

EVERYDAY

PLACES

EVERYDAY

PARTICIPATION



SHARING THE LEARNING FROM OUR STRATEGIC TOURING PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT QUARANTINE

Quarantine was formed in 1998 by artists Simon Banham, Richard Gregory and Renny O'Shea. Working with a shifting constellation of collaborators, the company makes theatre and other public events that are characterised by their intimacy, fragility and a playful instinct to place everyday life side-by-side with moments of rare beauty. It's human-scale art, made epic and in miniature.

Quarantine work with virtuosic performers and with people who have never done anything like this before – electricians, philosophers, families, soldiers, chefs, children, florists, opera singers and countless others. It's an ongoing exercise in mass portraiture. There's a light, open, often conversational relationship with audiences that can be unexpected, inspiring and provocative – the theatre as a thinking public.

There have been family parties, shared meals and cookery lessons; karaoke booths, radio broadcasts and journeys in the dark for one person at a time - as well as performances on stage for audiences in seats. Quarantine have been seen all over the world and are widely regarded as one of the UK's leading contemporary theatre companies.

WHY THIS PROJECT?

Quarantine has a long history of touring, both in the UK and internationally, from everyday places like cafes, libraries and train stations, to prestigious national venues and world arts festivals. We also have a history of making work based on human relationships, mining hidden experience and knowledge, and encouraging genuine conversation between strangers – it's the essence of all that we do.

We conceived this project, Everyday Places, Everyday Participation, in response to a very real gap that existed, in time and geography, between the moment where our work is 'booked' and when it is met by its audience. We wanted to bridge this gap by working closely with people and in places where the work was to be presented. This meant we were able to bring our work closer to audiences who might well see themselves reflected in it, but are traditionally described as 'harder to reach'.

We also felt there was a tension between creating egalitarian work, where in its broadest sense, the audience could be 'anyone', and presenting it in locations where our desired high production values and quality of delivery could be assured.

There remains an awkward tendency in contemporary art and performance to concentrate on presenting complex, challenging work that talks about the edges of society to apparently sophisticated, informed audiences who occupy the centre. When work travels to those edges, it can sometimes “dumb down” or let standards slip, as though those audiences might not be capable of understanding or somehow be worthy of the best work of its kind. We wanted to avoid this.

We developed the work carefully, keen to contradict pre-conceived ideas of touring contemporary performance events as challenging or elitist. The ‘settings’ for each piece were: a van converted into a mobile film studio that could set up in almost any outdoor location, from school playgrounds to parks or outside shopping centres; a karaoke booth; and a conversation over food in a familiar location.

At the centre of our project was the Audience Ninja, whose role was to work closely with our strategic partners, to identify needs and priorities in conversation with local ambitions and interests, and to work with a range of delivery partners who were close to communities and individuals that could help make the project happen.

We were fortunate to appoint two exceptional individuals who took up this role consecutively in years one and two: Teresa

Wilson and Sarah Hunter. Both navigated us through this complex project working across 9 strategic partners and 3 different pieces of work presented in 50 locations, all achieved with sensitivity, rigour and flexibility. Through this role, we shared information across the partnership, so that each and every event or activity could inform the next.

We commissioned The Audience Agency in order to support our existing thinking around understanding who our audiences are, and evidencing impact through qualitative and quantitative data collection research and design. And we put together a team of artists, specific to each piece of work, who were skilled at putting people at ease, especially audiences who had never experienced anything like this before.

We invited a number of partners to be part of the project: some of whom we had an existing relationship with, others were developing relationships, and some were entirely new but based on common approaches or ambitions that felt appropriate. Many of the partners were also new to each other. All were invested in their local communities and were keen to place high quality work in a range of locations.

We believe the project was successful in many ways as you will go on to read, but there were times when we questioned our motives: where we felt like the work was being instrumental, for example, in its contribution to place-making, well-being or skills development. Quarantine believes in art as a major domain of human experience, a place to find personal meaning, alongside others and individually. Our approach has never been based on a deficit model, where something is perceived to be absent from peoples' lives or communities, and we were keen to ensure this project did not stray into this territory. However, through subtle curation we felt we were able to stay true to the work whilst engaging with wider agendas.

The project was also very time intensive and we questioned the sustainability of our advocacy approach; but spending time with people, trying to understand the real and perceived barriers, were all important activities, and the understanding gained from this will stay with the partners, and much of it will stay with us.

This project has had a significant impact on our organisation and our work: it informed everything we did alongside it and after it in terms of how we might communicate with audiences going forward, helping us to consider our invitation

to audiences as fundamental, and what it means to be part of something.

Projects that followed - **The Reading Room**, **Wallflower**, and our most recent large-scale work, **Summer. Autumn. Winter. Spring** - have all benefitted from the insights from this project.

It has reinforced the value and primacy of the **work** and of **people**, in all their complexities: those who make and mediate the work, those who place it or contextualise it, and those who take part in it as the final vital ingredient.

Ali Dunican, Executive Director
Quarantine

Further information on Quarantine can be found by visiting our website: www.qtine.com

This project was funded by a Strategic Touring grant from Arts Council England, with support from The Garfield Weston Foundation.

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This document is intended as a resource to share some of our learning from delivering Everyday Places, Everyday Participation, a project funded by a Strategic Touring grant from Arts Council England throughout 2014 and 2015.

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ABOUT OUR PROJECT

In 2013, Quarantine embarked on Everyday Places, Everyday Participation, a strategic touring project aiming to:

1. Work in partnership with a range of partners across the North West, West Yorkshire, and the East Midlands to tour three pieces of original work, to new people and new places
2. Encourage project partners to take a risk with their programming, creating new contexts for contemporary work
3. Support partners to identify and cultivate new audiences for contemporary work
4. Recruit local people in each area as local ambassadors to act as advocates for the work and help to deliver the projects in their area
5. Engage with local groups and networks, delivering information sessions and targeted marketing, to further spread the word at a local level
6. Test new approaches to gathering quantitative and qualitative data in order to produce robust research with support from The Audience Agency.



To support delivery of this project, we created a dedicated post: our 'Audience Ninja'. This 'on the ground' audience development role was created in response to an identified gap, both in time and geography, which often exists between work being booked and its presentation. With the aim of increasing capacity to support both Quarantine and our strategic partners for this project, the Audience Ninja role was a realistic response to the time and energy required to build partnerships, develop key local relationships, and identify and cultivate new audiences.

To deliver this project, we worked closely with nine strategic partners: [Compass Live Art](#) (Leeds), [Contact](#) (Manchester), [Derby Theatre](#), [Manchester City Council](#), [Oldham Council](#), [Quays Culture](#) (Salford), [Salford Community Leisure](#), (Salford), [Spot On Rural Touring](#) (Lancashire), and [WLCT](#) (Wigan). Some of our strategic partners were familiar with programming contemporary work but many had not programmed anything like this before. We were pleased to have a range of partners involved as this allowed us to bring together and draw upon a wide bank of knowledge and experience. Partners came together at yearly intervals (the beginning, midway, and at the end) to share hopes and expectations, evaluate progress, and reflect upon the learning. In between times, partners were kept up to date with project activity and key learning via the project blog,

which can be accessed [here](#). Please note, this blog was a working document of the process and as such has not been edited retrospectively or updated now the project has come to an end.

ABOUT THE WORK

For this project we had three pieces of work available, all of which were high-quality, original pieces. We had 'road tested' versions of all three previous to the project beginning to gain a better understanding of the most appropriate contexts and the ways audiences might choose to engage. In response we undertook further development on **Between us, we know everything...** to make the project more portable, turning a van into a mobile film studio that enabled us to site the work in a wide range of outdoor public locations; and reimagined **Table Manners** to enable the work to be sited in local cafes, restaurants and pubs, as well as carrying out some refurbishment of **The Soldier's Song** booth.



As stated above, each of the works were portable: **Between us, we know everything...** was self contained in our converted VW Crafter Van which could be parked in outdoor public locations; **Table Manners** took place in local cafes, restaurants and pubs and required only reservation of two tables; and **The Soldier's Song** was housed in a purpose built wooden booth that our production team could install in any public spaces that were wide and high enough to house it. This was an essential element of the project as it made it possible for us to present the works directly in the places where people live, work, and play.

“Love the ideas and the concept. Each individual project was well thought through and very different, and used innovative ways of working with and engaging people”

- Strategic Partner, Oldham Council

BETWEEN US, WE KNOW EVERYTHING... is an attempt to collect all the useful and useless knowledge that we acquire over the course of our lives. Members of the public are invited to share a piece of knowledge in our mobile film studio, which is then uploaded to the dedicated [project website](#).

“It’s great – it gets people talking and brings people together. And it’s really accessible, anyone can do it. It’s brilliant”

- Audience Member, August 2015

THE SOLDIER’S SONG is an installation made with and about currently serving soldiers. Audience members are invited to enter our karaoke video booth and share an encounter with someone who might fight in our name. This quietly provocative piece, asks whether we are willing to remain an audience.

“Thanks for this opportunity, an unusual experience in our local library – popped in for a Ghost Hunt and ended up singing our hearts out with the soldiers”

- Audience Member, October 2015





TABLE MANNERS is an invitation to a one-to-one encounter with an artist, where people are bought lunch in exchange for a conversation, with a menu of topics available to choose from. It is about the familiarity of eating together, the art of conversation, and a temporary connection with a stranger.

“A lot of the areas we worked in are quite isolated, people wouldn’t come into town or seek out arts opportunities, so we definitely achieved what we wanted to because we took the work directly to them”

- Strategic Partner, Salford Community Leisure

“We talked about some big issues and we just connected – two strangers over a meal. It was a really enlightening, wonderful experience”

- Audience Member, June 2015

As a result of our Strategic Touring funding, we were able to offer these works at a subsidised price, which was an intentional decision to make it possible for our strategic partners to ‘take a risk’ and programme something a bit different from their normal offer.

Each work used a familiar form (karaoke, sharing food or sharing knowledge) to invite audiences to get directly involved in the experience. Strategic partners could choose any combination of our available works to fit with their aims, chosen locations, and target audiences.

Over the three years the works toured to a wide range of locations, including town centres, market squares, independent cafes, pubs and restaurants, a primary school, an athletics track, a rugby club, libraries, public parks, a youth centre, a community centre, galleries and art centres, and local festivals.

We learnt a great deal from siting our work in a wide range of locations and our experiences in the first year of the project were instrumental in informing our strategies for where the work was placed (and how) in the second year of delivery. Some of our key findings were:

1. We found building relationships with local delivery partners, and local people essential for cultivating audiences. These relationships enabled us to develop an advocacy-based approach, which helped us build a presence locally prior to the work arriving. Local recommendations formed an important part of this advocacy approach, and were one of our most successful ways of ‘spreading the word’ about the projects.
2. We found it was important not to assume that because a location has high footfall this will always translate into high levels of engagement with the project. For example, we tested delivering work outside a busy leisure centre and supermarket and discovered people were so focused on the activity they had already planned to do in that location (e.g. going swimming or doing their weekly shop), that they generally weren’t

willing to stop to engage with something unexpected or new. This was less the case at events (e.g. festivals) where people were often spending longer periods of time and therefore had space to stop to talk to the artists and ask questions, and in many cases took time to think about the project and then came back later on to contribute or take part.

3. **Table Manners** required audience members to sign up in advance but it was free to do so and free to take part on the day. In year one we tried to manage sign-ups remotely and found that while it was easy to fill slots, often people booked far in advance and then didn’t turn up on the day. We considered asking people to pay a small deposit to hold their place (hoping this investment might encourage people to show up), but decided against this because we didn’t want to add unnecessary barriers. Instead, in year two, we decided to ask our delivery partners (café, pub and restaurant hosts) to manage the booking list within the venue. This worked very well, with most events running at full capacity and an overall average of 85% capacity for the second year.

All of the projects were free for people to engage with, which removed cost as a barrier to involvement, and only one project required people to sign up for the work in advance, which made it possible for our team to continue to engage with local audiences once the work was live (see point 3 above for reflections on advance sign-ups). The ability to set up in everyday public locations meant that the work reached a wide demographic, engaging both confident arts attendees and people that had little or no previous experience of the arts.

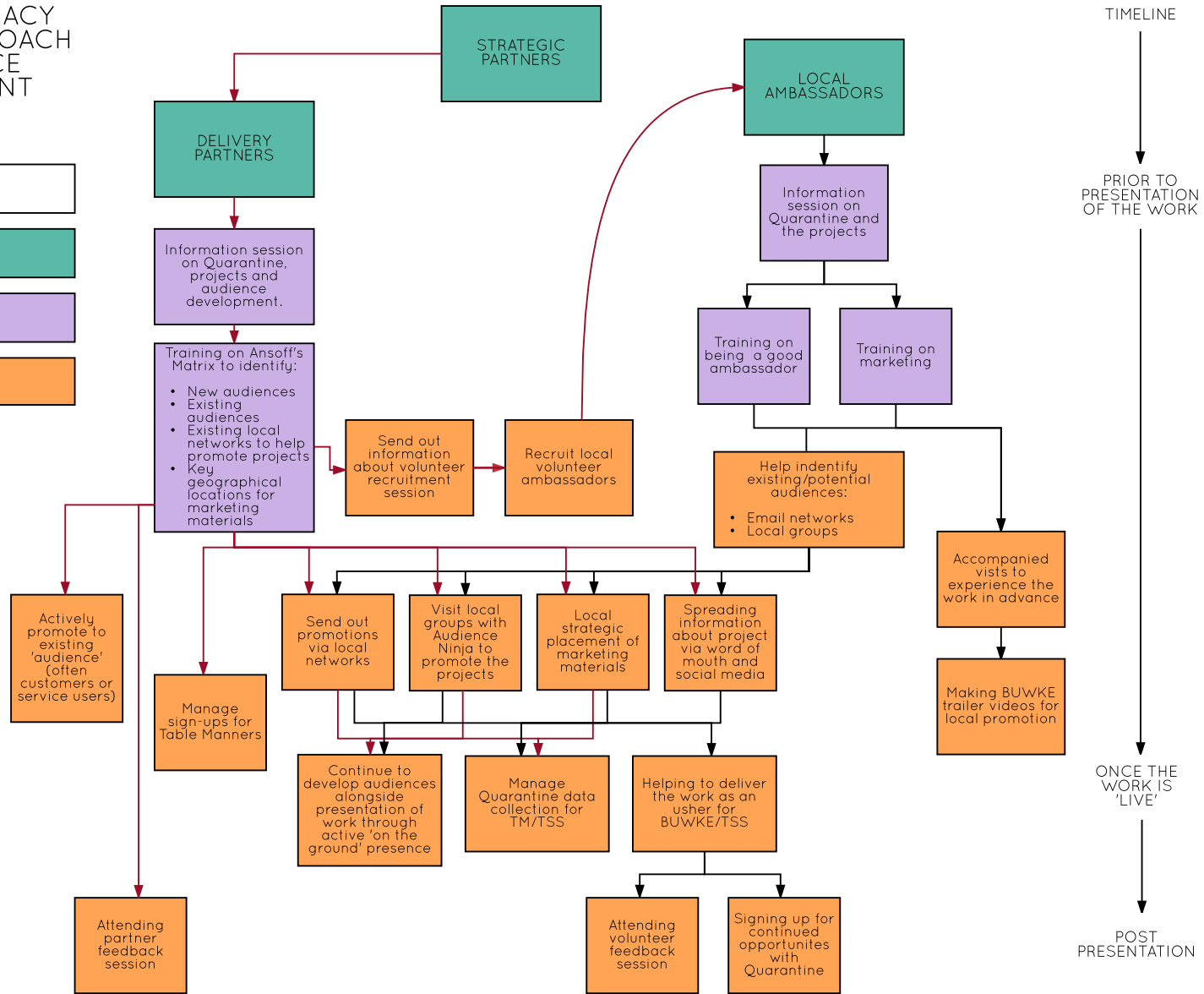
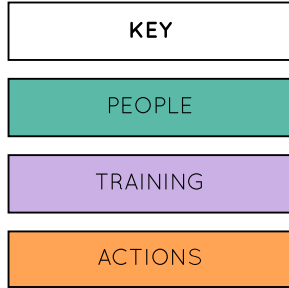
DEVELOPING AN ADVOCACY APPROACH TO AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Our intention as part of Everyday Places, Everyday Participation, was to develop an advocacy based approach to audience development. At the beginning of the project we didn't have a set idea of what this would entail – instead, we developed this approach in conversation with our partners (at both strategic and delivery level) and our local ambassadors, which meant that our strategies for audience development remained open enough to unfold organically in line with the needs of our partners, the projects, and local audiences.

As such, it is important to stress that there is no 'one size fits all' approach when delivering a project of this nature, however, the following map provides a rough guide for the model we developed. Please see the below sections for more detailed information on working with delivery partners and local ambassadors using this approach.

• EVERYDAY PLACES, EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION •

OUR ADVOCACY
BASED APPROACH
TO AUDIENCE
DEVELOPMENT

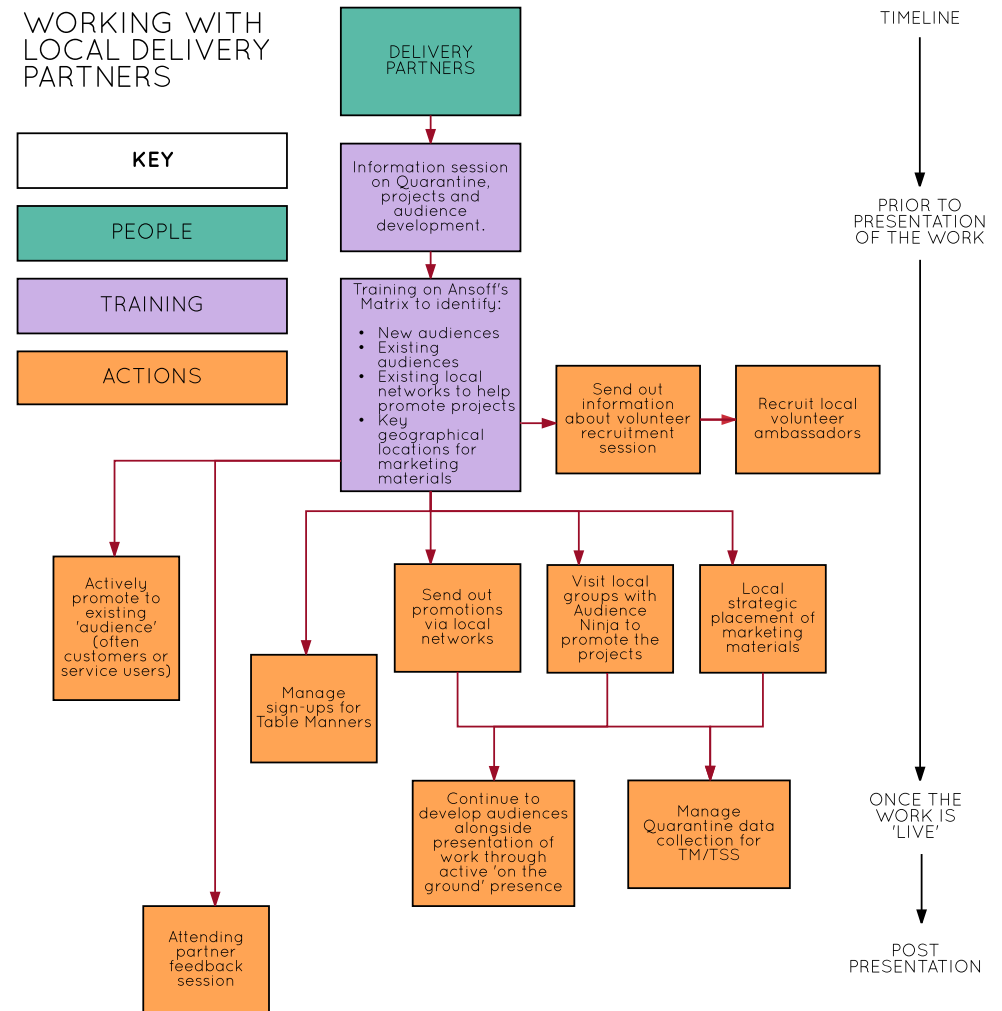


QUARANTINE

WORKING WITH LOCAL DELIVERY PARTNERS

To support the presentation of these works in everyday locations, we worked with our strategic partners to identify local contacts who could become key delivery partners for the projects in their area. Over the two years we worked with a wide range of delivery partners including library staff, pub landlords, café supervisors, restaurant owners, housing associations, the chairman of a local town hall, trustees from a community centre, a primary school drama teacher, the director of a community arts centre, a rugby club president, youth workers, and neighbourhood officers.

As the majority of our delivery partners were new to programming and delivering contemporary work, we put structures in place to support them to host the work and to identify and cultivate audiences for it. The needs of our delivery partners varied widely depending on the type of organisation they were working in, their previous experience of programming and marketing arts events, and their available resource and capacity. As stated above, we have discovered there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach when delivering a project of this nature, however, as a rough guide our model for supporting delivery partners looked a bit like this:



“You could flyer until you’re blue in the face ‘round here, but people will only come if they already know what it’s about or if someone local recommends it.”

Local Ambassador, Wigan

At the beginning of each relationship with a delivery partner, our Audience Ninja visited them to make a personal introduction and to provide them with detailed information about Quarantine and the project(s) they had chosen to be involved in. Where delivery partners had the capacity, the Audience Ninja returned for follow up sessions, using tools such as ‘Ansoff’s Matrix’ to identify existing and potential audiences for the work, and to come up with a strategy for how these target audiences might be reached.

You can read more about how we made use of Ansoff’s Matrix [here](#). All delivery partners were provided with the necessary communications materials to enable them to promote the project at a local level, with support from local Volunteer Ambassadors where relevant. Working closely with delivery partners enabled us to use personal connections to access local networks, groups and individuals, which helped us to engage people we would most likely not have reached

had we been reliant on a more conventional marketing approach.

“I’d like to do more like this in the future. I’ve found it a very interesting, informative and entertaining experience”

- Delivery Partner, Salford

The biggest challenge for our delivery partners was capacity, with the majority of partners taking on this project alongside their existing workload, and many facing funding cuts or organisational restructures that resulted in reduced resources. However, in spite of this, the response from our delivery partners was overwhelmingly positive, with feedback that the projects had augmented their usual programme, helped them develop relationships with new and existing audiences, and encouraged them to take a risk and get involved in something new.

“Culture often isn’t visible locally, but this project made culture visible in local communities. The work was there as an offer and people chose to take it up”

- Strategic Partner, Manchester City Council

In Leeds in year one, and in Morecambe in year two, alongside working with delivery partners, we also had the opportunity to work with young producers who were working with Compass Festival and Spot On Rural Touring respectively.

This was a brilliant opportunity for collaboration as it gave the young producers the chance to take some responsibility for delivering several aspects of an arts project, and it provided us with extra resource, which allowed us to have a more active presence locally and enabled audience development to continue ‘live’ alongside the presentation of the work.

You can listen to Annie Lloyd from Compass Festival talking about how they set up their young producers scheme [here](#). You can watch short videos of the Young Producers from Compass Festival 2014 sharing their approach to audience development [here](#). And you can read about the experiences of our Young Producers in Morecambe [here](#).

“It was a lot of fun being an usher for The Soldier’s Song installation and a great experience to see local people engaging in a unique project, one which many people had stumbled upon accidentally”

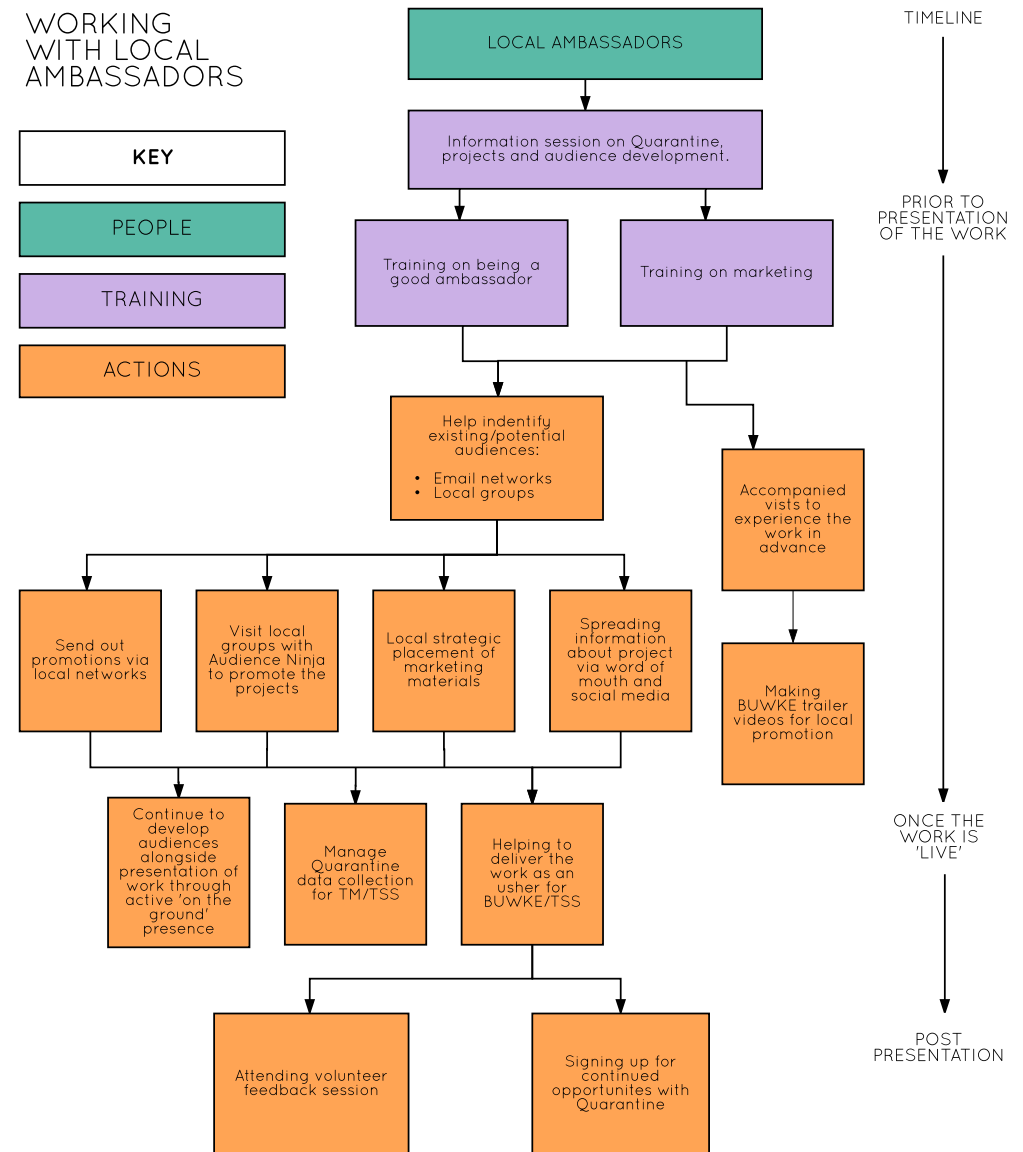
- Young Producer, Morecambe, October 2015



WORKING WITH LOCAL AMBASSADORS

Central to the success of this project was recruiting volunteer local ambassadors, who acted as advocates for Quarantine and the work, and helped us to promote and deliver the projects in their area.

Local knowledge enabled us to identify barriers that might discourage people from coming to see the work, and informed the strategies that we used for audience development. Again, there was no 'one size fits all' strategy, and each location required a tailored approach to make the most of the opportunities, however, the model we developed looked a bit like this:



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We worked closely with strategic and delivery partners to access local networks, which enabled us to spread the word about the projects and to send out an invite for local people to come along to an information session to find out how they could get involved. Through these sessions we developed teams of local ambassadors, who sometimes came together as a group and sometimes helped on an individual basis depending on availability and what was required. We found it was important to have a range of ways available for people to get involved and to make sure that all contributions, no matter how small, were valued. The following list details ways that local ambassadors got involved at different stages in the project:

PRIOR TO THE PRESENTATION OF THE WORK

- Attending a session, delivered by our Audience Ninja, on how to be an effective ambassador
- Attending a training session, delivered by our Audience Ninja, on communications and how to develop strategies for promoting the work in their local area
- Making trailer videos at the Between us, we know everything... van and sharing these through social media and local networks to promote that the project was coming
- Going on an 'accompanied visit' with the Audience Ninja to experience one of the projects in another area prior to helping deliver it in their own area
- Distributing communications materials locally and sharing information about the project through word of mouth
- Making suggestions for local groups that might be interested in the work and going along to one of their sessions, with support from the Audience Ninja where needed, to spread the word.

You can read about making our trailer videos in Wigan [here](#) and can watch two of our trailer videos from Salford [here](#).

QUARANTINE

ONCE THE WORK WAS LIVE

- Being an usher for The Soldier's Song or Between us, we know everything...
- Bringing along family, friends, neighbours, local groups, to experience the work
- Doing active 'on the ground' audience development to continue to cultivate audiences

AFTER

- Taking part in feedback and evaluation sessions
- Signing up to our mailing list to be kept informed of other opportunities with Quarantine
- Getting involved in other Quarantine projects - as a performer or as an advocate.

Throughout the project we created 'Quarantine Stories' to document examples of the ways that local ambassadors engaged with the projects, these are available to view [here](#) and [here](#).

Through initial meetings and evaluations we know our local ambassadors chose to get involved in the project for a range of reasons and benefitted in different ways from their experience:

"I've not lived here long and I don't know many people, so this project has been a good way to get a bit more involved with my local community"

- Local Ambassador, Eccles

"It was an interesting experience, especially talking to complete strangers. It's been worth the time. Doing this has had a big impact on my confidence"

- Local Ambassador, Wigan

From postcode data we know that the majority of our audiences at each event were local, with a large percentage stating that they had heard about the project via word of mouth and local promotions, which evidences that this 'on the ground' advocacy based approach was successful.

Since the project came to a close we have been active in keeping interested local ambassadors up to date with other opportunities with Quarantine through email mail outs and personalised invites to events. Many of the people that supported the project are still involved with Quarantine, acting as advocates to help us spread the word about our new work, coming along as audience members, or getting involved as performers.

Below is an example of how we used our audience development model to work with delivery partners, recruit local ambassadors, and identify and reach new and existing audiences when delivering **Between us, we know everything...** in the summer of 2015.

AN EXAMPLE OF HOW OUR AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT MODEL WORKED IN PRACTICE

We began by working with our strategic partner, Salford Community Leisure, to identify potential delivery partners – in this instance the local neighbourhood officers for the ward we were working in; Wheels for All: a local accessible cycling service; the Bridgewater Coordinator from Salford Council; and the Eccles Rugby Football Club.

All of these delivery partners attended an information session with our Audience Ninja, and from there we set about identifying potential and existing audiences and recruiting local volunteer ambassadors. In the two months prior to the work arriving our Audience Ninja, with support from partners and local ambassadors,

visited a number of local groups in the area to deliver information sessions about the projects – this included joining in with bingo at an over 60's ladies group, giving a talk at an under 18's local awards evening, and attending the annual general meeting at the local rugby club to spread the word.

Our local ambassadors attended training on how to be effective ambassadors to equip them with all the information they needed to promote the project locally. Our delivery partners and local ambassadors took responsibility for placing communications materials in key local spots including the town hall, community noticeboards, cafes, and a local gallery, and for spreading the word out to local groups including youth groups, housing associations, local 'friends of' groups, and other volunteering associations.

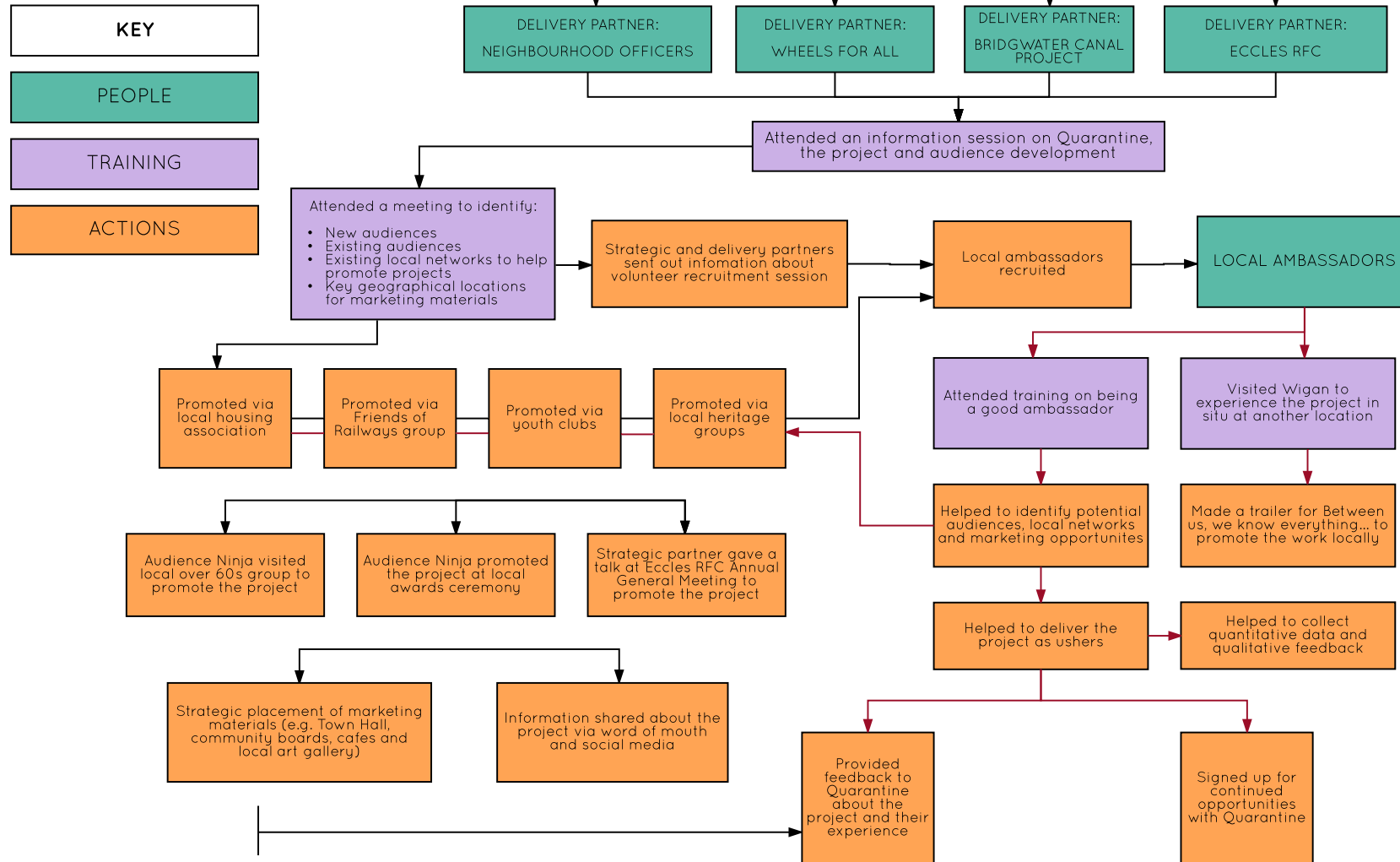
Two of our Local Ambassadors came on an accompanied visit to Wigan to experience **Between us, we know everything...** and then made trailer videos to promote the work coming to their area (these can be viewed [here](#)).

Once the project was 'live', our local ambassadors continued to do 'on the ground' audience development, encouraging members of the public to get involved and bringing friends and family along to experience the work. They also helped to deliver the work as ushers – helping us to collect quantitative postcode data and to gather qualitative feedback from audience members.

Once the project was over our local ambassadors provided us with feedback about their experience. All of our local ambassadors from Eccles signed up to learn about other opportunities with Quarantine and the majority came to see our touring production **Wallflower** when it came to Manchester the following August. We remain in touch with a number of these local ambassadors now.

• EVERYDAY PLACES, EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION •

HOW IT WORKED IN PRACTICE: DELIVERING BUWKE IN ECCLES, JULY 2015



PROJECT OUTCOMES

AUDIENCES

We delivered 25 outings of **Between us, we know everything...** 8 outings of **The Soldier's Song**, and 12 outings of **Table Manners**, exceeding our original targets and reaching a live audience of **2,864 people** and an online audience of approximately **16,236**.¹ From conversations with our audiences we know that the majority were new to Quarantine's work, and that many were new or infrequent attendees to the arts more generally.

From postcode data, which was analysed externally by The Audience Agency, we know that we succeeded in reaching audiences from across the Audience Spectrum, but that the vast majority of our audiences (60%) came from segments of the Audience Spectrum considered to have lower level engagement with the arts.² 31% of our audiences came from segments considered to have medium level

engagement with the arts³ and 9% from segments considered to have high level engagement with the arts⁴.

"I was nervous at first because I didn't know what it was, but I'm glad I did it, it made me think about how art can be all different kinds of things"

- Audience Member, June 2015

"It was a most enjoyable new experience. Uplifting, informative and stimulating"

- Audience Member, May 2015

Some outings were more challenging to develop audiences for than others, and we quickly learned it was not possible to gauge the success of events solely on numbers, and that it was necessary to modify expectations about what a 'successful audience' might look like from place to place, based on the wider context, the number of contacts we had in that location, and the time/date the events were taking place.

¹ Based on the number of unique visits to www.betweenusweknoweverything.com, a percentage of visits to www.qtine.com, unique opens of our Qmail e-newsletter, and engagements on social media.

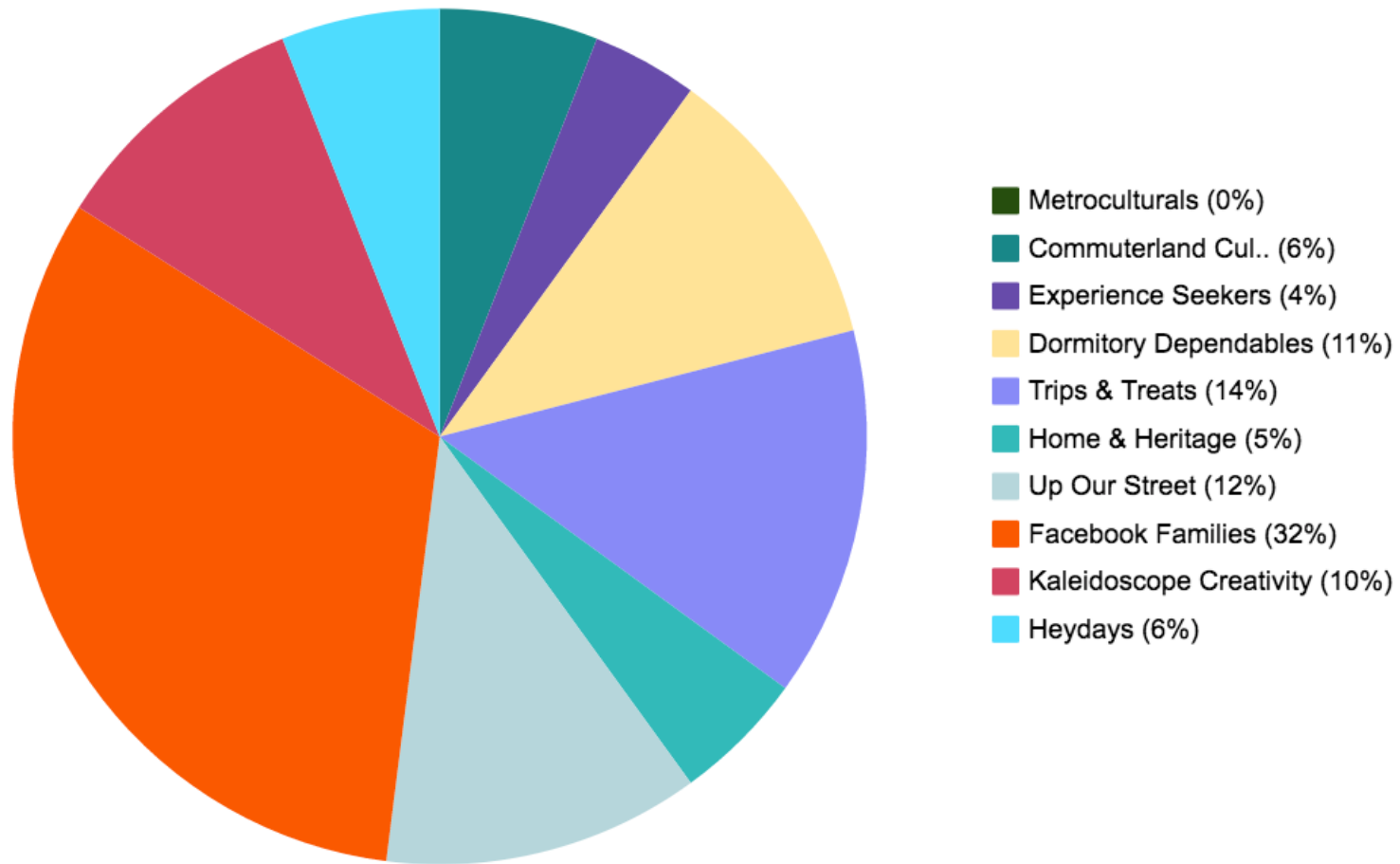
² Facebook Families, Up Our Street, Kaleidoscope Creativity, Heydays - from <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum>

³ Dormitory Dependables, Trips and Treats, Home and Heritage - from <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum>

⁴ Experience Seekers, Commuterland Culturebuffs, Metroculturals - from <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum>

AUDIENCE BREAKDOWN BY SEGMENT

(BASED ON THE AUDIENCE AGENCY'S AUDIENCE SPECTRUM SEGMENTATION SYSTEM USING POSTCODE DATA FROM YR 1 AND Y2 OF THE PROJECT.)



TRAINING AND ENGAGEMENT

Over the course of the project, our Audience Ninja delivered 56 sessions for delivery partners, local ambassadors and potential audiences and volunteers. This included marketing training, ambassador training, information sessions about the work, and tailored sessions for particular groups. We engaged **592 people** through these training and engagement activities.

DATA COLLECTION

Collecting quantitative data (in this instance postcodes) and qualitative feedback, from audience members, local ambassadors, and partners at both delivery and strategic level, formed a large part of this project. We worked with [The Audience Agency](#) on our research design to ensure we had robust methodologies that would provide us with a body of evidence to tell the story of the project, and to access tailored training and on-going support. All data collection was undertaken alongside project delivery, with information collected 'on the ground' by the Audience Ninja with support from local ambassadors and delivery partners.

Whilst collecting postcode data and qualitative feedback was a vital part of this project, we also wanted to ensure this was obtained via methods that did not disrupt people's engagement with the work. We found it was best to collect postcode data before people had started to engage with the work: for *Between us, we know everything...* we collected this data as part of a consent form; for *The Soldier's Song* our ushers collected this data prior to people entering the karaoke booth; and for *Table Manners* delivery partners collected this data at the point of sign up. We ensured that it was clear how people's information would be used (i.e. that we were using this information to monitor the project and would not use it to contact them/pass it on to third parties) and found that with this clarification people were generally happy to provide this information.

To collect qualitative responses, we tried to build feedback mechanisms in as part of the overall project experience and ‘road tested’ different approaches to see which felt most appropriate for the three works. Along the way we discovered that some approaches were less successful than others – for example, we found that, in relation to these projects, vox-pops often generated only surface level responses, and that there was a low uptake on calls for people to share their experience via social media. The approaches we found most successful varied across the three projects:

1. *Between us, we know everything...* is conversational in nature, with audience members generally stopping to speak with our artists and watch existing videos, before choosing to record a video themselves. We decided to use these opportunities for conversation as a space to gather feedback, and implemented an ‘overheards’ book where our artists could record any comments that audience members shared about their experience of the work. We found this conversational approach to gathering feedback often

resulted in interesting, open, insights in to people’s experiences.

2. For *The Soldier’s Song*, we found the best way to gather feedback was a comments book where audience members could choose to leave a response about their experience of the work. As a project for one person at a time, we found this inbuilt space for reflection was welcomed as an extension of the project, with many people choosing to write something in the book.
3. *Table Manners* is a delicate project for one person at a time and we wanted to find a way of gathering feedback that wouldn’t interrupt this intimate exchange. To achieve this we created take-away cards that provided audience members with a link to a survey where they could leave feedback. The uptake on these was low (on average 1 in 10 people who took part in *Table Manners* filled out a survey) but the feedback we obtained from them was useful.

CARRYING FORWARD LEARNING

Included in this document are snapshots of our approaches to working in partnership (with strategic and delivery partners and local people) to create new contexts for contemporary work and to cultivate audiences for our work in these locations.

While it is impossible to encapsulate all the learning from a project that spanned three years, involved nine strategic partnerships, and toured to 50 locations across the North West, West Yorkshire, and East Midlands, we hope that sharing some of our process and learning is informative for others embarking on similar projects.

At the end of the project we asked our **strategic partners** to each share three pieces of learning that they would carry forward with them:

1. **Being a venue-based organisation, we found that there was a need to ensure our venue staff had capacity to support this sort of work.**
2. We found that it worked best when we were able to make the connection between the work and the venue clear for our audiences.
3. We found that programming work outside of our venue worked best when it was part of an existing event

1. **The importance of work that questions and challenges.**
2. The importance of a long lead-in time for local marketing.
3. The increased use of public spaces as art spaces.

1. **Think outside the box** to problem solve – you might find it takes you to new places. **Be adventurous** in your decisions.
2. Don't pre-judge your audience.
3. Investing in long-term projects is a luxury but it is worth it. **Create space to explore new ideas.** Being involved in this project was additional to our existing daily commitments, but taking the time to do it has given us some long-term outcomes.

1. **Start early** with making community contacts and identifying champions for the work.
2. **Take good care of people** and communicate frequently and effectively.
3. Always work with Quarantine.

1. This was the first time we'd worked with local ambassadors and we definitely think this is a valuable strategy to take forward. It's a good way of **giving ownership** of the projects and ensuring the work reaches a wide range of people.
2. Think about working with artists that are using art forms you're not familiar with - **open up new opportunities for collaboration.**
3. **Use out of the ordinary venues.** We found this a brilliant way to provide access to types of work

1. **Be realistic** with expectations and honest about capacity.
2. Ensure enough time is set aside for all the things you hope to achieve
3. We found that Quarantine brought alternative ways of engaging with people (from karaoke, to a free lunch) **that were high quality and well considered. We'll continue to look for different ways of working with and engaging people going forward**

1. Leave plenty of time for for consultation and lead-in to projects.
2. Make evaluation an on-going part of the project so that nothing gets missed along the way.
3. **It is worth taking a risk to see what might happen.** This project demonstrated that there is appetite for contemporary work in our area and now we have a body of evidence to express the need to continue to support projects like this.

1. We've learned a lot about programming and feel more articulate in terms of communicating what we're looking for and ensuring it's high quality work.
2. **We found the training element an interesting aspiration** in this project and that's something we're definitely looking to carry forward into our work with other partners. We think it's a brilliant way to 'up-skill' people and give them new vocabularies and resources.
3. **This project was a risk but it was worth it. Probably the best learning to take forward is that it's worth continuing to take a punt and see what happens!**

The Audience Agency have written a case study documenting their role in the process, which is available on their [website](#).

Jo Kay, Regional Director for the North West, shared with us why she felt our approach on this project was successful in reaching such a wide audience demographic:

“The starting point for this project was never ‘how do we reach people that don’t go to the arts’, rather it was founded on the belief that sharing human experience in a human way will appeal to all kinds of people. Quarantine really do have audiences completely at the heart of what they are doing, but that’s not about bums on seats, it’s about a genuine desire to create the circumstances for conversations between strangers who might not otherwise meet. I really like this approach, it is very democratic and it results in work that’s professional and cutting edge, but also entirely about people, making connections and telling people’s stories.

I think one of the things that is remarkable about Quarantine is that they make exciting, experimental and challenging work, but manage to strip away all the hype surrounding the art, which can make it feel exclusive at times, and instead make it feel very unthreatening and accessible to both confident arts attenders and people who might feel like the arts aren’t for them. There’s a certain listening quality to Quarantine, a quietness that enables others to do the talking, and a transparency that means nothing is hidden - the work and the exchanges that take place around it feel very honest. The strand that connects all of Quarantine’s work is that it is human and universal, and I think this played a big part in helping Quarantine to reach audiences from across the Audience Spectrum.”

- Jo Kay.

Below, we've detailed the most significant learning for **Quarantine**, as an organisation continuing to make work for public presentation:

- Audience development is a slow process. Leave as much lead-in time as you can (we'd recommend at least 3-6 months if you plan to do 'on the ground' work as this involves building trust and developing relationships on a number of levels). We found it valuable to have a second year of delivery as part of this project as it gave us time to establish working relationships with partners, and enabled us to reflect on our success and challenges from year one and implement new strategies where needed.
- Build in as much time as you can for consultation with partners. It is vital for managing expectations on both sides and we often wished we had more of it to ensure we were making the most of all opportunities.
- Find methods of data capture that sit well alongside the work, and don't over complicate it: often a conversation is faster and more effective than a questionnaire.
- Engaging new audiences should not compromise the quality of work or the quality of engagement. To take risks with programming it is vital to have the right support in place, at both strategic and delivery level, and to ensure that the necessary resource and time is available to care for the projects.
- Don't make assumptions about the suitability of a location – visit it, imagine the work in it, speak to the people that live and work there. Audiences will often surprise you. We found some of the most exciting, thoughtful and interesting responses came in places where we least expected them. Don't be afraid to take a risk.

Thank you for reading our thoughts and reflections on this project. If you have any questions or would like to know more about the project or Quarantine's work, please contact us on: office@qtine.com | Tel: + 44(0)161 839 4392.

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