

## Appendix 7

### Impact summary report: The Fusion Prize

#### Cultural and Creative Learning Goals, Aims and Outcomes

Goal 4: 'Cultural and creative experiences develop and enhance the fusion skills needed for employability in the 21st Century'

#### Summary of the project including significant changes from the original action plan

The Fusion Prize launched in June 2019 and the process has included a series of symposia events, application support, and two rounds of judging. The winning team, Play Nice, received the £50K award to deliver their solution 'The Pattern' over the course of 2021. The Pattern aimed to empower young people with the skills and capabilities they need to access the creative industries, setting them up to start their creative careers powerfully and thrive. The selected cohort of 20 participants represented the minority communities that The Pattern aimed to reach and inspire. This report details the achievements of The Pattern. Previous reports have covered the wider Fusion Prize process.

The Pattern's original plans for in-person workshops and seminars in the community and on-site activities at cultural venues were disrupted by the pandemic. The majority of the training programme, what was called the curriculum in cultural production, was therefore coordinated and delivered remotely due to the national restrictions at that time. This caused some challenges around scheduling but also provided a vital lifeline of support and connection for young people at a time of uncertainty.

A total of 214 young people applied in the period January to February 2021, after an online awareness campaign led by Play Nice. Almost half of the applicants (45%) identified as being part of the LGBTQIA+ community, reflecting the programme's appeal and reach to the communities represented by its leaders and mentors. Greater diversity and representation of people from minority ethnic communities in creative roles and in leadership positions, as well as more opportunities (funding, networking, commissions and creative exhibitions) for them to enter and progress in the creative industries, were key overarching themes in the applicants' responses to what they wanted to see more of in the creative sector.

The Pattern's cultural production curriculum ran over 8 weeks providing sessions on research, ideation, design and curation led by a group of Patterners who are leaders in their field. Twice weekly, sector leaders and inspiring creatives delivered online workshops designed to upskill and inspire the group. More intimate meetings, of the four smaller groups, bolstered these learning sessions where the mentors would support their group to absorb and examine what they had learnt and then use their new skills in the design and ultimate delivery of the four creative projects.

Two of the resulting projects were particularly successful and impactful:

- At the Feet of Our Mothers (launched August 2021): a short film documenting and cherishing the relationship between Muslim mothers and their daughters, led by Lamisa Khan, founder of Muslim Sisterhood
- Gaia’s Garden (Launched July 2021): a community garden hosting events and workshops which platform themes around sustainability and the environment, led by climate activist Noga Levy-Rapoport

Of the four creative projects produced by The Patterners, Gaia’s Garden far exceeded our expectations for scale and impact. The project managed to generate almost £180k of additional corporate funding, provided 10 Kickstart paid placements, and welcomed thousands of young people to the green space that was created by City Thameslink station. It was a brilliant example of young people working to benefit their peers and was recognised as Time Out’s Best Green Space of 2021.

<b>Proposed cost</b>	£50k award
<b>Actual cost (include breakdown)</b>	£50k award
<b>Delivery period</b>	October 2020- January 2022
<b>What outputs/activities were delivered?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 creative leaders led The Pattern’s inaugural season</li> <li>- 214 young people applied, and 45% were from the LGBTQIA+ community</li> <li>- 20 young people (the Patterners) were selected. 12 participants described their ethnicity as either Black, African, Caribbean or Black British, 3 described their ethnicity as mixed, 2 as Asian or Asian-British, 1 as British Malaysian, 1 as from South East London, and 1 as White Hispanic/Latinx</li> <li>- 8 curriculum workshops on cultural production were delivered over 4 weeks from February to April 2021 (2 sessions per week)</li> <li>- 2 major cultural production projects were successfully completed over the summer of 2021</li> <li>- £180k external investment from the London-based property developer Dominvs was secured for Gaia’s Garden, an-award winning pop-up community garden designed to celebrate sustainability and educate Londoners about sustainable practices</li> <li>- 230 young people volunteers helped bring Gaia’s Garden to life, building furniture and planting the greenery</li> <li>- 10 creative part-time jobs were created for young people at Gaia’s Garden</li> <li>- The Gaia’s Garden programme consisted of 25+ workshops and events employing young creative freelancers</li> <li>- £245,466 social value collectively realised for social outcomes experienced by employed young people and volunteers engaged in Gaia’s Garden, this sum was calculated using the Housing Association Charitable Trust (HACT) Social Value Bank that adopts wellbeing valuation analysis methodology to calculate the social value outcomes experienced by stakeholders who received employment and volunteering opportunities</li> <li>- 5,641+ social impressions about The Pattern across Instagram (784), Twitter (4,631) and Linked In (226) between Jan-21 and Sept-21. Featured in Mayor’s Culture newsletter</li> </ul>	

reaching c.7,000 - 8,000 people and professionals. Positive media coverage from 6 media outlets: Timeout, BBC London, Hypebeast, i-d, Vice, Resident Advisor, Dazed

**Have the target outcomes been met, and how have they been measured?**

The following table summarises the key outcomes identified for participants.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Measurement/Evidence (e.g. results, pupil survey responses, etc.)</b>	<b>What has been the impact?</b>
Participants developed pride, purpose and feel creative ownership: the Patterners see themselves in the creative world	For all outcomes the data sources were: - Monitoring data about the applicants and participants	Showcasing their work with friends, peers, family, and professionals in the creative industries has helped to reinforce creative identities and instil confidence that they belong and have a future in the creative industries.
Creative and personal confidence	- The results of a post-curriculum survey with the participants - Feedback from The Pattern's reflection and feedback session with participants in April	Patterners have stretched themselves personally and creatively, taking on creative and production opportunities they might not have otherwise said yes to without the support of The Pattern's leadership team and mentors.
Fusion skills were developed in particular collaboration and teamwork	- Informal conversations with five participants and one mentor at the launch of two of the community projects - Depth interviews with two of the participants and with Nate Agbetu, Play Nice co-founder	Patterners felt more confident about cultural production. They developed vital soft skills, fusion skills, through delivering their projects: communication skills, thinking skills, organisation skills, creative skills, and staying positive. Patterners valued the opportunity to learn new creative skills and be part of a creative team and network, they spoke most explicitly about feeling more confident about working in teams and collaborating with others.
<b><i>Connections and friendships</i></b>	- Conversations with Culture Mile and Foundation for Future London representatives	Patterners cherished the personal and professional friendships and connections they made through the programme, and it is clear that this had a positive impact on their wellbeing and career readiness at a time of uncertainty and challenge for many young people, as well as opening up opportunities

	Analysis of the above data by an external evaluator	and possibilities for future work and collaborations.
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**How has the project improved wider educational outcomes, e.g. wellbeing, confidence, aspiration, etc.?**

The Pattern showed significant personal, social, and cultural impacts for its participants. It also had huge ethical impacts, with all projects focusing on social or minority issues including; underrepresentation of the British Muslim experience, the British trans experience, and sustainability. Partially because of its longitudinal and practical nature, it was highly successful in developing fusion skills and showed clear employability pathways to The Patterners.

The evaluation concluded that: ‘The Pattern is a unique creative learning programme differentiated by the vision, passion, creative experience and connections of its diverse leadership team and mentors. The Pattern inspired access to the creative industries for young people from underrepresented backgrounds. It empowered young people with creative confidence, skills and capabilities, which they applied to real-world creative projects of scale and impact. The Pattern has given young people from ethnic minorities and underrepresented backgrounds a new sense of purpose and clarity around their creative identities and potential future careers. The majority of the Patterners from the two project teams appear to have left the programme seeing themselves in the creative world with increased confidence, a creative mind-set and skills, a can-do approach, and lasting connections and friendships.’

*‘I feel I’ve grown so much this year. I’ve become more involved in the visual arts, and I had opportunities to network with people and build my creative skills. I’ve got to work with people in fashion, photography and PR, professionals I wouldn’t usually get to work with through my day-to-day work. [...] I’m proud of just being able to go to the garden [Gaia’s Garden] whenever I wanted to and then taking people and being like I created this. I felt that was probably like my proudest thing – we made it happen.’* Patterner

*‘It’s a struggle to be a Muslim in the creative industries. We’ve shown through this project how we are able to carve out our own spaces in places like this [180 Strand]. The space is really iconic, and we’ve been able to push through with our own identities and really shout about our community.’* Patterner

*‘I really enjoyed collaborating with my team and working on a tangible project with others. There have been opportunities to shadow people with more experience in the creative industries and network. I’ve built relationships with lots of different people. I’m glad I was involved in the project. You had to use your initiative, and this is something I can transfer into work.’* Patterner

**Will the outputs/activities continue?**

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In the final quarter of this financial year the Patterners will deliver the remaining two creative projects. Beyond the project the team behind Play Nice will continue working to upskill young creative producers from backgrounds underrepresented in the creative industries, and will support the Patterners in their blossoming careers. Nate Agbetu (one half of Play Nice) has been commissioned to run a new iteration of the project by A New Direction and Foundation for Future London.

#### **What would you change if you were to repeat this project?**

The external evaluation concluded that:

‘The investment of £50K to the Fusion Prize winner has delivered on the aims and aspirations of the prize – helping young people develop the soft skills they require for employers in the workplace – and delivered a significant return in social value and impact... The funders may want to consider whether the Fusion Prize funding allocation could be better maximised and stretched, for example, by making smaller awards to more projects (different ‘categories’), along with cross-programme incubation, training and mentoring support. This would also have the benefit of promoting and supporting inter-project collaborations and maximising the involvement and reach of partner organisations.’

A list of recommendations was made to Play Nice about further iterations of The Pattern and also to cultural commissioners and partners, the latter summarised as follows: ‘organisations and partners who may be considering future collaborations with Play Nice or commissioning a similar creative learning programme should consider how they can maximise their spaces and networks to support the programme.’