



Refugee Week Conference 2020

Workshop Notes: Imagining Welcome Through Arts and Culture

Facilitated by Mandla-Rae Nkomo and Hafza Yusuf with Daniela Nofal, Refugee Week Leadership Project

Note: These notes were taken by our fantastic volunteers, with the aim of sharing some of the key points discussed in the workshop, rather than being an exhaustive record of the conversation. If you'd like more information about the workshop or its facilitator(s), drop a line to Emily on emily@counterpointsarts.org.uk.

Discussion Group 1: Positive and negative things about organisational practices in the arts

Negative:

- Lack of recognition and legacy
 - Working with volunteers and taking their stories without payment
 - After the project people feel let down on not engaged in ongoing way
- Working with people should be organic and authentic
- Partnerships should happen across sectors
- Diversity needed within all aspects of organisations – including board members and senior staff
- Refugee-related work and representation doesn't need to focus only on the bad stories – positive should also be shared
- Important to remember intersectionality
- Safeguarding and creating policy that is public within an organisation
 - We'd love to see more awareness of safeguarding and resources that ethically engage with individuals and communities

Positive:

- Commitment to understand cultures of people we live and work with
- Creating opportunities for peer support
- Consulting with all kinds of people – what are people's aspirations?
- Collaboration is encouraged in the arts
- Giving ownership of the work created to those who have shared their experiences
- Offering training opportunities

- Partnerships with organisations like Counterpoints Arts has given practitioners confidence to learn and explore these big topics with an appreciation of their complexities and nuances
- Recognising that partnerships are a strength and that it is okay to see the shortcomings within a given organisation

Discussion Group 2: Conversation on Arts production and programming

- Can 'pay it forward' approach be a way to connect with different people?
- Participation: encouraging people with lived experience to be involved, including in making decisions
- Focus on languages and particularly translation
- Importance of ownership
- How do we get access to communities? Especially for cross-generation collaboration
- Collaborating and having authentic partnerships that allow everyone to do their best work. This also comes with trust in other people

Discussion Group 3: How do we make arts spaces more accessible?

- Outreach, breaking down the barriers of art spaces
 - Art spaces can be intimidating, we need to combat this
- Having community promoters and ambassadors
- Working toward integration, especially when it comes to refugees
- Diversity in leadership