



RESOURCE

Using the arts as a driver for equality in criminal justice settings



About the **National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance**

The National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance is the leading national network supporting the arts in criminal justice. Our aim is to ensure the arts are used within the Criminal Justice System as a springboard for positive change.

Over 800 Alliance members deliver creative interventions to support people in prison, on probation and in the community, with impressive results. We support this transformative work by providing a network and a voice for all the talented and creative people who are committed to making great art with offenders.

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“The arts need to take a lead. They hold up a mirror to society and show us how we are; but they can also be a light to show us what we could be.”

Sir Peter Bazalgette, Chair of Arts Council England
in Equality, Diversity & the Creative Case: a Data
Report 2012 – 2015

Purpose of resource

We have put together this resource to help our members, as well as arts organisations, to promote equality, inclusivity and diversity in their work. It's inspired by Arts Council England (ACE)'s Creative Case for Diversity, and incorporates ideas from delegates at our event focusing on using the arts as a driver for equality in criminal justice settings.

Background

The Equality Act 2010 outlines nine characteristics that are protected from discrimination. These are: age; being or becoming a transsexual person; being pregnant or having a child; disability; race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion, belief or lack of religion/belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

By 'diverse artists' we mean artists from a wide range of backgrounds; those who see themselves under one of the nine protected characteristics, and those who also might identify with other groups who face potential discrimination, including people with mental health issues, care-leavers and those with experience of homelessness.

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Image courtesy of Good Vibrations

The arts

Publicly funded arts and culture is for the many, not for the few. However, the Warwick Commission has highlighted that nearly half of live music audiences and a third of theatre-goers and gallery visitors are from the wealthiest, best educated and least ethnically diverse 8% of society.¹ In December 2014, ACE launched their agenda to combat these statistics, the Creative Case for Diversity. The Creative Case for Diversity holds ACE's funded organisations accountable for promoting and developing diversity throughout their work, from their workforce and governance, to their programming and audiences.

Criminal justice

Alongside this, the disproportionately high numbers of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) offenders and the poor outcomes they face in the Criminal Justice System has drawn the attention of successive governments as well as voluntary and public sector agencies for decades. The situation has frequently been the subject of independent scrutiny and attempted institutional reform.

The Young Review (2014) noted that there is a greater disproportionality in the number of black people in prison in the UK than in the United States, and that 13.1% of prisoners identify themselves as black, compared with 2.9% of the over-18 population (as recorded in the 2011 census). Similarly, Muslim prisoners account for 13.4% of the prison population compared with 4.2% of the general population.²

Additionally, an announcement by previous Prime Minister David Cameron to investigate racial bias in the UK court system (the Lammy Review) is another reminder of the continued over-representation of certain ethnic and faith groups in our prisons. Current Prime Minister Theresa May's requested cross-government review aims to reveal the scale of inequalities in Britain's schools, universities, hospitals and in the Criminal Justice System.

Other groups face additional stigmatisation, including women, older prisoners, care-leavers, and those with mental health issues, as well as

those who are stigmatised because of their offence. Forms of discrimination within the Criminal Justice System are many and varied, some are protected by law, but others are not. In addition to this there is both intersectionality – for example, black, lesbian, care-leaver – and sometimes friction between different groups. These frictions are at risk of magnification within a prison setting.

The need for diversity

The introduction of ACE's Creative Case for Diversity, new government-led reviews, and a review into the care and management of transgender offenders, highlight the need – and the opportunity – to look more closely and critically at how we can promote diversity in both the arts and the Criminal Justice System.

Promoting equality is more than ticking boxes; it is about ensuring diversity becomes intrinsic to everything we do. The ACE publication *What is the Creative Case for Diversity?* outlines the role of diversity in the cultural sector: *"Diversity and equality are good for the arts. The Creative Case builds on what we believe to be an instinctive understanding within the arts community that diversity and creativity are inherently linked."*³ It continues: *"We are convinced that the benefits to the arts, museums and libraries and wider creative industries of unlocking this creativity, eradicating exclusion and having a cultural sector that is truly welcoming and focused on people is potentially magnificent."*⁴

This resource highlights ways in which arts organisations can embed diversity and equality within their practice, leading to the creation and production of more interesting and relevant work.

In a speech in December 2014 about the Creative Case for Diversity, ACE Chair Sir Peter Bazalgette noted that: *"It becomes a creative, shaping process for us that will make for richer arts and culture, and a richer nation. And I say richer also in a material sense, as well as metaphorical. Because diversity also means that we can find new audiences and income streams."*⁵

The arts in criminal justice settings are currently leading the way, attracting diverse audiences and working with excluded participants who have had little or no previous contact with the arts. For example, arts organisations have already begun to demonstrate their effectiveness in engaging BAME communities. In 2016 Clean Break Theatre Company found that 49% of women who accessed their services were from a BAME background, when BAME women make up 28% of the female prison population.⁶ Similarly, Family Man – a theatre-based education programme run by arts organisation Safe Ground – reported that 34% of its recent graduates were from BAME backgrounds compared to 26% of the male prison population.⁷ In 2015/16 Good Vibrations, a music charity working across the prison estate, also engaged with high numbers of people from BAME backgrounds. Of the 45% of participants monitored for ethnicity, over half defined themselves as having an African, Caribbean or Asian background.

We want to highlight and celebrate this success so we can build on a core principle of inclusivity which shapes much of the creative work happening in prison, probation and community settings.



Image © Paul Gent

The National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance's role

In 2016, the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance held an event at Sadler's Wells in London exploring how the arts can be a driver for equality in criminal justice settings. Baroness Lola Young chaired the event and speakers included Abid Hussain, the lead for the Creative Case for Diversity at ACE and Phil Forder from HMP Parc, Cardiff, who talked about an LGBT anthology developed with inmates in 2015. The event featured a moving performance from Fallen Angels Dance Company who work with people recovering from addiction as well as a presentation from Synergy Theatre Project, who discussed diversity in relation to casting and writing film and theatre.

Arts organisations working in criminal justice settings are leading the field in creating diverse, innovative art that pushes boundaries, explores complex issues and brings people together from different cultures and backgrounds. We know that many people who come from groups that are more likely to experience discrimination and disadvantage are over-represented in the Criminal Justice System and under-represented in the arts. So how can we improve this imbalance and use arts as a driver for equality?

At the event, we explored a range of questions to help us further understand how arts can drive equality in criminal justice settings, and this resource aims to summarise our learning, so we can share it with our members and the wider participatory arts sector. You can [read a blog post](#) about the event written by the Alliance Chair, Alison Frater.

This resource is split into the following sections:

- 1) **Innovation to drive equality:** How promoting equality can improve the art we make and how we can encourage the production of innovative, challenging art in criminal justice settings.
- 2) **Governance and staff:** How we can promote equality and diversity among our staff and boards.
- 3) **Reaching mainstream arts:** How national arts organisations, like museums, galleries and theatres, can attract more diverse audiences and participants, including those with experience of the Criminal Justice System.

SECTION 1

Innovation to drive equality

How might we go about developing visual art, music, playwriting, dance and literature that pushes boundaries, challenges audiences and drives equality? Dynamic and collaborative art created by people from diverse backgrounds has the potential to be more interesting, innovative and exciting than art produced by similar groups of people. There are many ways we can facilitate this drive for diversity and innovation in the art we make.

The arts themselves can reach and engage diverse audiences, as illustrated by HMP Parc's anthology [Inside and Out](#), initiated by Phil Forder, HMP Parc's Equality and Diversity Officer. The anthology is a compilation of writings from LGBT people within HMP and YOI Parc – both prisoners and staff. The publication allowed people who experience multiple disadvantages both in prison and within their communities to tell their own stories and explore positive creative identities.

In particular, the arts can be helpful in engaging people who have previously found it difficult to engage: perhaps those with little prior experience of education or the arts, or people who are serving sentences for particular offences. This means working to overcome initial barriers that might prevent people accessing arts projects, such as how people are selected to take part, the language used to describe the project, and pre-existing ideas about the arts.

The arts in criminal justice are unique in that they can encourage people to take risks, and it is in this risk taking that we can lead the way – not only in the criminal justice sector, but in the mainstream art world too. Additionally, a process of co-production can help us produce innovative and high quality work, and also ensures we are incorporating values of diversity and equality at the point of creation.



There are ways we can overcome the challenges facing us and move towards creating more innovative and reflective work. These are many and varied, but include:

- Not sacrificing artistic quality for social impact. The art created needs to be able to stand on its own and while process is important, art can go beyond this.
- Allowing plenty of time for research and exploring new ideas, as well as to develop an appropriate critical reflection and evaluation.
- Nurturing relationships and developing strong collaborations – with diverse professional artists, participants, organisations, key members of staff, financial allies and venues. For example, venues might be indirectly discriminating against a group of people with protected characteristics due to physical access, location, or the cost of entry. Working with diverse artists who reflect the participant group can change perceptions, challenge stereotypes and help engage marginalised groups.
- Equipping prison and criminal justice staff with the knowledge and skills to be able to keep working with prisoners beyond the creative intervention. For example, Geese Theatre Company's work around self-harm requires prison staff to continue to support participants well after the project has ended.
- Maximising opportunities to cross over into the mainstream art world and the media, giving participants a sense of pride in their achievements and setting the bar high in terms of quality.
- Recognising the culture of a prison or a criminal justice setting and understanding the potential barriers to accessing the arts within that. Who gets to decide who attends workshops, performances etc – is it the Governor, prison officers, the prisoners themselves? How can we help shape this through building relationships and asking the right questions?
- Thinking about ways we can work with people who are stigmatised by their offence, for example, sex offenders.
- Thinking about what text, sources and cultural frames of reference we use in our projects; how might these include or exclude our participants?
- Avoiding reinforcing stereotypes in the work by ensuring a range of characters explore a range of narratives. For example, not always producing plays and performances where young black men play people involved with crime.

Case study 1 Synergy Theatre Project

[Synergy Theatre Project](#) seeks to create a ground-breaking, interrelated programme of artistic work which harnesses the energy, instincts and life experiences of prisoners, ex-prisoners, young offenders, and young people at risk of offending. Synergy wants to give them a voice and, in doing so, their dignity back. They aim to inspire change by capturing the imagination and affecting the feelings, behaviours and attitudes of participants and the public.

Synergy's work provides practical opportunities which develop beneficiaries' skills, capabilities and resilience, build a bridge from prison to social reintegration, provide vital support for rehabilitation and seek to stop young people from entering the Criminal Justice System.

Synergy's overall aim is to support desistance from crime by:

- Producing high quality theatre and film across prisons, mainstream theatres and schools, bringing together professional artists with prisoners and ex-prisoners to create and perform urgent and authentic work, representing unheard voices on the stage.
- Running Synergy Studio, a theatre-based training for prisoners and ex-prisoners, which includes skills accreditation, progression routes, and pathways into education, training and employment.
- Challenging mindsets and offering alternate pathways as a deterrent to crime for young people at risk of offending through their Young People's Programme of projects and productions that uses the life experience of trained ex-prisoner facilitators.
- Engaging the public to change perceptions and generate new understanding through performances, debates, access to prisons, and a chance to hear directly the stories of those involved in the Criminal Justice System.
- Working to promote the impact of the arts by contributing to the rehabilitation and desistance agenda, seeking to influence approaches and to effect institutional and system change.
- Working with artists new to the Criminal Justice System and providing enrichment for mainstream cultural institutions by sharing expertise and helping them to connect to new experiences and lives.

In 2016, Synergy produced *A Raisin in the Sun*, a theatre production at HMP Thameside, in collaboration with the Irene Taylor Trust's Music in Prisons programme. They worked with over 20 prisoners as actors, musicians and backstage crew over five weeks, culminating in performances to the prison, prisoners' families and the public.

The production itself is a classic drama set in the 1950s which explores an African-American family's struggle with poverty, racism and inner conflict including the temptation to engage in criminality as they strive for a better way of life. Beyond the project, Synergy will offer participants the opportunity to engage in further courses and projects in the prison and when they're released through Synergy Studio, the company's training, work experience and employment programme.



CASE STUDY 2 Helix Arts

Helix Arts is a participatory arts organisation working with artists, in partnership with other organisations, to create opportunities for people to participate in ambitious arts activity. Their work is participant-centred and each of their programmes starts by identifying the participants' needs, goals and strengths. The Irene Taylor Trust works with some of the most vulnerable and marginalised individuals in society, creating original music collaboratively to bring them new confidence, important transferable skills and raised aspirations for the future.



Image © Paul Gent

'Tuned In' is a Helix Arts and Irene Taylor Trust resource designed by and for women. It aims to help address offending behaviour that leads to involvement with the Criminal Justice System. The creative component of the resource was developed as part of the Irene Taylor Trust's 'Music in Prisons' programme via a series of writing and music workshops. The project took place in a women's prison and the subject matter, creative writing and musical content was imagined, developed and produced by a group of prisoners.

'Tuned In' consists of five modules based on five songs, each of which addresses a different theme. Each module contains a series of exercises based around one of the songs. The exercises that accompany the songs are designed to be creative ways to think deeply and constructively about the underlying themes and address any specific issues that may affect the participants – such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, substance abuse and relationships with family and children.

Helix Arts is a strong supporter of the mantra that diversity offers a creative opportunity. Because of this, 'Tuned In' has been co-produced with artists, women and girls facing complex and multiple disadvantages, including women and girls in criminal justice settings facing risks particular to them. By co-producing an artistic resource with them, Helix Arts and the Irene Taylor Trust were responding to a specific need to offer structured activities to female service users. This innovative female-focused drive to give a voice to a group often denied a say has led to the co-production of a challenging piece of art which could be replicated in other criminal justice settings.

Case study 3 Intermision Youth Theatre

[Intermision Youth Theatre](#) (IYT) was established in 2008 by Rev. Rob Gillion, his wife Janine and Artistic Director Darren Raymond as a pastoral resource and actor training course for young people, predominantly from BAME communities, who are lacking in opportunities or at risk due to crime, poverty or violence. Every year they bring together 25 young people to explore a chosen Shakespeare text, filtering the events of the play through their own personal experiences to enhance their understanding of Shakespeare's work and their own sense of personal autonomy within society.

Intermision's work has several key aims, one being to provide an alternative path in life for young people at risk of offending or reoffending. By helping young people to discover and develop a skill in the performing arts and allowing them to evaluate their own personal experiences through Shakespeare's work, Intermision shows their participants that they can make different, positive choices about themselves and their future.

To help participants to make the most of this training, Intermision also provides ongoing personal development resources for both current members and graduates, such as advice for CV writing and letters to agents, academic support and ongoing pastoral care through a network including social workers, spiritual leaders, and tutors.

By helping their members to forge a career in the arts, Intermision contributes to their aim of changing the cultural landscape of the arts in the UK. They also do this by forging close partnerships with cultural institutions such as the Royal Shakespeare Company and by encouraging necessary conversations about diversifying narratives around race on the stage and screen. Through this model, Intermision aims to create more opportunities for young BAME artists.

SECTION 2

Governance and staff

ACE's data report (2012-2015) showed that in their 2014-2015 results, 13.7% of National Portfolio Organisation staff were from a BAME background and 1.9% were disabled. In the same year, their Major Museum Partner data showed that 3% of staff were from a BAME background and 3.8% were disabled. Although their Taking Part data illustrated that between 2005-2006 and 2013-2014 there has been an increase in levels of arts engagement and participation by adults with a disability, adults from lower socio-economic groups and adults aged 65+, there is a mutual agreement that the arts sector could be doing more.⁸ Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's 2015 report Creative Industries: Focus on Employment which showed that in 2014, 91.9% of jobs in the creative economy were held by people in more advantaged socio-economic groups, compared to 66% of jobs in the wider UK economy.⁹

Having a diverse workforce is important because we become more able to challenge participants' and audiences' views about the artists they are working with and the medium through which the artists deliver their work. When we think about diversity, it is important not to think about it in terms of physical appearance, but instead to think about our values and how we deliver our work. Once we have a clear ethos, we can focus on recruiting people with similar values.

By providing workforce training, encouraging self-reflection – particularly among senior managers and trustees, advertising vacancies in a broad range of places, and monitoring characteristics,

we can begin to ensure our workforces and boards are diverse, in turn providing aspirational role models for our participants. Organisations must be prepared to be challenged about representation, staff experience and equality, and must be pressed to commit to change. This could be by linking an equality plan to their business plan and being transparent about what they want to achieve.

Methods to improve the diversity of our workforce, board, supporters and audiences include:

- Ensuring we have a wide pool of freelancers to draw on so that the ones we use for a particular project can meet the needs of the group they'll be working with.
- Doing what we need to do to make our projects work, for example sending someone who is able to use sign language to work with a hearing impaired group – it's not about positive discrimination, it's about doing what's best for our participants.
- Ensuring participants are represented at different levels in our organisations (right up to the board) so we can better understand and effectively advocate on their behalf.
- Advertising vacancies in places where a diverse range of people will see them. Finding ways to remove discrimination before an applicant has even been seen, for example, because of their age, gender, or the sound of their name.
- Discussing questions around equality and diversity within our organisations and at board meetings to create a culture of honesty.

- Ensuring subject matter, photos and media of our projects are reflective of and accessible to the participants they're aimed at.
- Continually reflecting and asking who our work is relevant to.
- Providing regular awareness training.
- Taking "on the ground" experience to trustees so they understand what the organisation is really doing, for example, making sure they see projects to stop a disconnect between board, staff and participants.
- Making sure decision-makers have knowledge and experience of the participants' world.
- Relaxing employment requirements, for example, not requiring a degree for certain posts, or actively encouraging ex-offenders to apply.

EXAMPLE: The [Koestler Trust](#) actively employs ex-offenders. They highly value the contribution that offenders can make to their work, and their team includes ex-offenders as paid staff and volunteers. They provide information on how criminal convictions might affect a person's application in the initial job pack for each post advertised, and they offer a guaranteed interview, with feedback, to anyone who has been in prison or on a community sentence in the last two years and meets all the 'essential' points in the job specification.

EXAMPLE: Service users from the charity Clean Break reported that the arts could specifically lead to employment because: "The arts world is more accepting of difference and so both being black and having a criminal record is less of a barrier."

Case study 4 Geese Theatre Company

[Geese Theatre Company](#) is a team of theatre practitioners who present interactive theatre and facilitate drama-based group work, staff training and consultation for the probation service, prisons, young offender institutions, youth offending teams, secure hospitals and related agencies throughout the UK and abroad.

In 2008, Geese Theatre Company implemented an equality action plan to address the lack of diversity in their staff team and among their trustees. They wanted their team to more accurately reflect the service users they worked with to improve engagement and to ensure voices from different backgrounds were represented in their workshops and productions. The equality action plan sought to increase the number of people applying to work for the organisation from the range of protected characteristics, with a focus specifically on those from BAME backgrounds. They wanted to better reflect the prison and probation population that they predominantly work with and to reflect their local community in the West Midlands.

New recruitment methods included advertising roles in specific regional BAME platforms, ensuring auditions for jobs were at a variety of times and in a variety of locations, and placing less emphasis on written applications by meeting more candidates face to face to ensure they had the relevant interpersonal and communication skills.

Geese Theatre Company now has a 33% BAME staff team and 25% of their board are from BAME backgrounds. They say this change has significantly improved engagement and enables them to carry out both their theatre work and training workshops more effectively. Through their productions they now represent a range of voices, backgrounds and experiences that enables broader participation. This is particularly relevant when casting theatre productions to ensure they “mirror” society and don’t reinforce stereotypes.

Geese Theatre Company also specialises in delivering training for staff in the Criminal Justice System and broader social welfare arenas. They run training courses specifically exploring vulnerabilities among people in the Criminal Justice System to ensure staff can work effectively with people’s needs from diverse communities. This includes working with judges, police and prison staff to understand complex cultural issues such as honour-based crimes and female genital mutilation. They work to help dispel myths and provide services with the tools to support vulnerable people – both victims and those who commit offences.



Image courtesy of Geese Theatre Company

Case study 5

From participant to board member

“When I was released from my incarceration I was left feeling hopelessly lost and confused. Mostly because I felt I had achieved nothing from being inside and was left wondering what it was all about. What were my options? How did I move on? I was angry, embarrassed but determined. I knew that the blame lay with me but there seemed to be so many barriers to moving on.

“I didn’t want to be another person lost in the system. I wanted to make a difference. My ambition was still a fuel burning inside of me but I felt there was no outlet. It was slowly killing my self-esteem, motivation and my aspirations. Instead, I hid myself away from society. I felt I was no longer allowed to be a part of it.

“Then I met Good Vibrations, an arts organisation that through music helped me to find my voice and, in time, my confidence. Their encouragement helped me to channel my determination to improve a failing justice system. I wanted to help push education, especially in the arts.

“Over time, Good Vibrations recognised my desire to implement positive change in the justice system and encouraged me to join the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance’s Steering Group, further helping me to use my experiences and energy in a practical, positive and useful way.

“In my time as part of the Steering Group, my knowledge and understanding of the Criminal Justice System has improved greatly. To use my experience of being inside and the impact the arts had on me, along with the support and expertise of the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance, I hope to make a difference to those who find themselves caught up in a demoralised revolving door system, who feel like there’s no way of moving on.”

SECTION 3

Bringing together mainstream arts and arts and culture from the Criminal Justice System

This section explores how regional and national arts organisations – including museums, galleries and theatres – might more effectively engage excluded communities in their work; specifically those who have come into contact with the Criminal Justice System. As part of their Creative Case for Diversity, ACE made a commitment to investing in diversity: *“We must give opportunities to everyone, everywhere. We must cross all social barriers, not only the protected characteristics, but also class and geography.”*¹⁰

Arts organisations working in criminal justice settings are well placed to lead by example, encouraging the art world to think about the work they do and whether it could better engage these excluded communities.

The Alliance can play a part in brokering the relationship between arts organisations working in the Criminal Justice System and the arts world by sharing knowledge, resources and best practice. By linking criminal justice arts organisations up with national arts venues, we can provide further opportunities for participants from excluded communities to work in and contribute to mainstream spaces, while at the same time promoting collaboration, inclusivity and diversity.

Suggestions for museums, galleries and art venues include:

- Looking at how we break down the division between “community” or “participatory arts” and other mainstream provision to build inclusive art programming from the beginning. This means ensuring diversity and inclusion reach further than learning and community programmes, encompassing the whole organisation.
- Building in mechanisms for excluded communities to be exposed to arts organisations by encouraging collaboration with organisations who work with specific excluded communities.
- Ensuring these collaborations and partnerships can be long-term, meaning projects can be reflected on and improved year on year.
- Exploring funding options from the commercial and corporate sector that could support work with excluded communities in the long term.
- Encouraging the creation and use of content and language that is relevant to and recognisable by excluded communities.
- Ensuring programmed events and exhibitions are relevant and accessible for a wide range of people.
- Reaching new audiences by moving out to other geographical locations. This could be through outreach programmes or the development of different sites and spaces.

- Using volunteer programmes and other methods to upskill people from excluded communities. This could include training participants to run workshops, or encouraging people to join a volunteer or placement scheme which could lead to paid employment.
- Taking stock of what is currently happening with certain excluded communities and thinking about how you might be able to expand this to include other communities.
- Realising what having a more diverse audience would bring you, for example, more ticket sales and sold out shows.
- Learning from organisations who have existing knowledge and skills around working with people in the Criminal Justice System, or other excluded communities, including looking at existing evidence and good practice guides.
- Seeking practical advice on the barriers you might face when working in criminal justice settings.



Case study 6

HMP Send and the Watts Gallery's Big Issues Project

In 2007, the government-commissioned Corston Report highlighted the plight of vulnerable women in the Criminal Justice System and made recommendations for an improved approach towards their rehabilitation. Drawing inspiration from G.F. Watts' ideas around offering art for all, the [Watts Gallery](#) formed a partnership with HMP Send.

The Sisters in Art group was formed, offering the women of HMP Send opportunities to acquire and practise new skills, an outlet for creative energies and emotions, recognition of achievements and encouragement to continue in the arts and education. Underpinning the project is the desire for the women to contribute to the content of The Big Issues exhibition while developing new skills.

In addition to the annual exhibition and participation in workshops as part of the project, women prisoners have created a permanent sculpture at HMP Send. The Governor commissioned the sculpture in 2012 and the Artist in Residence and the Sisters in Art group created a life-sized sundial at the prison entrance. It is a female figure reaching skywards, triumphantly breaking the chains wrapped around her body. The sculpture is a permanent reminder of the value of the programme.

Major national institutions such as museums and galleries can provide a link between being on the "inside" and the outside world. When the Alliance team visited the Watts Gallery to find

Commissioned sculpture at HMP Send

out more about this project, we were told about a female prisoner who had been working from photographs of the Watts Cemetery Chapel during her time in prison. On her release, she finally got to visit the chapel in person; an overwhelming and very powerful moment considering the amount of hope the images of the chapel had given her.¹¹

There is more information and further case studies relating to working with people with experience of the Criminal Justice System on the [National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance's resources for arts organisations webpage](#).

Case study 7

Koestler Trust and the Southbank Centre

The [Koestler Trust](#) has been working in partnership with the [Southbank Centre](#) for nine years on its annual exhibition in London. During the exhibition at the Southbank Centre, the Koestler Trust trains and employs invigilators who are ex-offenders. In the past, several ex-offender exhibition hosts have gone on to gain permanent employment with Southbank Centre. The partnership is led by Southbank Centre's Festival programming team who work directly with audiences, participants and contributors on its artistic programme. Its work with Koestler has enabled Southbank Centre to implement its belief that the arts have the power to transform lives.

CONCLUSION

In light of our knowledge of the over-representation of minority groups in the Criminal Justice System, new government-led reviews, and ACE's focus on their Creative Case for Diversity, there has not been a better time to think about improving diversity and equality in both the arts and criminal justice settings. By creating innovative and diverse work, we can engage a wider range of people who in turn can influence new participants and audiences down the line.

The National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance's online [Evidence Library](#) indicates how arts can support the development of positive identities consistent with moving away from offending behaviour, supporting rehabilitation and resettlement. Detailed analysis of prisoner data from the research project Inspiring Change,¹² carried out in Scotland, highlights the unique impact of creative interventions and concluded that: *"For reluctant learners and those with negative experiences of formal education, arts interventions can build a bridge towards the acquisition of new skills and a positive engagement with learning."*

"The arts can show us how things are – and the arts can give us a vision of what they could be. They can make the case for diversity; they can be the case for diversity. They can bring us together."

Sir Peter Bazalgette, Chair of Arts Council England, in a speech in December 2014.

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