

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Education Board	Dated: 02/12/2024
Subject: Cultural & Creative Learning Fund 2023/24 Evaluation Report	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes 	Diverse Engaged Communities Vibrant Thriving Destination Leading Sustainable Environment Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	
What is the source of Funding?	Education Board
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Yes
Report of:	Director of Community and Children's Services Department
Report author:	Caitlin McMillan, Education Strategy Unit

Summary

This report presents Members with key information relating to the first year of the City's Cultural and Creative Learning (CCL) funding model. 12 projects were awarded money from the CCL budget to the combined cost of £184,315. Funding from 1 project was returned as the project was not completed, leading to an actual spend of £170,115. 3,220 participants took part across the completed projects.

This report summarises recurring findings from the evaluations returned by partners at the end of project delivery. An overview of the projects can be found in Appendix 1. A full collection of evaluations on each project can be found in Appendix 2.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the findings in this report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation (CoLC) is committed to 'Embracing culture, creativity and the arts' (Education Strategy 2024-29) and the City being a 'vibrant thriving destination' (Corporate Plan 2024-29).
2. In the current financial climate for cultural and creative institutions, it is becoming increasingly difficult for partners to access funding for projects.
3. According to the 'Arts in Schools' published by A New Direction (2023), 'there is a lack of value ascribed to the arts within the state education system in England'. The Education Strategy Unit (ESU) is committed to redressing this finding by providing cultural and creative learning opportunities to young learners with a focus on additionality.
4. The management of the cultural and creative learning offer was brought into the Education Strategy Unit in June 2023, from Culture Mile Learning.
5. The CCL Fund was established in 2023. This report relates to its first year of operation.
6. Priority for funding was given to organisations working in partnership with another City cultural venue.

Current Position

7. In the academic year 23/24, 12 projects were funded by the CCL Fund. These were:
 - a. Culturally Speaking
 - b. Garden Club
 - c. Inspiring Young Londoners
 - d. Music Production for Girls
 - e. Nature Learning
 - f. New Leaf
 - g. Poetry vs Colonialism Festival
 - h. Reimagining Londinium
 - i. The Big Picture
 - j. Wild City
 - k. Young City Poets
 - l. Crafting Futures
8. 11 of these projects were successfully delivered. Due to capacity issues, 'Crafting Futures' was not able to be delivered. Their funding was returned.
9. In total, £184,315 of funding was allocated. £14,200 was returned, making the total fund outlay £170,115.

10. £190,000 was originally allocated to the fund. Of the £19,885 underspend, £10,000 was allocated to top up the School Visits Fund for academic year 24/25. The remainder was allocated to cultural and creative careers sessions at the London Careers Festival.
11. 3,220 participants took part across the 11 completed projects.
12. Whilst each project was evaluated separately, there were some themes observed in their impacts including:
 - a. Cultural capital – a majority of projects reported that young people were visiting cultural venues for the first time. Particularly impactful were projects such as ‘Garden Club’ where families were also invited to engage with the cultural venues and given opportunities for further engagement.
 - b. Environmental engagement – a number of the projects reported that participating children experienced increased engagement with and confidence in nature.
 - c. Pupil voice – all of the projects had this focus in their evaluations on the experience of the participating young people. This was particularly of interest in the ‘Nature Learning’ project which employed innovative evaluations methods to ensure that the experience of non-verbal young people could be reported.
 - d. Careers and Employability – several projects (most notably ‘Music Production for Girls’ and ‘Inspiring Young Londoners’) cited an increased understanding of available careers and routes into them as an outcome.
13. A full collection of project evaluations can be found in Appendix 2. This includes evidence of how the projects addressed disadvantage and cultural capital, and the anticipated long-term impact of the projects.

Options

14. N/A

Proposals

15. The feedback from participants makes it clear that the fund is a valuable resource. It should therefore remain part of the City’s cultural and creative learning offer.
16. Evaluation should continue to prioritise impact and addressing disadvantage, growing cultural capital and promoting upward social mobility.
17. Collaborations between the City’s cultural institutions should continue to be prioritised to drive Destination City objectives on behalf of young Londoners.

Key Data

18. See Appendix 1 and 2 for key data relating to this report.

Corporate & Strategic Implications –

Strategic implications – the CCL Fund contributes to the City’s position as a vibrant thriving destination by bringing young people into the City’s cultural venues. It also engages a diverse community of learners. The fund meets the City’s 2024-29 education strategy aim of ‘Embracing culture, creativity and the arts’.

Financial implications - none

Resource implications - none

Legal implications - none

Risk implications – risk assessments for all trips are carried out by the participating schools and venues.

Equalities implications – the CCL Fund provides cultural access opportunities to young people, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those protected by existing equality legislation.

Climate implications - a number of the funded projects focused on green skills and improving young people's relationships with the natural environment.

Security implications - none

Conclusion

19. The Cultural and Creative Learning Fund is an effective and valuable component of the City's Cultural and Creative Learning offer. It allows increased opportunities for young people to engage with the City and to have enriching cultural experiences whilst also encouraging collaboration and partnership between the City's cultural institutions.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – CCL 23.24 Evaluation Overview
- Appendix 2 – CCL 23.24 Evaluations

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