

External 4x8 Evaluation:

Mapping the Journeys of DIY Young Leaders and Musicians



Evaluation of DIY's 4 x 8 Inclusive Music Training Programme
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Mapping the Journeys of DIY Young Leaders and Musicians

This evaluation of DIY Theatre Company's Youth Music funded 4 x 8 Inclusive music training programme report has been written by external researcher Dr Rosalind Hawley on behalf of DIY Theatre Company. Ros is a music leader, trainer and researcher specialising in delivering music education, training and evaluation projects in health and disability contexts. She has worked with a range of organisations including The Hallé, Britten Sinfonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, The Royal Northern College of Music, Musik Alliansen (Sweden), Musique et Santé (Paris), Figura Ensemble (Denmark) and The Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus (Denmark), Live Music Now, TiPP and Alder Hey Arts.

Ros has written about making music with children and young people with complex healthcare needs and disabilities in articles and book chapters and in 2021 completed her PhD - a reflexive study of her own music-making practice with children in a paediatric hospital (SOAS, University of London).

Her brief was:

- To evaluate the Four by Eight Programme from the perspectives of DIY Leaders and emerging musicians.
- To identify learning against the proposed outcomes and make recommendations for next steps.

The findings are based on a combination of semi-structured interviews, observations and questionnaires.

A summary document is also available via DIY Theatre Company

Who are DIY Theatre?

DIY is an established Learning Disability Theatre Company based in Salford, UK.

The company's vision is a world where performers and arts leaders with learning disabilities are valued as part of the rich diversity of our cultural sector and our society.

DIY aim to:

- Challenge preconceptions and barriers experienced by people with learning disabilities through high quality performance, education projects and research.
- Celebrate diversity and creativity in all areas of our work.
- Promote the achievements of performers and theatre-makers with learning disabilities and share good practice.

What was the project?

DIY has for a number of years been developing their emerging practice of multi-sensory theatre and workshops for Special School settings and this is an important area of work which the company is committed to developing further. As a member-led organisation, participatory, participant-led approaches are central to DIY's values and practice. DIY had identified a gap in music practitioners with skills and experience to work with DIY artists with learning disabilities within Special School settings. We wanted to contribute to filling that gap, whilst at the same time developing relationships with a core group of musicians who know and understand our work and practice and with whom we would hope to collaborate in the future.

This programme was directly linked with much-needed opportunities to put training into practice. The project enabled musicians to work with DIY artists and for DIY leaders and musicians to learn from each-other's experience and knowledge through piloting collaborative workshops in Special Schools. The aspiration was for mutual learning through the process of developing creative interventions in collaboration with partner schools and considering the responses of learners and feedback of teaching staff in order to move practice on.

Who was involved?

The project had three main groups of participants:

Six DIY Leaders worked throughout the project, collaborating with musicians, developing skills and new work and delivering sessions in inclusive settings. DIY Leaders were supported by core staff throughout the process.

Emerging musicians worked throughout the project, collaborating with DIY Leaders, undertaking training, developing skills and new work and delivering sessions in inclusive settings. Musicians were trained by the lead musician, and offered shadowing opportunities.

Children and young people accessed creative workshops in three different settings as part of this project; a Special primary school, a Special college setting and in a youth drama group.

The project was overseen by music lead, Sarah Atter. Sarah Atter is an award-winning Manchester-based musician with extensive experience of devising and delivering education and community projects, alongside student and teacher training, large-scale residencies and consultancy work. She works across a variety of fields including music in healthcare, music in the community, music in education, music in criminal justice and collaborative cross-art form projects.

Project stages

- **Recruitment of musicians** interested in developing their inclusive practice to an introductory session. This was an opportunity to meet DIY staff and leaders and gain an understanding of DIY and our ethos as an organisation.

- **Interviews** were undertaken with all musicians and DIY Leaders at an early stage in the project to provide a baseline for evaluation.
- **Training:** A series of musician training sessions was led by Sarah Atter around frameworks and approaches to inclusive music including Sounds of Intent, Sensory music making and total communication and Intensive Interactions. More formal training elements were followed by practical sessions with six DIY Leaders to trial and test new ideas.

Emerging musicians were also offered:

- Shadowing opportunities with DIY
- Arts Award Adviser Training at Discover and Explore level
- Arts Award Adviser Training at Bronze and Silver level
- 1:1 time with a member of the DIY staff or music lead, to discuss areas of particular interest, concern or development.
- **Commissioning:** Following this training, the emerging musicians were invited to apply for the opportunity to take part in the next stage of the project. All six applied and all were accepted.
- **Collaboration:** Six pairs were established – each comprising a musician and a DIY leader. Working in pairs they co-developed new inclusive music work to be taken into the delivery settings. Sessions included time for each pair to try ideas with the rest of the group and gain feedback from the other participants in the project.
- **Mid-Point Evaluation** – semi-structured interviews and participatory feedback activities were introduced to contribute to the project evaluation.
- **Delivery:** Each pairing designed their workshops for their particular setting and delivered two sessions to that group. Sessions were observed and mentored by lead musician Sarah Atter, who gave feedback to enable modifications to be made between each first and second session. Each musician also created a set of inclusive resources for DIY's website.
- **Evaluation:** A final evaluation session was held including practical exercises, interviews and a questionnaire to identify what went well, highlights, learning and what could be improved.
- **Follow-up project:** Thanks to the uplift provided by Youth Music, DIY was able to employ one of the emerging musicians trained through the 4 x 8 programme to deliver a series of music sessions with the group of 5 sensory learners at Chatsworth Futures. This offered an opportunity to evaluate medium term outcomes for sensory learners in a way that was not possible within the shorter-term projects.

Beginnings

Young Leaders: Baseline Conversations

For The Young Leaders, 4x8 gave a new opportunity to explore using music, and working with musicians to co-create and co-facilitate participatory activity. The Young leaders' expertise is in leading drama activities as part of regular DIY programmes and projects. As part of their baseline conversations, the Young Leaders identified a range of skills they brought to the project, including:

- Leading and introducing drama activities and games at workshops as linked to pre-existing DIY sessions
- Having had experience of going into schools with drama activities to share and try out with learners
- Leadership experience – through DIY theatre workshops and leading conferences
- Sharing and using activities to show and teach other people
- Awareness of using these improve peoples' mood and wellbeing – to help people feel better.

Music and me

The Young Leaders outlined how they currently engaged with music. For many, this was centred around listening to music (on phones or Alexa), or through taking part in practical activities that share recordings of music – at local radio projects and DJ slots which are live streamed or shared via zoom and expressing preferences to listening to particular types of music. It was clear that every Young Leader interviewed had a clear use of music in their day-to-day life, and some had developed skills to share music through DJ-ing.

“I’ve just done a DJ Live-stream. I got the chance to put together my favourite songs and stuff like that and go and show other people what I had the chance to do on Zoom on a Live-Stream.”

“I listen to it all the time on my phone. On my mobile phone – walking around different places. If I’m sad or upset I listen to music and that will make me happy.”

The Young leaders also identified they used music to listen to for enjoyment, to relax, and to keep calm. When asked for their thoughts on why music is important, the Young Leaders strongly fed back that music is useful as a support to mental health, in feeling positive, and helpful in exploring a range of moods and emotions. The accessibility of participating in music was also highlighted:

“If you can’t use your hands, you can use another body part to play an instrument and feel the vibrations. It’s accessible for anyone.”

Working with musicians and learning new skills

The Young Leaders were asked about what they wanted to learn about using music during the project. Answers were varied, from wanting to learn specific instruments and having questions as to how this might be done, and what some of the techniques might be for

learning and playing instruments, to wanting to learn about music technology/ies, and wanting to learn about composing tracks and tunes. There was also curiosity about the musicians' practice and what preparation they needed for performing their instruments:

"Do they do have to do breathing exercises before they play and go live on stage?"

The prospect of working with musicians was exciting and intriguing - something new - and there was an overall curiosity and anticipation from the Young Leaders about joining together with musicians, of seeing them play their instruments and of learning to play instruments themselves. The exchange element of the project, bringing together skills and experience in leading participatory drama and music activities, was also highlighted by one Young Leader:

"We're teaching them drama and they're teaching us music. Then we're going to put it together and do a little scene to take into schools."

The Young Leaders were asked what skills they hoped to learn through the project. Some identified using specific equipment or instruments, others identified specific skills, like learning to write a song. Others talked more about the creative process and learning new skills directly as a result of that:

"How to put drama and music together – in a group of 3 or a group of 2. In small groups and not in a big group. We usually work in a big group but working in a smaller group you've probably got more time to think about what you want to take into the schools."

"Probably the new skill will be how not to be nervous doing music."

What will be new?

Whilst everyone was looking forward to the project, there were some questions and uncertainties about how it all might unfold. Working with drama and music was a new development and brought the possibility of working in new ways and with different people. The Young Leaders highlighted at this stage of not being sure of what might happen in the sessions, of learning to work with people new to their group, of the uncertainty of trying out new things and being aware of making mistakes:

"Are we playing or are they playing and we're learning off them and helping them?"

"Because I've never used it before and if I've got to use it by myself then it feels like I'll be exposed."

"Obviously I would like to know if we're learning new things that it's not too much for me and I can actually do it. If we're going to do something I'd rather that the teacher goes through and say "this is what we're going to do and we're going to do it like this" rather than getting it wrong."

When asked to think about what challenge the project could bring. The Young Leaders expressed the importance of clear communication in promoting feelings of security and confidence within the group and during the workshops:

“I want clear explanations. I don’t like to get things wrong. Even just showing me how to use the instrument more than once so I can eventually do it on my own – once I feel more comfortable.”

“Just the learning new things and making sure that someone shows you and they teach you how to do it right. That’s quite important, isn’t it? That they explain stuff and show us things. Doing it as well as saying it.”

Musicians: Baseline Conversations

The emerging musicians also brought a range of skills to the project, through their individual student and professional experience:

- teaching music/singing in the community and in schools
- working in drama/theatre in the community already, and using sensory musical activities to support this work
- having experience of intensive interaction approaches and non-verbal interaction
- experience of classical music training/study

The musicians engaged with music in a range of ways. This was influenced by the fact that some of the musicians used music in their work and studies as well as or instead of using music for enjoyment and relaxation. The musicians described how they might listen to albums of music rather than playlists of different tracks, how they used music and music activities to teach children and young people, or how their relationship with music was centred on structured practice schedules aimed to improve their ability to play an instrument. One musician also highlighted how, being neuro diverse, they used listening to music as a specific strategy:

“I use music as a stim. I can listen to the same song on repeat again and again and again and I actually get caught in songs and from that I think I create a little world of that song. By focussing on that world, I can also focus on doing the things that people need to do day to day.”

Why is music important?

When the musicians were asked why they thought music was important, they highlighted how music, and music making, offer alternative ways to communicate, learn and express ourselves. One musician talked about how music can also be fun and enjoyable, something that can be shared together. Another musician talked about how music making utilises different parts of the brain to other activities people learn in daily life, and offers ways to communicate that are not reliant on needing words or language:

“I think music is very important because it’s a different form of communication and it can unlock things with people and emotions that normal talking can’t – that are sometimes indescribable with words. It’s a different way of being able to express yourself that can be really helpful when you’re working with different groups.”

Learning from DIY Young Leaders

When asked about what they wanted to learn from the project, the musicians were keen to develop their musical skills specifically in working with people with disabilities to gain a deeper understanding of the application of musical activities in this context, build confidence in using music with other people, and broaden their experience of music, musical styles, activities and experience of using music with people. One musician highlighted their hopes for developing leadership skills through taking part in the project:

“Being able to be that leader – being able to adapt- having the self-confidence so I am able to adapt so there’s not that doubt when I’m trying to lead or plan a session.”

Another reflected that working with the Young Leaders would shape the direction of their learning, and in doing so highlighted the fact that every participant in the project was able to learn from each other:

“Because I don’t actually know what the Young Leaders want to learn in music. If they want to learn something that I don’t actually know anything about maybe I’ll be better shadowing their project than doing something else.”

What will be new?

The musicians were looking forward to meeting new people through the project, to learning new ideas and ways of working from other people in the group, developing their leadership skills and expertise, and sharing ideas and creativity together with the DIY members. The anticipation of the project also highlighted the feelings of apprehension that come with stepping into a new opportunity:

“I think that sometimes I can be a bit wary of the unknown and I think when you’re workshopping then having a skeletal plan in the background but being able to work off the fly and improvising quickly or adapting to certain situations is really important. So, although I acknowledge that that is something that you need to be able to do, I haven’t done that in my practice very much. So, I think it will be interesting to see how adaptable I could be.”

“I think sometimes I have problems with self-confidence and standing up in front of people. Normally once I’m there I’m fine – I guess it’s just like that fight or flight feeling before when you’re “oh, I don’t know if I can do it”.

The musicians were also anticipating the possible new elements that would emerge during the project. They highlighted working in small groups, working with new people, experiencing taking training workshops with other musicians, and having the opportunity to share ideas and input into each other’s ideas, all as key elements that would be new to them. There was also some uncertainty around how the project might unfold at this stage.

Mid Project Conversations

Young Leaders and musicians took part in semi-structured conversations mid-point in the project, at the point where they were preparing for working in the spoke settings after Christmas. Both groups were asked questions on their experiences to date, giving chance to reflect on what they had enjoyed, learned and were looking forward to.

Young Leaders

The Young Leaders reported back that they were enjoying working with the musicians, and that this experience had provided new opportunities to learn more about music and making music. The project had also opened up opportunities to explore sharing ideas and working together. Working in pairs or small groups, which was a new element, was also a positive, providing a more in-depth opportunity to learn together and to learn from each other:

[I've enjoyed]:

“Meeting the musicians and using different ways to make music – never used a loop pedal or set one up before – most of the apps I've never used before.”

“Learning about music tech, making your own sounds on it.

“Just coming up with the ideas... and putting my ideas across – and when you do a workshop and you come up with good new ideas that makes a good workshop.”

“I like every Monday the musicians take turns to lead games. I like working in 2's because you get to learn more stuff from each other.”

New Skills

At this point in the process, the Young Leaders were able to report back on what the most important learning had been for them so far. This centred on the development of practical musical skills, workshop delivery and leadership skills:

Practical

- Music tech
- Learning all the different tech and how to set up.
- Playing instruments... doing all the different instruments
- How to do warmups for your vocal chords before you start singing
- Music scales, and music technology and vocal exercises
- Learning different music and different ways to make/use music.
- Playing the music, doing the music, playing the instruments
- I've liked doing different songs and learning different sensory stuff off the musicians and learning different yoga poses and stretches.
- Technology – learning about how it works and using the technology to make music.

Workshop and leadership skills

- The games – music *and* drama
- Working in a pair
- How to try out new ideas to other people and let them tell me how to improve.

- Coming up with new ideas and listening to other people have new ideas.

Next steps – visiting partner organisations

The Young Leaders reported that generally they were excited to be going into the partner organisations after Christmas, although some Young Leaders expressed feeling a little scared about the prospect. Being able to fall back on the skills they had learned was reassuring. Working in pairs was also noted as being helpful in preparing for going into settings, by providing a feeling of security and partnership. The group were aware that they might need to adapt or adjust their plans and ideas when they met the groups in the settings to run the workshops. Making sure the participants in the workshops got the most from the sessions was also important to the Young Leaders, who talked about wanting the workshop activities to help the participants, and of wanting the participants to enjoy the activities and have fun.

The Young Leaders thought the best part of taking their workshops into settings would be seeing participants learn and develop and to see them gain confidence.:

“Probably to see their faces show [light?] up and shine because its new to them, what we’re doing. I’ll like the way they smile at different things... to feel the vibrations.”

Getting the chance to play specific music during the workshops, and working alongside the musicians in their workshop were also noted as being the element they were looking forward to experiencing the most.

The Young Leaders anticipated some challenges in leading the workshops:

- Children I’ve not worked with before.
- Managing the behaviour/reactions of children during the workshops
- Using new skills/equipment such as music tech
- Adapting to children/participants with physical impairments and helping them to access activities - *“Some of them can’t use their hands, so we’ll have to help with feeling the vibrations and think of different ways to do this. “*
- Starting the sessions and encouraging participation

One Young Leader observed:

“I think they’ll enjoy it but it’s going to be different. They can get nice feelings from us, and we can get nice feelings from them.”

Musicians

In their mid-project conversations, the musicians expressed they had enjoyed making connections through taking part in the project, and in working collaboratively with the Young Leaders. They also acknowledged the value of working with the Young Leaders to help them learn about working with more diverse groups of people, in working specifically

with people with disabilities, and in working together to form a model of best practice informed by disabled and non-disabled facilitators. Musicians also commented on the value of working with other musicians, and of coming together to learn from each other. Some of the musicians expressed feelings of uncertainty regarding the project structure at this stage, commenting on the timings of particular project sections, such as training phases (“felt a little quick”) and gaining feedback more promptly (“a much quicker feedback loop where we can openly discuss what’s worked”).

Learning so far

The most important learning at this stage for the musicians was centred around working with the Young Leaders and co-facilitating with them. This was informed by either how the initial training sessions had helped to build knowledge and skills before starting to work together with the Young Leaders, or how direct opportunity to work with the Young Leaders had enabled authentic, practice-based learning:

- Teamwork/collaboration. Working with different people and different needs, and working in a leadership way together – having a shared goal. Giving authenticity, shared leadership – everyone is a participant, everyone is a leader.
- Workshops helped me to think about what to include/ how to build a workshop, and looking at different frameworks (to see [understand] reactions)
- Good to see how to approach different learners and perspectives, i.e., kinaesthetic – how to adapt to different learners, SOI framework – understanding what people are able to do and maybe challenge them, explore their potential.
- Big one is the relationship with DIY Young leaders – co-facilitating and leading, understanding this relationship – the 2 roles, sometimes interesting dynamics, initially quite nervous about it.
- I think I have learned skills from being around there who have experience of this environment, how you talk to people, the point of music – just music? Or music to help with movement, to help someone move a bit more.

When asked what they would have liked to spend more time on, nearly all the responses highlighted wanting to spend more time on practical delivery and working with the Young Leaders, and being able to spend more time with them to build their co-facilitation relationship together. One musician felt that they would be able to reflect better on this aspect after they had delivered the workshops after Christmas.

The most important learning for the musicians at this stage centred around their abilities as music leaders and the skills one develops as confidence and experience grow. These included learning to take more time, to break up ideas and activities into smaller steps, to take time to expand on fewer activities rather than race through a series of more activities during a workshop session, to be able to ‘read the room’, and building trust and confidence with others. Musicians also highlighted they had learned to better understand inclusive practice through working directly with young people with learning disabilities, and through

working in Special Schools and with learning disability-led groups; importantly, this was achieved through direct contact and communication with the DIY Young Leaders and young people involved in the project.

Next steps – visiting partner organisations.

Musicians were excited about going into partner organisations to deliver workshops after Christmas, but some did express some feelings of apprehension about the prospect:

“Excited, good, I feel planning/creative side is reasonably well sorted. Creative bit is fun, I will be a bit nervous but that is normal. I want participants to get as much as they can from it.”

The musicians reported that building confidence throughout the project, working directly with the Young Leaders, and having training on musical frameworks and sensory/interactive approaches, all helped with preparing for the new experience of going the settings. They all anticipated that the best part of going into the settings would be to see how participants responded and reacted to activities, and that they would learn from watching how the participants engaged during the workshops. For at least one musician, it was the first time they would be experiencing a special school. Another commented that working with 16+ young adults would be a new experience. The musicians anticipated that any challenges relating to the future workshops would be around time management and delivery of activity: knowing when to move away from the plan and allow an activity to develop ‘in the moment’, and how to keep the session on track. They also highlighted the challenges of 1:1 versus group activity within a session and making sure that activities were accessible to all participants:

“[I’m aware of]my role/responsibility that I need to facilitate to ensure inclusive practice and be accessible.”

End of Project Reflection

At the end of the project all the project team took part in a group evaluation session and the Young Leaders and musicians were invited to fill in questionnaires. 3 of the musicians were also interviewed in follow up telephone interviews.

Young Leaders

The Young Leaders’ responses reflected that they had enjoyed taking part in the project and all would be happy to do it again. They highlighted enjoyment in taking part alongside with the musicians, learning about music from them, co-operating with them, and going into settings to deliver workshops. Working with the musicians would also change how they develop their own DIY theatre shows and gave new ideas for using music differently in the shows in future. The Young Leaders learned about using music and drama together and enjoyed seeing how music can help people to relax, and experienced how music and music making activities also helped them to relax. The project enabled an opportunity to learn different skills by “playing different music,” through experiencing different forms of

engagement with music, and by singing and playing music together alongside the musicians. Specific and personalised experiences, such as learning specific new skills using music technology and apps, and singing a song composed during the project, were highlighted by the Young Leaders as being their most important learning experiences.

One Young Leader reflected that they would have liked *“more session[s] to work through the plan so we know what to do.”* When asked if there were any elements of the project that they were unsure about, The Young Leaders fed back *“travel”* and *“plans”*, and the use of new musical equipment/resources such as music apps.

Musicians

The musicians all enjoyed working with the Young Leaders, collaborating with them, *“listening to everyone ‘s ideas to come up with a plan,”* and working together. One musician commented on how the training had helped with preparation for this. Another commented:

“I loved getting to know the DIY members and the other musicians. It was great to work with the DIY members as colleagues as I feel like they are often participants, and this was a great way of seeing how capable they are.”

The project offered new opportunities:

- Working with other musicians and learning from each other in the leading and training sessions
- Going into more depth about how to plan activities for different abilities – ideas on where to find resources – i.e., Sounds of Intent
- Co-facilitating with someone from a different discipline.
- Practising leading really useful. Usually thrown in the deep end, made me feel more confident.
- I never worked on a project before where I was facilitating both the participants and my co- facilitator.
- Working with different participants than I’m used to and helping to train other facilitators.

Musicians reflected on the structure of the sessions and the balance between planning, delivery and feedback – there were a range of suggestions and reflections on how this could be improved: whilst some would have liked more planning, others felt there were too big a gap between receiving feedback, and also between planning and delivering activities. Some musicians commented that they would have liked to receive more information on their Young Leader co-facilitators so that they could learned in advance how best to communicate and work together in the sessions. There was some uncertainty around the structure of the project and how it might work, and in not knowing the DIY Young Leaders very well.

Overall, the musicians’ feedback indicated that they would have liked to have more practical opportunities, and more time with their DIY colleagues to develop ideas and build their partnership together, with less time waiting for feedback. It was suggested that an introduction to Young Leaders first before launching into a full music session – to get to

know them and DIY and the DIY approach, and the Young Leaders element(role) would have given more clarity to the musician's understanding of the project, and more communication and interactions with spoke groups would have helped musicians and the co-facilitators have a clearer understanding of who they would be working with when they delivered their workshops.

Key learning for the musicians was centred around diversifying their own practice, informed by developing approaches for and with DIY Young Leaders, project participants and outreach spokes. This included developing knowledge in using music technology, structuring and scaffolding creative activities, understanding the needs of a range of learners and potential approaches to take (nonverbal, sensory, kinaesthetic, physical/theatrical), and in learning to apply and adapt these approaches to make them relevant to the workshop group in question. Musicians also became aware of how music can be used to support, reinforce, facilitate, and co-facilitate other creative experiences. One musician reflected:

"[I learned] that music isn't always the purpose of the music!"

The musicians reflected that they had built their own bank of new knowledge through learning to apply new musical skills in the training workshops; through being given short time -restricted tasks to co-plan and facilitate activities, and to share and feedback these with the wider group; through observing other musicians lead and co-facilitate; observing group reactions and responses to different leaders and leadership styles, and from working with the Young Leaders.

The most important learning for the musicians was centred on collaborating with others and learning skills in co-facilitation and, and in learning how to structure workshop sessions. Observing others facilitate, and developing an understanding of DIY, its members and ethos, being part of the organisation's environment and to experience this first hand were also highlighted as important.

Challenges

During the evaluation process the ground-breaking nature of the project was frequently acknowledged and enthusiasm for this aspect was clearly voiced by all those taking part. The newness of the project - the first time the structure had been implemented by DIY, bringing together disabled and nondisabled creative leaders to work together to develop inclusive leadership models, and exploring music/drama models of practice collaboratively to gain new learning for the organisation - supported an honest and open space for feedback within the evaluation. Due to its exploratory nature the project did meet, and overcome, several challenges:

- Whilst time was taken at the beginning of the project to set up an introductory day for the new musicians, changes in personnel within the artist cohort in the early planning stages made it more difficult for DIY to share and communicate introductory information collectively across the whole artist team.

- Changes had to be made to the length of time available to go into partner organisation settings. This needed to be adapted within the project due to a revision of payment allocations to the musicians to reflect their time commitment within the project.
- The project supported an increased number of musicians involved in the project (from an original 4 to 6) which impacted on budget and also affected the length of time available for working in the partner organisation settings.

Recommendations:

There has been significant learning for the organisation as a result of implementing this project, which are presented as recommendations below:

- DIY to consider how information could be communicated to new musicians if there are changes in personnel/artist teams- possibly an additional session factored into budget as a project safety net/recap session?
- Take time to review and reflect on the role of musicians as co-facilitators – in this project it's a multi-layered role, requiring a level of expertise and experience as a music leader, facilitator and collaborator. What do the musicians need to learn or be supported with coming new to DIY?
- Ensure clear communication between all project participants throughout the project, especially where any handover/exchange of information/activity is important.
- Re-visit the project structure with a view to further development, consider a longer length of time for the overall process to take place, and consider where extensions to parts of the process would work well – i.e., more time for pairs/small groups to work together and explore ideas to build their partnerships before going into partner settings; increase number of sessions in the partner settings, with time in between sessions to process the experience, and plan/reflect. Consider additional mid-point feedback session to support team and process, and try out ideas together, as well as final evaluation.
- Consider new ways to give feedback after sessions - are there other ways which may build/strengthen the team and allow project members to learn from each other and reflect together? A reflection session/meeting in person or online? Consider when the best time is to give this feedback for the Young Leaders and musicians.
- Musicians & DIY Leaders would like to meet students in school beforehand for familiarisation and support to aid planning/preparation– (i.e. to observe them in a lesson and learn more about them. More background info would have been useful e.g., age range. Chat with staff would have been useful – a bit of direction about how learner' previous experience / how they respond to things).
- Allow more time and opportunity for partner organisations to meet or be introduced to the DIY creative team(s) before workshop activity takes place - perhaps an

introductory visit to the school, and/or DIY members/musicians design and send in introductory flier/poster with information?

- Increase staff involvement from partner organisations – could key staff come to DIY to talk to the project team? Deliver focused sessions on key aspects of working with their organisation/groups of young people? Make a video to share? Be visited by DIY project team before workshop activities commence, i.e. in the first term/phase of activity?

Evaluation Summary: Impacts and Learning

Impacts of the 4 x 8 Programme

- Pioneered and explored, through action learning, a new inclusive model of creative leadership, bringing together young leaders with learning disabilities and non-disabled young leaders for the first time.
- Gave DIY Leaders opportunities to develop new musical skills, build confidence in music-making and gain new experiences in creative leadership.
- Enabled emerging music leaders to develop their understanding of inclusive practice by learning from, and working collaboratively and co-creatively with DIY Young Leaders.
- Enabled cross learning opportunities to take place exploring models of drama and music workshop practice and delivery.
- Enabled DIY Young Leaders to lead workshop activity for young people with disabilities in their community, and to become role models in creative leadership for children and young people with disabilities.

What worked well?

- Developing, strengthening and pioneering new leadership models which promote inclusive practice, led by DIY Young Leaders and emerging music leaders, through working in pairs and in small group activity.
- Honest and open spaces created throughout the project for gaining feedback to help improve future practice.
- Giving valued feedback to project teams to support project delivery with partner organisations.
- Creating an authentic, inclusive leadership style through co-creation and collaboration.
- Collaborative exploration of music and drama models of practice to enable new organisational and personal learning.
- Exploration of a range of musical and sensory frameworks as a foundation for inclusive participatory music practice and creative leadership.

What can we improve?

- Develop new ways/approaches to giving feedback within our projects.
- Increase the diversity of approaches to learning, training and communication within the organisation, to support sensory, non-verbal and neurodiverse participants,

whether within our project team or within partner organisations, and use our learning to inform and help others.

- Build on the project structure we have developed in 4 x 8 to give more time for pair work and small group opportunities, to enable increased time for working together inclusively, and allow more time to learn from each other.
- Sharing our learning more widely with other organisations to help others develop their own models of inclusive practice.
- Celebrating what we do well!

Appendix 1: Case Studies - Musician A

Reflection:

1. Can you say a little bit about your role in the project and what you did. Was the project what you expected it to be? Was anything unexpected?

- I enjoyed being a musician on the DIY course which included 4 weeks of training, working with the young leaders and planning sessions for youth drama with our collaboration partners.
- I didn't have many expectations coming into the project as there was little information regarding what we should expect. However, I was sure I would have a good experience and learn lots about leading sessions which I did.
- Nothing particularly unexpected

Skills Development:

1. What skills have you learned from taking part in the project (musical, communication/social, leadership/facilitation)?

- I believe my communication skills have improved, including email correspondence.
- My leadership skills and confidence in leading has improved, I believe this is down to me shadowing and volunteering at other DIY sessions and being able to emulate other great leaders.
- I enjoyed being able to tailor the creative planning sessions to the Youth Drama group we were going into.

2. Can you tell me about the initial training sessions you had. Is there anything you would like to have spent more time on, or explored differently? What was most useful? What was least useful? Were there any areas of training you would have liked to have covered that weren't covered?

- I really enjoyed the training sessions and took a lot from each one.
- Also enjoyed the practical elements so if anything, these could have been more, but the information was also interesting to learn.

3. How did you find it working with the DIY Leaders? What did you gain from this?

- DIY Leaders of the sessions were great and understood the groups well to be able to include everyone each session.
- The Young Leaders were also great to work with, they brought loads of energy to each session, and we learnt about their lived experiences. (I feel like however it wasn't very well explained about the youth drama sessions would be being incorporated into our training)

4. How did you find it going into settings? What did you gain from this?

- We could have explored as a leadership group the Youth Drama participants, so they got the most out of our planning.
- Learnt a lot from going into youth drama, if I did the project again, I would probably want to be placed in a school or external from a DIY company setting.

Looking Forward:

1. How will this experience help you in future work/projects?

- Project has linked me with other professional young musicians which means I can see my career progressing in Manchester post-college.
- It's also linked me with a great organisation (DIY) which I hope to run sessions for or be part of in the future.

2. Is there anything you would change about the project if it happened again?

- Personally, being placed in a school if I did the project again.
- Less planning time, more practical leading time
- More info or links with the group were planning the sessions for
- Seems to be a lot of evaluation at the end, could this be spread out more throughout the project?

3. What's the key learning you will take away with you from the project?

- Collaborative creative skills
- Planning sessions that are tailored to the participants.
- How to connect and work with an organisation

Case Studies – Musician B

Reflection:

1. Can you say a little bit about your role in the project and what you did.
 - Support worker for Young Leaders, also known as an “emerging artist” in DIY: I support the lead artist in running the session in a number of ways from modelling behaviour to helping with loo trips to taking the register!
 - Support worker for Youth Drama, which was one of the chosen settings for workshop delivery, giving me a chance to see other sessions!
 - Musician in the 4x8 project, learning how to co-create and run music workshops for sensory learners with a DIY member. This consisted of learning accessible approaches to music (sounds of intent, intensive interaction etc), leading games for the Young Leaders and gaining feedback, ultimately leading to creating a pitch for two music workshops to be delivered in a specialist school/setting alongside a DIY member.
2. Was the project what you expected it to be?

I came into the project with no expectations. I hadn't even seen the call out and was instead invited by Sue and Sarah to take part.
3. Was anything unexpected?

Yes:

 - How nervous I was around using music in workshops! I have no formal music training and suddenly felt completely out of my depth surrounded by professional musicians for whom time signatures, keys and theory are second nature.
 - I really had to battle with imposter syndrome, and my own insecurities around my music skills.
 - How much I would grow as a facilitator as a result.

Skills Development:

1. What skills have you learned from taking part in the project (musical, communication/social, leadership/facilitation)?

Frameworks

- Sounds Of Intent
- Intensive Interaction
- Non- verbal practise

Leadership/Facilitation

- Co-Leadership with DIY Members
- Co-leadership with workshop leaders
- Multiple levels of facilitation required in SEN settings.
- not hunting the “perfect” reaction

Musical

- Everything can be musical
- Stripping it back to the basics
- Not worrying as much about lack of training and theory

Social

- How to cope in an academic environment
- How to take criticism
- How to not read into people's tone
- The importance of moderating my energy levels and mood

Communication

- Importance of nonverbal communication in workshop settings
- Using music in Intensive Interaction
- Reminding myself that communication methods differ

2. Can you tell me about the initial training sessions you had. Is there anything you would like to have spent more time on, or explored differently?

- Incorporate different ways of learning
- Sometimes too verbal
- Very academic in tone
- How can you also honour any neurodiversity among musicians?
- Sometimes I felt othered.
- Perhaps more of a grounding in sensory prior to starting the music sessions, I feel some of the musicians were going in blind and this created some clashes of ideas during teamwork.

3. What was most useful?

- Great flexibility in what we could deep dive into EG What are all the acronyms?

4. What was least useful?

- Sitting down too much

5. Were there any areas of training you would have liked to have covered that weren't covered?

6.

- Perhaps contacting organisations responsible for methods we were learning to offer discount codes for further training.

7. How did you find it working with the DIY Leaders? What did you gain from this?

I loved:

- coming to the Young Leaders as a learner and gaining their feedback
- exploring co leadership with Viv and challenging my perception of true co leadership

I wish:

- we had more time together to truly co plan the sessions.
- Viv had direct input into the pitches we created prior to planning workshops.
- To lead more workshops alongside DIY members

I gained:

- A greater understanding of how much care and planning needs to take place to facilitate true co-leadership.

4. How did you find it going into settings? What did you gain from this?

I loved:

- Finally, being in the setting,
- Meeting my participants
- Getting to see X leading parts of the session

I wish:

- I could have seen all the settings
- Had more sessions in my chosen setting
- Chatsworth was more accessible as a building

I gained

- An awareness of slowing my delivery and being flexible with my plans
- An awareness of the importance of repetition
- A greater understanding of how I can use music more in all my sessions
- Greater communication skills with my co leader
- An understanding of how important it is to listen to all the needs in a room
- Skills in blocking out distractions in a public space

Looking Forward:

1. How will this experience help you in future work/projects?

- Increased confidence in incorporating music during sessions
- Showing me how I can further explore combining sensory and music practises
- Further opportunities to work with DIY – Hanging by a Thread musician, Chatsworth Futures workshops with Sue
- Good practise for pitching workshop ideas (what format I would like my pitches to be in, how to break down ideas, clear communication)
- Practise in planning sessions alongside another artist
- Personal development – challenging imposter syndrome, learning more about my learning styles, overcoming personal barriers

2. Is there anything you would change about the project if it happened again?

- Giving the Young Leaders a chance to pitch their own workshop ideas.
- Giving everyone a chance to see all settings and maybe participate in all workshops
- Creating a clear line of communication between the Musicians and the Young Leaders

3. What's the key learning you will take away with you from the project?

- You can do this

And finally ...

Is there anything else you would like to say?

I would like to thank DIY for taking this time to help me develop professionally. I found it difficult yet rewarding. I know this was a new venture for them and I am so excited to see how DIY learn and grow from this project as a result of being able to gain direct feedback from all participants

Case Studies – Musician C

1. a. I was a musician on the project and my role involved learning additional facilitation skills, collaborating with DIY young leaders and other musicians, and delivering two sessions we had created.

b. I think the most valuable skill I learned through this project was not needing to use all the ideas you have for a session all in one go. With the hindsight of having delivered the sessions I think we could have kept things much simpler and given each of our activities more time to get the most out of them.
2. I thought the initial training sessions were really helpful for general facilitation skills but the one that I found most relevant to the project we ended up delivering was the one in which we looked at using as many senses as possible to support the music. I would have liked to spend some more time preparing more directly for the project during the training period by discussing how we could best involve our DIY leaders in both planning and delivery. I also think it might have been really helpful to workshop an activity, discussing how we could plan and deliver that idea for different settings, needs and ages.
3. I really enjoyed getting to know the DIY leaders and I felt that they were able to make really valuable contributions. I would have liked some more time with them because we ended up needing to spend most of the time working on our plans and some musical skills and didn't have the chance to go into facilitation skills. I think the whole process helped me to think more about my role as a facilitator and the relationship with a co-facilitator during delivery.
4. I found the group we were working with to be really challenging. I had purposely chosen the setting I was least familiar with and I'm glad I did, but I definitely felt that lack of experience. I think one of the challenges was that I only actually got to work with the group twice which meant there was only one opportunity to put into practice what I'd learned during the first session. Obviously, there are lots of schedule constraints, but I think in an ideal world I would want to shadow someone else facilitating that group a couple of times and then deliver a longer series of sessions myself. I feel like I gained a lot from delivering those two sessions nonetheless. I would definitely be more confident working with an older age group in future and I also think I would be able to plan better for a similar group.

Looking forward

1. Having done this project is really helpful for me both in terms of the relationships I've made with other musicians and with DIY, and in terms of the skills I've been able to develop.
2. I would want the project to last a bit longer and I would have loved a chance to see more of what the other groups came up with for their sessions.

3. I felt that the biggest value of this project for me was thinking about how to plan appropriately for a specific group so this is something I will carry forward with me and also the thing I wish had been a more central focus to the training. The other key for me was developing the skill of facilitating for the group and the DIY leader at the same time and I feel that this will be really helpful when working with co-facilitators going forward.



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