individual projects. In the cultural sector, as well as in academia, there is an undeniable appetite for working across disciplines and across sectors. Interestingly, there is a growing recognition of a shared civic agenda and a desire to capitalise on the environment of trust that many universities provide. The 'unique' selling point of academic work is its rigour.

This said, the all too familiar issues of the dynamics of power (where research professionals are very much in the driving seat), confusion about expectations and frustration about different cultures of working (the barriers of language, time scales and costs – academics are thought to be difficult to understand, slow in delivery and expensive) resurfaced in many conversations.

Moreover, although there was some awareness of a growth in the number of collaborations involving universities and the arts and cultural sector, there was no clarity about the established ways of collaborating. Examples of a programme considered successful in bringing different cultures of working together was the AHRC-led and ESRC co-funded **Connected Communities** programme[46] and, in this context, **Understanding Everyday Participation**[47] (this said, only a handful of people could name them). Regarding the actual institutions named as having a tradition of inquiry into cultural value, the ones mentioned more than once were: **ICC Liverpool**, **Sidney De Haan Research Centre for Arts and Health**, the **University of Warwick** and **King's College London**.

It is interesting to note that, on the whole, respondents were not familiar with **Culture Forum North**[48] – which might be thought of as the most ambitious attempt to build cross-sector collaborations to date. What may also seem intriguing is that only a few referred to work done at research departments of big cultural organisations and NGOs as a resource of information on cultural value.

Membership bodies and networks

At the same time, many consultees said that they relied on the work done by membership bodies and networks, such as: **National Museum Directors' Council** (NMDC),[49] **The Society of Chief Librarians**,[50] **Voluntary Arts**[51] and the **Creative Industries Federation**.[52]

On the whole, there was a very good awareness of networks and associations – examples given ranged from some big national networks: **What Next?**,[53] **National Operatic and Dramatic Association** (NODA),[54] **The Artists Information Company, A-N**,[55] **People Dancing**,[56] **Sound**

---

[46] connected-communities.org/
[47] everydayparticipation.org/
[48] cultureforumnorth.co.uk/
[49] nationalmuseums.org.uk/
[50] goscl.com/
[51] voluntaryarts.org/
[52] creativeindustriesfederation.com/
[53] whatnextculture.co.uk/
[54] noda.org.uk/
[55] a-n.co.uk/news
[56] communitydance.org.uk/

Sense,[57] **Making Music**;[58] through those working more regionally, e.g., **Federation of Scottish Theatres**,[59] **Society of London Theatre**;[60] to those working with more specific groups, e.g., **National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE)**,[61] **Youth Music**,[62] **Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers (LABBS)**.[63] There was a tendency to 'delegate' the responsibility for research and information sharing to these umbrella bodies. This is hardly surprising given that few arts and cultural organisations have the time and resources to spend on research activities, as they are preoccupied with satisfying their day-to-day operational needs. At the same time, this state of affairs was very much in tension with the professed desire to reflect thoughtfully and to understand better the value of cultural engagement.

2.5. Drawing conclusions for the future

The examples presented above are not meant to be a comprehensive list. Yet it is clearly important to showcase them given how few were mentioned in the consultation. Better awareness of these infrastructures and resources will hopefully contribute to their better use in the UK; avoid duplication (in particular between these and any new resource that is set up as a result of this report); and provide lessons from the past which might be considered when creating future resources. In this context, they can help us to draw some general conclusions.

It appears that succeeding – i.e., managing to make a meaningful impact and contribution – is down to a balancing act in five interconnected areas.

Maintaining research functions without ignoring the need to network

Firstly, many of the examples bring to light the tensions in, yet **necessity of, uniting the functions of networking, information sharing and outreach on the one hand, and staying actively involved and driven by research ideas, on the other**. When these entities are divorced from generating ideas and focused entirely on repackaging information generated by others – they perish or scale down.[64] This is what happened to many European networks. On the other hand, if they become too isolated, self-absorbed or self-referential – working in disciplinary and academic silos without sufficiently acknowledging how culture and its effects are perceived and approached by other constituencies (including policy makers and funders) – they also fail. This was to some extent the problem encountered by the academic centres in the US. The opening up that was needed meant embracing more collaborative ways of working and a portfolio of topics cutting across disciplinary boundaries.

Documenting what we know as well as producing new insights

Another iteration of the balancing act we have just described is the ability to both **engage new ideas** and **solidify the existing evidence base**. Documenting and archiving must go hand-in-hand with producing new insights. Just as a good literature review enhances project design, improved

---

[57] soundsense.org/metadot/index.pl

[58] makingmusic.org.uk/

[59] scottishtheatre.org/

[60] solt.co.uk/

[61] nawe.co.uk/

[62] youthmusic.org.uk/

[63] labbs.org.uk/

[64] Some of the European networks are a good example, but also private consultancies – such as EUCLID in Liverpool – could be named.

historical awareness will help us to ask better questions, plan the future research agenda and so improve our understanding of cultural value. In a nutshell, we need better understanding of what we already know (and to avoid reinventing the wheel), as well as more thought-leadership and forward thinking.

Building institutional memory while actively communicating in the present

While, on the one hand, we need better historical awareness and institutional memory ('those who do not learn from history repeat past mistakes'), being too inward-looking is dangerous. **Communication, interaction and outreach are crucial**. The fact that hardly any of the international examples had come up in the scoping consultation is a good indication that there is still a lot of work to be done around information dissemination. It is not enough to have resources – people need to know about them (and, indeed, have the time to use them, which is a related but different point to do with the pressures on arts and cultural organisations – more on this in Chapter 3). It is worth bearing in mind that the success of membership bodies in staying connected to their members has a lot to do with the skilful use of social media and the tailoring of the membership offer.

Being independent yet relevant

Similarly, both **independence and relevance matter**. The tension between research and advocacy which resurfaced in many examples given above may seem relatively straightforward. More advocacy-inspired research will not help if it means eroding the credibility of the findings and limiting what questions may or may not be asked. Indeed, the consultation demonstrated that there is a growing recognition across the different groups that sustainability requires departing from the advocacy-driven 'house of cards thinking' which has only short-term effects.[65]

On the other hand, the model of 'ivory tower theorising', which has no connection to what is happening on the ground or in policy, has also been much derided. We need research that is relevant, and this is where the complications begin, because there are different ways of being relevant. Solving practical problems is one; providing a way to critique existing solutions and improve our understanding of the complexity of the issues is another. It seems that a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value will have to embrace different ways of being relevant which will exist on a spectrum from proposing useful solutions to engaging in a critique of ideas.

---

[65] Access to information alone – even if impartial, credible and robust – might not in itself be sufficient to change patterns of policy making. Indeed, in spite of the great improvements to research and infrastructure for cultural value in the US, recent policy making there seems to take little account of the growing body of evidence about the value of cultural engagement.

Augustin Girard, former head of the Department des Etudes et de la Prospective of the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, was instrumental in setting up a few observatories. Apparently, he described the choice of the word 'observatoire' as a 'shy' and 'pleasant' name for a place which, in contrast with a centre, 'does not deliver judgments' (quoted in Schuster, 2002, p.33). Well, it appears from the analysis of the past examples and the scoping consultation that more courage is needed. One of the things that a new Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value could usefully do is to engage in honest interpretative work to refine the knowledge base – because too much information is noise. It should **speak in an authoritative but not authoritarian voice and make judgements and selective choices, where needed.** For instance, choices may have to be made about what the Centre can realistically do. One lesson learned from the examples is that it is difficult to do many things equally well. It is very difficult – if not impossible – to provide a one-stop shop with 'everything you ever needed to know about cultural value'; moreover, it is not clear that a resource of this kind is in fact needed (see Chapter 3). In the proposals outlined in Chapter 4, although a portfolio of activities is sketched, we suggest that only a selection of these is taken forward. We also recommend that the Centre specialises at any given time in one or two node challenge areas.

2.6. Key points from Chapter 2

At risk of over-simplifying, the following are the most general lessons to be drawn from the overview of the existing resources for research and analysis into cultural value. Many of these lessons come down to performing a balancing act.

As discussed above, there is a tightrope to be walked across many overlapping areas. Uniting research and networking functions emerged as important. Being past-aware through archiving, documenting and building institutional memory while at the same time being forward-looking through producing new insights and actively communicating and reaching out to contemporary stakeholders were all recognised as necessary capabilities.

Neither being decentralised nor focused on one constituency worked well. The former goes hand-in-hand with low accountability and low responsibility and makes it harder to solidify the knowledge base; the latter risks the broad-range of viewpoints being silenced.

Independence is important on a number of levels. Many entities had gone under because of their excessive dependence on one source of funding. A wide and diversified funding-base works well and seems an important factor for sustainability (match-funding arrangements are perceived as a form of safety-net in the US).[66] Similarly, being too closely associated with political agendas and policy trends (in terms of ideas, location or affiliation) is a risk to stability, because it undermines trust and raises suspicions of partiality. Independence matters in creating the trust and respect needed to perform the role of selector and curator.

Lastly, working collaboratively emerged as vital. Embracing cross-sector ways of operating and a portfolio of topics cutting across disciplinary boundaries was important first and foremost because it can ensure that the collectively-produced understanding of cultural value has a wide-reaching legitimacy, recognition and relevance.

---

[66] createquity.com/2017/03/threats-to-federal-arts-and-culture-funding-whats-at-stake/

3. The knowledge base: the need to collaborate

3.1. Two dimensions of understanding

Understanding the value of arts participation and cultural engagement can only happen collaboratively because cultural value itself is formed through interaction: between different people and contexts. These contexts are constantly shifting and continually unsettled by changing agendas, and the groups and stakeholders involved have both divergent and overlapping objectives.

As a result, cultural value may never be 'fixed', 'solved' or known in absolute terms, and so our knowledge cannot be exhausted. This does not mean that we should give up the search for understanding and accept a relativist or 'art for arts' sake' argument. On the contrary, our job of understanding is only beginning – and we can only do this together.

There are two dimensions to understanding cultural value:

- We need to **solidify our evidence base about the effects of arts participation**. The CVP offered new and different perspectives on cultural value which require further investigation. The previously neglected areas brought to the fore by the CVP – e.g., the relationship between cultural engagement and empathy, and the ability to reflect and imagine – call for more methodological work and robust evidencing.
- We need to continue to **interrogate how conversations around cultural value are framed** – how research and inquiry are conducted, how value decisions are made and what convergences in opinions and agendas can be legitimately expected between the different stakeholders.

A Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value could make a big contribution by building a knowledge base in both areas.

3.2. Neither starting from scratch nor the terminus in sight

What we know

We know more about cultural value than we did 30 years ago. We have more and better evidence in certain areas and our **understanding of the subject matter** has advanced over the years. We can speak of consensus and solid foundations across several different topics.

We know that participation in arts and culture (more so than attendance in many cases) has positive effects on people at all life stages and in a wide range of situations. We know it can improve quality of life for older people as well as the impact of long-term conditions such as dementia; it can provide personal, social and educational gains for young people including at-risk youth; we also know about the impact of arts and cultural engagement on subjective wellbeing and metal health more generally.[67]

We have also been making some progress in **developing our methodological approaches and data sets**. For instance, we have moved a long way from the very narrowly construed outcomes frameworks which relied on rudimentary input-output models, often expressed as money made or saved. With the rise in popularity and increased sophistication of various models – such as the 'theory of change' approach, Social Return on Investment (SROI) frameworks, contingent and

---

[67] The Cultural Value Project Report brings here some key support but the evidence base is continuously expanding.

subjective wellbeing valuation methods, and multi-criteria analysis – we are starting to have a much better, more detailed, understanding of how to capture cultural value.

The wide adoption of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS), and other scales for arts and health, make it possible to paint a wider picture and to connect some dots. Data sets such as Taking Part – despite its deficiencies – are **enhancing our capacities for analysis** and, when complemented by hyper-local initiatives such as the Cambridgeshire Culture Card project,[68] over time they are likely to put us in a position that would be envied by those working in cultural value 30 years ago.

We are also better at identifying the **relevant indicators and measures**. For instance, after living with the creative place-making agenda for a number of years, we are coming to see that most successful projects are 'not measured by how many new arts centers, galleries, or cultural districts are built. Rather, their success is measured in the ways artists, formal and informal arts spaces, and creative interventions have contributed toward community outcomes'.[69]

We are making advances in **setting our conceptual and theoretical frameworks**. Here the pioneering work of Paul DiMaggio and colleagues at the Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies to facilitate cross-disciplinary thinking and to 'stimulate the transfer of ideas and methods from mature policy fields to the field of cultural policy research' provide a good illustration of how conceptual progress happens.[70] The CVP Report also contributed to this growing body of scholarship.

Where the gaps are

We know a lot for sure, yet there are areas where more foundational research is needed, driven by academics.

We still need **more longitudinal studies** of various kinds. One example is how individual taste changes over a lifespan and how household participation in culture may differ depending on different life stages of its inhabitants, etc. Another is that, despite the recent boom in studying the supply side of cultural value, our understanding of the labour processes for specific art forms and areas remains poor. Where we have some longitudinal data sets (e.g., the Nordic epidemiological approaches discussed in the CVP Report, CVP, p. 106) or research design with longitudinal components (e.g. the research project by Janelle Reinelt and colleagues, CVP, pp.43–44) – we need more theoretical insights explaining why we are observing the correlations that we find.

We need **more research into certain areas**. It is intriguing that so little academic research looks at the relationship between popular culture and behavioural change, particularly given some successful 'nudges' such as *#PopJustice: Social Justice and the Promise of Pop Culture*,[71] the six-volume publication funded by Unbound Philanthropy and the Nathan Cummings Foundation. There are also those areas which, while in some ways niche, might carry a lot of potential to change how we think about well-established areas such as arts and health. Good examples are the work in the aesthetics of care exploring how the affective dimensions of art experiences influence

[68] cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/blog/13032017-1736/understanding-cultural-engagement-cambridgeshire-culture-card?qt-popular_content=1

[69] artplaceamerica.org/about/introduction

[70] princeton.edu/culturalpolicy/moc_prospectus.html

[71] unboundphilanthropy.org/sites/default/files/%23PopJustice Executive Brief_FINAL with full credits (7).pdf

the practices of caring (See e.g. Thompson, 2015) or how paying attention to the performative/theatre-like aspects of care delivery might be useful in training medical staff.[72]

Speaking of gaps in our knowledge base, **we need better methods**, and we need them urgently. The ambitious Digital R&D Fund for the Arts[73] showed the value of research-led experimentation and how fascinating ideas may be translated into successful projects if methods can be developed to answer the important questions they pose. Also, some of the areas highlighted in the CVP Report as fundamental to the value of cultural engagement (e.g., enhanced empathy and reflectiveness) can only be properly addressed if we develop methodological approaches that can cope with the complexities at issue.

Regarding data, paradoxically, we have been suffering from 'data overflow' in the cultural sector – as observed by Selwood in the early 2000s (CVP, p.16) – yet we are still **missing relevant baseline and benchmarking data** to carry out some intelligent analysis. For example, this happens when we try to compare different locations (as we are reminded by the lessons from the European Capital, previously City, of Culture programme – see CVP, p.76).

Managing our expectations

Although we have been making progress in understanding the subject matter and improving our methodological approaches, we still lack realistic **expectations about what research can achieve**.

Firstly, the consultation showed that there has not been enough acknowledgement across the different groups that **we will never solve the question of cultural value**. Wishful thinking that the challenges of valuing the arts and culture can be settled with the right kind of experiment, the right kind of report, better and more facts seems to persist. This is not so. While we know far more about the subject matter and the methodologies for capturing cultural value than we did 30 years ago, many questions to do with cultural value will remain contested. This is because cultural value is:

- **relational** – produced through a relationship between what is valued, the one who is doing the valuing and the context in which valuation takes place;
- **iterative and contingent** – rather than accumulating facts and findings, we are likely to be progressing by bouncing ideas off different stakeholders across changing contexts and refining our understanding through this process;
- **subject to various overlapping agendas and interests at any given time** – Holden's cultural value triangle with the three interacting points of emphasis – intrinsic, institutional and instrumental – may in some ways be reductive but remains fundamentally right (Hewison & Holden, 2004).[74]

One implication of this is that looking for an end point where we 'know everything' is a mistake. The inquiry into cultural value **cannot be scientific in the sense of building knowledge through aggregation**, and bringing together a definitive collection of information. What follows is that **there is no one silver bullet, no magic report that would settle the questions of cultural value** for the purposes of policy making, nor is there 'killer evidence that will release dizzying amounts of money' (Scullion & García, 2005, p.120).[75]

---

[72] blog.wellcome.ac.uk/2013/01/15/feature-professor-kneebone/
[73] artscouncil.org.uk/creative-media/digital-rd-fund-arts-2012-15
[74] warwick.ac.uk/research/warwickcommission/futureculture/resources/blog/hewisonholden/
[75] This was explored in the workshop focused on cultural policy which we discuss below.

Being realistic about what can be achieved by research on its own also means recognising that **there are as many research challenges as there are practical problems** in cultural value, and that, in fact, some practical barriers may come disguised as research problems. For sure, there are many things we still do not know about the barriers to participation and yet lack of knowledge is not the main problem. Many problems continue because of real obstacles. For example, things may not change because of entrenched ways of working in institutions and sectors (also known as institutional inertia). We stick to solutions that may not work even if better alternatives come to light, because we base practice on historical preferences or precedents, or because changing the status quo may seem threatening and a lot of work.

To sum up, while our understanding of cultural value has been evolving, our awareness of the conceptual and pragmatic constraints remains limited.

3.3. Conflicting and converging agendas – our workshops with stakeholders

The starting point of this scoping project is **that we need to embrace the fact that different questions and priorities arise for different stakeholders in cultural value discussions**. This should be accepted as something to be worked with, interrogated and better understood. The framing of the cultural value discussions should form an important dimension of understanding cultural value, alongside the subject matter, methodologies and data sets. The results of the four workshops we organised as part of the CVSP provide here a good starting point.

The four events focused on four distinct yet overlapping groups with a stake in cultural value: artists, activists, smaller arts organisations and cultural venues; big cultural sector institutions and organisations with commercial interests; those involved in policy making; and academics. (See the Appendices for the agendas and list of speakers and participants.) In each case, the concluding roundtable discussion looked at the specific question of **how any given group would stand to benefit from the existence of an entity dedicated to research and analysis into cultural value**, and **what functions and structures could meet the needs they identified** most effectively. The objective was to home in on key issues that arise within each constituency.

Artists, activists, smaller arts organisations and cultural venues

Two different points of emphasis came to the surface early in the workshop's discussion. Some saw their work from the perspective of **artist-led engagement**, others through the prism of a **participant-led approach**. Yet it transpired that these complex practices are clearly about both: guided collaborations and being embedded in specific locations and communities.

Similarly, on the level of the effects these artistic interventions have, it was not possible to draw a distinction between the **public realm and private lives**. Transformations in private sensibilities inevitably feed into a wider context. Arts and culture provide a high-trust environment where differences can be articulated and identities unsettled without the danger of this leading to a breakdown in communications – for example in multi-cultural communities. They provide a space where thinking that would not necessarily be allowed in the everyday 'transactional' world can be established.

Of course, every arts and cultural organisation has its unique way of working. One of the things they have in common is that **their practices are coming to occupy an increasingly important role in the shifting landscape of cities and districts**. New ways of artistic working and forms of cultural engagement are being written into the DNA of how localities operate and how people living there

think. In this context, the deficit model – the assumption that arts interventions of this kind happen in situations where there is something missing or something needs fixing – is to be resisted.[76]

Another point that emerged in the workshop was that, rather than focusing on achieving outcomes – however they are defined – it is more productive to try to understand **the process of how art does what it does**. In this vein, research and evaluation cannot be about advocacy because taking this approach pre-empts what questions and answers can be voiced and so limits what can be learnt. Advocacy leaves no room for unexpected or unintended outcomes, which are often the most interesting ones from the point of view of learning.

This raises further questions about who does the 'learning'. Here the binary distinction between those who do cultural value and those who think about cultural value seemed to collapse. What emerged was that researchers need to be embedded into producing teams early on in the process – rather than simply 'observing'. **Bringing the observer and the observed closer together will lead to better understanding** and true learning.

Where does this leave us in terms of the expectations placed on a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value? There were clear signals that we must **move away from advocacy-based evaluation** which is antithetical to learning. Although the tension between advocacy and learning cannot be easily dismissed,[77] the overall sentiment was that resources would be better used if the entity tried, in the words of one of the participants, to 'identify what is emergent, what is impacting and what is changing against this challenging political and economic climate'. On the whole, this group said that an agenda-making body was needed – one that would pro-actively anticipate future trends and catalyse new situations where learning through practice could occur.

Big cultural sector institutions and organisations with commercial interests

It is interesting that similar messages emerged at this workshop: underscoring the importance of researching *with* and not *on*; highlighting the problem that the practitioners of cultural value are often absent when the research agenda is set; and emphasising the need to move away from advocacy-based approaches.

The reasons to move away from advocacy also had to do with learning, practice improvement and self-validation. The argument developed that **if we want to understand cultural value, we should not be trying to put it into the straight-jacket of advocacy** because this distorts its character. Cultural value is not static, it does not happen in the neat and sequential way that advocacy presupposes, i.e., first something made by arts and cultural professionals, framed through cultural organisations, then observed in research and finally subjected to policy assessment. The way we understand cultural value and make meaning from it affects how arts and culture professionals and organisations work and how policy is set. So, **the model of understanding we need is not linear but cyclical; not static but iterative (involving repetition and being bounced-off by different stakeholders)**.

---

[76] Here the tension in the Creative People and Places programme was used as an example – was the objective to engage in arts-based unsettling and exploration or to improve these places through audience development?

[77] For instance, a suggestion was made that best research support might amount to a 'mapping' – in order to inform arts organisations about what is happening elsewhere but also to demonstrate and make an impactful case about the breadth and richness of the existing initiatives.

The importance of coming to terms with **co-creation of knowledge** resurfaced across many dimensions.[78] Co-production was also a term frequently used – as one participant suggested, it means embracing 'Museum 3.0': no longer turning spectators into participants but allowing participants to become users.

The message was clear: **practice development and organisational learning should be at the centre of thinking about cultural value** – improved understanding will follow. What does it mean in practical terms? Putting learning at the heart of cultural organisations is too big a job for any future entity to accomplish single-handedly. This needs work within individual organisations to align strategic and operational values; to make sure that there are enough time and resources to reflect on what is learnt and to feed this back. So there is work to be done in removing the practical obstacles that get in the way of embedding the research and development (R&D) culture in arts and cultural organisations and among practitioners.

Many of the themes discussed at the workshop have wide-reaching ramifications for evaluation and funding practices, such as incentivising risk-taking, developing staff and providing core-funding for research (see 'Some reflections on evaluation' in Chapter 4). This requires wider changes to how institutions and the funding system work. The Centre could indirectly contribute to this agenda by catalysing and facilitating conversations with stakeholders in areas where systemic changes are needed. It could also provide a space for peer learning, experiment and excitement about cultural value.

Academics

The starting point of this workshop was that **'research as advocacy' is and should remain at the very periphery of what academics do**. Echoing the findings from the other two workshops, there was an almost unanimous recognition that we need more **research which is genuinely co-conceived and co-produced**, even if in practical terms this is difficult to achieve because of institutional silos, Research Excellence Framework (REF) requirements, etc.

There was a manifest agreement that real advances in our understanding of cultural value have been made in the last 15 years or so. This is about more than just improvements in the evidence base. There have been some undeniable conceptual and methodological advances, e.g. the emergence of configurative models and value constellation and a much greater awareness of how methodological choices shape the nature of inquiry. There have also been very welcome developments to do with expanding our frame of reference, e.g., the growing importance of everyday participation and domestic consumption, the recent interest in creative workers, etc.

Not surprisingly, what emerged is that academics – in particular those working in the humanities and social sciences – are **well placed to demystify the valuation process and expose the different systems of inclusions and exclusions that influence how cultural value is understood**. Indeed, where arts and humanities scholars (and the AHRC as a research council) have a real job to do is in highlighting the complexities, contingencies and conflicts between different strands of cultural value. If this is carried out and communicated in a sensitive way, it may open up genuine opportunities for learning and discovery for everyone with an interest in cultural value.

---

[78] For instance, in relation to the digital dimension where both those working in research and in the cultural sector are coming to terms with the fact that the networked digital culture presents a new knowledge-system and a way of producing cultural value (rather than being merely useful for marketing and educational purposes). And yet, the public digital realm is under-researched and, just like the historical public sphere, in danger of being colonialised by private interests.

What follows from this is that, rather than solidifying or legitimising certain agendas, the role of academics in relation to the future entity may be more about disrupting inflexible ways of working and unsettling stale ways of thinking about cultural value. Rather than appeasing and grounding, academics should be actively working to pre-empt what Bennett once called 'the narrow intellectual horizons within which a great deal of policy orientated research [...] is formulated [...] that takes so little account of history, ideas or the cultural experience itself' (Bennett, 2004, p. 244).

Those involved in policy making

The discussion in this workshop confirmed that the way inquiry into cultural value interacts with policy making is complicated, and there were two clear messages. One was that we should get better at lifting the lid of the 'black box' of policy process; the other was that we should understand better how research is used in policy making.

In practical terms, we need more conversations about **how research is consumed by policy makers and politicians, and how politicians make their decisions**. One participant asked, 'does someone go to see a minister with a big thick report?' Some 'tips' were offered by those representing the civil service: one was that there are different ways of feeding into the policy-making process but timing is critical – some potentially impactful interventions fail because they arrive too late in the process.

Admittedly, the civil servants, politicians and other 'insiders' in the room agreed that identifying the goals of policy and how they fit within overall government objectives (e.g., how objectives might be dictated by the interests of the Treasury or the Home Office) was complicated and not something that could be 'fixed' through the 'right' operational procedure. **More transparency** would help,[79] as well as **a better understanding of the presupposed 'theory of change' behind policy interventions** – in order to develop research questions, designs and methodologies.

At the same time, participants suggested that **we needed a more naturalistic understanding of research impact**. As Belfiore reminds us, it is useful to think about the research utilisation patterns that Carol Weiss had already identified in the late 1970s. This is where 'government officials use research less to arrive at solutions than to orient themselves to problems (Quoted in Belfiore, 2016, p.213). More recently, Smith pinpointed the same issue by suggesting that **ideas drive policy, not evidence per se**, nor specific studies or reports, and [that] 'this influence occurs in a diffuse manner, by **gradually changing the way actors think about particular issues, over long periods**' (Smith, 2013, p.9).

What follows from this? A Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value might focus on configuring conversations between policy makers and those working in the cultural sector and academics, identifying key blockages points in these discussions and shining a light on the decision-making process. While policy in government is focused on solutions to concrete problems, it might also be useful to have an agent responsible for setting the agenda and 'raising horizons' insofar as cultural policy is considered, as one participant put it. To echo the findings from the two workshops with arts and cultural organisations, 'focusing on developing a culture of curiosity, rather than the disengagement that can come from concerns over accountability' – as another participant put it – could also be a driver for the future entity.

---

[79] For instance, separating the questions of how to ensure accountability and how to justify public spending decisions, from the more general question regarding the significance of cultural engagement (see Chapter 2) – could be a relatively straightforward way of cutting through some of the unnecessary 'tangles' in the discussion.

Conclusions from the workshops

This overview of the four workshops reveals some obvious convergences. First and foremost, across all constituencies we are seeing a **crisis of faith in advocacy** as an effective long-term strategy. While in the current climate, advocacy may still be important, there was an agreement that it should not be the job for any future entity itself to carry out this role. Rather, its efforts should be focused on the palpable need to **make a space for conversations removed from the instrumental and short-term pressures**.

Co-production of knowledge was a recurrent theme. There is a need to understand how arts participation affects people, how cultural value is ascribed and judged and how the perspectives of those directly involved, and those who are observing, interlock in research.[80] There was a sense that this improved understanding of cultural value should be conducive to learning, and should ignite a sense of excitement and conviction, rather than purely responding to the pressures of accountability.

All four events confirmed that, as much as we need a cross-sector agreement on what constitutes the evidence base, we also need an improved grasp of what is at issue in the **process and procedures that shape conversations about cultural value.** This includes a better understanding of the practical pressures, specific constraints and structural conflicts experienced by different organisations and sectors.

A big task facing a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value is therefore to create communities of understanding and practice; to get people across the sectors – academia, the arts and culture, and policy making – to talk to each other, to understand each other's problems and points of view, to converge on shared concerns and to work on collective approaches and methodologies.

3.4. Node challenges – where working together is necessary

What are node challenges?

This section proposes how to build on the suggestions made in the workshops. This includes **how we might explore the converging and conflicting agendas and find a shared voice** across the different constituencies by identifying platforms for working together rather than a common denominator. Such an opportunity presents itself in the form of what this report calls node challenges.

The notion of **node challenges** is inspired by the concept of 'wicked problems' – which was characterised in system theory and urban planning back in the 1970s.[81] These are essentially **problems that cannot be solved once and for all** for reasons such as: their solution would require an unrealistic change in material circumstances; there are many opinions (including ideological views) involved; there is contradictory or incomplete information available; the problems are connected with other problems; the level of resources needed to address them is too large. Instead, wicked problems **can be tackled and managed**. A number of approaches have been proposed over the years, and two were identified as most effective: iterative, imagination-based design

---

[80] A suggestion was made by one workshop participant that 'it could be more helpful to the arts organisation if the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) publicly argued that they needed the arts in order to continue their own research, than if the HEIs produced their own research advocating for the benefit of the arts'.
[81] uctc.net/mwebber/Rittel+Webber+Dilemmas+General_Theory_of_Planning.pdf

techniques[82] and making 'those people who are being affected into participants of the planning process'.[83]

Where does this leave us? We know it is not helpful to try to 'fix' or 'solve' the problem of cultural value (see p.23). If we accept that many questions concerning cultural value are node challenges, we should also recognise that they are challenges for both research and action co-ordination: and **collaboration might be the most effective way of managing these**.

Starting by articulating a problem collectively and then researching it (also known as problem-based research) is likely to yield good results. Also, questions will have to be formulated in a way that de-activates some of the tensions and creates new potential for convergence: rather than the 'what' questions we need more 'why' and 'how' questions.[84] The aim should be to create a shared understanding of the problem and foster a joint commitment to ways of resolving it that cuts across the sectoral silos. Applying design principles and techniques will be useful in this context (more on these in Chapter 4).

Three node challenges of cultural value

Identifying node challenges as possible platforms for collaborative practice would in itself be a challenging task for the future entity. However, the following three possible areas emerged from the scoping consultation and are presented here as examples:

- **Cultural value and social justice.** This is an area where many conflicting agendas, including ideological viewpoints, collide. It would benefit from being approached collaboratively through a series of how and why questions, for instance: 'How is cultural value best captured in relation to the vast swathes of the population who don't feel part of the main stream (as we have seen post-Brexit), including publicly-funded culture?' Answering questions like this would require working with community activists who read participation not just through the prism of class, but across different trajectories, and themes that do not alienate. It would also mean going beyond the shallow 'access' agenda (limited to introducing measures to increase participation from under-represented groups); and moving beyond the skin-deep diversity agenda (characterised recently as 'a scramble towards superficial diversity, rather than an opportunity to dismantle the frameworks that created the systemic exclusion to begin with [...] a meaningful, committed, resourced, long-term process of shifting existing power-dynamics').[85] The shift required to engage with this node challenge would be away from democratising culture and towards a better understanding of cultural democracy (Wilson, Gross & Bull, 2017, p.1).

- **Innovation, risk-taking and the creative economy.** This is another area where many overlapping issues and concerns collide. As discussed in the CVP Report, a number of prisms have been used to capture the relationship between economic and cultural value and to investigate how cultural, creative and economic dimensions interact. One of these approaches that proves to be both continuously cogent and in some ways underexplored –is the framework of the creative industries. Of increasing importance in this context is the question

---

[82] publicsphereproject.org/content/wholesome-design-wicked-problems
[83] courses.cs.vt.edu/~cs5984/spring_2005/reading/Rittle.pdf
[84] Rather than 'What is the evidence that spending more on cultural engagement in prisons will be more effective in reducing re-offending than hiring more prison officers?', we need to ask 'Why is it that many prisoners and ex-prisoners feel that arts participation changed the way they feel about their identity?'
[85] artshub.com.au/education/news-article/opinions-and-analysis/professional-development/tania-canas/diversity-is-a-white-word-252910

of how culture and the arts drive innovation; more specifically, how creativity and imagination will persist as requirements in the economy of the future and how they may be grounded in cultural engagement. These are clearly complex questions and we need concrete proposals to break them down into manageable lines of inquiry. Tackling these as a node challenge presents such a proposal. Taking this approach could mean, for instance, working on the borderline of economics and sociology to look at skills development. In this context, some questions becoming increasingly pressing given the prospects of automation – e.g., 'How do the needs of the future workforce and the current skills of the creative workforce (including artists) interlock?' – could be explored. Taking the node challenge approach in this area is also likely to mean recalibrating the on-going discussion away from the narrow focus on how the subsidised cultural sectors feed into the creative industries, to investigate the simultaneous interaction of commercial, voluntary and publicly- subsidised culture. This could be done, for example, by exploring chain events in product development and observing how innovation and cultural engagement might be correlated or even causally connected by tracing the patterns of cultural engagement of creative workers.

- **The challenge of bringing the micro (individual-level outputs) and the macro (society-level outputs) together**. This is a problem area rather than one specific problem or set of related problems. The challenge is to explain how changes on the individual level (e.g., increased empathy) translate into large, complex, society-level outcomes (e.g., pro- or anti-immigration sentiments).[86] This question of micro-macro translation is not isolated to cultural value and recurs in many other guises in the social sciences. What makes the problem difficult to tackle in all these contexts is not just the intricacy of the issues, but also the lack of adequate methods and techniques, as well as the absence of good benchmarking and baseline data (data used to compare different contexts and to measure the difference between the initial condition and the condition that exists after any intervention). It might be that real breakthroughs could be made by using place-based approaches where detailed data sets could be built and conversations facilitated between organisations of similar size across different localities.[87]

These are just examples of possible node challenges.[88] As we suggest in the next chapter, the scoped entity might work on more than one challenge at any given time, or challenges could be tackled sequentially, as they are identified, through, say, three-year programmes/taskforces.

3.5. Key points from Chapter 3

To sum up, we know much more about cultural value than we did 30 years ago. This said, we are not in any danger of exhausting our knowledge of this area. We have to accept that there are

---

[86] This issue was hinted at in a number of places in the Cultural Value Project Report, notably, in relation to the work of the Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP) at the University of Pennsylvania (CVP, p.39) and in the discussion of the aggregation problem in economic valuation approaches, e.g., Taylor's contention that there are aspects of culture which are collective and irreducibly social and which cannot be entirely captured in terms of individual preference (CVP, p.139).

[87] The aforementioned Cambridgeshire participation card is a good example, but the local data collected for the applications to the UK City of Culture programme – both successful and unsuccessful – could also be incredibly useful. Working with small arts organisations on collecting data in their localities would also be a promising strategy.

[88] For instance, addressing some of the issues surrounding the digital and cultural value identified at the workshop with the big cultural sector organisations (see above) would be an equally good suggestion. Another more specific but interesting problem area to explore would be real-life, quasi-experimental situations where we have opportunities to compare counterfactual scenarios – similar situations with and without cultural value. For instance, the situations created by closing down local libraries or the changes to the uptake of arts subjects in schools might be explored. Given the radical nature of these changes, it might be possible to compare the before and after scenarios by collecting longitudinal data.

conceptual limitations to our inquiry – as discussed above, relationality, contingency and iterability are the inherent features of cultural value which put a natural break on knowing 'everything' in this domain. We must also accept and work with certain pragmatic limitations: there will always be different agendas, historical lags, path dependencies and institutional inertia impinging on how cultural value is discussed, experienced and framed. The groups and stakeholders who interact on the issue of cultural value have some divergent and some overlapping objectives. We must embrace this situation rather than try to resolve it or wish it away.[89]

The agendas of the different groups overlap on some fundamental issues, in particular when it comes to wanting to have the means to learn about the value of participation in arts and culture. This is a good foundation to build upon. It provides enough agreement to introduce new collaborative ways of working around shared concerns and collectively articulated problems, which we have framed as node challenge areas.[90] There are many benefits in taking the collaborative approach: it may lead to substantive findings about cultural value; it is likely to catalyse the possibility of improving methods; and it will offer an opportunity to work through some of the big 'knots' – the key blockage points in the discussions of cultural value where groups take antagonistic or mutually-ignorant stances.

What some might call 'the limitations' of the inquiry into cultural value are not insurmountable but could be a great motivator for much-needed work in cultural value. We do have to accept and understand the implications of the conceptual and pragmatic limitations. So, we propose that a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value establishes itself as a leading body and a 'specialist' in tackling those node challenges – i.e., where it is obvious that the stakeholders come to the table with radically different world views and different frames for understanding.

---

[89] Here the ability of the arts and humanities to explain how different values co-exist configuratively, without the need to aggregate and eliminate the differences, will be very useful as a coping strategy.

[90] Those areas where it is acutely visible that the stakeholders have radically different world views and different frames for understanding and that the parameters of the discussion change over time.

4. What is needed: a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value

As we highlighted in the previous chapter, the scoping consultation and the workshops revealed convergence of opinion in some areas. Together with the findings from the CVP (Chapter 1) and our review of the models of research and information infrastructures (Chapter 2) we have used these areas as a foundation for the practical recommendations that follow. This chapter presents a proposal for a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value, and outlines what structures, functions and activities might be appropriate to meet the needs we have identified in the scoping process.

4.1. Functions

The needs identified in the consultation and, hence, the proposed functions fall into two broad categories: **custodian and communicator**, and **broker and facilitator**. Together, these two strands would put the Centre in a good position to work to a long-term agenda, while at the same time being useful and relevant to the on-going activities of the groups with an interest in cultural value.

Custodian and communicator

A Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value should not simply be a repository of data and an observatory of research and analysis. It should amplify and interpret information by: conducting and disseminating syntheses of research, analyses and information (this includes academic research, grey literature, statistical releases); scanning existing research and bringing a critical lens to it; communicating information back to stakeholders in a way that can be understood and used across sectors; playing a role in setting the agenda for practice and debate around the value of culture.

In practical terms, the Centre would be drawing attention to key findings and contextualising them in its reports and publications, as well as highlighting what the research and data are not saying and what implicit assumptions may be affecting what is said. As we highlighted in Chapter 2, the challenge will be to speak in an authoritative but not authoritarian voice. An important long-term, core function should be to consolidate the knowledge base by: building blocks of robust evidence (some examples were given in Chapter 3); and also, potentially, expanding the evidence in some areas by stimulating specific areas of research.

It is neither feasible nor desirable to produce an encyclopaedic compendium of everything and some choices about emphasis and focus will have to be made (more of this in the section below).

Broker and facilitator

The Centre would help to build cross-sector communities of understanding and practice around shared problems and concerns. It would work with partners and wider stakeholders as a facilitator, intermediary and adviser, translating between sectors and brokering new relationships and collaborations. It would do this by: facilitating new conversations (through meetings and events): articulating problems, raising awareness of different agendas and assumptions; providing information and contacts; and giving advice to partners about what research questions might be pursued.

Articulating problems collectively is the key – as we stressed in the previous chapter. It is only by addressing shared questions such as those contained in node challenges that people working in different sectors and disciplines might begin to develop shared understandings and eventually a shared language and methodologies.

The most immediate outcome would be to raise awareness of how conversations about cultural value are framed – the fact that there are different agendas, expectations and institutional limitations on those engaging in these discussions. Rather than wishing these away, people would develop a wider understanding of these constraints.

4.2. Activities, scope and focus

A Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value would be most effective if it could deliver a **portfolio of activities**. The size of the portfolio will depend on the level of staffing and other decisions still to be made by the organisations prepared to support the future entity. The proposal below is modular – it allows for a selective mixing and matching of activities within three categories. However, the Centre will only be able to deliver the functions outlined above if it carries out a combination of long-term/permanent activities as well as additional, time-limited programmes across all three categories.

Bringing together blocks of robust evidence around key themes

As we have already mentioned, the Centre cannot be a one-stop shop and a portal channelling all information about the value of arts and culture. Firstly, it would be extremely difficult to construct and maintain. Secondly, it is not clear that a portal with 'every fact you ever needed to know about cultural value' would be that useful. Access to unfiltered and unchannelled information is not helpful when communicating with policy makers; arts and cultural organisations and practitioners would benefit more from deepening rather than broadening their understanding of the value of their work; and academics would approach such a portal with suspicion.

Instead, the message that came across in the consultation is that it would be useful to have 'blocks of evidence': known and accepted facts, key findings, sources and documents in areas such as cultural value in education or cultural value in health. Pulling together these sources and adding new evidence as it emerges would build institutional memory. This information would be made publicly available to eliminate the need to re-invent the wheel every few years or in every individual funding application.

There are many different ways of 'slicing the pie' and agreeing on the areas to include may not be simple. One solution would be to use the six categories laid out in the CVP Report (reflective individuals; engaged citizens; communities, regeneration and space; economy: impact, innovation and ecology; health, ageing and wellbeing; arts in education). Some grading system may have to be devised to mark the robustness and appropriateness of the evidence. It may also be desirable to put in place networks of experts assigned to each evidence block, whose responsibility would be to keep the Centre's staff aware of any new publications and developments in each area.

Another useful activity for the Centre would be to carry out 'judicious sampling' of methodological approaches and to showcase these on a website/in reports. These could be divided into two groups: most promising work in innovation, and methodological approaches that have proved to have practical benefit. There are other options that might also be considered.[91]

---

[91] In addition, there are some areas identified through the consultation where consolidating what we know would be useful but would not fall into the category of evidence per se, e.g., collaborations between the HE sector and arts and culture. This information is currently dispersed, but it could be collated by triangulating the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction survey and five-year institutional knowledge exchange strategies published by individual universities. It may or may not be a job for the Centre to carry out these kinds of tasks.

Developing a communications strategy

A Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value will need to have a website where information and updates can be publicised, a well-maintained contact database and digital (enews, social media) communications strategy.

Simply having a website and related communications tools would not be enough to achieve the aims of the Centre (particularly if we take into account the conclusions drawn in Chapter 2 about successes and failures in reaching audiences). There is a range of additional activities which might be considered, including: a blog (with invited contributors) to help to encourage participation and debate, and raise profile (including through social media sharing by contributors); a platform for reviewing new books (perhaps by inviting doctoral students to make contributions) to help to advance people's knowledge; and a resource where practitioners could share best practice to improve effectiveness, impact and quality of their work.[92] Keeping in touch with the representatives of the many network organisations and membership bodies identified in the UK through the consultation (see Chapter 2) will be an important part of the communications strategy, as will releasing bi-annual or quarterly reports pulling together the most interesting work in any given period. Communicating internationally and staying in touch with transnational communities of researchers and practitioners will also be vital to ensure that the entity is neither parochial nor insular. Of course, defining the exact portfolio of desirable communication priorities will be a necessary task for the Centre.

Building communities

Gatherings of people – physical and virtual – should be the backbone of the shared community of understanding and practice. There are a number of ways we could do this which are mutually enhancing, including through a large annual conference with high-profile speakers at which the Centre makes announcements regarding its key areas of work; policy breakfasts with MPs, civil servants and groups involved in the relevant APPGs (All Party Parliamentary Groups) to communicate new developments and identify and anticipate future policy trends; awards for excellence in practice-based research or methodological leadership to promote and encourage high research standards in arts and culture; a series of events delivered by experts from the networks created in the evidence areas to share emerging findings and good practice and encourage participation and debate; new meeting formats that rely on practice-based thinking e.g., cultural value mashups and hackathons; and online events, e.g. webinars or discussion groups, to reach out to people who are less likely to participate in more traditional events. These examples are illustrative – here once again it will be a job of the Centre to define, in discussion with its partners, the exact portfolio of activities it may wish to pursue. What appears however to be the minimum required for the entity to fulfil its functions is that it runs some form of working workshops and 'sandpits' (residential interactive workshops bringing together people from different sectors and disciplines around a single theme). These are likely to form the core of this work, and will identify questions and new ways of tackling them. They will be most effective if they nurture mixed communities of users and practice in the areas identified as node challenges (see pp.27–29).

---

[92] If this option is chosen, the resource will have to be carefully designed. As we have mentioned, Culture Action Europe is currently running a crowdsourcing platform for practitioners, and the LIFT Living Archive and the National Disability Arts Collection and Archive (NDACA) are carrying out interesting work combining different non-textual materials with more traditional archival materials. Although not prototypes, these examples might be considered when designing this kind of platform.

If it is to successfully and simultaneously act as custodian and communicator and broker and facilitator, the Centre has to engage in activities in all three categories above. The minimum activities required would be publicising blocks of evidence through a website and in bi-annual or quarterly reports, and running a series of workshops/events to promote work on specific node challenges. It would be advisable to enhance this minimal portfolio with some of the add-on, optional activities outlined above.

Looking at timelines and timeframes, the Centre would have to be involved in some long-term, core activities and some short-term programmes and initiatives. Articulating blocks of evidence and building institutional memory will require more stable/permanent delivery channels, whereas work within the specific node challenges could be delivered using the format of taskforces. These time-limited initiatives might be more effective in creating tipping points and opportunities to shift current thinking on cultural value.[93]

Identifying node challenges would in itself be a substantive job for the Centre (a deliberative method involving representatives from the key constituencies and the founders of the Centre should be used). To amplify and increase the effectiveness of its work in this area, the Centre could advise interested organisations or partnerships on possible research programmes to take forward ideas emerging from events and meetings. The Centre could work in more than one area at any given time, or the areas could be tackled sequentially, for example through three-year programmes/taskforces.

4.3. Changing the evaluation game

One strong finding from the consultation is that people often see evaluation as a burden, rather than something which helps them to learn and improve. This is a missed opportunity, for both the arts and culture sector and the cultural value knowledge base.

There are wide-ranging discussions concerning causes and possible remedies for the current situation. In terms of causes, we agree that there has been too much emphasis on the value of outcomes, and not enough on the value of processes. We also know that organisations are rewarded for articulating the perceived benefits of what they do, not for reflecting and thinking about what might have gone wrong and what could be improved. The question 'What did you learn?' does not figure prominently enough on evaluation forms.

Suggestions for remedies might include: more support for self-evaluation and formative learning activities;[94] creating group – and network – evaluation practices where information can be shared (confidentially if needed), and good practices and learning disseminated;[95] making research and

---

[93] A good example of a programme which has been successful at re-writing the narrative of cultural value is ArtPlace America (introduced in Chapter 2) – a 10-year collaboration among 16 partner foundations, eight federal agencies and six financial institutions – working to 'position arts and culture as a core sector of comprehensive community planning and development in order to help strengthen the social, physical, and economic fabric of communities' (arts.gov/news/2016/how-do-creative-placemaking). Arguably this initiative succeeded in ring-fencing an area of policy making, now known as creative place-making, that did not exist before.

[94] In contrast to summative assessment which is focused on results, the goal of formative assessment is to monitor and improve learning by providing ongoing feedback.

[95] An interesting example of an attempt to create a learning network is Plus Tate: tate.org.uk/about/our-work/national-partnerships/plus-tate

development integral to the business cycles of arts and cultural organisations through core research and development (R&D) support and funding.

It is clear that it would benefit arts and cultural organisations to re-think and re-tailor their data collection practices; and it would benefit the cultural value community to explore how the existing data sets might be better used, for instance by allowing academic researchers to analyse some of the data 'graveyards' – research that has been conducted but not effectively used.

Funders can drive change in this area most effectively. It will be of crucial importance that they begin to behave more like venture capitalists – accepting that a certain amount of failure is inevitable, and indeed necessary for learning. A shift in outlook is needed – from evaluation for accountability, to evaluation for learning.[96]

A Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value could play a role in facilitating this shift. It could showcase best practice, draw attention to possible new solutions and – more practically – facilitate discussions, catalyse network-evaluation approaches and match researchers with already existing unanalysed or badly analysed data sets.

4.4. Organisational, legal and funding structures

Various organisational structures could be considered for a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value, ranging from a centred model or a stand-alone hub; a body attached to some bigger structure to a network. Our findings so far, particularly those in Chapter 2, cast doubt over the suitability of the network structure.[97] This leaves three feasible models that could deliver the functions and activities outlined above, and are broadly in line with what the funding consortium of the Cultural Value Scoping Project might be prepared to consider.

An independent body

It would be possible for the Centre to function as an independent structure, unattached to any other organisation. In legal terms, it would be formally constituted as an independent, incorporated entity (Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO); Charitable Company, Limited Company including Community Interest Company (CIC), etc.), with a governing structure (more of this below). Unlike in the other models proposed below, it would require its own in-house staff to deal with finances, human resources (HR), office-management, etc. It could also work with a network of freelance associates. A good way to illustrate this model is with an example of a thinktank or an independent charitable research institute. However, unlike most thinktanks, the Centre would not be raising revenue through its services, project work, etc. It could be supported by a grant, endowment or on-going donations from other organisations (see the section on Funding below).

The biggest advantage of this model would be independence, which, as we discussed in Chapter 2, is an important factor in ensuring success and stability for research and information infrastructures. This set up would allow the Centre to genuinely to represent the interests of the constituencies which have a stake in cultural value, without in any way privileging one over another. The biggest

---

[96] This said, figuring out how to 'square' the demand of accountability on the one hand, and the need to drive practice development and institutional learning on the other, is an important and urgent question. A suggestion was made in the consultation that the requirement of accountability can be met through simple monitoring of a small number of key indicators, so that evaluation practices can focus on learning. This is something that might benefit from more inquiry in the future.

[97] This however does not mean that network structures should not be added to the core structure, in fact, we are proposing earlier in this chapter that we develop networks of experts in the component/blocks of evidence areas.

disadvantage is that a significant up-front commitment would be required of the funding consortium before the range of possible solutions is tested (see the Trial and Evolution period described below). Rather than the starting point, this option could be considered as something the Centre could move towards after a period of time.

Nominally independent, operationally attached

This light-touch structure would use some other body (most likely an academic institution or a foundation) for accounting and contract management purposes. The 'base' organisation would act as a banker and HR department for the Centre. The new structure would not need a legal status (it would be an unincorporated structure). Unlike the model of an attached structure (discussed below), it would function as nominally independent. The larger structure would not be acknowledged on the level of branding and the Centre would need its own name/logo, etc. It would have an agreed governance structure where the institution providing operational support could be represented, but only as one of a number of voices.

This option could provide a good starting point. It has the advantage of being a light-touch solution with minimal running costs, while at the same time enjoying the perception of being independent (the importance of this was discussed in Chapter 2). With time, the Centre could evolve into an endowment or a community interest company. In terms of disadvantages, this model would require a host institution and a clear agreement on how operations would be carried out. The partners of the funding consortium would need to agree which organisation would be best suited to this and how the Centre's operations could be integrated. Also, if staff are hired as free-lancers, it could potentially deter some people from applying (it might however be possible to make the staff employees of the base organisation).

An attached/satellite structure or programme

In this model, the Centre would be formally attached to and housed by an already established organisation. There are precedents of such structures being attached to academic institutions, cultural organisations and foundations. The Centre would not need to have its own legal status. It might also be possible to attach the Centre to more than one organisation/institution using the hub and spokes model, which would formally bring the possible partners (the spokes) together to form one structure (a hub). It is likely that there would be a lead body where the Centre is housed. In both these cases, the Centre could be set up as a programme (in the sense used for the programmes of the funding councils). A grant would be given to the host organisation(s) following a tendering/grant application process and a unit would be developed, once again, resembling some of the existing Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC)/Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) centres.

This model could be a permanent solution or it could be used for a transitional phase, before moving to an independent model. It would also work well as a way of getting the Centre off the ground. However, setting it up would be a more laborious process than with the nominally independent structure and an application process would be needed to determine the host organisation. Other disadvantages could be that the interests/agenda of the host institution(s) might dominate the workings of the Centre – in perceptions and/or in reality – particularly if, for example, all of the partners come from the higher education sector.

The bottom line

Any of these models could work to meet the needs identified through the consultation and the role of custodian and communicator and broker and facilitator, but we have concluded that it would be wise to take the evolutionary approach of the second or third options above. This would be in agreement with a strong message from the consultation: start with something and add more later – 'do not let the formula crystallise too quickly'.

4.5. Staff, affiliates and governors

The Centre will clearly need its own staff. The number will depend on what activities it will be expected to carry out. The minimal operating arrangement would probably require three/four members of staff with a director and a head of research and strategy to give the centre intellectual leadership, communications manager and events/research activities co-ordinator.

The staff would work with a steering group/governance board. This would comprise the core funders and it could also include high-profile, well-established representatives from across the key constituencies. In addition, it would be useful to have an advisory board consisting of high-profile figures from across the different constituencies (the composition here will be important and the following should be represented: academic sector; arts and culture, foundations and public-sphere bodies; representatives from the world of finance and investment with an interest in cultural value).

It would also be desirable to create networks of affiliates – for example, these could be experts assigned to each component/block of evidence. Other possible add-ons may include a variety of roles such as: public engagement ambassadors, policy champions, artists in residence or research fellowships. The fellowships and residencies might be high calibre post-doctoral roles, as well as people seconded from non-academic sectors. These could be considered at a later stage of development.

4.6. Funding

The level of funding needed for a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value will depend on the selection of activities made by the funding consortium. The budget will need to cover staff salaries and operating costs, and capital costs of setting up an office would have to be factored into the initial phase. The Centre would also need some resources for its own scholarly activity – some seed-corn funding to enable it to play a dynamic rather than merely a service role, undertaking preliminary research and thought leadership rather than simply servicing its publications, communications and events roles.

A consortium is needed to support this work: not only because the job is too big for one organisation or even one sector, but also because collaboration needs to be at the heart of this work. In the past, work that required collaborative approaches had been pursued separately within individual sectors. Building a consortium to support a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value is important symbolically, as it provides an example of the kind of working approach that the Centre would champion, and would be important politically, in showing the capacity for collaboration across different bodies and sectors.[98] Furthermore, the review of research and information infrastructures in Chapter 2 indicates that partnering, in particular when formally underpinned by

---

[98] Once again, it would be possible to formalise this partnership by setting up a hub as a separate legal entity that would officially represent the partners of this funding arrangement.

match-funding, is a good way of securing stability and sustainability.[99] Of course, the Centre will need to demonstrate that the value added by a consortium of partners outweighs the transactional and opportunity costs involved. The considerations presented in this report are reassuring on this front.

4.7. Trial and evolution

Design will be very important in securing the success of the Centre. In recent years, there has been significant progress in understanding the role that design principles can play in supporting good collaborations (see for instance the discussion in the CVP, p.95 and p.104). The consultation for the scoping project suggested that applying design methods and techniques would help the Centre to be effective and provide a genuine opportunity to put collaborative approaches at the heart of the operations while testing and refining some of the existing design techniques.

Design principles could be applied broadly to design and manage governance and operational structures (e.g. networks of associates) as well narrowly as a working method for individual workshops and events.

Three examples of this emerged from the scoping consultation (two of these have been developed in the cultural sector and one is born from an interaction of academics with small businesses):

- Scratch[100] – a method which Battersea Arts Centre has been applying to its programming, capital investment and managerial decisions since 2006. Scratch is an iterative, process-centred method of working where an early form of an idea is exposed to feedback which then helps take the idea to the next stage. Over time, ideas become stronger and learning is gathered to inform the final proposal. It was initially used for testing ideas in theatre productions. It was soon observed that this approach helps to create interesting solutions because it removes the pressure to only present to the public those ideas that are well formulated and 'finished'. In other words, risk- taking and occasional mistakes are written into this model. The consultative nature of the process makes it well suited to work with multiple constituencies and different agendas.

- Open Space technology – an approach originally developed by Harrison Owen and used and marketed by Improbable theatre company.[101] This is another example of how design thinking could be applied to group co-ordination. As an approach to event management it is most distinctive for its initial lack of an agenda: the meeting's participants create the agenda for themselves at the beginning of the event. The event proceeds on this mutually agreed agenda with light-touch facilitation from the organisers. This 'self-organising' process works best in situations where the participants are faced with: complexity (in terms of the tasks to be done or outcomes achieved); diversity (in terms of the people involved); conflict (real or potential); and urgency. This set of characteristics makes the approach suitable for tackling cultural value issues in the node challenge areas (see pp.27–29).

- Design in Action – a model developed as a tool for knowledge exchange and business development by a consortium led by the University of Dundee, as part of the AHRC-funded

---

[99] This point applies to the core operational costs of the Centre. However, if the suggestion to run add-on programmes is also endorsed, the Consortium should consider the possibility of pooling budgets and leveraging funding with external organisations (this way of working is attractive to foundations – in particular when channelling resources at specific problems).

[100] bac.org.uk/content/39534/create_with_us/scratch/what_is_scratch

[101] improbable.co.uk/hire/

Knowledge Exchange Hubs for the Creative Economy. This is a staged process to support design-led innovation. It consists of five progressive, facilitated stages with shifting points of emphasis between expanding the bank of ideas by inviting external participation, and synthesising and framing the outcomes of discussions using internal expertise and networks.[102] At the heart of the approach are methods of co-inquiry to collectively question and position the key challenges. The techniques work well in configuring three-way discussions, and the residential design-led knowledge exchange events – known as Chiasma[103] – are particularly helpful for articulating problems. There is no doubt that the approach could be usefully tested for node challenges in cultural value.

These are just examples, yet admittedly exciting ones, for what kind of design thinking might be tested in the proto-typing stage of the Centre. If they prove to work well, these and other design techniques could also be used on an on-going basis for the Centre's events.

4.8. Key points from Chapter 4

The scoping we have carried out shows that what is needed is a body that could act as a **custodian and communicator** of what we know about cultural value, **and broker and facilitator** of new conversations, ways of working and relationships.

This chapter breaks down and translates these broad functions into specific activities across three categories: articulating blocks of evidence and building institutional memory; active dissemination and communication; forging a sense of community and developing shared practices.

The portfolio of activities proposed is modular in character – it offers a number of self-contained suggestions which can be combined or interchanged with others. We recommend what would constitute the minimum core activities required to deliver the functions specified and make a strong recommendation in favour of specialising and being selective, for example, focusing on the node challenge areas.

We consider the question of structures suitable for the future Centre – location, setting and legal arrangements – and propose three possible models, outlining their advantages and disadvantages. This is followed by brief consideration of the staffing, governance and funding required to support the operations of the Centre.

Lastly, we make a strong recommendation that there should be a proto-typing phase built into the business development model for the Centre, during which a number of concrete design approaches might be tested. This is not an afterthought, but is integral to the proposals concerning the new collaborative approaches that would be the backbone of the Centre. The techniques tested could then be applied on an on-going basis to the core operations and activities.

---

102 discovery.dundee.ac.uk/portal/files/7754918/Woods_Marra_Coulson_2015.pdf
103 designinaction.com/faq/

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Are we heading towards a tipping point?

The AHRC's Cultural Value Project (CVP) coincided in time with many other programmes and taskforces looking at the role that the arts and culture play in our society, such as the Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value; the on-going research activities of Arts Council England; the efforts of the What Next?; not to mention some important, smaller-scale undertakings such as the Happy Museums Project and the work of the Independent Theatre Council. Since the CVP Report was published in April 2016, many initiatives have come into being and begun flourish, often focusing on the value of everyday participation and cultural democracy. The level of interest in cultural value is certainly not diminishing.

Writing in December 2002 in the Task Force Final Report for The Clore Leadership Programme, Robert Hewison and John Holden hypothesised that the study of cultural history suggests that whenever there is 'a burst of anxious theorising about an issue' two things can be inferred:

> Firstly, that the matter in question is going through a climacteric of change. To cite Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, the particular paradigm that has framed the conception and knowledge of the subject is beginning to twist and break under pressure from new knowledge and new situations, provoking a crisis. Secondly, that following this crisis, a new paradigm – a new conceptual structure – will emerge. (Hewison & Holden, 2002, p.5)

If Hewison and Holden's prophesy is true, the period of 'anxious theorising about an issue' has been extended in this case to over a decade. Some will probably insist that there is no crisis; still, few would disagree that a fresher way of thinking about cultural value, one promoting more adventurous ways of exploring (and ultimately, creating) cultural value, seems long overdue. By recommending that a new structure is set up – one that is past-aware, future-looking and dedicated to research and analysis – this report attempts to make an advance in this direction and to contribute to creating a tipping point.

The cultural value debate now needs a collaborative centre

Our consultation and analysis revealed that the root causes of many current frustrations with the cultural value debate cannot be tackled with a fact-checker: the answer is not more and better facts alone. Moving the debate forward will require more active learning and mutual-understanding of how facts are used and how understanding is produced – how the discussions and decisions about cultural value are framed.

The recommendation of this report is to set up an entity promoting collaborative work in cultural value. **A Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value** should consolidate and communicate what we already know, as well as broker and facilitate new ways of working. In practical terms, this will mean facing up to the multiple challenges of: identifying a shared evidence base and building institutional memory; staying transparent about different priorities and demystifying how decision making works; creating a common platform for inquiry and, perhaps one day, collective action plans, language and methods.

This is not 'yet another network'. The long-term ambition is to build the cultural value community of practice and help those in policy, research and practice to become more stable, resilient and sustainable.

Three lessons to underpin the Centre's mission

There are a number of learning points emerging from this scoping project. Three possible lessons that might feasibly underpin the mission of a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value are:

1. **Those who do not learn from history repeat past mistakes**

   First and foremost, we need to be aware of what resources for understanding cultural value already exist. We need to capitalise on the hard work done elsewhere and avoid duplication: the consultation revealed that the existing information and research infrastructures are severely underused. Secondly, we must avoid the pitfalls and mistakes that derailed past initiatives (these are discussed in Chapter 2). Finally, it is important to build institutional memory and take advantage of the progress made in the understanding of cultural value over the last 30 years.

2. **Better and more facts alone is not the answer**

   Many frustrations about the value of culture are due to practical barriers and confused expectations. We have to be realistic about what research can achieve, and understand that many entrenched difficulties are not so much research challenges as practical problems (for instance, to do with how cultural institutions work). We also must acknowledge that because we are talking about a value we will never have a neatly incremental, aggregative, scientific model of progress in our knowledge. The point which is reverberating throughout this report is that the knowledge base for cultural value should be about both a) better evidence and b) a better grasp of how discussions of cultural value are framed and value decisions are made.

3. **Working together is essential**

   This is the core of what makes cultural value a challenging area. Yet the best way of dealing with node challenges – those complex problems where different objectives clash and agendas collide, and which abound in relation to cultural value – involves co-ordination and collaboration. The Centre must therefore build a shared community of learning and a mixed community of use. There are a number of factors that will help.

   Firstly, we should recognise that articulating problems is the key: people should be brought together at an early stage to agree on what matters to them collectively, preferably around the 'why' rather than the 'what' questions (see p.28). Discussion facilitation techniques developed by the cultural sector and design principles will help.

   Secondly, we should acknowledge that even most well-articulated questions cannot be properly answered if we lack the appropriate methods and techniques to tackle them. Adopting a problem-based approach (starting our inquiry with a collectively defined challenge) must go hand in hand with promoting and incubating new research methods. Acting collectively – in a way that bridges those working in the arts and culture, policy makers, academics – is the only means of making the outcome of this approach binding and legitimate, and indeed, making this approach possible in the first place.

What follows from these lessons is that a Collaborative Centre for Cultural Value will not just exist to speak truth to power by collating evidence and translating research. Its other equally, if not more, important role will be to broker relationships and raise awareness of the complicated nature of the conversations concerning cultural value. Creating **a shared platform and a community of understanding** where this can be done will be the ultimate challenge, but will lead to better practice, greater impact, more informed decision making and greater appreciation of value from culture.

References

Belfiore, E (2016). Cultural policy research in the real world: curating 'impact', facilitating 'enlightenment'. *Cultural Trends*, 25(3), 205–216. Retrieved from dx.doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2016.1204050

Bennett, O (2004). Review essay. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 10(2), 237–248. Retrieved from dx.doi.org/10.1080/1028663042000255844

Crossick, G & Kaszynska, P (2016). *Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture. The AHRC Cultural Value Project*. Swindon: AHRC. Retrieved from http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/publications/cultural-value-project-final-report/

Hewison, R & Holden, J (2002). *Task Force Final Report*. London: The Clore Foundation Leadership Programme. Retrieved from cloreleadership.org/userfiles/Task Force Final Report Full.doc

Hewison, R & Holden, J (2004). *Challenge and Change: HLF and Cultural Value*. London: Demos/HLF. Retrieved from hlf.org.uk/files/challenge-and-change-hlf-and-cultural-value

Scullion, A & García, B (2005). What is cultural policy research? *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 11(2), 113–127. Retrieved from iccliverpool.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/ScullionGarcia2005WhatisCP-IntJourCP-ProofEdit.pdf

Schuster, JM (2002). Informing Cultural Policy: The Research and Information Infrastructure. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.

Smith, K (2013). Beyond Evidence Based Policy in Public Health: The Interplay of Ideas. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Thompson, J (2015). Towards an aesthetics of care. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance,* 20(4), 430–441. Retrieved from tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13569783.2015.1068109?journalCode=crde20

Warwick Commission (2015). *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth: the 2015 Report by the Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value.* Coventry: The University of Warwick. Retrieved from www2.warwick.ac.uk/ research/warwickcommission/futureculture/ finalreport/warwick_commission_ report_2015.pdf

Wilson, N, Bull, A & Gross, J (2017). *Get Creative: Opening Our Eyes to Everyday Creativity*. London: BBC and Cultural Institute at King's. Forthcoming.

Appendix 1.
Cultural Value Scoping Project: consultation and workshop participants

The consultation for the Cultural Value Scoping Project took place between November 2016 and March 2017. In addition, four workshops were organised between January and March 2017. (The agendas from the workshops are available in Appendix 2).

With many thanks to those who contributed to the consultation:

Joanna Allatt, Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)

Nicholas Allott, Cameron Mackintosh Ltd

David Anderson, National Museum Wales

Tom Andrews, People United

Kate Arthurs, British Council

Sally Bacon, The Clore Duffield Foundation

Ella Baff, The Andrew W Mellon Foundation, US

Hasan Bakhshi, NESTA

Suzanne Bardgett, Imperial War Museum

Nicolás Barbieri, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain

Mandy Barnett, MB Associates

Tully Barnett, Flinders University, Australia

Peter Bazalgette, Arts Council England

Alex Beard, Royal Opera House

Eleonora Belfiore, Loughborough University

Nancy Bell, Northumbria University

Tim Boon, Science Museum

Billie-Rose Boorer, Sky

Alan Brown, Wolfbrown, US

Catherine Bunting, Catherine Bunting Consulting

David Burke, London Philharmonic Orchestra

Tony Butler, Derby Museums Trust

Sam Cairns, Cultural Learning Alliance and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, UK Branch

Jonty Claypole, BBC

Paul Collard, Creativity Culture & Education

Caroline Collier, Tate

Gina Crane, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Paul Crawford, DCMS

Geoffrey Crossick, Crafts Council

Jocelyn Cunningham, Arts and Society

Sumi David, Arts & Humanities Research Council

Lauren Davies, Julie's Bicycle

Maurice Davies, The Museum Consultancy

Rosalind Davis, artist, formerly Zeitgeist Arts Projects

Evan Dawson, Live Music Now

Kathryn Deane, ArtWorks Alliance

Lydia Deloumeaux, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Canada

Andrew Dixon, Culture Creativity Place

Ann Drew, Arts & Culture at Business in the Community

Eliza Easton, Creative Industries Federation

Barbara Eifler, Making Music

Jane Ellison, BBC

Alastair Evans, Creative Scotland

Susan Feder, The Andrew W Mellon Foundation, US

Lindsey Glen, Royal Opera House

Ellen Grantham, National Endowment for the Arts, US

Jonathan Gross, King's College London

Josephine Guy, University of Nottingham

Meredith Hale, University of Cambridge

David Hall, The Foyle Foundation

Joe Hallgarten, RSA Associate

Yvonne Harris, British Film Institute

Robert Hewison, writer and cultural historian

JD Hill, British Museum

Kelly Hill, Hill Strategies, Canada

Liz Hill, Arts Professional

John Holden, independent consultant

Alison Holdom, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Richard Howells, King's College London

Sue Hoyle, Clore Leadership Programme

Polly Hunt, Studio Wayne McGregor

Jo Hunter, 64 million artists

Péter Inkei, The Budapest Observatory (Regional Observatory on Culture in East-Central Europe), Hungary

Sunil Iyengar, National Endowment for the Arts, US

Tim Joss, Aesop

David Jubb, Battersea Arts Centre

Nick Kaplony, Artquest

Poppy Keeling, Complicite

Fin Kennedy, TamashaJohn Knell, Intelligence Agency

Jayne Knight, Suffolk County Council and a-n (The Artists Information Company)

Máté Kovác, Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa (OCPA), Mozambique

David Lan, Young Vic

Ian Leete, Local Government Association

Anthony Lilley, Magic Lantern

James Livesey, University of Dundee

Mark Londesborough, Royal Society of Arts

Gareth Maeer, Heritage Lottery Fund

Sejul Malde, Culture 24

Paul Manners, National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement

Maja Maricevic, British Library

Michael Marra, Design in Action, University of Dundee

François Matarasso, Regular Marvels

Shona McCarthy, Shona McCarthy Consulting

Paul McDonald, King's College London

Nick Merriman, Whitworth, The University of Manchester and Manchester City Galleries

Sam Mitchell, NESTA

Steve Moffitt, A New Direction

Ben Monks, Improbable

Pippa Moore, De La Warr Pavilion Charitable Trust

Fiona Morris, Space

Freya Murray, Google

Jonothan Neelands, The University of Warwick

John Newbigin, Creative England

Dave O'Brien, The University of Edinburgh

Jonathan Petherbridge, London Bubble Theatre

Robert Phiddian, Flinders University, Australia

Jessica Plant, National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance

Karen Powell, Economic & Social Research Council

Emily Pringle, Tate

Vicky Prior, The League of Culture

Sarah-Jane Rawlings, Fun Palaces

Tim Robertson, Royal Society of Literature

Sarah Rowles, Q-Art

Ralph Rugoff, Hayward Gallery

Harry Sagger, British Film Institute

Abigail Scott Paul, The Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Marilyn Scott, The Lightbox

Susan Seifert, University of Pennsylvania, US

Sara Selwood, Cultural Trends

Robin Simpson, Voluntary Arts

Charlotte Slinger, Hampshire Cultural Trust

Christopher Smith, British School at Rome, Italy

Martin Smith, Ingenious Media

Mark Stern, University of Pennsylvania, US

Allan Sudlow, British Library

Annie Thorpe, A New Direction

Richard Thurston, Welsh Government

Helen Tomlin, ACTA Community Theatre Limited

Anne Torreggiani, The Audience Agency

Rachel Tyrrell, Higher Education Funding Council for England, HEFCE

Iain Watson, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums

Heather Williams, Arts & Humanities Research Council

James Wilsdon, University of Sheffield

Jane Wilson, Cambridge City Council and Arts Development UK

Nick Wilson, King's College London

Shelagh Wright, consultant

With many thanks to those who contributed to the workshops:

Daniel Allington, University of Leicester

Hasan Bakhshi, NESTA

Eleonora Belfiore, Loughborough University

Leonie Bell, The Scottish Government

Martin Bellamy, Glasgow Museums Resource Centre

Anne Boddington, University of Brighton

Tim Boon, The Science Museum

Matt Brennan, The University of Edinburgh

Victoria Brown, Contact, Manchester

Deborah Bull, King's College London

Catherine Bunting, Catherine Bunting Consulting

Tony Butler, Derby Museums

Sam Cairns, Cultural Learning Alliance and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, UK Branch

Asa Calow, MadLab, Manchester

Kerris Casey-St Pierre, The Bureau Centre for the Arts, Blackburn

Helen Charman, Design Museum, London

Richard Clay, Newcastle University

Kathy Conklin, The University of Nottingham

Paul Crawford, DCMS

Jocelyn Cunningham, Lancaster University

Kathryn Deane, Artworks Alliance and York St John University

Claire Doherty, Situations, Bristol

Anne Douglas, University of Aberdeen

Eliza Easton, Creative Industries Federation

Jill Ebrey, The University of Manchester

Alastair Evans, Creative Scotland

Susan Foister, The National Gallery, London

Patrick Fox, Heart of Glass, St Helens

Errol Francis, Cultural Co-operation, London

Lynn Froggett, University of Central Lancashire, Preston

Peter Funnell, National Portrait Gallery, London

Marie Gillespie, The Open University

Clive Gillman, Creative Scotland and Scottish Funding Council

Abigail Gilmore, The University of Manchester

Helen Graham, University of Leeds

Dominic Gray, Opera North, Leeds

Josephine Guy, The University of Nottingham

Joe Hallgarten, Associate, RSA Global

Hussnain Haniff, Brierfield

Yvonne Harris, British Film Institute

Ayesha Hazarika, BPI

Ruth Hogarth, King's College London

Alistair Hudson, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima)

Tom Inns, The Glasgow School of Art

Mel Jordan, Royal College of Art

David Jubb, Battersea Arts Centre, London

Dominic Lake, DCMS

Pip Laurenson, Tate, London

James Livesey, University of Dundee

Adrian Lochhead, Eden Arts, Penrith

Kathryn MacDonald, More Music, Morecambe

James Mackenzie-Blackman, New Adventures, London

Gareth Maeer, Heritage Lottery Fund

Paul Manners, National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement

Oliver Mantell, The Audience Agency

Maja Maricevic, British Library

Michael Marra, Design in Action, Dundee

Helen Marriage, Artichoke

Thomas Martell, The Education Endowment Foundation

François Matarasso, writer

Andrew Miles, The University of Manchester

Jane Milling, University of Exeter

Fiona Morris, The Space, London

Kerry Morrison, In Situ, Brierfield

Andrew Mowlah, Arts Council England

Kathleen Mulready, Welsh Government

John Newbigin, Creative England

Jack Newsinger, The University of Nottingham

Helen Nicholson, Royal Holloway

Alis Oancea, Oxford University

Dave O'Brien, The University of Edinburgh

Heather Peak, Studio Morison, Weobley

Laurie Peake, Super Slow Way, Burnley

Jonathan Petherbridge, London Bubble Theatre Company

Stephanie Pitts, The University of Sheffield

Emily Pringle, Tate, London

Charles Quick, University of Central Lancashire, Preston

Tom Robbins, HM Treasury

Alastair Roy, University of Central Lancashire, Preston

Emma Rucastle, Lancaster Fun Palace Maker & ELART Productions, Lancaster

Caroline Sharp, National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales

Declan Sheahan, King's College London

Naomi Shoba, Ovalhouse

Robin Simpson, Voluntary Arts, Cardiff

Chris Speed, The University of Edinburgh

David Stevenson, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

Donna Stewart, Scottish Government

Mike Stubbs, Fact, Liverpool

Becky Swain, Arvon

Pat Thomson, The University of Nottingham

Chrissie Tiller, Chrissie Tiller Associates CTA, London

Stella Toonen, King's College London

Alison Turnbull, Museums Galleries Scotland

Ed Vaizey, Former Minister of State for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries

Panayiota Vassilopoulou, University of Liverpool

Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, OECD

Ben Walmsley, University of Leeds

Victoria Walsh, Royal College of Art

Andy Whitfield, Millennium Choir, Lancaster

Laura Whitticase, Barbican Centre

Penny Yewers, Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Appendix 2.
Cultural Value Scoping Project: workshop agendas

With special thanks to Dave O'Brien, The University of Edinburgh; Emily Pringle, Tate, London; and Lynn Froggett, University of Central Lancashire, Preston for their support and active involvement in the organising of workshops.

Cultural Value Scoping Project Workshop, 18 January 2017

Evolution House Boardroom, 5.21

Edinburgh College of Art, The University of Edinburgh, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh, EH3 9DF

Workshop overview

The central question of this workshop – organised as part of the Cultural Value Scoping Project – is how academics, and cultural value scholarship more broadly, would stand to benefit from the existence of an entity dedicated to research and analysis into cultural value; inversely, what academics would have to contribute to this cross-sector platform. The workshop will be divided into two sessions, followed by a closing roundtable discussion.

09:30–10:00 **Arrival and refreshments**

10:00–10:15 **Welcoming remarks and introductions**

10:15–12:30 **Session 1**

12:30–13:15 **Lunch**

13:15–15:45 **Session 2**

15:45–16:00 **Refreshments**

16:00–16:50 **Roundtable discussion and concluding remarks**

Sessions and speakers

Session 1. Has scholarship in cultural value been 'advancing' over the years?

This session will look at the history of the field, how approaches have changed and what we have learnt over the years. It will attempt to diagnose and – as much as possible – remedy or manage some of the stumbling blocks. It will consider how the changing modes and sites of cultural engagement impact cultural value scholarship and it will examine the need to maintain a critical research focus on some areas highlighted in the Cultural Value Project Report. Crucially, the session will attempt to identify what questions we should be asking in the future and what research techniques we need in order to answer these questions.

Discussion topic 1: The history of the cultural value research, the problem of shifting definitions and how to have incremental learning about cultural value.

Dr Abigail Gilmore, Institute for Cultural Practices, The University of Manchester

Dr Dave O'Brien, School of History of Art, Edinburgh College of Art, The University of Edinburgh

Discussion topic 2: The increasingly diverse sites and modes of engagement – everyday participation, the voluntary sector and commercial culture – and how research can capture these changes.

Professor Jane Milling, Drama, University of Exeter

Dr Matt Brennan, Reid School of Music, Edinburgh College of Art, The University of Edinburgh

Professor Andrew Miles, School of Social Sciences, The University of Manchester

Discussion topic 3: Coming to terms with the ecologies of cultural value – what we know about the 'transactions' underpinning cultural and creative ecosystems and how we can find out more.

Dr Daniel Allington, School of Media, Communication and Sociology, University of Leicester

Professor James Livesey, History, University of Dundee and Michael Marra, Design in Action, Dundee

Professor Alis Oancea, Department of Education, Oxford University

Session 2. Are different ways of working needed?

This session will reflect on the structures and frameworks used to conduct and disseminate research and ask whether there are specific ways of working which are conducive to advancing our understanding of cultural value. Specifically, it will look at the advantages and difficulties of working across different disciplines and sectors, in particular in relation to collaborations with the arts sector and in terms of building networks spanning academics, policy makers and the public. It will also discuss a need for a forum to develop new solutions, test risky ideas and work with less conventional research design.

Discussion topic 1. Working across disciplines to answer questions in the arts and humanities.

Professor Josephine Guy, School of English, The University of Nottingham and Dr Kathy Conklin, School of English, The University of Nottingham

Professor Stephanie E. Pitts, Department of Music, The University of Sheffield

Discussion topic 2. What's to be gained from collaborations with the arts sector?

Dr Jack Newsinger, Department of Culture, Film and Media, The University of Nottingham

Professor Anne Douglas, Emeritus Professor, University of Aberdeen

Discussion topic 3. What are cross-sector networks good for?

Professor Richard Clay, School of Arts and Cultures, Newcastle University

Paul Manners, National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement, University of Bristol and the University of the West of England

Discussion topic 4. How to develop new insights and test risky ideas.

Professor Chris Speed, School of Design, Edinburgh College of Art, The University of Edinburgh

Dr Panayiota Vassilopoulou, Department of Philosophy, University of Liverpool

Roundtable discussion. What would a new entity and framework for research and engagement deliver that could not be delivered within existing structures and programmes?

East Room, Tate Modern Boiler House, Bankside, London, SE1 9TG

Workshop overview

This workshop, organised as part of the Cultural Value Scoping Project, will look at how the question of capturing the value of arts and culture has been approached by big organisations in the cultural sector; how data-gathering, analysis and evaluation practices in the cultural sector have changed in recent years; and what further changes are needed to address the key concerns of cultural organisations in relation to the value of arts engagement and cultural participation.

Thus, the issue is not that of capturing the totality of value generated by cultural institutions but of probing how a shared, cross-sector agenda could emerge by focusing on the more specific question of the value of arts and culture. To this end, the workshop will look at how evaluation and analysis of cultural value could become conducive to learning in a triple sense: learning through making and participation; institutional learning and organisational change; and learning in the sense of advancing our understanding of the value of art and culture. Accordingly, this workshop will be divided into three sessions, followed by a closing roundtable discussion.

Sessions and speakers

09:45–10:00 **Arrival and refreshments**

10:00–10:15 **Welcoming remarks and introductions**

10:15–11:45 **Session 1**

11:45–12:00 **Refreshments**

12:00–13:30 **Session 2**

13:30–14:15 **Lunch**

14:15–15:45 **Session 3**

15:45–16:45 **Roundtable discussion and concluding remarks**

Session 1. Learning through making and participation

The aim of this session will be to discuss the role of the cultural sector in supporting our understanding of artistic practices and the development of arts professionals and, more broadly, in driving our knowledge of public cultural participation, including co-production and digital participation.

Alistair Hudson, Director, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima), Middlesbrough

Tony Butler, Executive Director, Derby Museums

Professor Pat Thomson, Professor of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences, The University of Nottingham

15-minute Q&A session

James Mackensie-Blackman, Executive Director, New Adventures

Dr Mel Jordan, Reader in Art and the Public Sphere, School of Fine Art, Royal College of Art

Professor Victoria Walsh, Professor of Art History and Curating, Head of Programme, Curating Contemporary Art, Royal College of Art

15-minute Q&A session

Session 2. Institutional learning and organisational change

This session will look at how evaluation and evidence gathering can be helpful to the arts and cultural sector in terms of informing organisational transformation and learning in cultural organisations (this could include improvements to artistic programming, workforce development, creating sustainable business models and securing sponsorship).

Dr Emily Pringle, Head of Learning Practice and Research, Tate

Maja Maricevic, Head of Higher Education, British Library

Professor Marie Gillespie, Professor of Sociology, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, The Open University

15-minute Q&A session

Becky Swain, Head of Learning and Participation, Arvon

David Jubb, Artistic Director and CEO, Battersea Arts Centre

Professor Anne Boddington, Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, University of Brighton

15-minute Q&A session

Session 3. Advancing our understanding of the value of arts and culture

The third session will investigate how data generated by cultural institutions could be used as a bedrock for research and analysis, leading to a better understanding of the value of arts and culture as a phenomenon theorised in scholarly investigation and understood in public knowledge.

Dr Helen Charman, Director of Learning and Research at Design Museum, London

Caroline Sharp, Research Director, National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales

Professor Helen Nicholson, Professor of Dance and Theatre, Royal Holloway

15-minute Q&A session

François Matarasso, writer

Dr Ben Walmsley, Associate Professor in Audience Engagement, School of Performance and Cultural Industries, University of Leeds

15-minute Q&A session

Roundtable discussion. In what concrete ways could the new platform dedicated to research and analysis into cultural value support the cultural sector? The key objective of this discussion will be to establish how – in the light of the issues discussed in the workshop – the cultural sector would stand to benefit from the existence of an entity dedicated to research and analysis into cultural value, the possibility of which is currently being explored by the Cultural Value Scoping Project.

Court Room, Glaziers Hall, 9 Montague Close, London Bridge, London, SE1 9DD

Workshop overview

The workshop – organised as part of the Cultural Value Scoping Project – will discuss best ways of establishing a sustained conversation between those making and advising on policy concerning cultural value on the one hand, and those working in the cultural sector and academia on the other. The objective will be to envisage what kinds of evidencing approaches and frameworks of analysis might be recognised as credible and relevant by these three constituencies.

The workshop will be divided into three sessions, followed by a closing roundtable discussion.

10:00–10:30 **Arrival and refreshments**

10:30–10:45 **Welcoming remarks and introductions**

10:45–11:45 **Session 1**

11:45–12:00 **Refreshments**

12:00–13:15 **Session 2**

13:15–14:00 **Lunch**

14:00–15:30 **Session 3**

15:30–15:45 **Break**

15:45–16:30 **Roundtable discussion and concluding remarks**

Sessions and speakers

Session 1. Cultural value – is it a 'special' case compared with other areas of policy making and what makes it challenging for policy makers?

John Newbigin OBE, Chairman, Creative England

Hasan Bakhshi, Director, Creative Economy in Policy & Research, NESTA

Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, Senior Analyst, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), OECD

Ayesha Hazarika, Communications Consultant, BPI

Q&A session

Session 2. What is it that academics and those working in the cultural sector need to know about the policy making process and what do policy makers need to understand about cultural value?

Dominic Lake, Deputy Director of Arts, Libraries & Cultural Property, DCMS and Paul Crawford, Chief Economist/ Analyst, DCMS

Leonie Bell, Head of Cultural Engagement and National Cultural Strategy, The Scottish Government

(Presentation by Dr Richard Thurston, Deputy Chief Social Research Officer, Knowledge and Analytical Services, Welsh Government did not take place but Dr Thurston sent his notes to feed into the discussion)

Q&A session

Helen Marriage, Director, Artichoke

Dr David Stevenson, Head of Division – Media, Communication and Performing Arts, School of Arts, Social Science and Management, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

Q&A session

Session 3. Three-way conversations spanning policy, cultural and academic worlds – can a shared language be found?

Gareth Maeer, Head of Research & Evaluation, Heritage Lottery Fund

Dr Helen Graham, Associate Professor in In/tangible Heritage, Director, Centre for Critical Studies in Museums, Galleries and Heritage, School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds

Q&A session

Thomas Martell, Grants Manager, The Education Endowment Foundation

Sam Cairns, Co-Director, Cultural Learning Alliance

Q&A session

Joe Hallgarten, Associate, RSA Global

Professor Eleonora Belfiore, Professor of Communication and Media Studies, Social Sciences, Loughborough University

Q&A session

Roundtable discussion. In what concrete ways could the new platform, the possibility of which is currently being explored by the Cultural Value Scoping Project, be most helpful in terms of facilitating meaningful conversations between public policy, academia and the cultural sector?

Opening remarks by Ed Vaizey MP, former Minister of State for Culture, Communications & Creative Industries

MIST (Media Innovation Studio), 4th floor Media Factory, Cold Bath Street, Preston PR1 2XY

Workshop overview

This workshop – organised as part of the Cultural Value Scoping Project and hosted by the Psychosocial Research Unit at the University of Central Lancashire – will look at the value generated and delivered by locally embedded small arts organisations and cultural venues. This topic is timely. The municipal landscape is changing and the expectations placed on arts organisations are shifting. We are witnessing the emergence of new and distinctive forms of practice, collaborations and developments within local ecologies. These give rise to new manifestations and ways of channelling cultural value. This workshop will ask how the distinctive cultural value produced by small arts organisations could be articulated and captured and whether a shared voice can be found for this diverse sector.

This workshop will be divided into two main sessions, followed by a roundtable discussion.

> **Session 1**. The distinctive value that arts programmes and cultural venues create in relation to the public realm and civil society, including the new forms of collaborative practices and social engagement.

> **Session 2**. The effects and impact of small arts organisations on everyday cultural practices and private lives, including how the changes to the patterns of participation (with the growth of digital platforms and domestic consumption) are changing the character of arts programmes delivered locally.

Spanning these sessions will be the overarching question of how the cultural value delivered by small arts organisations is best evidenced and analysed and what research support is needed to make this value more transparent to funders and policy makers. This question will be directly tackled in the closing **roundtable discussion** whose objective will be to establish how – in the light of the issues discussed in the workshop – arts organisations and cultural venues would stand to benefit from the existence of an entity dedicated to research and analysis into cultural value, the possibility of which is currently being explored by the Cultural Value Scoping Project.

Sessions and speakers

> 11:00–11:15 **Arrival and refreshments**

> 11:15–11:30 **Welcoming remarks and introductions**

> 11:30–13:00 **Session 1**

> 13:00–13:45 **Lunch**

> 13:45–15:15 **Session 2**

> 15:15–15:30 **Refreshments**

> 15:30–16:30 **Roundtable discussion and concluding remarks**

Session 1. The distinctive value that arts programmes and cultural venues create in relation to the public realm and civil society, including the new forms of collaborative practices and social engagement.

Short presentations bringing together key reflections in order to provoke a conversation around this topic will be given by:

> Patrick Fox, Heart of Glass, St Helens (chair)

> Jonathan Petherbridge, London Bubble Theatre Company, London

Laurie Peake, Super Slow Way, Burnley

Session 2. The effects and impact of small arts organisations on everyday cultural practices and private lives, including how the changes to the patterns of participation (with the growth of digital platforms and domestic consumption) are changing the character of arts programmes delivered locally.

Short presentations bringing together key reflections in order to provoke a conversation around this topic will be given by:

Claire Doherty, Situations, Bristol (chair)

Kerry Morrison, In Situ, Brierfield and Hussnain Haniff, Brierfield

Errol Francis, Cultural Co-operation, London

Roundtable discussion. The objective will be to establish how – in the light of the issues discussed in the workshop – arts organisations and cultural venues would stand to benefit from the existence of an entity dedicated to research and analysis into cultural value, the possibility of which is currently being explored by the Cultural Value Scoping Project.

Appendix 3.
Cultural Value Scoping Project: Steering Group

Jane Steele, Director, Evidence and Learning, Paul Hamlyn Foundation (Chair)

Deborah Bull, Assistant Principal (London), King's College London

Professor Geoffrey Crossick, Former Director, AHRC Cultural Value Project

Darren Henley, Chief Executive, ACE

Ruth Hogarth, Director, Cultural Partnerships & Enquiry, King's College London

Dr Patrycja Kaszynska, Project Manager, Cultural Value Scoping Project, King's College London

Julie McLaren, Associate Director of Programmes, AHRC

Andrew Mowlah, Director of Research, ACE

Moira Sinclair, Chief Executive, Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Professor Andrew Thompson, Chief Executive Officer, AHRC

Stella Toonen, Coordinator, Cultural Partnerships & Enquiry, King's College London (Steering Group Coordinator)