

# Learning Highlights 2023



Nottingham  
Contemporary

In 2023, our focus has been on developing and sharing practice, hosting groups and working across the city to foster connections.

With city partners, we respond to local priorities and use art and creativity to bring people together. We learn from each other and grow projects together.

New programmes include Early Years, Warm Hubs and the return of Work Experience Week.

10,000 people took part in learning activities with us in 2023.

We'd like to share our work and warmly invite you to respond and connect.



# Schools of Tomorrow

In 2023 we celebrated the completion of a 4-year partnership with 8 local schools to nurture learning and creativity.



“The artist instilled a sense of joy, confidence, and pride in the children. They encouraged teachers to shift to more innovative approaches where students take an active role.”

Teacher, Edna G Olds Academy



“It’s clear that this has been a very child led approach which has been wonderful to witness.”

Parent, Melbury Primary School

“Conversations with our parents created solidarity about issues they face as parents of young children.”

Teacher, Melbury Primary School

Through working together, schools have embedded approaches that are creative and collaborative. More of what we do is developed with teachers and pupils and more emphasis is placed on pupil voice and teacher practice.

A new partnership with teachers at Raleigh Educational Trust begins in 2024.

# Developing together

Together, teachers and artists develop their practice and enrich the curriculum.



“These sessions challenge ideas of what art and creativity is and how we can teach it.”

Teacher CPD participant

With educators from LGBTQ+ communities we developed resources for an inclusive curriculum. Activity and a local network will continue in 2024.

# Creative learning

Our free resources and artist workshops are developed with teachers and students to support connections to art and ideas.

“Getting behind the scenes making and testing resources for other schools, led to thinking beyond the classroom. It opened their eyes to creative ways to collaborate.”

Teacher, Sneinton  
C of E Primary School



We welcomed over 2,500 students to create and learn with us.

# Collaborative exhibitions

With exhibiting artist, Eva Koťátková pupils from Seely Primary School helped create an imaginative world. Their voices, stories and drawings filled our galleries.



“It was so good for the children to be part of the exhibition. The whole experience was new for them.”

Teacher, Seely Primary School



Each year our exhibitions are developed with local people. In 2024, local musicians will help create and activate our summer show.

# Our city

We work with partners to make connections across the city and foster a sense of place and belonging.



“It was lovely being able to form new friendships and share places we love to visit.”

Pending Collective member



“It’s opened up new approaches and developed their confidence in writing and connection to the city.”

Teacher, Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team (NEST)



Young people from 1525 and Pending Collective created a map zine to share with newcomers to the city.

With students from Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team (NEST) we visit museums and galleries across the city and respond through writing.

We’ll be celebrating and sharing the creative work by students from NEST in spring 2024.

# Developing skills

Through workshops, commissions and placements young people develop skills and work experiences.



"It's been a fun and informative journey."  
1525 member



"My skill in teamwork greatly developed. I gained valuable knowledge about working in a professional setting."

NTU placement student



1525 members worked with exhibiting artists to make art works for the gallery. Courses and skill shares focused on how to plan and host events.

Nottingham Trent University students took part in 6-month placements to produce a publication, an exhibition and events.



# Work experience

Work Experience Week is back! Students gain insights into a career in the arts and connect to the city's cultural offer.

“The diversity of learning really was really fun and unique. It made me want to rethink my career.”

Student participant



Students visit venues across the city and work alongside artists, programmers, curators and technicians. They create a zine and an event to share and celebrate their week.

Recruitment for the 2024 programme is underway.

# A warm welcome

To respond to the rising costs of living we developed a new offer - free family film events during the winter months.



“A very dignified free event for families.”

Family participant



“Free food, entertainment and transportation - this is a wonderful thing. It is helpful for my family in this difficult time.”

Family participant

We worked with local food banks, schools and community partners to connect with families. Nottingham City Transport generously supported with free bus travel too.

With support from Gateley PLC the programme is back in 2004.

# Let's play!

New this year - Early Years play sessions. Designed for developmental stages and delivered in an immersive, sensory environment.



"It was really good to see my daughter discover all the varied textures, lights and colours that would not be possible to do at home."

Family participant



"This is the best thing ever to bring my boys to."

Family participant

1,200 babies, toddlers and their grown ups took part.

# Free family activities

Families join us to play, make and explore together during the school holidays.



“As a single dad I think these sessions are great. They help break up the holidays and the day.”

Family participant

“There’s always something different to do each time.”

Family participant



“These sessions are so good, my son really comes out of his shell.”

Family participant

We welcomed 5,000 family participants.

# Shaping practice

Partners share skills and knowledge and together we develop inclusive, creative approaches.



“Our citizens loved it – you can see it on their faces. Activities are tactile and everything is made by the citizens.”

Staff member,  
Spring Meadows Day Centre



With Spring Meadows Day Centre, we created a set of activity cards to encourage creative experimentation and independence. Rainbow Parents Carers Forum enjoy exploring the galleries with an artist when we're closed to the public.

New in 2023 - our partnerships helped us develop immersive family workshops and sensory bags.

# Evolving partnerships

We host local groups and together explore how partnerships can evolve and our work together can grow.



“It was such a safe and welcoming environment for our young people. They had a great time with the artist expressing their feelings in a creative way.”

Staff member, Juno Voices



“Our young people have been warmly welcomed and made the gallery their home. We’re excited about our partnership and collaborating with exhibiting artists in the year ahead.”

CEO, Nottingham Music Hub

Robin Hood Youth Orchestra rehearses at the gallery and we host young people from Juno and Imara. With Communities Inc. we host events together, and Cool Company and Notts Trans Hub also have a home with us.

In summer 2024 the orchestra will be part of an exciting collaborative exhibition.

# Coming up in 2024

Between January and March our successful family film events return - a welcoming warm hub for families.

This spring sees the start of a new partnership with the Women's Centre - a programme of seasonal creative walks for wellbeing.

Our summer exhibition with artist Julian Abraham 'Togar', brings local musicians together to create and activate a sonic world.

In May, we'll be celebrating the creative writing of young people from Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team.

July sees the return of our Work Experience Week.



# Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who has been part of our learning programmes in 2023 and to our friends and partners from education, arts, health, the community and voluntary sector.

Thanks to our principal funders Arts Council England and Nottingham City Council and our partners and funders Nottingham Trent University and the University of Nottingham.

And to the trusts and foundations who have generously supported our work – Foyle Foundation, Freelands Foundation, MaxLiteracy, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Weston Culture Fund.

A big thank you to Gateley PLC for their generous support of our warm hub for families in 2024 and Nottingham City Transport.

We would love to work with you, please get in touch.

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# Credits

## Front cover (L to R)

Teacher CPD. Photo: Sandra Austerfield.  
Family workshop. Photo: Morgan Stockton.  
Schools workshop. Photo: Francis Slip.  
Early Years Workshop. Photo: Morgan Stockton.

## Introduction

Schools workshop. Photo: Morgan Stockton.

## Schools of Tomorrow (L to R)

Pupil-led Celebration. Photo: Ismail Khohon.  
Family workshop. Photo: Catherine Masters.

*A partnership with Edna G Olds L.E.A.D. Academy, Huntingdon L.E.A.D. Academy, Jubilee L.E.A.D. Academy, Melbury Primary School, Nottingham Nursery School, Robin Hood Primary School, Southwold Primary School and The Milford Academy. Supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.*

## Developing Together (L to R)

Teacher CPD sessions. Photos: Sandra Austerfield.  
Photo: Holly Tea.  
*Sessions explored creative thinking, writing and an LGBTQ+ inclusive curriculum.*

## Creative Learning (L to R)

Schools workshop. Photo: Francis Slip.  
Work Experience Week. Photo: Sandra Austerfield.  
Schools workshop. Photo: Morgan Stockton.

## Collaborative exhibitions (L to R) –

Audio recording session. Photo: Amanda Spruyt.  
Installation view Eva Koťátková. *How many giraffes are in the air we breathe?* 2023. Photos: Scene Photography.

## Our city (L to R)

1525 mapping workshop. Photos: Chan Fagan.  
Student workshop. Photo: Catherine Masters.

## Developing skills (L to R)

Skill share. Photo: Chan Fagan.  
DIY workshop: How to host spaces. Photo: Chan Fagan.  
NTU student placements. Photo: Katy Culbard.

## Work experience (L to R)

Work Experience Week. Photos: Sandra Austerfield and Lisa Jacques.

*Delivered in partnership with Backlit Gallery, National Justice Museum, Nottingham City Arts, Nottingham City Museums and Galleries and Notts Queer Zine.*

## A warm welcome (L to R)

Family film event. Photos: Ismail Khohon.

## Let's play! (L to R)

Early Years Workshop. Photos: Morgan Stockton.  
Early Years Workshop. Photo: Catherine Masters.

## Free family activities (L to R)

Family workshop. Photo: Catherine Masters.  
Family workshop. Photo: Morgan Stockton.  
Family workshop. Photo: Catherine Masters.

## Shaping practice (L to R)

Spring Meadows workshop. Photo: Charlotte Tupper.  
Spring Meadows workshop at the gallery.  
Photo: Natelle Morgan-Brown.

## Evolving partnerships (L to R)

Image courtesy of Juno.  
Image courtesy of Nottingham Music Hub.

## Coming up in 2024

Pupil-led Celebration, Schools of Tomorrow.  
Photo: Ismail Khohon.

## Thank you

Teacher celebration, Schools of Tomorrow.  
Photo: Still from film by Bill Newsinger.

## Credits

1525 Slow craft social. Photo: Chan Fagan.

## Back cover (L to R)

Schools workshop. Photo: Francis Slip.  
Family film event. Photo: Ismail Khohon  
Pupil-led Celebration, Schools of Tomorrow. Photo: Ismail Khohon.  
Teacher CPD session. Photo: Holly Tea.





**Nottingham  
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