

Press release

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**EXPOSURE TO DIVERSITY KEY TO YOUNG PEOPLE FULFILLING AMBITIONS, FINDS
NEF AND ROUNDHOUSE REPORT**

A new report from NEF (the New Economics Foundation), Diversity and Integration – How young people at the Roundhouse shape each other's experience, has revealed the experiences and personal skills gained by young people on courses at the Roundhouse is significantly improved by studying with people from a range of backgrounds, helping to deliver strong creative learning experiences

Young people who had taken part in the Roundhouse's courses felt more strongly that they could influence a group of people to get things done*, and that they had the potential to fulfil their ambition, compared to before they had taken the course.

Both those from wealthier and less privileged backgrounds were found to respond positively to working with young people from different backgrounds to their own, learning to appreciate the different values and skills each brought. By avoiding any reinforcement of personal, social or economic dividing lines the Roundhouse's approach was seen to generate valuable outcomes for individual participants, the arts, and society at large.

Marcus Davey, Chief Executive & Artistic Director, Roundhouse, said: "This report underlines the importance of creating opportunities for young people to learn alongside others from all backgrounds – particularly when it's a creative environment, such as the Roundhouse. By ensuring we make our courses attractive to a broad range of young people, we can continue to inspire and develop the creative talent of the next generation.

"At a time when young people are struggling to find ways to express their creativity, whether it be as part of planned career, or just in their spare time, our vision for the Roundhouse is to create the most accessible arts centre in the country, allowing young people to spend time developing their skills in a supportive and collaborative environment."

Helen Kersley, Head of Valuing What Matters at the New Economics Foundation said: "This research reveals fascinating insights into how young people understand and experience diversity at the Roundhouse. There was a real variety in their perspectives and attitudes towards class and other kinds of diversity. But what was clear was that the experience of working together in a diverse but inclusive environment not only promoted ideas and learning but also a sense of equality and appreciation for others".

For more information on the range of courses available at the Roundhouse, and to apply, please visit www.roundhouse.org.uk

Ends

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Notes to editors

*Of the ten indicators tested, two showed movement between beginning (T1) and end (T2) which was statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Young people indicated that they felt more strongly that they could influence a group of people to get things done: scoring 15% higher at end than beginning. This went from being the least agreeable indicator, to the second most agreeable indicator. On programme end, 81% of young people strongly agreed, compared to 31% at beginning.

Young people also felt increasingly they had the potential to do anything they wanted to; scoring 7% more strongly in favour at programme end compared to beginning. At programme end, 84% of young people strongly agreed with this, compared to 50% at baseline.

Report background

A combination of focus groups, surveys and interviews were conducted by nef in conjunction with the Roundhouse amongst 60 young people to understand the impact of the arts courses undertaken at the arts venue.

In order to provide insights into the value of social integration within its open access arts programme, nef conducted a mixed-method evaluation study at the Roundhouse, comprising a baseline and follow up interview with 25 participants; a focus group discussion with core staff; interviews with two tutors; interviews with four alumni; and a rapid review of the literature on the creative case for diversity in the arts, summarised below. A sample of young people completed a 10-item questionnaire at the beginning and again at the end of their Autumn programme.

Fieldwork took place between November 2012 and March 2013. A sample frame of participants was purposefully constructed to include 60 individuals from across the range of demographic backgrounds recorded in Roundhouse management information. This allowed us to ensure coverage of different gender, ethnicity, age and experience (i.e. number of programmes they had undertaken at the Roundhouse). It is important to acknowledge, however, that it was not possible for the sampling to take account of other important attributes of diversity, such as health status for example. 30 individuals were then randomly selected from the sample frame to be approached for an interview. The Roundhouse made first contact with those selected, ensuring that consent was obtained and that potential participants were aware of a £50 voucher (redeemable against Roundhouse programmes, studio time and concert tickets).

About the Roundhouse

The Roundhouse is an arts centre based in Camden, north London. Young people are at the heart of the Roundhouse, with a year-round schedule of creative projects for 11–25 year olds in 24 state-of-the-art studios, where facilities include TV, radio and music production, media suites and rehearsal rooms for music and performance. Over 3,000 young people take part in the Roundhouse's programmes each year.

The Roundhouse is a charity which generates income from ticket sales alongside private/corporate hire, gifts from individuals, trusts, corporate sponsors and public funders

which all help to raise the £3m needed each year towards the artistic programme and work with young people.

About NEF

The New Economics Foundation (NEF) is an independent think tank that promotes innovative thinking on economic, environmental and social issues.