

Task and Finish Group on Participation in the Arts in Wales

Inquiry into Participation in the Arts in Wales

Response from ArtWorks Valleys Kids

1. What organisation do you represent?

ArtWorks Valleys Kids

2. Which groups of people participate in your organisation's arts activities?

Young People from Community First areas in Rhondda Cynon Taff aged between 7 and 25

3. Do you think that budget changes have affected participation in the arts, either positively or negatively?

Yes of course companies involved in participatory work lost their funding and this was bound to have a negative affect.

4. Do you think that certain groups of people have been affected more than others?

Yes young people and poor people as always policies hit the poor the hardest and young people at the moment are being hit on sides by the recession and lack of investment in their future.

5. Are there gaps in provision for people to participate in arts activities, either demographically or geographically?

Yes there are some amazing youth arts and community participation projects this is a real area of expertise in our country however we still do not have a clear picture of how youth arts for example is represented in the country – I suspect there are many areas with little or no provision particularly in Pembrokeshire and Powys.

6. Are there enough funding sources available other than the Arts Council for Wales? Are alternative funding sources accessible?

No there is not there should be funding available for young people and community groups who want to set up their own participatory work, wide spread apprenticeships in the arts, there should be an economic strand dedicated to developing creative industries available on a grass roots level.

7. What role does the voluntary arts sector play in promoting participation in the arts in Wales and how can this be supported?

A huge role without it there would be little or no access to the arts in many areas of Wales. However we also need high quality professional workers with the skills to deliver community and youth arts at a high level – this is highly skilled work if done properly it can have a huge impact on intervening successfully in supporting young people and members of the community.

8. Is the strategic relationship between the Welsh Government and the bodies that distribute arts funding effective in increasing participation?

The Arts Council of Wales are trying to do their best with limited resources – the Welsh Govt needs to understand that the Arts are no longer additionality they are the means to economic regeneration and developing communities.

9. All public bodies in Wales will have published a strategic equality plan by April 2012. Do you think that these new public sector equality duties will help to increase participation in the arts among under-represented groups in Wales?

Possibly but more bureaucracy is meaningless without additional funding – you need to speak to people get out the assembly and your working groups and meet real people and understand what they want and why. This is a healthy democracy where the Govt serves the people and not the other way round.