



ESOL Art Programme

3 November - 12 December 2025



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Message from our founder

Something incredible happens when we tap into creativity. Even more so, when we start young.

In the UK, access to creativity for young people from global majority groups is disproportionate. The inequalities they face, from engagement all the way up to employability, are very real.

Through our 16-18s ESOL art programme, our core belief was reaffirmed in real time: creativity is a gift, talent and a skill that all young people should have the opportunity to nurture, because when they do, it can change their lives.

We worked hard across three Further Education (FE) college campuses, in three London boroughs to help strengthen the enriching experiences they offer young learners, especially those from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Together we reached over 90 ESOL students giving them space to develop art skills, build confidence and foster a sense of belonging.

I'm continually inspired by the resilience, resourcefulness and creative curiosity demonstrated by London's youth.

Thank you to our board and volunteers in the City. A special thanks also goes out to our supporters and funders. Your belief in our mission helps make what we do possible and means that young community members from global majority backgrounds get the support and access they need, right where they are.

Let's continue to do the work that equips young people with the tools to build creative mindsets and skills to broaden their futures.

Sharyh Murray

Founder and CEO, Alpha Artistry World C.I.C



Student's art tells the story of their journey from Guinea to the UK



Introduction

Making creativity more accessible
for young people in London



Enfield learners frame their art for the Culture Day display

Introduction

This report summarises the delivery of our 16-18 ESOL programme across three London Further Education (FE) college campuses, an initiative contributing to our goal of making creativity more accessible for young people from global majority and ESOL backgrounds in the UK.

The programme took place in the Autumn term 2 of 2025, between 3 November and 12 December. It represents a significant step forward in our aim to offer meaningful entry points into creative learning, develop creative thinking skills and broaden young people's creative experiences.

By improving access to creativity for young individuals from ethnic backgrounds, the programme actively tackles under-representation in the creative sector at the root. It also helps remove key barriers to participating in creative education, and over the long term, strengthens the transferable skills that support young people's future progression.

Innovators Club

Innovators Club is part of the Alpha Artistry World C.I.C family. We are responsible for delivering creative development initiatives, reflecting Alpha Artistry World C.I.C's commitment to widening creative access and increasing opportunities for people from global majority backgrounds.

What does 'Global Majority' mean?

"Global majority" is a term used to describe people of Black, Asian, Brown, mixed heritage and Indigenous groups who make up approximately 85% of the world's population. In recent years it's usage has intended to replace outdated terms like "ethnic minority" or "BAME" (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic).

Executive summary

Delivery - Key achievements

Number of sessions delivered	FE Campus sites engaged	Young people engaged	Percentage of participants from global majorities	Percentage of participants aged 16-18
26	3	93	100%	100%

Purpose

The Innovators Club 16-18 ESOL art programme aims to provide young people from global majority backgrounds with access to creative development in youth spaces in London.

Young people take part in a structured, culturally-responsive art programme which develops their creative skills and techniques, while building their confidence to express ideas.

Impact

In Autumn term 2 (3 November - 12 December) of 2025, the programme delivered the following outcomes for young people and three FE college campuses in London:

- **Increased confidence in artistic self-expression**, 80% of learners surveyed reported an increase in their confidence to express themselves creatively since taking part in the programme.
- **Strengthened sense of creative community**, 100% of young people surveyed reported feeling part of a creative community as a result of taking part.
- **Greater motivation to create art independently**, 80% stated that they now feel inspired to create art in their own time.
- **Improved use of artistic materials and techniques.**
- **Developed problem-solving skills.**
- **Enhanced cultural awareness through art.**

About the programme

The programme was delivered within a budget of £2000, covering the provision of weekly sessions across three sites, plus materials and equipment designed to enhance young people's creativity, confidence and wellbeing. The 16-18 ESOL art programme aims to empower young people through creativity, with a focus on developing artistic skills, fostering cultural expression and promoting independent engagement with art.

Learnings

Learnings from the successes and challenges will be used to inform the design of future programmes. For future, we recommend:

- Spending more time in mobilisation phase, co-curating differentiated resources to support and maintain engagement at all levels.
- Building in more infrastructure for translation support to help overcome language barriers, such as multi-lingual resources, volunteers and facilitators.



Programme reach

Connecting young people from
global majority and ESOL
backgrounds through art

Engaging young people

This section of the report provides insights into how young people and youth organisations were engaged in the programme. It also considers the global majority backgrounds of the learners who took part.

Where FE organisation names are commercially sensitive, they have been omitted. The data on the 'college campuses' table shows the number of young people enrolled in each group at each site, including those who joined later in the programme.

We originally aimed to engage a group of ten young people, however we were able to engage 93 due to increased funding.

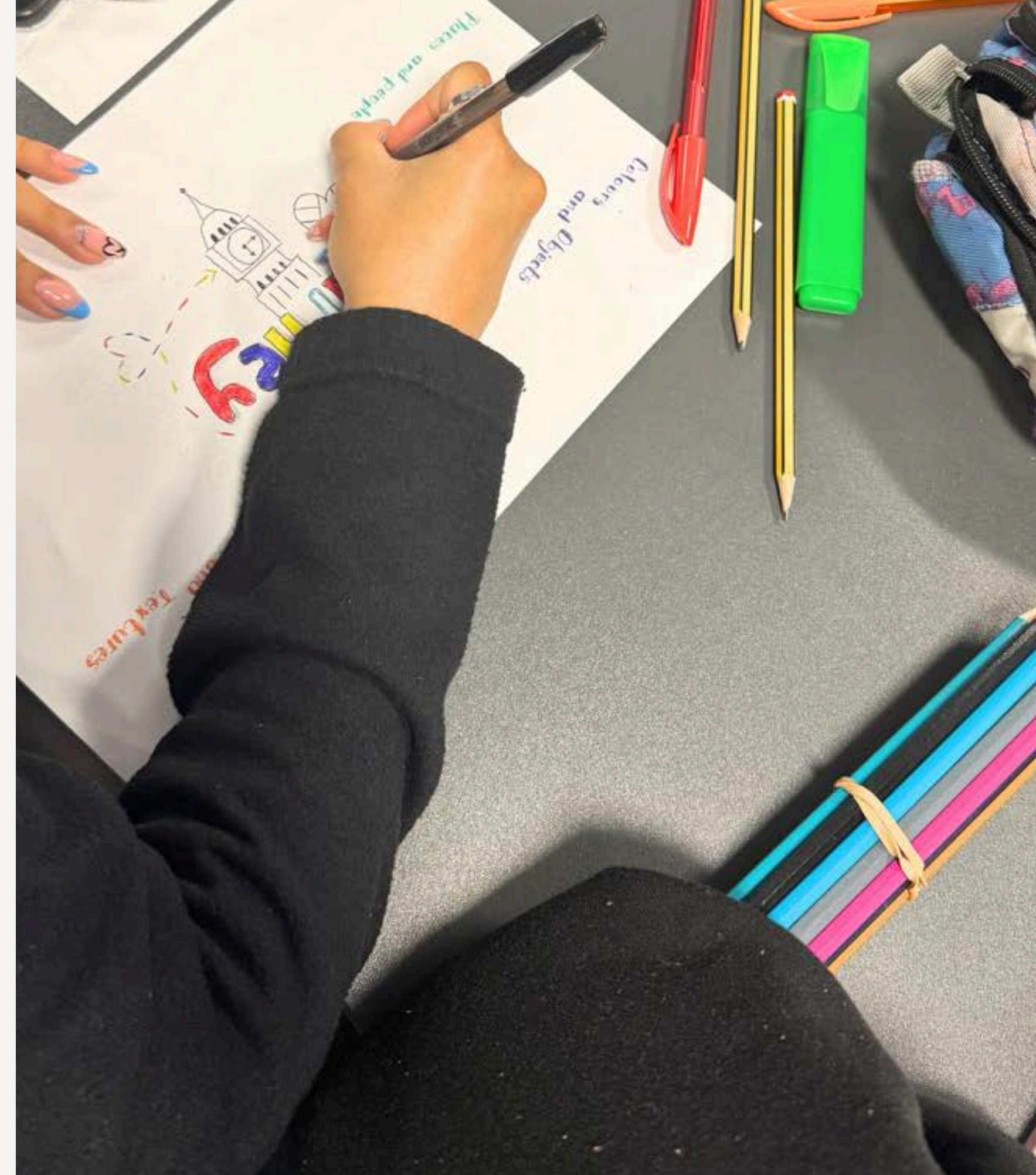
College campuses

Groups by location	No. of young people
Enfield	18
Holloway 1	10
Holloway 2	22
Holloway 3	22
Tottenham	21

Global majority profile

100% of the young people who took part in our programme were from global majority backgrounds. This aligned with our long-term goal of increasing creative access and opportunities for young people from ethnic backgrounds. The programme was delivered to young people in London from the following global majority groups:

-  Afghanistan
-  Bulgaria
-  Democratic republic of the Congo
-  Dominican Republic
-  Ecuador
-  Equatorial Guinea
-  Eritrea
-  Ethiopia
-  Guinea
-  Honduras
-  Kazakhstan
-  Senegal
-  Somalia
-  Sudan
-  Türkiye



Young people at the Tottenham campus plan their creative ideas

The background is a complex, layered collage. It features various textures and colors: a prominent yellowish-brown area with dark, irregular spots resembling water damage or mold; a teal-colored piece with dark, mottled patterns; a black and white section with large, bold, stylized letters; and a red section with white text. The overall composition is abstract and textured, suggesting a process of deconstruction and reconstruction.

Programme outcomes

Positively impacting young people
across emotional, behavioural and
social dimensions

Engaging young people

The programme achieved several positive outcomes across:

- emotional (confidence)
- behavioural (independent artistic activity)
- and social dimensions (a strengthened sense of belonging to a creative community).

Impact on young people

The following findings are based on responses from a focus group of 10 participants across all three college campuses.

Increased confidence in artistic self-expression

Feedback shows participants felt the programme taught them how to express themselves creatively, and learn new artistic techniques, like collage.

Findings from the questionnaires indicate that the programme has had a strong positive impact on young people's confidence. 80% (8 out of 10) of learners reported an increase in their confidence to express themselves through art since taking part in the programme.

* findings are based on responses from a focus group consisting of 10 participants across all three college campuses.

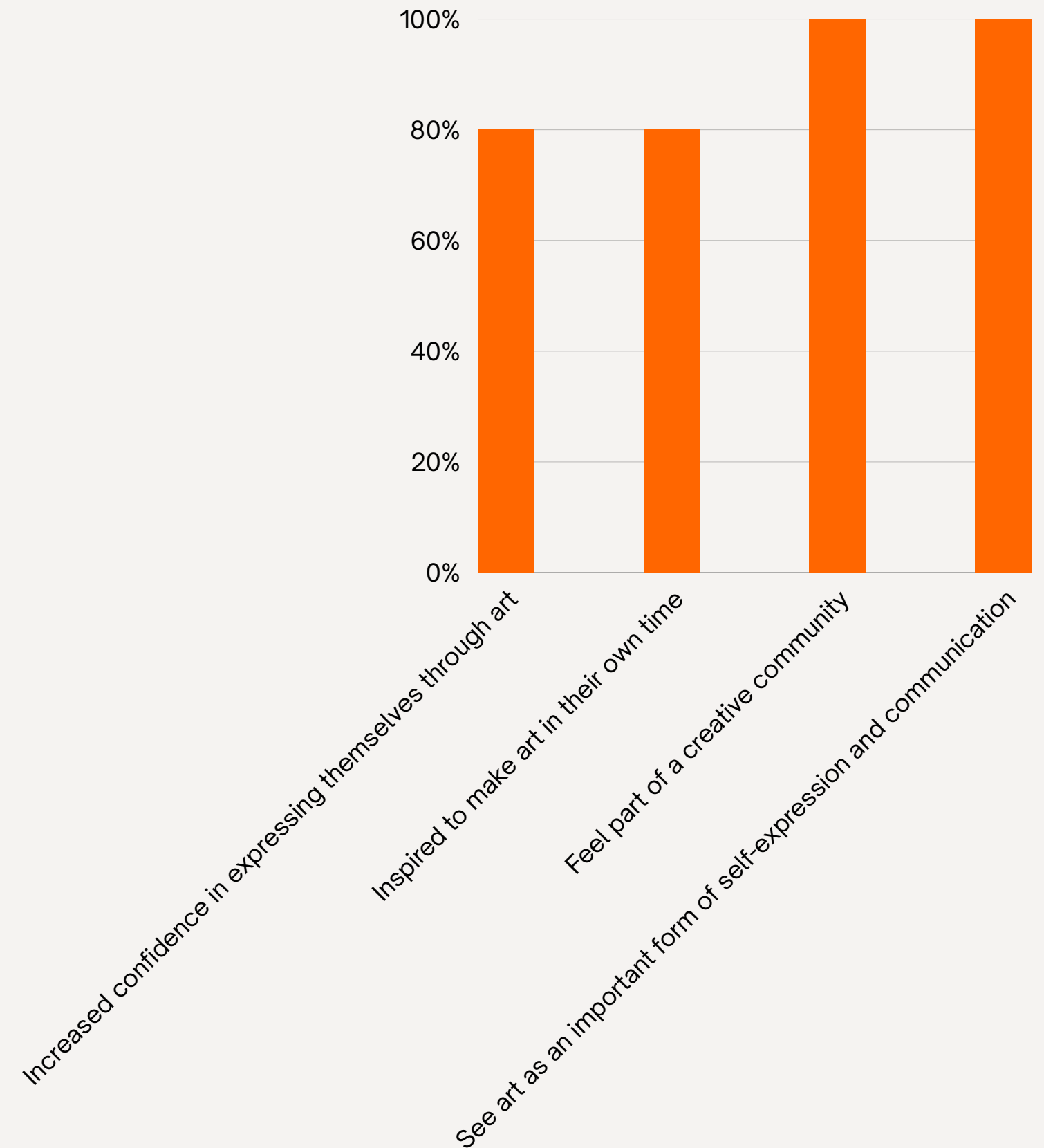
Greater motivation to create art independently

Young people also reported increased engagement with art outside the programme. 80% (8 out of 10) stated that they now feel inspired to create art in their own time. This shows the programme encourages independent creativity.

Strengthened sense of creative community

Feedback from the focus group shows that the project has been highly effective in building a supportive and inclusive creative community. All participants (100%) reported feeling part of a creative community as a result of taking part in the programme.

Several young people highlighted that the art workshops helped them form new social connections. One learner noted that they were able to build friendships with peers from a similar cultural background, indicating that the programme also fostered a sense of belonging and cultural connection.





Student's art showcases nature back home in Afghanistan

The following findings are drawn from students' final evaluation responses. Learners were asked to complete the prompt, 'During this programme we learned how to...'. We have shared their answers below with names changed or redacted to protect anonymity.

Confidently use artistic materials and techniques

Jenna wrote, "*express ourselves creatively through collage, use different materials and techniques.*"

Pablo wrote "*create a collage, use different materials and express ideas through images.*"

Develop problem-solving skills

Participants gained key transferable skills like problem solving. During final evaluations, one student shared:

"I had some problems choosing the right shapes and arranging them so the picture looked balanced. I solved [this] by trying different layouts, asking for feedback and adjusting the colours and shapes until they fit."

Build cultural awareness through art

Trough the programme, students also gained the opportunity to express their cultural heritage through art. The following entry is from one learner's final evaluation response:

"[My collage is about] my journey of moving from the Dominican Republic and Spain to London, England. Celebrating my Dominican and Spanish heritage and culture, while also acknowledging my current life and travel.

I am most pleased with how I used colour and stickers/cutouts to make the collage look vibrant and accurately refelect my culture e.g. the flag and traditional items. I like the overall composition and how I connected the Dominican [Republic] and Spain to Europe with the map and themed elements.

I found it challenging to fill all the ideas I had about my journey into one small frame.

I prioritised the most important symbols (flag, map, key travel signs) to focus the story."

Impact on FE College

In addition to achieving curriculum-aligned outcomes, the programme also promoted cultural enrichment, skills building and community engagement within the FE college following its completion.

Students from the photography department were invited to photograph our participants at work, as part of a wider project outlining culture and diversity within the college.

The programme also enabled staff to provide a platform for young people to learn about other cultures through their art during student Culture Day, and a subsequent student art exhibition at one of the campuses.

“It was beautiful to see the transition between sceptical students, initially unsure of their artistic talents, to confidence and the excitement of exploring and narrating their journeys to the UK, embracing their cultural identities with such freedom.” - Student Enrichment Officer



Enfield learners showcase their art alongside our founder



Conclusions

Increasing creative engagement,
self expression and key transferable
skills



Student's collage tells the story of their faith journey and Eritrean heritage

As a result of the Innovators Club 16-18 ESOL art programme, young learners from global majority and ESOL backgrounds gained access to creative education, strengthened transferable skills and developed confidence in expressing themselves creatively. Not only this, but the programme contributed to increased cultural enrichment opportunities on offer for young people at the college.

Key learnings

The delivery of the programme went as planned, which we were pleased about. However, there were some areas where the actual results differed from our original expectations. For example, the programme was extended an additional week due to scheduling conflicts. Nevertheless, we used the extension to our advantage by observing what worked best with other groups, and modifying remaining sessions to implement those findings.

Differentiation to support youth engagement

This was a structured programme, however language barriers in addition to different abilities meant students worked at varied paces throughout.

We were required to modify and differentiate the sessions according to the pace and capabilities of learners (which was often done in real time).

For future programmes, we will spend more time in the mobilisation phase, co-curating more differentiated learning resources to support and maintain learner engagement at all levels.

Building infrastructure for translation support

Working with ESOL Entry 1 groups all the way to Entry 3 meant that we encountered a variety of translation needs. We utilised online translation resources and images to ensure all young people could take part. Although this approach was successful, we found it was time consuming.

For future projects, we will build in more infrastructure for translation support to help overcome language barriers, such as multi-lingual resources, volunteers and facilitators.

Sustainability and next steps

Stakeholder involvement

We continued to provide the FE college's ESOL and Enrichment departments with creative follow up activities, such as a Culture Day free-flow creative workshop for all students.

Materials and equipment

The art supplies purchased as part of the programme have been inventoried and securely stored for continued use in future creative programmes.

Seeking funding opportunities

We will pursue new funding opportunities to allow us to grow and sustain the programme delivery with youth organisations in London, extending creative access to more young people from global majority communities.



Culture Day art workshop with ESOL Students' artwork on display



Appendix 1: Theory of change



Learner's collage tells the story of their Sudanese heritage

What we are doing	Why we are doing it	Who we will work with	What we will achieve	How we will achieve it
We deliver culturally responsive, artist-led creative workshops designed for global majority and ESOL learners, offering a meaningful entry point into creative learning.	Many global majority and ESOL learners face significant barriers to participating in creative education. Barriers that often contribute to low confidence, social isolation and under-representation in the creative sector.	Continuing development of partnerships with FE colleges and youth organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for learners to practise English in informal, confidence-building contexts • Creative outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally responsive practice. • Artist-facilitated sessions and partnership with FE staff. • Accessible resources and settings.

About us

We use creativity to support wellbeing, belonging and self expression. Especially for young people from global majority and ESOL backgrounds.

Our professional artist-facilitators deliver high-quality workshops and programmes that celebrate culture, build confidence and strengthen community.

The curriculum-aligned ESOL workshops we deliver through Innovators Club expand students' creative and educational experiences.

Our why

We believe everyone is born with creative potential, but experience (and the data) shows not everyone has the same level of access to the resources and opportunities to nurture that potential.

Today, creativity is a wellbeing essential while creative thinking is becoming one of the most sought after employability skills. We're not just helping people make art, we're equipping them with the creative mindset and skills to broaden their futures.

Our social mission

Our dream is to see more diversity in the art world, starting with access and engagement from the root, for global majority groups.

To make that dream a reality, we reinvest our profits into free and subsidised arts initiatives for young people from global majority and ESOL backgrounds. Our goal is simple: Make creativity accessible - one workshop, one community, one idea at a time.

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