

February 2019



CLINKS
RESPONSE

National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance's submission to Arts Council England's consultation document: Shaping the next 10 years

About the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance and Clinks

The National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance (NCJAA) currently has 900 network members delivering creative activity with people in prison, on probation and in the community, with impressive, internationally recognised results. The NCJAA's vision is to ensure everyone in the criminal justice system can engage in arts and creative opportunities as a springboard to positive change. The NCJAA provides a network for its members and conveys their collective voice to the government, showcases the quality of arts in criminal justice settings, and supports the development of evidence through its online Evidence Library¹. In April 2018 the NCJAA joined Arts Council England's National Portfolio as a Sector Support Organisation.

The NCJAA is managed by Clinks, the national infrastructure organisation supporting voluntary sector organisations working in the criminal justice system. Clinks' aim is to ensure the sector and those with whom it works are informed and engaged in order to transform the lives of people in the criminal justice system and their communities. Clinks provides specialist information and support, with a particular focus on smaller voluntary sector organisations, to inform them about changes in policy and commissioning, to help them build effective partnerships and provide innovative services that respond directly to the needs of their users.

About this submission

To inform our response to Arts Council England's draft 10 year strategy we carried out a range of activity. We held an event on 7th November 2018 in Liverpool at FACT to gather feedback from our network. This was attended by representatives from a wide range of organisations including Soft Touch Arts, Imagine If, Changing Lives, Theatre in Prison and Probation and Writing on the Wall, as well as independent artists working in criminal justice settings. We invited contributions to and feedback on a draft response from our Steering Group, which is made up of leading arts and criminal justice sector organisations² and from our wider network via our newsletter and website.

We also presented a draft response to the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance³ (CHWA) (of which we are a member) Strategic Alliance Members meeting on 10th December 2018 in Leeds. Views from participants at this meeting have further shaped our thinking and have been incorporated into this response. Where relevant we support the CHWA response to the 10 year strategy and recognise the synergies, especially in relation to wellbeing. In addition, this response draws from our recent report, *What does success*



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*look like for arts in criminal justice?*⁴, published in September 2018 following a series of roundtable discussions commissioned by Arts Council England in 2017 that engaged a broad set of stakeholders, including specialist and mainstream arts organisations, academics and senior officers working in prisons and probation. Our response also refers to findings from Arts Council England's latest report, *Arts and culture in health and wellbeing and in the criminal justice system: A summary of the evidence*.⁵

Overview

The NCJAA welcomes and supports many of Arts Council England's proposed outcomes, especially those which demonstrate a shift in emphasis towards equality and inclusion. We particularly welcome the following proposed outcomes:

- *A nation that supports and celebrates culture and creativity of every kind*
- *People from every background benefit from public investment in culture.*

In line with *Arts and culture in health and wellbeing and in the criminal justice system: A summary of the evidence*⁶, and the inclusion of the NCJAA and the CHWA in the National Portfolio, we would like to see the criminal justice sector not only talked about alongside health and wellbeing in the next iteration of the strategy, but recognised as a distinct and important sector in its own right.

This distinction and recognition can support Arts Council England to achieve its outcomes of enhanced creativity, social impact, relevance, inclusivity, diversity and global leadership - and further demonstrate Arts Council England's role as an advocate within and for the communities involved. This will build on Arts Council England's commitment made in the 2018-20 corporate plan, which states:

"We will support and celebrate the contribution creative practitioners and cultural organisations make across vital areas of public policy, including health and wellbeing and criminal justice."⁷

We also see this as an opportunity for Arts Council England to deliver the commitment made in the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's *Culture White Paper*, published in 2016, which states:

"There are many good examples of how cultural interventions can benefit prisoners, ex-offenders and people at risk of becoming involved in crime. Culture can help to improve self-esteem, social skills and wellbeing: all of which helps to reduce the risk of offending and re-offending and make our communities safer. We will work with Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners to ensure that offenders and those at risk continue to benefit from cultural opportunities."⁸

The NCJAA believes the work of our members can support Arts Council England to achieve its ambitious outcomes by 2030 and we want to work collaboratively to deliver success. The proposed strategy seeks to demonstrate the social impact of arts and culture in order to make the case for public investment - metrics that will be increasingly scrutinised according to Nesta's report, *Experimental Culture: a horizon scan*.⁹ It is therefore vital Arts Council England supports and enhances work carried out in criminal justice settings delivering the social impact it aims to achieve. The NCJAA's online Evidence Library¹⁰, along with case studies from our broad ranging network, can be built on to demonstrate effectiveness and



improve practice across the arts in criminal justice sector and the cultural sector as a whole.

To this end, we recommend that Arts Council England's next 10 year strategy makes explicit its recognition of the contribution of the arts in criminal justice sector, strengthening the case for public investment and enhancing creative practice for all. Specific reference to the criminal justice sector within the new strategy would have a significant impact on investment from public, private and philanthropic sectors.

Summary of recommendations

These recommendations are further developed throughout this response document, however, in summary, the NCJAA membership would be able to flourish if the next 10 year strategy embraces the following recommendations:

1. Arts Council England's next 10 year strategy makes explicit recognition of the arts in criminal justice sector, strengthening the case for public investment and enhancing creativity of every kind from people from any background.

2. Prison and probation settings are included when Arts Council England talks about 'communities' and 'place'. However, it should be noted that prison populations do not always reflect the local population and therefore many specialist arts in criminal justice organisations and practitioners work nationally as a result.

3. The proposed action to *"Support partnerships that focus on improving health and wellbeing through cultural experiences and creative opportunities, e.g. with health and social care providers, sports clubs"* is extended to foster local partnerships with prisons, probation settings and with organisations working with those at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

4. There is acknowledgement of the challenges that occur when developing creative activity in criminal justice environments (such as safety, geography, cohorts, digital limitations, regimes etc.) and that funding structures and reporting mechanisms are flexible to incorporate these challenges.

5. Arts Council England continues investment in infrastructure and network development, such as Sector Support, across the field to enable advocacy and engagement at the highest level. Support from the government - the Ministry of Justice, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and other departments of state (Department of Health, Department for Education, Department for Work and Pensions and the Home Office) - as well as support from all those providing services - governors, senior probation officers, health professionals and educationalists - is needed to enable this work.

6. Arts Council England supports incentives which encourage local and relevant collaborations between specialist, grassroots organisations working in criminal justice settings and mainstream, large, high profile arts organisations; to improve individual and creative outcomes, as well as sustainability in this distinct area.



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7. Arts Council England enhances its investment in specialist arts and criminal justice organisations and Sector Support to develop a recognised training, development and good practice 'offer' for artists and practitioners working in the field of arts and criminal justice and related areas.

8. Arts Council England develops opportunities to foster high quality, well supported artist in residence schemes (across all art forms) to build relationships between local artists, arts organisations and criminal justice system partners, and improve practice across all levels.

9. Arts Council England continues to support and develop research in the field of arts and criminal justice to build an 'integrated approach' and specifically, to explore the potential impact on audiences and public opinion.

10. Arts Council England continues to lead by example by adopting practices and advocating for employment for people with criminal records, and go further to promote Ban the Box and develop opportunities for Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) across its portfolio and related sectors in order to support its aim to *"promote careers in the creative industries to people from every background."*

11. Arts Council England recognises and supports the distinct needs for children and young people in the criminal justice system, and invests in sustained partnerships that enable young people who are least likely to engage in arts and culture to benefit from opportunities.

12. Arts Council England builds resilience for the arts and criminal justice sector by investing in longer term sustainable funding for small and specialist arts organisations working in the field. This would yield consistency of provision across the criminal justice landscape and foster innovation.

13. Arts Council England expands the world-leading international reputation of England's arts and criminal justice sector across its 10 year strategy.

Response to Arts Council England's proposed outcomes

Below we set out our response to the seven proposed outcomes. We make suggestions about specific actions proposed in the document and how we think the arts and criminal justice sector can further enhance the proposed strategy to create a more inclusive, diverse and creative landscape across England in the next 10 years.

1. A nation that supports and celebrates culture and creativity of every kind

The NCJAA welcomes the shift towards recognising and celebrating the culture and creativity that is part of people's everyday lives. We recommend that Arts Council England specifically supports and publicly celebrates art produced *by* and *with* people with lived experience of the criminal justice system; embracing creativity from all corners of society.



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To do this effectively, creative practice from within the criminal justice system needs further investment, development and advocacy to ensure it can thrive across all art forms (established and emerging) to enhance art and culture of every kind for everybody.

We know that to support and celebrate creative practice from the criminal justice system we need to continue building public and political support through robust research and advocacy. So far the evidence is compelling: leading evidence from academia, documented in our internationally renowned digital Evidence Library, and by the Ministry of Justice¹¹, indicates that the arts support the process of desistance from crime by fostering empathy, building family connections and playing a role in restorative justice. Research also suggests using the arts in criminal justice settings is cost effective, can improve safety and wellbeing in prisons and communities, and can support the professional development of artists and of criminal justice practitioners.

The NCJAA network is well placed to support Arts Council England to *"celebrate more of the culture and activities that people are passionate about, and help more people to lead creative lives... [and] support people to improve their own creative practice and increase the range of culture they experience."* Members, such as the Koestler Trust, and programmes, such as Tate Exchange, provide exhibiting opportunities to foster and celebrate high quality visual arts, music, playwriting, sculpture, model making, textiles, painting, film, poetry and more from within the criminal justice system. They are leading the way in developing competitions, awards and showcasing opportunities to nurture creativity of every kind. Other members such as the Irene Taylor Trust (Music in Prisons), Fine Cell Work and Synergy Theatre Project deliver bespoke workshops to people in the criminal justice system, developing new talent and broadening audiences. Many of these organisations are vulnerable to short term investment and therefore sustained engagement and co-commissioning opportunities would be welcomed to ensure people in the criminal justice system can consistently benefit from and contribute to creative activity.

To this end the NCJAA wants see:

- A commitment to increased specific and sustained investment in specialist arts organisations and practitioners working in criminal justice settings to foster creative practice from prison and probation settings.
- A drive to initiate ambitious collaborative projects that bring together criminal justice organisations, mainstream and specialist arts organisations and practitioners to deliver creative work that impacts individuals and communities in criminal justice settings and reaches mainstream audiences.
- Enhanced mechanisms for people to be independently creative in criminal justice settings through access to materials, resources and development opportunities. Specific access to mainstream grant programmes for people with an experience of the criminal justice system by providing support with application processes (or through enabling local grant-giving by specialist local organisations).
- Increased advocacy mechanisms and resources to foster the value of 'everyday creativity' across the criminal justice system by empowering governors, heads of learning and skills, heads of reducing reoffending and the National Probation Service (NPS) to understand, commission and embrace the role of the arts and creativity; in order to sustainably embed creative practice across the criminal justice system.
- Improved employment practices to reduce barriers to people with convictions gaining work in the creative sector.
- Incentives to drive dynamic programming and improved outreach activities by mainstream

arts organisations that embrace creativity from within the criminal justice system.

- Increased 'in-kind' support from leading arts organisations to add value to small and specialist work in the arts and criminal justice field.

The achievement of each of these would support Arts Council England's ambition that *"England should be a nation in which culture and creativity of every kind are valued and celebrated for the difference they make to people's lives and the strength they bring to our communities and the economy."*

The NCJAA recommends that prison and probation settings are included when Arts Council England talks about 'communities' and 'place'. However, it should be noted that prison populations do not always reflect the local population and therefore many specialist arts in criminal justice organisations and practitioners work nationally as a result.

We also recommend that the proposed action to *"Support partnerships that focus on improving health and wellbeing through cultural experiences and creative opportunities, e.g. with health and social care providers, sports clubs"* is extended to foster local partnerships with prisons, probation settings and with organisations working with those at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

2. People from every background benefit from public investment in culture

For Arts Council England to achieve this ambitious outcome, which sets out to work in local communities to *"reach a far wider range of people and tackle the barriers that prevent people from taking part in publicly funded cultural experiences"*, work across the criminal justice system needs explicit and expanded support, targeted development and advocacy to ensure equity of access to arts for all. There is huge potential to reach new participants, artists and audiences from a range of backgrounds by explicitly and holistically embedding the criminal justice system across the new 10 year strategy.

In England there are currently over 85,000 people in prison and over 250,000 on community sentences, and there are just under 1,000 children under the age of 18 in custody in England and Wales, with 6,000 young adults aged 18-20 in prison.¹² According to Unlock (the national charity that provides a voice and support for people with convictions) over 11 million people in the UK have criminal records.¹³

Those in the criminal justice system represent some of the most disadvantaged people in our society. The Prison Reform Trust's 2018 *Bromley Briefing*¹⁴ highlights the over-representation of people from low socio-economic groups, such as care leavers and those from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds. It also points to the high prevalence of poor mental and physical health, poor educational attainment and poor life chances for individuals in contact with the criminal justice system: 47% have no qualifications and 48% of prisoners reoffend within a year of release. For those serving sentences of less than 12 months this increases to 64%.¹⁵

To compound this, criminal justice settings are not well served by the arts. They are often in isolated locations where creative resources are limited and consequently prisoners' access to arts is unequal, not determined by personal ambition, need or talent. In contrast, the Warwick Commission highlights that nearly half of live music audiences and a third of



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theatre-goers and gallery visitors are from the wealthiest, best educated and least ethnically diverse 8% of society.¹⁶ Addressing this disparity will yield a massive social dividend.

"The nature of the art produced in the criminal justice system leads to a richer cultural exchange and more diverse stories. There is a lot to gain from this work and it's a prize worth fighting for."

- Richard Russell, Chief Operating Officer, Arts Council England. (2017).

The artists and arts organisations working in criminal justice settings are currently experts at 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 its services were from a BAME background, when BAME women make up only 28% of the female prison population.¹⁷ 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.¹⁸ This can be built upon to significantly broaden the reach of Arts Council England's creative output and social impact.

The NCJAA suggests that by undertaking the following activities Arts Council England would make a significant contribution to achieving its aim of *"significantly more people to have access to cultural activities, and to have developed their creativity"* by 2030:

- Incentivise and invest in building relationships between specialist, grassroots organisations working in criminal justice settings and mainstream large, high profile arts organisations to improve individual and creative outcomes, as well as sustainability in this distinct area.
- Acknowledge the specific challenges that occur when working in criminal justice environments (safety, geography, challenging cohorts, regimes etc.) and ensure funding structures are fit for purpose.
- Recognise the value of small, specialist and local arts organisations (and artists) through sustained investment, showcasing and development. Secure funding will ensure resilience and promote the creativity of this unique sector.
- Arts Council England continues investment in infrastructure and network development, such as Sector Support, across the field to enable advocacy and engagement at the highest level. Support from the government - the Ministry of Justice, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and other departments of state (Department of Health, Department for Education, Department for Work and Pensions and the Home Office) - as well as support from all those providing services - governors, senior probation offices, health professionals and educationalists - is needed to enable this work.
- Seek innovative ways to build audiences for arts in criminal justice. This will increase community engagement with the arts and build public support for the work.

We fully support and share Arts Council England's belief that *"all organisations that receive public funding must tackle barriers that exclude people."* Making this real will require investment and development in meaningful partnerships.

Effective incentives to encourage local partnerships that acknowledge expertise in arts and criminal justice should be fostered, ensuring people from a whole range of backgrounds benefit from public investment.

There is an opportunity to support and build upon existing mechanisms to further enhance arts and cultural activity within prisons specifically, which will broaden opportunities for those least likely to engage with arts and culture. For instance, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons *Expectations Document* for male adult prisons¹⁹ currently includes an expectation that "*Prisoners can access creative activities which promote learning, well-being and support rehabilitation.*" This includes encouraging arts and culture within a prison context to support employability and learning, improve wellbeing and the prison environment, help prisoners maintain contact with their children and families, and to promote resettlement into the community.

3. Creative research and development (R&D) and talent development are flourishing

There is a significant need for recognised and bespoke training in the field of arts and criminal justice (demonstrated by our annual surveys, ongoing enquiries and a mapping exercise carried out in 2016). Our members consistently ask for a range of bespoke training opportunities, from introductory courses in arts in criminal justice to leadership, governance and artistic direction. The NCJAA has begun to offer opportunities for training and mentoring (through Arts Council England support) but cannot currently meet demand in terms of delivery or signposting to relevant existing training and development opportunities.

Higher education applied arts courses increasingly include an element of social or participatory practice, which does in some cases apply to the criminal justice sector (specifically in the performing arts), but more could be done to join up this work. There is a lot to be gained from further investment in partnerships across higher education to support the needs of the criminal justice system workforce and to foster cross-sector learning across disciplines and art forms.

We support Arts Council England's ambition to see "*increased focus on creative R&D, together with a stronger commitment to making sure that more independent cultural organisations and creative practitioners can achieve their potential and maintain their careers.*" Development work across arts in criminal justice, health, homelessness and participatory arts could do more to provide a holistic training offer that enables talent development and meets the needs of contemporary artists and practitioners who work in a variety of settings.

We recommend that Arts Council England continues to invest in specialist arts and criminal justice organisations and Sector Support organisations to develop a recognised training, development and good practice offer for practitioners working in the field of arts and criminal justice and related areas.

Research suggests that artists working in criminal justice settings have found the experience significantly impacts their creative practice.²⁰ More can be done to understand and celebrate the role of the artist in residence within prison and probation settings. Schemes like the artist in residence at HMP Grendon/IKON Gallery partnership could be replicated with great impact and benefit for both prisons, artists and cultural institutions. We are especially keen to see renewed support for networks that foster artist in residence schemes (across all art forms), which build roots with local communities and artists.

We recommend that Arts Council England develops opportunities to foster high quality, well supported artist in residence schemes (across all art forms) to build relationships between local artists, arts organisations and criminal justice system partners; and improve practice.

Talent and expertise from across the arts and criminal justice sector will thrive where it is supported, shared and celebrated more widely. Individual artists with experience of the criminal justice system could be supported better to access funding and learning and development opportunities more effectively. This could include a "Directory of opportunities for people post-release and mechanisms to develop talent within the sector to increase sustainability." (NCJAA member feedback).

We would also recommend that Arts Council England continues to support and develop research in the fields of arts and criminal justice to build an 'integrated approach' to the evidence, specifically related to exploring the potential impact on audience and public opinion.

As Arts Council England's latest report *Arts and culture in health and wellbeing and in the criminal justice system: A summary of the evidence*²¹ points out, "Research is needed into how the prisoner voice is made audible through collaborations [...] and with what social and political effect."

4. England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations we support, and in the culture they produce

We very much support Arts Council England's ambition to "ensure that by 2030 Arts Council England will only invest in organisations that have governance, leadership and workforce that reflects England's diversity." We believe partnerships with the criminal justice system can support the arts and cultural sector to deliver this important mission.

Furthermore, employment is a key contributor in supporting people to desist from crime and has been shown to be a leading factor in reducing reoffending. However, as the 2018 Ministry of Justice *Employment and Education Strategy*²² indicates, employment rates for people with convictions are low; with only 17% of people who have offended in Pay As You Earn (PAYE) work a year after coming out of prison and only half of employers saying they would even consider employing an ex-offender. Leadership from Arts Council England to provide training and employment opportunities for those with talent will have a specific and immediate social impact.

By building on its recent commitment to encourage arts and cultural organisations to sign up to Ban the Box, Arts Council England can support people with criminal records to find employment upon release within the arts and cultural sector. Developing opportunities for Release on Temporary License (ROTL) would go even further to meet this objective. We very much hope the pilot project which Arts Council England is currently developing provides a promising case study that can be replicated nationally to develop a step-change in the employability of those with criminal records across arts, culture and media. This work will support Arts Council England's aim to "promote careers in the creative industries to people from every background."

In addition to this, the NCJAA is committed to encouraging arts organisations working with people in the criminal justice system to embrace inclusivity. Diversity must be reflected in the workforce, in freelance artists and in governance structures across the arts and criminal justice sector. Our work in this area can be used to promote good practice, for example from the experience of organisations such as Synergy Theatre Project and Geese Theatre Company building on our resource *Using the arts as a driver for equality across the criminal justice system*.²³

We therefore recommend that Arts Council England utilises the NCJAA to promote diversity across the arts and criminal justice workforce.

5. The creative and cultural lives of all children and young people are recognised and nurtured

In order for Arts Council England to deliver its aim that *"the creative and cultural lives of all children and young people are recognised and nurtured"* we would like to see children (under 18) and young adults (aged 18-25) in the criminal justice system²⁴ (including those in secure children's homes, prisons, detention centres and those serving sentences in the community) targeted explicitly by investment and strategic focus. Children and young people at risk of crime have much to gain from the arts, yet are least likely to access creative and cultural opportunities. Organisations such as Odd Arts, Intermission Youth Theatre and Recre8 deliver bespoke creative activity to meet the needs of young people in local communities with impressive results. Further publications and other means to disseminate case studies and models of good practice are needed to foster, promote and support this work. This includes sharing learning from and promoting the work carried out by Unitas and the Summer Arts Colleges.

For Arts Council England to ensure that *"investment in the creativity of every child and young person both in and out of school is increased and better co-ordinated"*, working with criminal justice partners is crucial; so that those least likely to be exposed to a variety of creative practices are provided with the opportunity to take part in community and cultural life. Research demonstrates an opportunity for a huge return on investment in terms of reducing crime and supporting community cohesion. Infrastructure support is needed to foster partnerships with Police and Crime Commissioners, Youth Offending Teams, the secure youth estate and probation providers at a local and national level. This will increase the efficiency of engagement by local arts organisations and enable shared learning and optimise opportunities for young people. There is also work to be done to effectively co-ordinate and upskill Bridge organisations (a network of 10 organisations connecting the cultural and education sectors, funded jointly by Arts Council England and Department for Education), so they are informed about the criminal justice system and able to support the organisations and artists working in this space. Cultural Educational Partnerships could be better integrated at a local level so they do not duplicate existing structures, and can add value to local work in arts and criminal justice.

Our members also very much welcome the approach to *"co-design cultural experiences that are relevant to them"* so that young people from all backgrounds feel and see their culture valued and recognised.

We recommend that Arts Council England recognises and supports the distinct needs of children and young people in the criminal justice system and invests in sustained partnerships that enable young people, who are least likely to engage in arts and culture, to benefit from creative opportunities.

6. Cultural organisations are dynamic, focused on the future, and relevant

We welcome Arts Council England's focus to drive effective business development to improve resilience, however the NCJAA suggests this needs to be proportionate and realistic for small organisations working in arts and criminal justice. The approach needs to recognise the changing nature of alternative sources of funding. This includes reduced expenditure from government departments and local authorities with the concurrent increased competition for grant funding from trusts and foundations.



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Clinks' recent *State of the sector 2018* report, which examines the health and sustainability of voluntary sector organisations working in criminal justice, of which 16% of respondents were arts organisations, indicates that *"the sector continues to face a challenging financial environment, where organisations are reliant on grants and are unlikely to meet their costs, while often having to subsidise services they are contracted to provide."*²⁵

Sustaining diversity of investment will require support for professional development in cultural leadership, business development and governance. Infrastructure support is needed to deliver this programme of skills development across the sector. Our aim is to work with members in co-production of best practices, and develop effective mechanisms to share learning and good practice. We also support Arts Council England's ambition to *"be better at giving organisations business advice, as well as developing a range of alternative investment tools to go alongside our grant-giving functions."*

Furthermore, we welcome the ambition to see *"cultural organisations be more collaborative and enterprising, as well as act as models of social responsibility."* Our experience is that innovative collaborations, which include arts organisations working alongside criminal justice staff and policy makers, can foster effective partnerships, which benefits the cultural ecology.

NCJAA members would like to see mechanisms to build resilience by planning for a longer term future with sustainable funding for the sector. This would yield both consistency of provision across the criminal justice landscape and foster innovation.

Arts organisations working in criminal justice settings produce high quality creative work in difficult circumstances. Budgets have been cut to minimum requirements and they are often unable to meet demand. Additional investment from across the Ministry of Justice and other departments is needed to create a more stable environment from which to build the sector. The NCJAA has been successful in influencing policy at the highest level, and responding to the new understanding in the government of the transformative value of arts in criminal justice will require a more systematic review of investment to meet strategic priorities for high quality artistic output and social impact.

We value the importance of new technologies for development and dissemination. Organisations such as Stretch Digital have led the way in pushing the boundaries of what is possible to achieve in criminal justice spaces. However, digital limitations within criminal justice settings (i.e. the restrictions on laptops, memory sticks and use of the internet in prisons and secure settings) are real and our work in pressing for new approaches within the framework set by the criminal justice system suggests that innovation will be restricted. These limitations need to be recognised and supported when Arts Council England considers supporting arts in criminal justice programmes of activity.

It is also worth noting that while the NCJAA membership value the specific arts and criminal justice sector support, direct funding to deliver activity is crucial for the sector to survive and needs prioritising. We recommend Arts Council England supports local creative provision to enable people in the criminal justice system to benefit from arts and culture as much as possible.

7. England continues to increase its global reputation for the quality of its creative industries

The arts in criminal justice sector in England is recognised as having world-leading expertise



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and can therefore make a significant contribution to Arts Council England's ambition to increase its global reputation. The NCJAA and its broader membership are frequently asked to attend international conferences, events and research seminars to provide best practice research and training across the world in criminal justice and arts sectors. Our award winning Evidence Library is utilised by counterparts all over the world, and the USA is currently replicating our model.

The global academic community is specifically interested in how we evaluate and recognise the positive impact of arts on education, reducing reoffending and health outcomes. It is interested in the types of organisations who deliver this work and how we utilise different art forms such as music and visual arts in different settings.

There is more to be done to celebrate the work of the sector on a global stage, capitalising on our expertise, unique practice and skill set as we move towards fully understanding the social impact of arts and culture internationally. The NCJAA would like to see Arts Council England utilise its international standing and voice to champion and advocate the expert work of our sector.

We are also interested to learn from the global community about how arts and culture is valued and promoted at a policy level in different countries - this would enable us to learn more about effective commissioning structures that could support the sector.

We would encourage, where possible, opportunities for international exchange in order to foster connections and innovation. The criminal justice and homelessness sectors are closely linked in practice and policy, and the criminal justice sector would also be interested to learn from the international arts and homelessness movement, With One Voice.²⁶

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The National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance is managed by Clinks.

Clinks supports, represents and advocates for the voluntary sector in criminal justice, enabling it to provide the best possible opportunities for individuals and their families.

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End notes

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2. Our steering group members include the Koestler Trust, Clean Break, Irene Taylor Trust (Music in Prisons), Geese Theatre Company, Good Vibrations, Synergy Theatre Project, Odd Arts, a prison governor, academics and people with lived experience of the criminal justice system.
3. Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance. Available at: <https://www.culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/> (last accessed 18.01.19)
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