

## Creative Exchange Peer Leadership Network

### PRODUCT 3: A DOCUMENT TO ILLUSTRATE OUR ETHICS & PURPOSE

**TASK 1: INDIVIDUAL FEEDBACK ON QUESTIONS** (extracted from the work prepared by Janna, Jennifer & Emily from the Working Group on Ethics & Purpose)

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- What is ethical practice **within** refugees and the Arts? (3)
- Where does use of **participants'** stories play a part **in or** cause difficulties? (4) – **this question is unclear!**
- What is the purpose of the work that we do? (1)
- Who is it for? (2)

(We thought the questions should be in this order)

*The WK on E & P decided that there were two useful strands of ethical practice and purpose to discuss:*

- *Use of personal stories and traumatic/past experiences as inspiration for work*
- *The question of sharing cultural and multi cultural art forms – **unclear what does it mean?***

*Within this, three pointed questions help us to challenge these strands:*

- *Who is the work for?*
- *When is it right to draw on personal experience? Is it ever right?*
- *Linguistic definitions and uses, in particular definition and self-definition of 'refugee'*

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1. Who is it for?

#### **Personal stories/past experiences**

- Why do we ask people to tell stories?
- Why do we make the professional decision to avoid telling stories?
- What purpose **do** artistic recreations of true stories have?

- When does someone have the responsibility to decide when and how stories are told?
- Is the cathartic/emotional experience of stories (which stories?) for someone other than the teller's gratification? – unclear question. – who gets off on it? Audience or teller?
- Is there ever justification for telling stories as release/political statements/social justice tools. Who should make this decision?
- Are there different rules for work with young people?

### Sharing cultural art forms

- Who is receiving the artistic experience (is it for the 'refugees' themselves or for the host community to feel better about 'an active demonstration of multiculturalism'?)
- Whose *need* is it? (box ticking/feeling better/relieving suffering?)
- Is it ever done in the name of 'duty'? Is this a bad thing?
- Do people really want to 'mix up'?
- What is the value (to whom) of providing (providing to whom) culturally specific work?
- How well attended are mixed cultural events for 'refugees'? - unclear
- Are there times when mixing (what?) is appropriate and times when it is not?
- Being individual rather than 'common human' (??) can guard against stereotype?
- Being a group is supportive? (??)

2. When is it right to draw on personal experience, if ever?

### **Personal stories/past experiences**

- Should memories and work **that draws** on memories *a/ways* be avoided?
- What are 'no go' territories?
- What is cathartic? Is it the same for everyone? – **silly question?**
- Is protection the same for everyone? – **What does this mean??**
- Where does the urge to tell stories come from? Should we stem the urge or encourage it?

3. Use of 'refugee'

### **Personal stories/past experiences**

- When does work with refugees promote the artist rather than the refugee? - **Patronising?**
- When does this balance change?
- Why particularly with 'refugees' do we avoid the experience of stories? Is it to do with being perceived as vulnerable, disenfranchised, 'poor'? Would we expect the same rules to be applied to other similarly labelled groups?
- How much does defining oneself as a refugee shape personal identity?
- Do my experiences define me? - **!!! Silly question?**
- Is there any justification in using the word refugee for funding purposes?
- What is a refugee?

## Sharing cultural art forms

- Is the label 'refugee' actively useful in terms of publication, production and publicity?– Makes it an open question
- Can the label compromise quality (ie in 'refugee' literature? Again – more open..

Other questions to ask directly to Study Visit hosts / yourselves:

- What do you define as a refugee/asylum seeker and how do you monitor this within your work?

We define refugees as people who been granted legal asylum in this country and asylum seekers as Those who are in the process of trying to obtain leave to stay.

Other than specifying Refugee/Asylum Seeker/Migrant on marketing and promotional materials we conduct outreach workshops through and at Refugee organisations like Refugee Council/Refugee Youth who carry out their own monitoring.

- What is the expressed purpose of your work?

To give artistic and performance opportunities to those who might otherwise not have access and vulnerable/marginalized groups.

There's a big cross-over between R/AS and Homelessness and we believe that as well as basic needs such as housing being met, everyone has a fundamental human right to cultural expression

- Where did the need to work with 'refugees' come from that led to this project?

Over the years, CC noticed increased encounters within homeless populations with R/AS and decided we needed to do specific work with this group as they have a range of needs alongside those faced by homeless people more generally.

We worked in Dance/Theatre for our 'Dreams' project as a response to desire amongst participants and a greater ability to find a shared language. Through this work they increased in confidence and language skills and were more able to improvise in theatre and therefore bring their own voices to other projects and programmes of work.

- How do you define, deliver and monitor ethical practice?

Our outreach marketing is targeted to R/AS and Migrants but we treat people first and foremost as they've come from and what their stories are, unless they choose to tell us...

Dreams, for example, focussed on experiences and challenges to a new life in London and participant's exploring their hopes for the future.

*THANK YOU !*