

Tuesday 7 May 2019
Headway ArtSpace, Blyth
11am – 1pm

NEIDN Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Rachel Jean Birch – NEIDN (RJB), Hannah Marshall - NEIDN (HM), Lynn Campbell – Arts Connect (LC), Cheryl Day – Dance City (CD), Amanda Drago – Green Croft On The Wall (AD), Mia Rawlinson – Headway Arts (MR) and Becki Parker – Independent Artist (BP)

Apologies

Rachel Horton – Culture Vulture, Eliot Smith – Eliot Smith Dance, Chris Johnson – Phoenix Theatre Manager, Martin Wilson – TIN Arts, Rob Huggins – Liberdade, Conor O’Kane – Lawnmowers, Kristian Pelissier – Arts Council England, Mileva Donachie – Northumberland Arts Development, Emma Hardman – Dansformtion, Amelia Henderson – Arts Council England and Debbie Harbin – The D-Project.

Agenda

- Welcome and apologies
- Approval of last meetings minutes
- Discuss draft ambassador job description for comment and final edits
- Discuss Skills/Knowledge exchange framework
- Think Inclusive update
- Partner updated / sharing of opportunities and events from network members for 2019 calendars
- Next meeting date and location
- AOB

Minutes

- **Welcome and apologies**

Thank you to Headway Arts Space for offering their venue for the meeting.

- **Approval of last meetings minutes**

Discussed the fact that the last meeting was scheduled alongside a performance at Gosforth Civic Theatre which was useful and a good use of people’s time. Agreed that where possible we will do this again.

- **Discuss draft ambassador job description for comment and final edits**

We presented at the meeting a draft for a pilot of an ambassador role which was initially discussed as a potential idea at the last meeting.

The ambassador role came about from a suggestion by Becki Parker to support the sharing and advocacy of the work of the NEIDN.

The focus of the role and the terms of the agreement were discussed at the meeting to make decisions on launching the ambassador position in September 2019.

AD commented that we need to be able to demonstrate impact of the role and we would need to look at ways to capture this.

We also discussed: What is the location of the ambassadors geographically? What makes an NEIDN Ambassador visible? Would they need marketing material e.g. banner, t-shirt, badge?

The strength of having an ambassador is to have bespoke conversations which can have huge impact for the network and its members. It will allow the NEIDN to have soft touch reach and allow for one to one interactions. Being able to pilot an ambassador role will allow the NEIDN to explore what form the role could take and how best it could work for all involved.

We also discussed that another potential strand of the activity could be for the Ambassador to visit venues and review their accessibility offer. The ambassador could feedback on their experience at the venue, how comfortable they felt and what the venues accessibility offer is. This would be undertaken to have a positive impact for the venue and highlight the strengths as well as suggestions on areas to consider. The positive intentions of this engagement would be clearly communicated with venues by the Ambassador and HM and RJB.

We could also explore the possibility of negotiating complimentary tickets for events at the venues as part the arrangement to review the accessibility of the venue.

It was commented though that there is a lot of great work already taking place around accessibility in venues. LC mentioned that there is an accessible blog called Ewans List that may help feed into the development of the role.

- **ACTION:** HM and RJB to research Ewan's List

As BP originally presented the role to the network with an interest in being an Ambassador it was agreed in the meeting that she would undertake one of the roles. This means that we would present an open call for one other Ambassador to start September 2019.

- **ACTION:** HM and RJB to contact BP about the Ambassador Role.

The application process for the other Ambassador was agreed that it would be an open call for expressions of interest which can be submitted in writing, in person, by film or in another format to HM and RJB.

Ideally the Ambassador would have a dance background and have a disability or work/engage with a disability venue/organisation/company. We discussed the support for the Ambassador and HM and RJB can only provide light touch/minimal support throughout the year, so the Ambassador could also be supported by a carer/family member where possible/suitable.

AD suggested investigating the Awards for All funding application to support the Ambassador role. There may just be stipulations and barriers to the network accessing this funding?

- **ACTION:** HM and RJB to research Awards for All.

The document will also need to be converted into an Easy Read format.

- **ACTION:** HM and RJB to ask Martin at TIN Arts if they are able to convert the document to Easy Read format.

- **Discuss Skills/Knowledge exchange framework**

The exchange framework was introduced by mentioning that it was first developed from the Think Inclusive event in October 2018 where the feedback was that some artists/venues wanted to gain knowledge ask questions about specific subjects and some artists/venues could offer support/help/answers to questions. The idea was developed so that people from both sides could present to the network their request or their support and an exchange of knowledge could then take place.

HM and RJB gave an example of a recent exchange that had happened where Rasmi Becker had asked about audio descriptions and BSL interpretation and we had received extremely useful and generous responses to this query.

HM and RJB have developed a form for artists/companies to fill out with their request/offer to then be shared with the network for responses. This is the document which we discussed in the meeting.

CD suggested that schools may also be interested in the exchange.

However, we also discussed that if the ask is too loose/vague then this isn't helpful. LC commented that a specific request is very welcome and the form should help this.

There was also comment that specific requests or opportunities for providing support could be built into programme planning processes of organisations and companies - people's time availability/small resources/small budget allocations.

AD offered to act as a 'guinea pig' to trial the form with her current project *A Secret Garden*.

- **ACTION:** HM and RJB to get in touch with AD.

It was suggested that maybe there should be some stipulation on who could present a request, for instance...so that we aren't inundated with students wanting help with assignments. We could make the cut off for students to be 3rd Year Only.

It was also suggested that the call out for requests/offers is time specific so that we don't get a trickle of request coming in all year, we do a month campaign of activity. We are going to trial this in September.

- **ACTION:** HM and RJB to release the campaign in September.

- **Think Inclusive update**

Not a lot to update at this time as Moving Art Management need to fundraise for the activity. There was a great response and up take at the last event and it has been agreed to aim to do the event again.

HM and RJB opened out a conversation about topics that could be included in the next Think Inclusive Day.

AD - Wants to learn more about social prescribing and the choice and benefits to people. Who is the person to have in the room? Researcher? GP? Professional? Health and Wellbeing officer? AD is currently working with a participant that is accessing both her yoga classes and a physio so this could act as a Case Study for the event.

➤ **ACTION:** HM and RJB to follow up with AD on this.

HM and RJB are also in contact with Chris Fonseca about another project so there could be some way of getting him involved.

Questions also over where the event should be held and what time of year. There was a previous discussion of it tying in with the Talent Hub showcase at Dance City.

➤ **ACTION:** HM and RJB to contact Martin from TIN Arts about the Talent Hub Showcase.

- **Partner updated / sharing of opportunities and events from network members for 2019 calendars**

AD lives 18 miles from Hexham in Rural Northumberland on Hadrian's Wall which is a World Heritage Sites. Her project *A Secret Garden* is an interactive installation which is currently in the Research & Development stages focusing on themes of nurturing. The project is ACE funded to create a touring structure with use of projection. AD is holding workshops with potential audiences to develop the project, she is also going to invite promoters at Dance City in Newcastle, Kirkgate Arts Centre in Cockermouth and Tullie House in Carlisle. The project is still in the refining process and she is working with Susie Tate. The opportunity to try out the piece with closed groups and through open events will support the development of the work into a bigger bid. AD will also be trialling it in her barn this Summer in Northumberland. AD will send targeted posts for each area and she also welcomes requests for specific groups to attend the workshops.

➤ **ACTION:** HM and RJB to share the available opportunities to engage with *A Secret Garden* with the network

MR shared CoCreArt which is Headway Arts Symposium taking place on Friday 26 July. They also have a call-out for an artists to work with their groups in advance of the symposium and this opportunity has been shared with the Network. MR asked for members to share this opportunity with any artists you know.

- **Next meeting date and location**

TBC. CD from Dance City offered space to host the next meeting.

- **AOB**