

ARTiculation Partners' Day: Creative Folkestone

Monday 22 July 2019



We were delighted to hold our annual ARTiculation Partners' Day in **Folkestone** this year, on a very sunny Monday, where we received a warm welcome from Tania McCormack, Learning Officer, **Creative Folkestone**.

Nineteen arts educators, university lecturers and arts education champions from eight different organisations attended the day: **Canterbury Christ Church University, Creative Folkestone, The Fitzwilliam Museum, The National Gallery, Open School East, The Roche Court Educational Trust, Turner Contemporary and Uncomfortable Oxford**.

The day was designed to **thank existing ARTiculation Partners and welcome new ones**. We started with a **tour of the Folkestone Artworks**, and for many, this was an introduction to Folkestone and its fantastic programme of activities. Group discussions followed a light lunch, focussing on three areas: **Expectations, Ambitions and Communications**.

Highlights included a presentation on ARTiculation 2019 and **new initiatives for 2020**, including the **ARTiculation Ambassadors programme** and a talk by **Benji Kandler, ARTiculation Alumnus**, currently studying at Goldsmiths University. Benji told to us about his journey and the impact that ARTiculation has had on his university and future career choices, and how valuable the **Alumni Network** has been for his professional development. The day concluded with a tour of the artist [Thurle Wright's](#) studio, and an introduction to her practice.

Themes addressed throughout the day included the importance of **valuing the ideas and opinions that young people bring to museums and galleries**, and ways in which these voices can be **encouraged, supported and extended into their communities**; developing partnerships between arts organisations and universities to support and **celebrate the voices of young people and increasing the visibility of the ARTiculation initiative**.

Summary of Group Discussions

Partner Organisations

ARTiculation Partners expected the initiative to provide a platform for young people to push themselves through the provision of a supportive and nurturing 'scaffolding' process, challenging them to look at artworks that they would not necessarily choose themselves. The initiative was described as opening the door for galleries and museums to work with 14 to 19-year olds and celebrated it for building confidence, challenging opinions, and providing the opportunity for young people to freely explore ideas with no requirement for formal assessment. Partners stated that Discovery Days were a good way of directly witnessing participants' development but that more could be done to diversify the types of organisations that offered ARTiculation activities. There was also a request for much broader and open understanding of how venues go about delivering Discovery Days and how students progress from the Discovery Days to the ARTiculation Prize public speaking competition.

By communicating with existing networks to understand how each organisation, town, city, region work together, ARTiculation can celebrate the regions' individual voices, whilst addressing region-specific barriers.

ARTiculation Alumni and Professional Development Opportunities

The Alumni Network was seen as a good way to support young people in the early stages of their professional development, with the suggestion to create an Alumni Portal for previous participants to communicate with one another, share experiences and highlight opportunities. It was suggested this be open and accessible to partner organisations. Partners suggested inviting local employers, creative industries, and university staff to Prize events to promote networking opportunities for young people and encourage the wider community to be involved through evening events. It was considered crucial to continue to take the views of young people into consideration when shaping the future of ARTiculation through Alumni Focus Groups.

Schools and Teachers

There was a request for ARTiculation to connect more widely to the curriculum and encourage cross curricular collaboration, with the suggestion of doing this by pitching to schools' senior leadership teams and not just Art & Design teachers and also to work with Teacher Training colleges and courses to embed ARTiculation into teaching practice.

Participants and Presentation Styles

Partners expected ARTiculation to be open and inclusive to all and to promote a platform for debate within groups outside of the mainstream education system, and to take into account that there are ways of communicating other than verbal. There was also a request to encourage the exploration of alternative presentation formats by showcasing a range of diverse presentations styles on the ARTiculation website and to make it clear to young people what the benefits of participating are, and why they should take part.

The Digital Sphere and Discover ARTiculation Challenge

The potential of the digital sphere was suggested as an area for exploration, with possibilities around arts organisations running filmmaking workshops and featuring short videos created by young people on their websites. Galleries could be encouraged to support young people to present on artworks that are local to them through these workshops, and for the videos to then be submitted to the Discover ARTiculation Challenge (for GCSE students). ARTiculation would thus engage with younger aged students, and raise the visibility of the Discover ARTiculation Challenge.

ARTiculation is considering which priorities are key for 2019 / 2020 and which to carry forward to the future.