

IDEAS TEST

CPP3 BUSINESS PLAN 2020 - 2023



Photo: Take on Me - Dante or Die Hoo Leisure Centre December 2018



CONTENTS

Ideas Test Mission, Vision, Goals

Introduction

Core values

Governance and staffing

Programme (SMART objectives)

Audience Engagement

Finance & Fundraising (SWOT)

Appendices

1. Story of Change
2. Governance and staffing chart
3. Ideas Test governance handbook (decision making)
4. Development timeline
5. Workplan
6. Budget
7. Fundraising strategy and timeline
8. Audience engagement plans
9. Equality and Diversity policy
10. Risk register



Vision

Ideas Test works to create a vibrant arts ecology in Swale and Medway that involves the full diversity of local communities and brings new opportunities to celebrate the area.¹

Mission

Our mission is to enable and support communities to live more creative lives.

To do this Ideas Test works to:

- Encourage productive partnerships and sustainable networks that support community cohesion and ongoing creative development
- Enhance the quality of people's lives using collaborative commissioning and co-creation models to inspire, empower and celebrate the rich diversity *and history* of the area
- Remove barriers to participation in a creative life, regardless of class, economic background, race, sexual orientation, neurodiversity or disability of any kind
- Develop the creative workforce and the potential of individuals as artists, participants and organisations

Goals:

Over the next 5 years we will work to:

- Consolidate our reputation as a trusted strategic organisation for place making, capacity building and infrastructure development, recognised for our thoughtful, high quality artistic work, collaborative experimentation and co production models, genuinely putting the communities and individuals we work with and their environments at the heart of what we do

¹ Appendix 1 Story of Change - developed in CPP Phase 2 with our stakeholders and communities



- Attain charitable status with a sound plan for independence and sustainability beyond the Creative People and Places programme, but with the aim of leveraging more resource for the area, building capacity more broadly
- Increase our commissioning portfolio and attract more inward investment, particularly for core functions and to support and sustain the work of Ideas Test
- Become a more agile and sustainable entity, exploring options to find a sound base and business model for the future, in the next year basing ourselves in Medway
- Build the evidence base of what we do, articulate and quantify the social and economic value we create and share it, through action research, film, documentation, infographics, learning consistently and on all our platforms

Core values

Authenticity, Generosity, Honesty and Integrity in all that we do.

An imaginative, agile, listening, thoughtful, caring and learning organisation of and for its much valued communities.

Introduction

Ideas Test was founded in 2012 as one of Arts Council England's original 21 Creative People and Places (CPP) projects. CPP is a flagship programme about more people choosing, creating and taking part in brilliant art experiences in the places where they live. Over the past 6 years our significant achievements signal the progress we have made towards our CPP **10-year vision**:

"Within 10 years Medway and Swale will be known as creative places with a high demand for excellent local arts activity. Community Champions will flourish; a trusted network of cultural entrepreneurs will galvanise others to take part. Local people will be empowered to deliver their own fledgling activities, inspired by the grassroots 'bedrock of creativity'."



Ideas Test is committed to Arts Council England’s vision and aims for Creative People and Places funding:

- More people from places of least engagement experience and are inspired by the arts
- Communities are empowered to take the lead in shaping local arts provision
- The aspiration for excellence is central to the activity supported, both the artistic work created and the process of engaging communities
- Learning from past experiences and creating an environment where the arts and cultural sector can experiment with new approaches to engaging communities
- Learning more about how to establish sustainable arts and cultural opportunities and making this learning freely available across the cultural sector
- Encouraging partnerships across the subsidised, amateur and commercial sectors
- Through these projects, demonstrating the power of the arts to enrich the lives of individuals and make positive changes in communities

Our approach and our programme has been shaped and informed by dialogue with the local community and addressing the recommendations from our MBA evaluation report. Our co created Story of Change supports our Vision and the outcomes and wishes of our stakeholders, artists and communities:

- People feel more connected and proud to belong to Swale & Medway
- More people engage in and are inspired by art
- Participants and creatives develop skills confidence and knowledge
- Good practice is shared, and the Ideas Test approach is valued
- Networks and ambassadors better support the arts ecology and inform programming
- Partners and business are more creative, effective and likely to invest²

Ideas Test is very well placed to build on recognised models of excellent practice, genuine community engagement and participation and high quality artistic output. Our work aligns well

² Appendix 1 Story of Change



with the **Arts Council’s new Ten Year strategy, “Let’s Create”** which demonstrates the impact and influence of the national Creative People and Places programme.³

We can now confidently state that with our collaborative approach, we lead strategic cultural engagement and development in North Kent. We have worked hard over the past 21 months to establish ourselves as strategic partners in the area, sitting on the **Cultural Transformation Board (Kent and Medway)** to link with the **Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPEC)**, **Cultural Strategy Executive and Board (Medway City of Culture)**. We are extremely well networked into our communities through partnerships, collaboration and committed engagement. We are helping shape the new **Medway Cultural Strategy** and the move to a **Culture Compact**, supporting ambitions for **Medway City of Culture 2025** in the context of the **Kent wide Cultural Strategy** and offer.

We are building on action research practice with high quality engagement work which meets the tests of Matarasso’s five quality principles and four process/engagement quality criteria (cf A Restless Art 2019)⁴. We have a strong network of partners across Kent and nationally including Gulbenkian, Dante or Die, Chatham Historic Dockyard, Without Walls, LV21, Cohesion Plus, Counterpoint Arts, Icon Theatre, University of Kent Medway, Canterbury Christ Church University and People United among others. Ideas Test plays a vital part in the cultural ecology of Medway and Swale as an enabler, strategic partner, co-commissioner and supporter of community groups, artists and others in the wider voluntary sector. As such, Ideas Test is increasingly invited to play a developmental role in pioneering work, such as Culture Cubed, the Social Value toolkit work in Kent and is making work of national and international significance, on which we will build.

³ Outcomes

Creative people: Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life. **Cultural communities:** Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture. **A creative and cultural country:** England’s cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international. Investment principles **Ambition and quality:** Cultural organisations are ambitious and committed to improving the quality of their work. **Dynamism:** Cultural organisations are dynamic and able to respond to the challenges of the next decade. **Environmental responsibility:** Cultural organisations lead the way in their approach to environmental responsibility. **Inclusivity and relevance:** England’s diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that we support and in the culture they produce.

⁴ Op cit p.100 “**Craft Originality Ambition Resonance and Feeling**” p.101 **Experience** (is the process rewarding)? **Authorship** how much does it involve co creation? **Empowerment** - the extent that people gain control within and beyond the project, **Humanity** the extent that it produces kindness, solidarity and trust



Context

Arts engagement in Swale and Medway is low with 57.4% in Medway / 57% in Swale engaging in arts events compared with the England figure of 60.3% and is lower in deprived wards. There is only one NPO based in Medway, Chatham Historic Dockyard

50% of our area is rural marshland with a poor transport infrastructure and corresponding issues of social isolation. Swale (pop. 140,500) scores higher deprivation than the national average and health outcomes are poor, particularly in Sittingbourne (pop. 48,513) & Sheppey (pop. 40,300). Swale has few non-white residents 3.4% compared with 10.4% for Medway, 6.3% for Kent as a whole & 14% for England and Wales. Qualification levels are poorer than those for the county, region or country as a whole. Unemployment numbers are high, highest in Medway (pop. 277,616).

Most Medway residents live in Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham. Despite local economic growth above the UK average, there are worse public health outcomes in Medway's 4 most deprived neighbourhoods and the non-white population maps onto these areas. The area has a higher than average number of children in lower income families.

With double the regional population in Medway, Ideas Test is moving to an office base in Gillingham, so that we can work more strategically across our geographic area in and through our hyperlocal hubs: Medway and Swale libraries services, Big Locals in Eastern Sheppey and Luton Arches, Healthy Living Centres (HLCs) in Gillingham and Sheerness, Working Men's Clubs, Shopping Centres and Industry partners. We will also deliver in rural spots on Hoo peninsula and the Isle of Sheppey.

The next three years

Ideas Test has established a reputation and track record of co-creating work of quality and engaging meaningfully with communities over time. To respond to the challenges of fewer resources and serving a large geographic area Ideas Test is moving its office base to Gillingham, in order to be able to work smarter in and through our hyperlocal hubs. A new staff structure and a more agile approach to working and delivery, supports this approach. With our new office



located next to the mainline rail station we can support and implement a new environmental policy and approach.

We have applied for charitable status as a Community Interest Organisation (CIO) and we expect to hear about this by March 2020, allowing us to fully implement our fundraising strategy and to move forward with plans for novation.⁵

Over the next three years, we plan to deliver an ambitious and enthusiastically anticipated programme with and for Medway and Swale. This will feature high quality artist co-commissions and a community led programme informed by working in and through our carefully selected hyper local hubs. An active volunteer cohort and a team of dynamic Community Champions (CCs) will shape and support our programme. The hub approach allows us to “go where our target communities are” and we tested it in the latter stages of Phase 2 very effectively with the Healthy Living Centres, libraries, shopping centres and working men’s clubs. CC and volunteer voices in the hubs will shape our plans and projects and we will extend our reach to our target audiences. During 2019 our equivalent volunteer value increased by 200% showing that local people want to work with us. 43% of our participants had not engaged in the arts in the past 12 months. Our action learning approach will allow us to plan, do and review; sharing our models and findings and refining our approaches with local, regional and national partners. Through profiling local voices we can better demonstrate the value and authenticity of our approach.

Establishing strong relationships with funders, we will work towards longer-term sustainability as we evolve in status from ‘project’ to an to ‘organisation’ and we will develop our commissioning strand. Over the past 21 months we have generated in excess of £380,000 in match/ additional funds, putting Ideas Test on a sound footing for the future and providing a solid rationale and approach to supporting our ambitious programme.

Equality and Diversity

We will work to respond to Arts Council England’s Creative Case for Diversity – with a specific focus on

- socio-economic,
- sexual orientation
- neuro-diversity
- race, ethnicity

⁵ Appendix 4 development timeline



- disability

working to better understand and remove barriers to participation and access to funds. We will aim to increase the diversity of the artists we co commission and work with. We will continue to support a diverse range of young people, making sure they can access help with anxiety and mental health needs. These priorities and issues for communities around social isolation and change will continue to need our support.

Through the 3-year programme, we will share our practice and our learning. We will invite local and national partners to help us explore our research questions on reach and engagement in relation to inclusion in more depth, and through symposiums and sharing events embed the learning into our work. We will also share learning about our hyper local hubs and engagement approaches in understanding how and why people engage.

Ideas Test CPP's narrative will be **Untold Stories, Hidden Voices** with a focus on exploring the rich diversity of Swale and Medway through its personal stories, rich history and sense of place. Our approach will be based on the notion that an area's assets are in its people, their stories, memories and experiences, ideas and imagined futures with a focus on how these can be shared, updated, exchanged, changed or made new.

Ideas Test will encourage, co-commission, mentor and learn from practitioners who can help us explore and reveal the richness of this narrative. Nationally and internationally renowned creative practitioners will be invited to bring their skills to help reflect on the human experiences that connect and move us and what makes the area unique. The hallmark of success will be the production of work that is authentic, resonant and both celebrates and connects communities to stories, to each other, to their place and to the world. We will welcome practitioners who are interested in taking a deep dive into 'diversity and social cohesion' – interested in cultural and creative nuance, unearthing culturally specific stories that have local, national and international resonance. Our work will help to build social capital through cultural practice that explores what is important to communities and reflects back to them and out to the world the stories they want to tell and the fresh narratives for their futures.

Building on the experiences of Platforma, Paper Peace and the Fusion festivals in Swale, we will bring inclusive work and more diverse practice to the area. In particular we will work with sister CPPs Revoluton and Transported on opportunities to engage and learn from wider practice. The telling of the stories and the experiences will lead artists and communities to gain in confidence pride and skill in shaping their narratives and to lead and shape the development of their place(s). Placing people's stories and experiences at the heart of our creative work will drive ownership of and engagement with developing and articulating their social capital and sense of place. Some of the work will help address the urgent issues around social isolation, health and wellbeing. Evidence of impact will link to our support for skills development and to success in



levering in additional resource for the area, enabling these communities to work independently of us.

In line with our evaluation findings, our programme will help to **educate partner artists around the benefits of socially engaged practice**, in particular, co-creation and co-commissioning models where the voice of the local community can play a larger part. Ideas Test supports other small organisations and community partners to thrive, develop and to build local capacity: Sun Pier House and artists Wendy Daws and Chris Sacre at Mess Room, Diversity House, Optivo residents, Medway Afro Caribbean Association, Equator festival, Sparked Echo, Loosely Woven and Bootworks Theatre Company, Outdoor Studios, the Rural Kent Coffee Caravan, All Saints church Allhallows (Hoo), individual artists and networks through events, meetings, advice sessions, surgeries and 1 : 1s. We are working with young people and local communities to reimagine places and spaces where there is little or no infrastructure and few dedicated traditional cultural venues. We will continue to support and advise small community and voluntary organisations like Friends of Milton Creek / Murston Heart / Rose Street / Big Fish Arts/ Equator festival and to run relevant events across the geography that meet the needs of the area.

Core artistic delivery partners are currently Cement Fields/ Whitstable Biennale, Chatham Historic Dockyard, Gulbenkian, ART31, Quiet Down There, Live Art Development Agency, Royal Opera House, Sparked Echo CIC, Medway Dynamics, Kent Music, Cohesion Plus, Applause Rural Touring, Dante or Die, Counterpoint Arts, Emergency Exit Arts, Arts Emergency, Battersea Arts Centre (the Agency), Opera Circus, People United and Nucleus Arts. We will develop partnerships with businesses Drax power station, Gillingham Football Club, DS Smith paper mill and more community groups. Our ambition will include international reach through partnerships with eg Opera Circus (Ariel Dorfman Nigel Osborne) and work produced in the UK that has toured overseas eg User Not Found.

Governance⁶

The consortium consists of Swale Community and Voluntary Service (lead body) Medway Voluntary Action, Sheppey Matters, Cement Fields (chair), Medway and Swale Community Health Partnership and Live Art Development Agency.

⁶ See Appendix 2 Governance and staffing chart and Appendix 3 Governance handbook



The remit of the Consortium is to set the overall direction, resolve arising issues, take major decisions and ensure that the project is being delivered effectively against the agreed and approved business plan and core CPP principles. Meetings take place quarterly with frequent sub group meetings and advice (for example financial, business planning etc). The consortium helps make decisions, challenges, reflects on and takes community voice and geographic spread into account. Over the course of the past 20 months the consortium has undergone development and training and the membership has attended two Away Days.⁷ We will continue to run focused Away Days and development activities that provide opportunities for further dialogue with Swale and Medway communities. Consortium members are expected to attend events and gatherings, and to act as active Ambassadors and advocates for the work Ideas Test does.

Community voice is amplified and strongly represented on our with representation from the lead body **Swale Community and Voluntary Service (SCVS)** and **Chief Exec Christine White** who have supported Ideas Test from the beginning, providing employment, HR, financial and other support. SCVS provide these services to other organisations in Swale including **Sheppey Big Local** and support local volunteering and befriending services. SCVS helps Ideas Test to achieve the aims of CPP is increasingly using the arts in its projects as a direct result of the partnership. While at number 34 we have co hosted the Swale Community Empowerment network and worked with the Swale Seniors Forum. SCVS have supported Ideas Test to apply for CIO status and to develop in order to meet the challenges of the next 5 years. SCVS has held the lease for number 34 and now for the new office base in Gillingham (Medway).

The sister organisation **Medway Voluntary Action (MVA)** is based in Chatham and offers advice and links to communities in Medway. Represented by Chief Exec Jane Howard, MVA also has a strong training offer for the voluntary sector and Ideas Test are members of this network. MVA made the connection to Big Arches Local in Luton (Medway), one of our new hyper local hubs and to other local partners, nominating the NHS to the consortium/shadow Board. They support Ideas Test's move to Medway in February to a small community hub close to Gillingham station.

Sheppey Matters are based in the Healthy Living Centre (HLC) in Sheerness on the Isle of Sheppey. Working on the island for 25 years, Sheppey Matters are extremely well networked with associated links with Big Local Eastern Sheppey and the Working Men's Clubs on the island, in which we are now programming for the first time. Represented by **Nigel Martin Chief Exec**. We are also linking with their workers and with Sheppey FM on the same site as well as our partners at BRFM on the island and at the HLC as a hyper local hub, together with the Sunlight Centre HLC in Gillingham.

⁷ **Raise the level of support and challenge from the consortium - recommendation from MBA evaluation report December 2018**



Cement Fields/Whitstable Biennale (WB) are a new Kent NPO and founder consortium member. They work across North Kent to bring high quality arts experiences to local communities. The Deputy Director **Catherine Herbert** is Chair for the consortium, to help drive change and provide continuity in the transition phase as we become an independent charity.

CJ Mitchell, Consortium Treasurer (Chartered Accountant; freelance performance producer; and Co-Director, Live Art Development Agency, 2009-20), provides financial advice and **Julie Webster from Medway and Swale Community Health Partnership** - wellbeing are now on the consortium.

An open recruitment process to the new Board will be actioned when the new business plan is agreed and charitable status is achieved. Ideas Test has signed up to the Young Trustees' movement and aims to attract young people onto the Board to help influence and shape our programme. No duplication is intended between consortium and Board in development to secure continuity, oversight of the CPP programme and development of our commissioned strands of work.

All core consortium members sign a robust agreement document/ MoU and abide by the Nolan principles and rules about conflict of interest statements.

Additional **observers** attend the quarterly meetings representing Kent County Council, Swale Borough Council, Medway Council, and the Royal Opera House Bridge all at senior level, as well as our evaluators MB Associates, from time to time and as appropriate for example to share findings and recommendations.

Specialist advisers

In addition to the consortium/ shadow board members, Ideas Test has a number of highly skilled specialist advisers to draw on who may also attend consortium meetings and events as observers.

Cohesion Plus are a new Kent NPO with a track record of delivering festivals and outdoor performances in North Kent. They are specialist advisers to the consortium on issues of community voice, diversity, inclusion and social cohesion through **Gurvinder Sandher**. At a time of increased hate crime and a lack of diversity and inclusion in some of our communities, this role is particularly vital.

University of Kent (UoK) are represented by **Liz Moran** the Director of Arts and Culture to make strategic links with HE and wider initiatives (Estuary 2020, skills development, City of Culture, Cultural Strategy) and to support strong evaluation, artistic quality and strategic links.



wHoo Cares is a small community interest company on the Isle of Grain in a particularly isolated (but changing) part of Medway. They are our key partners on the peninsula and we work closely with **Christine Chetwood** the manager.

Expertise will be drawn upon from consultants, evaluators, **MB Associates**, and other organisations, academics, partners and individuals as appropriate and according to our available resources and In Kind offers. **Sarah Dance**, consultant and Chair of the Kent Cultural Transformation Board is currently advising on and supporting our **fundraising strategy**.

Critical Friends

Ideas Test has a formidable team of Critical Friends.

Elizabeth Lynch MBE is an arts producer, consultant, evaluator and coach. She has pioneered and developed influential approaches to engagement and participation and is committed to working with people to shift the barriers and boundaries around participation in and access to arts and science.

She established Roundhouse Studios as Director 2001-8 and Tower Hamlets Summer University as Director 1996-2001. As a theatre director, she has worked for companies in the UK, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. She has worked for Creative People and Places in several other roles.

Elizabeth is Associate Research Fellow in Contemporary Theatre at Birkbeck University, Chair of Board of Theatre-Rites, Trustee for Arts Catalyst (Chair 2009-2019), member of Wellcome Trust Diversity Inclusion Steering Group, Spitalfields Music Programme Advisory Group and the Experience Design Board for Osterley Park and House (National Trust), Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts, Chair of What Next Culture Wandsworth.

Elizabeth will support the consortium and Ideas Test providing bespoke advice for the project, alongside guidance and constructive criticism. She will ensure the quality of the quarterly monitoring data, comment on sample size and provide points of reflection for the project to learn from achievements against the business plan, as well as supporting new consultation approaches. Importantly, the Critical Friend will review performance, make recommendations and give advice. The Critical Friend will work closely with MB Associates, evaluators and the Director of Culture at the University of Kent.

Michael Hoar is an independent consultant with 25 years' experience in the arts, culture, HE, charity and local government sectors. Michael brings unique insights from a breadth of roles and has delivered organisational development for more than 70 client organisations over the last decade. With previous roles at Arts Council and Culture East Midlands, Michael has acted as an adviser and consultant for the consortium in terms of structural analysis and development of



Ideas Test and will play an additional Critical Friend role in terms of strategic and organisational development, subject to available resources.

Ruth Melville offers additional support and expertise with an extensive knowledge and understanding of the CPP programme. Ruth also acts as a critical friend and evaluator for Transported CPP.

Ruth has worked as Monitoring and Research Advisor to Aarhus 2017 European Capital of Culture, and is currently part of the team advising Medway's new Cultural Strategy and ambitions for UK City of Culture 2025. She also supports research design and strategic development at a range of organisations in the public and voluntary sector including Future Projects, Suffolk Artlink, Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre.

Her extensive background in research, cultural regeneration and social impact include work as Programme Manager and Senior Research Fellow of Impacts 08, the Liverpool European Capital of Culture Research Programme; researching Liverpool's Community Cultural Champions Scheme, the Green Light Trust Low Carbon Champions Project and Giants of the Infinitesimal, an interesting Science-Arts collaboration, development of UK City of Culture and European Capital of Culture bids and frameworks for Cultural Olympiad assessment. Ruth acted as research advisor to Liverpool's Arts Regeneration Consortium for four years.

Mandy Barnett is Director of **MB Associates**, working nationally with organisations committed to developing their social value. She is an accredited Social Return On Investment (SROI) analyst, on the board of Social Value UK and a trustee of Cumbria Action for Sustainability. She has recently co-created Culture³ with socially-engaged arts organisations in Kent, including Ideas Test.

Mandy was a change consultant for the Government for several years, focusing on multi-agency working for the benefit of vulnerable young people. She took leading roles in evaluation and the relationship with the cultural and non profit sectors, and ran programmes for the NW region.

Mandy has an MBA from London Business School, and worked in the arts and museums, before specialising in a collaborative approach to caring and community. Key roles included Head of Exhibitions at the Commonwealth Institute, Director of Bankside Arts Training Trust and Development Director for older people's services at Surrey CC.



Community Voice and Co Creation

The next phase of Ideas Test CPP seeks to further build and embed opportunity for community voice throughout the three years, as this is an area of continuous development. We have tested and evaluated new approaches to ensure we are responding to local people, holding regular gatherings to allow for active listening and dialogue.⁸ We imagine that community voice will take on a number of different forms, and offer choice as to levels of engagement, whether as volunteer, creative, trainee, decision maker, participant, co-commissioner and/or audience.

Using the CPP Appetite /Creative Scene/Left Coast 'ladder of participation' model and training in Matarrasso's 5 principles will help guide our inclusion of community voice and clearly outline to those who are part of Ideas Test how to engage meaningfully with our programme. A group of enthusiastic individuals are already playing this role, helping to shape our programme, working with us on co-commissions, drafting artist briefs, sitting on selection panels, helping recruit others, offering support, and developing their skills confidence and community leadership in artistic commissioning.⁹

Local cultural capacity will be increased through our continuing recruitment of Community Champions from Ideas Test alumni (artists, participants and volunteers) as representatives for our themed strands and co commissions and support their learning.

Paper Peace attracted new audiences for us by using translations of the top languages in Medway and Swale. Our aim is to be inclusive of all voices within communities, particularly those not traditionally engaging or with less opportunity to engage and we will build on this experience. In the year 17/18 we generated £20,000 equivalent value in volunteering alone.

We will develop a group of **Young CCs** to shape and lead on programme, build skills as co commissioners, producers, artists and creative professionals, giving them opportunities to create content for and to take over our digital and social media platforms. We will communicate their feedback to the Audience Agency about the meaning of postcodes to those who are living in deprived areas and particularly the sensitivities for young people (as well as others eg homeless, Roma) in disclosing information, finding imaginative methods for evaluation where there are barriers. This could be a CPP research area, as could be the notion of safe space and agency/entitlement.

⁸ Elizabeth Lynch Creative Consultation Swale and Medway 2019/20

⁹ Appendices 2/3 and CC role descriptor.



We will continue to use engagement/ evaluation workshops to feed back on and influence the direction and content of our programme.

Audience focus will continue to be on Young People 14 – 25, Families, 55+, & 4+ hyper-local under-served communities. Our Audience Engagement & Development Plan will ensure effective engagement with our target groups. Digital’s role in production, new audiences, circulation, exhibition and form is demonstrable across the programme and will seek to engage on appropriate channels. A revamped website will respond to feedback creating space for community voice and contributions.

Audience Engagement

Our focus for CPP remains

Families,

Young people 14 - 25

Older people (over 55)

Our new Audience Engagement & Development Plan will provide detail of our targets and approach¹⁰, but in summary we will:

- Work with our Audience Agency APR+ report to develop a new Audience Engagement & Development strategy and action plan that particularly targets groups we have not reached as effectively before, in particular those least likely to engage.
- To do this we will use local intelligence from consortium, community groups and community champions; understanding the behaviour of groups, motivations and the ladder of engagement, will help us align this to a targeted and focused approach.
- We want to understand more about how young people and those living in target communities respond to sharing postcode data and the language we use. We know that there can be stigma and sensitivities attached.
- We will map Audience Spectrum and Mosaic data onto the deprived wards and work in Healthy Living Centres, Big Local hubs working men’s clubs and libraries in Sheppey, Chatham (including Luton and Wayfield) and Gillingham.
- We want to ensure we are reaching more groups in target areas with protected characteristics and we will do this via the hyper-local model.
- Our practice will inform CPD as for example, our work with LGBTQ+ young people informing sensitivity in use of language and content on digital platforms

¹⁰ See Appendix xxx Audience Engagement & Development Plan and Appendix Audience Development Workplan



Staffing

With a smaller core grant, delivery in CPP3 will be based on a new structure. Core roles will address capacity issues identified by Michael Hoar's analytic report ensuring that the structure of Ideas Test is fit for purpose. The structure will allow for good succession planning and help build capacity in this phase to offset the reduction in core ACE grant. Some functions e.g. marketing, can be augmented by creating paid internships which have proved very successful in the past. Ideas Test will continue to nurture and develop talent, and to signpost progression routes for individuals. We will aim to retain staff where we can and to plan carefully for succession and staff change, implementing robust operational structures that offer best value. We are committed to supporting diversity and inclusion in the team.

The Director (3 days) will focus on strategic alignment, partnership development, artistic direction and fundraising. Lucy Medhurst is a respected senior arts professional with a reputation for integrity and high quality participatory work. She has a track record of very successful fundraising, leveraging in excess of £1.322million+ partnership investment over 4.5 years at Artswork as Strategic Manager and over £380,000 since her tenure at Ideas Test including commercial sponsorship of £5,000. She was formerly acting Director of an NPO, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, and sits on the Boards of Sun Pier House and Outdoor Studios CIC. She was instrumental in leveraging in £1 million DCMS/ACE funding for young people in Sheppey and Medway through the Youth Performance Partnership fund involving two cultural education partnerships - called Theatre 31.

The Deputy Director (FT new post) will support and deputise for the Director, reporting to her and ensuring the smooth operation and financial management of programmes and lead on staff line management, monitoring and evaluation, reporting and some fundraising. Tracy Brunt has recently joined the team. She worked at the Albany in Deptford, helping to raise over £1M, and worked there to develop scalable, sustainable projects and create a strong evidence base for their work with specific communities and artists. She has extensive experience of the arts funding system including working with the Arts Council and local authorities. Tracy brings touring theatre, events management, programming and a wealth of relevant experience to the role.

The **financial and operations** functions will be internal or commissioned out following a review of current arrangements in the transition phase. This will ensure that we implement tailored and best practice financial controls and models. At the time of writing, financial reporting, HR,



payroll and insurance are managed by the lead body. We will review our processes in line with best practice advice and bring financial reporting in-house (through the use of Xero or similar) looking for value in terms of HR, payroll, legal and insurances. This has the potential to make significant savings and efficiencies.

All staff will be expected to look for opportunities for sponsorship and work to meet our income generation targets and will work with the Director / Deputy Director on delivering the fundraising strategy. Each strand or project will be managed by the relevant **Producer**, one each for Swale and Medway, overseen by Deputy Director / Director. These individuals will work in and through our target community hubs ensuring a clear additional feedback loop from the grassroots into the organisation and links with our target audiences. They will work to complement the **Audience Engagement and Marketing** lead. They will work with our existing and new Community Champions from these communities, alongside the team, recruiting and providing regular contact for CCs and volunteers.

The youth programme producer will work across the geography, managing our highly successful strand for the 14 - 25 age group. Mentored by the Director, this individual will also respond to any commissioning requests, including from our two LCEPs, who have commissioned Ideas Test for project coordination, mapping and consultation exercises, bringing in much needed income. Arts Award will remain integral to our offer, as will music, working strategically with both Music Education Hubs, Dynamics, Kent Music, music production company Sparked Echo and other industry partners. Our work particularly focuses on young people who are at risk or who would not otherwise get opportunities with the aim of developing their leadership and skills. A very high percentage of young people engaging with our programmes have additional needs, mental health needs and experience of the care system. This requires sensitive handling and robust safeguarding practice.

The **audience engagement and marketing** lead will ensure that our communications plan and strategy reaches more audiences, in particular targeted groups and will help inform the team with local knowledge and contacts. The strategy is underpinned by our hyper local community-led approach. This individual will also lead on digital engagement, training staff and others in effective marketing and audience engagement practice. A refreshed new website will also foreground our work and community voice and will develop and share content created by them on a range of channels, including radio, podcasts and TV. We have already had support from Arts Council's Digital Champions to inform our digital development and will implement this plan in CPP2/3. Kyra Cross is a Swale resident with extensive local knowledge and networks in the area. They have undergone Arts Marketing Association Training and are developing their own creative practice with LADA.¹¹

An **Admin Assistant** will work 3 days per week (or equivalent) from the Gillingham office to

¹¹ Appendix 8 Audience Engagement Strategy and Action Plan.



offer support across the programme and help collate data and reporting. They will help process invoices, supported by a **book-keeper** who will help manage Xero and reporting.

Freelance artists, small arts organisations and **co-commissioned artists** will assist delivery and benefit from support, advice and CPD. This will include funding surgeries and network events. All staff and project teams will be trained in data collection, our evaluation methodology and use of dashboards. **Volunteers** will be trained to collect data, understand our evaluation framework and to support events. At busy times we will be supported by **interns** and casual staff.

Budget lines including CPD will ensure that the team, volunteers, artists, organisations and CCs can benefit from training events, gatherings and opportunities. The staff team is very dedicated, but salary levels are not as competitive as we would like within Kent and Medway and so we need to plan for staff progression within and beyond Ideas Test. We will ensure that valued intelligence and knowledge remains in the organisation. Ideas Test is creating value for other organisations recruiting our staff (eg Canterbury Museum and the Marlowe) and supporting career progression for new graduates and experienced team members.

Programme*

Ideas Test's significant achievements over the last 5 years have guided us to 7 bold activity strands for our final CPP funded Phase 2020-23. These achievements are underpinned by an evolution in our core methods and approaches, aligned towards reaching the least engaged, transforming arts and cultural community leadership and creating new arts and cultural capacity in Swale & Medway. The programme has seven distinct strands:

1. Co commissions
2. Youth Leadership and Voice
3. Art in the Everyday
4. Festivals and Outdoor
5. Capacity building for legacy
6. Strategic engagement
7. Evaluation and action learning

It is important to state that the strands will influence one another and interweave. What follows is a synopsis, please see the detailed Workplan.¹²

¹² Appendix 5 detailed Workplan.



One: Community and Industry Co-Commissions

Applying Mattarasso's five concepts of quality (from A Restless Art) our team, consortium, artists and Community Champions will train in and apply these concepts to all of the work we co commission for Craft/Skill, Resonance, Agency, Originality and Magic. We will develop a suite of exciting and innovative, community driven co-commissions across Swale and Medway, working with targeted communities through existing community organisations and large businesses. We will involve local individuals, organisations and businesses in the commissioning processes, as they are guided to take key decisions about socially engaged arts practice and high-quality art.

Co-Commissions will include a number of residencies and events - in 2020 for the Isle of Sheppey, Pull Up a Chair will be led by Quiet Down There and involve co-commissioned residencies with Revoluton and LV21, based on a New York apex art model. We will bring Three Portraits of Britain to the Hoo peninsula working with folk musicians Danny Pedler and Greg Russell to capture oral histories and factory sounds from the Power Station. Medway artists will work with an artist responding to a brief from Live Art Development Agency with the involvement of local artists as part of DIY 2020.

We will

- work with the Chatham Town Centre Forum testing co commissioning for the Pentagon to help animate the space and bring new experiences into the shopping centre. continue on our large scale ambitions for a Barn Raising co-commission in Milton Creek Country Park in Sittingbourne working with Cement Fields and the local authority to realise a new small scale environmentally sensitive creative space.
- broker a new relationship with Gillingham Football Club to explore co commissioning potential sharing opportunities and learning with partners, CCs, artists and stakeholders and linking this to a Social Return on Investment study.

Two: Youth leadership and Voice

- We will further develop **youth leadership** and voice in CPP3, supporting young people to develop their skills and overcome barriers experienced by individuals growing up in



areas of low aspiration and poverty of opportunity. Youth led work will offer high quality arts experiences, providing skills development, industry placements and production possibilities for more young people in the targeted areas as well as opportunities to be involved in high quality production of national significance.

- Working on a strategic piece of work with Battersea Arts Centre's the Agency, we will develop a pilot model for Medway and build on our learning about working with young people facing challenging circumstances and developing their entrepreneurial skills. This will include the three year theatre and new writing programme **Theatre 31** carrying on our work at strategic and infrastructure building levels. We will develop youth CCs to shape and lead the programme so that it is responsive to their needs and seek to recruit a young person to the Ideas Test board.
- We will encourage young people to contribute content for our digital and social media platforms advising us on effective engagement.
- We will further develop music funded work in Swale and Medway and a Digital creative programme working with Sparked Echo on creative digital skills, music and content development and outcomes for the Digital Gaming festival in Medway planned for 2021.
- We are working with Opera Circus and partners at University of Kent (UoK), Gulbenkian and Chatham Dockyard to bring a new contemporary chamber opera, **Naciteka**, by Ariel Dorfman and Nigel Osborne which will highlight issues of racism, child slavery, child migration and the uses of music and the creative arts to deal with trauma from areas of conflict and post conflict. Ideas Test are working locally with UoK introducing the chamber opera to the festival and performance opportunities in the UK and Europe. We will work with UoK on the community outreach programme that will explore the opera's resonant and topical themes. Discussions are being held about the involvement of refugee communities, with Nigel Osborne leading the design and delivery of the work. Local partner will be the Huguenot Museum. Nigel is currently training young musicians in Lebanon to work with children with trauma from Syria at a camp in the Bekka Valley. This will offer young people in Medway opportunities to be involved with and inspired by an international high profile production at all levels for May 2021.

Three: Art in the Everyday

This strand will provide opportunities to engage in creativity on a day to day basis, developing locally relevant participation models. There will be digital creative challenges that are inclusive, collaborative, easy to access and contribute to our online platforms, with opportunities for exhibition of amateur or collaborative work in local hubs with local artists. Pop Up events and workshops will take place in libraries, community venues, shopping centres. Links with national



festivals, like Get Creative. Strategic relationship with Voluntary Arts, particularly linking to mapping and engagement of amateur groups, Radio Kent, local radio, TV and all our digital platforms.

This strand will link with an interactive pilot in Medway libraries for User Not Found, Dante or Die's internationally acclaimed digital work that explores the virtual space and bereavement. We will work with groups from Cruse and community groups at Gillingham/Chatham library. Supported by the Chatham Town Centre forum, we will work with them to co-commission and bring exciting work to the shopping centre, connecting with the Hidden Voices Untold Stories theme. Following the evaluation of our highly successful Sea Folk Sing/Celebrating Age 2 year project and consultation with CCs and older people groups - Dilly Dally will focus on work with older people to combat social isolation using traditional and digital music making. We will continue working with Counterpoint Arts and Platforma to programme exciting and diverse work in our hyper local hubs creating opportunities for social cohesion and improved understanding. Strand 3 will link with local artists and networks to help engage communities and embed community engaged practice (see Strand Five).

Four: Festivals and Outdoor

We will help to build the ambition and programme content for local festivals in Swale and Medway to develop a quality offer in the build up to Medway City of Culture, bringing exciting events for Swale and Medway that are ambitious and at scale. Embedding diversity in programme design and content results in improved community cohesion and more representation of artists with protected characteristics. We will build on our engagement work to take part in and help to programme local festival events in Swale and Medway.

Strand Four will offer skills development for community art groups, young people, volunteers, CCs and target audiences (particularly families). This will include opportunities to

- develop Youth CCs to lead activity, create content, project manage, programme and perform.
- to build skills and knowledge for CCs and to encourage local communities to take part and build capacity locally (see Strand Five).

We will build on the Fusion Festival Sittingbourne, Art in the Park and three locally based Focus on Events in Medway.

A highlight in 2020 will be a co commission river spectacle for the river Medway partnering with Cement Fields and engaging with the local community and will explore an environmental theme linked with climate change, as part of the Estuary Festival, taking place across North Kent in September. This will contribute to developing the profile of Swale and Medway bringing exciting work to the area along the Thames Estuary.



Five: Capacity Building for Legacy

We will help to build capacity and skills locally by increasing our numbers of:

- Volunteers, Interns and work experience placements
- Community leaders and champions
- Artists, creatives and producers – both amateur and professionals
- Industry /Business and Non arts partners

Sharing best practice on co commissioning and community led programming will involve a range of approaches: advice sessions, surgeries, 1:1s, sharing and learning events, Go Sees, ideas exchanges, meet-ups, celebration /Long Table events and CPD for stakeholders, volunteers, artists, participants and and community groups. We will work with Revoluton, Transported and other CPPs to develop this offer and share what works well through case studies, conference and CPP network presentations.

Artists and others from our co commissioning strands will be asked to contribute content - short blogs and or 'talking head' pieces as learning resources and or to provide recorded Q and A sessions to widen our sharing with other national networks.

Strand Six: Strategic engagement

Ideas Test will continue to be a beacon of excellence, building sustainability and long-term thinking into all that we do, facilitating the leverage of more resources for Swale and Medway and building capacity for arts and culture in the region. We are positioned as important partners for Kent County Council, Swale Borough Council and Medway Council to play a role in strategic developments and help align with Arts Council priorities and the new Ten Year Strategy. We sit on Executive Boards in Kent Medway and Swale and contribute to thinking related to initiatives such as Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPEC) Medway Cultural Strategy and Cultural Compact, Medway City of Culture 2025, Kent Cultural Strategy, regeneration and economic growth. We highlight the need for community voice and engagement in these conversations, bringing voluntary, community and eg Big Local partners to the table to take part in relevant forums and dialogue. All of these initiatives and the TEPEC Estuary festival 2020 offer great opportunities to foster local pride and active cultural engagement in our communities.

We will continue to discuss longer term plans with our core LA partners and SELEP and to be



alert and ready to respond to initiatives such as the Future High Street fund, Heritage Action Zone and social prescribing. We will operate through more Pop Up models and deliver in e.g. shopping centres, green spaces and high streets. Longer term we would like to realise the ambition for a fully fit for purpose community hub that can help provide start up space for local creative businesses. There is no such facility currently in either Sittingbourne or Gillingham. We may approach Kent Community Foundation and other capital funds for loans or grants in the future.

Strand 7: Evaluation

Core evaluation methods were introduced in CPP2, based on Transported CPP's tried and tested model. Our action learning approach is integral to our projects, using Stories of Change.

In addition to continuing to exploring the 3 National CPP Research Questions:

1. Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?
2. To what extent was aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of process of engaging communities achieved?
3. Which approaches were successful, what were lessons learned?

We will add two locality specific themes informed by evaluation to date:

4. How (well) do participation approaches impact on very local place-making?
5. How (well) do participation approaches and active engagement aid audience reach?
6. How can the social value generated from Ideas Test's work be maximised?

We will share our Culture Cubed social impact toolkit widely through conversations and partnerships developing at DCMS, Social Value UK, the Centre for Social Value Research and others exploring potential with Professor Alex Stevens, Director of Public Engagement UoK to link with social and cultural impact research in Kent and Medway. We will train volunteers and young people in observation techniques and data capture, helping to develop their skills.¹³

We have strengthened evaluation within the team and programme by working with MB Associates over the past two years to embed Story of Change action learning models in all projects. We collate Audience Agency data and core questions as well as gather additional information when required (Celebrating Age).

¹³ DRAFT Evaluation framework - working document



Over the next 3 years, we will work with MBA to review our learning. We will formulate a robust evaluation framework, involving our volunteers and CCs in reflective practice, observation and data collection alongside regular feedback sessions to shape the programme as it progresses and inform annual reporting. By the end of the 3 years, we will have measured the national evaluation questions, as well as provided valuable qualitative and quantitative evaluation for sharing with the wider Swale and Medway cultural ecology and beyond. We will revisit our overarching Story of Change in sessions for our stakeholders CCs partners and volunteers reflecting local voice and wishes.¹⁴ We will further develop and disseminate use of our social value toolkit resource and training.

Strand	Smart objectives
<p>One: Community and Industry Co Commissions</p>	<p>Subject to funding, develop 4 x co commissions across the geography</p> <p>1x industry/ business investment in co commissioning</p> <p>Co commissioning practice is better understood in Swale and Medway</p> <p>Evidence a better understanding of socially engaged community led practice in 3 communities with reach of 1000 people</p>
<p>Two: Youth leadership and Voice</p>	<p>Up to 50 young people raise aspirations and develop skills as programmers, makers and consumers</p> <p>Up to 2000 young people experience work of national significance and some have opportunities to progress into the arts, particularly those from deprived or under represented communities and backgrounds. In Medway up to 10 young people help shape ambition for City of Culture/ Cultural Strategy</p> <p>Progression routes are established with up to 10 partners</p>

¹⁴ Appendix 1 Ideas Test Story of Change December 2018



	<p>A minimum of 5 young people are programming and shaping cultural life locally/ Ideas Test programme</p> <p>At least 1 young person represented on Ideas Test board and minimum 5 cyp helping shape programme as Community Champions</p>
<p>Three: Art in the Everyday</p>	<p>5% Increase in number of volunteers year on year Up to 50 Creative Champions and 20 artists help shape programme locally</p> <p>A programme of activity in everyday spaces and places engages target audiences to take part regularly and links with national campaigns Impacts are evidenced and up to 3 case studies shared</p> <p>Up to 20 interviews staff CCs and artists with local radio, Radio Kent, MTV, BBC and Vol Arts, foreground local voices</p> <p>Artists blogs local voices and stories are showcased on our website/ digital platforms</p> <p>Nominations from Swale and Medway to the Epic awards</p>
<p>Four: Festivals and Outdoor</p>	<p>Greater diversity in programming up to 10 artists co commissioned in this and other strands</p> <p>Evidence of community empowered to lead on events in longer term</p> <p>Opportunities for up to 15 Young Producers to gain training and experience over 3 years</p>
<p>Five: Capacity Building for Legacy</p>	<p>A more diverse pool of artists in Swale and Medway developing co created work up to 10 new artists / orgs (as above)</p>



	<p>Up to 10 new orgs can effectively demonstrate social value created by the arts through Kent toolkit legacy work</p> <p>The social value of Ideas Test programmes is well evidenced and understood</p> <p>Collective ability of minimum 5 non arts partners to articulate benefit the arts bring</p> <p>Communities in Medway and Swale empowered to lead</p> <p>% increase in funding applications to ACE, Heritage and other (10 successful over 3 years)</p> <p>Attendance and feedback from aspiring artists more diverse groups make progress towards accessing ACE /other grants and overcoming barriers to applying</p> <p>Up to 3 x Networks and 50 Cultural Champions/ ambassadors better support the arts ecology of Swale and Medway</p>
<p>Strand Six: Strategic engagement</p>	<p>% increase in cultural capacity is evidenced - In Medway and Swale partners and business become more creative, effective and likely to invest</p> <p>Step change in ambition and raised profile for Swale and Medway is evidenced by development of the Cultural Strategy and local culture change</p> <p>More effective collaboration and critical mass</p>
<p>Strand 7: Evaluation</p>	<p>Community voice feeds into artistic practice and understanding of what works in specific contexts and communities</p> <p>Additional questions and learnings arise through projects and are fed back informing our approaches</p> <p>Ideas Test consortium and wider sector improves understanding of what works, where and why?</p> <p>Evidence an increase in local pride and overarching Story of Change annual event</p> <p>Minimum 3 more case studies submitted</p>

* See Appendix 5 Workplan for more detail



Finance and fundraising

The proposed budget is informed by our new Fundraising Strategy.¹⁵ The Fundraising Strategy and attendant research is designed to offer alternative income sources for the programme and the timeline is indicative. We anticipate that we can realise project and grant income at an ambitious level due to the extra capacity afforded by the new organisational/staff structure and specialist fundraising support (Sarah Dance). Some funders are currently included in the budget, because we are already developing relationships with them (Colyer Fergusson Trust, Kent Community Foundation, the Fore). We will continue to work on others on the list over the next three years and in advance to establish their likely level of support, but the strategy gives us a sound basis for financial planning.

The consortium supports Ideas Test's evolution to become a CIO as this will unlock a great deal more fundraising potential. After six years under Swale CVS as lead body, independence will allow us to move boldly into the future with all of our consortium partners in support. This financial model will support more activity in Medway and sustain our work in Swale.

Fundraising climate

A key challenge for Ideas Test is the national fundraising climate: public sector cuts coupled with a competitive environment for fundraising across the board including the pressure on Trusts and Foundations funding due to low interest rates. Our fundraising will diversify our funding streams and seek new public and lottery funders to support skills and community development, target trusts and foundations, and continue to work with partners to explore research-focused funding and commissioning potential. We have a good fundraising track record and we are confident that further success can be achieved.

Our success in diversifying income streams across Local Authority, Trusts & Foundations, donations and earned income demonstrate a decreasing reliance on ACE support over the three years of the funding agreement:

ACE CPP award as a % of our total budget --

2020/21 - 58%

2021/22 - 52%

2022/23 - 41%

In addition, we project a 10% core budget contribution from project-specific income.

The ACE grant represents a percentage of lead body Swale CVS total income as follows:

¹⁵ See Appendix 7 Fundraising strategy



2020/21 - 23.65%
2021/22 - 23.81%
2022/23 - 20.55%

Kent County Council (KCC) has confirmed core commitment of £5,000 per annum for 3 years to support the Ideas Test programme and our evolution as an independent CIO. We received no core grant from KCC in CPP2. We anticipate that this will be supplemented by member grants and arts investment funds totalling approximately £11,000 per annum. In Kind support is considerable with a senior officer attendance at quarterly meetings. KCC have additionally invested in the social value impact toolkit work with Ideas Test, five small Kent arts organisations and MB Associates and we are in discussion about further work of national significance in relation to the resource, Culture Cubed, which is creating something for others in the sector to use and demonstrate the impact of their work. To date, we have interest from CPP network, DCMS, Nesta, Dementia UK, and others in this work and are developing a plan to roll out use of the toolkit. There is potential to request match funding for large scale projects/ co commissions from KCC (as we did with Sea Folk Sing) and others cited in the strategy.

Medway Council has confirmed £4,000 per year aligned with the Chatham Town Centre forum match investment. With officer support In Kind equivalent value and Town Centre forum funds amounting to an additional 12K over 3 years. This is the first time Medway has committed to core support of Ideas Test. Officer support facilitates links with libraries, public health (eg. Sun Pier House) and regeneration (via Dawn Hudd, Assistant Director Physical and Cultural Regeneration). Good relations with Medway are indicated by events permissions and access to the Pentagon Centre (recently purchased by Medway Council) for Pop Ups and outdoor events and festivals. Longer term potential could materialise through Future High Street and Heritage Action Zone funding and other conversations related to community engagement and new festivals.

Future commissioning funds may become available and there is a live discussion about investment for the Estuary festival, from Medway Council and the Cultural Development Fund.

These commitments represent a dramatic demonstration of improved confidence and support from our local authority partners at a difficult time for them, and an acknowledgement of the considerable value that our work is creating in terms of skills development, social value, capacity building and development of arts infrastructure.

Swale Borough Council (SBC) have undergone a fairly dramatic political change in the recent local elections and it is likely to take time for things to settle and for the strategic direction to be confirmed. Emma Wiggins head of regeneration has offered a statement of support and will continue to have an observer's place on the consortium. Emma and other officers at the Council have been very supportive of Ideas Test at number 34 and we will continue to work together



strategically. The planning department and other relevant officers advise and help on other matters, like the Future High Street Fund and sit on eg the Raising the Sittingbourne Barn advisory group. We will continue to apply to KCC and SBC for member grants for specific projects. A public facing high street offer at number 34 does not meet our strategic delivery plans for CPP3 and the Spirit of Sittingbourne partnership is under review.

The budget has been arrived at as an iterative process, based on real costs and our fundraising success over the past two years. Funds from project grants will not be committed unless the identified grants come in, lessening the impact of identified risks. Once we have charitable status, we will be better positioned to access additional core monies and thereby offer more competitive salaries, which is likely to be more of an issue once we are based in Medway, because of closer proximity to London and neighbouring North Kent organisations.

Governance and financial controls

Ideas Test will use its own Xero system by April 2020 in readiness for Phase 3 developments and CIO status. As Ideas Test becomes a CIO it will recruit a (potentially external) book-keeper and a Board Treasurer, implementing best practice and adopting robust financial controls and systems which mean we will have immediate access to our own finance reports designed for ease of reporting. In our new staff structure, we have costed options to have a dedicated bookkeeper and HR service. No longer having a public space to manage and programme will save on staff hours.

We acknowledge risk as we scale up and with the help of our consortium/ shadow board will build resilience, introducing a Risk Register.¹⁶

Fundraising Strategy

A consortium approved Fundraising Strategy is in place to take us into CPP3 and more work will be done with consultant Sarah Dance to identify relevant opportunities matched to the programme.¹⁷ Independent charitable status as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) will make Ideas Test eligible for more specific arts funding streams, as well as encourage more sponsorship, donations and crowdfunding. The CIO process is underway, supported by staff at SCVS. We will work with our consortium and other named partners to be bid ready for funds that align with our strategic objectives, themes and shared aims. We will be looking for added value through collaboration and pooled resources. We will continue to create value locally by supporting other groups, local artists and organisations to develop successful Arts Council bids

¹⁶ See Appendix 10 Risk Register

¹⁷ Appendix 7 Fundraising Strategy



in Swale and Medway, responding to our communities, needs analysis and our ladder of engagement models.

The team will be supported by the Director and Deputy Director to apply for grants, respond to commissioning opportunities and be entrepreneurial in terms of realising in kind and cash donations, sponsorship and income generation (including crowdfunding) for their own programmes. Staff will be trained to make sure they have the necessary skills in grant application and budgeting.

The **budget¹⁸** and **Fundraising Strategy** identify funds to support the programme and those additionally which will be accessible for Ideas Test once we become a CIO. Our overall targets are ambitious, aiming to leverage 1:1 funds for the programme; our projected budgets prudently acknowledge that not all of our funding applications will be successful, and include those which have been assessed as stronger prospects. However, with £180,000 confirmed core funds for the programme (ACE and KCC) and encouragement already from other potential funders (ROH Bridge and Colyer Fergusson Trust for core youth work and older people/families), we are confident that we can achieve our targets. In Year 3 Esmee Fairbairn will be approached to support programme as well as core. Baring Foundation are prior funders through Celebrating Age.

Income generation

Sponsorship potential

The Director/ Deputy will continue to develop sponsorship potential through high net worth individuals and businesses, and will train the team in pursuing income streams for cash in kind and material donations. Prospects include:

- Walkfree London and the Minderoo Foundation for Naciteka, through the Director's contacts
- Cook for Raising the Sittingbourne Barn and events that include food and celebration
- Asda - to support events, act as Community Champion and on relevant advisory groups
- U + I Ltd London property developer, for events in Sittingbourne (currently £5,000 for student digital light and sound projections)
- London estate agents Avison Young, in return for keyholding
- Copper Rivet Distillery: donations or In Kind prizes at the restaurant, rewards for volunteers
- The Works have donated art materials for eg Big Draw
- DS Smith have donated rolls of paper for drawing for events and consultation exercises
- Elvis and Kresse local luxury bag social enterprise for advice and mentoring on cyp

¹⁸ Appendix 6 Budget



programme

- Drax and AC Goatham and Son for Hoo peninsula
- Gillingham FC

Modest amounts of income can be realised through donations, sponsorship, ticket sales and crowdfunding.

As CCs help shape, comment on and lead the programme, we anticipate greater success with crowdsourcing and donations for specific projects. This will be part of our action research and it will be relevant to specific projects. We will develop our expertise in this area, looking at platforms like Spacehive, and taking care to check for due diligence.

Commissioned work/ income generation

We will develop our commissioned workstrand, bringing in a small amount of additional income through these opportunities to use the skills of the team to support capacity building and excellence locally. To date these have been cyp focused. Our policy will be to test against our mission, charging a 10% fee, and at full cost recovery as a minimum. We are working in partnership with Icon Theatre on the set up phase of Theatre 31 with baseline surveys and recruitment of young people to the youth panels, having successfully supported the application process.

We will tender for mentoring, project management, training, evaluation, data collection and community engagement work as opportunities arise. In 2018/19 this amounted to £25,500 and we will aim to increase this %age of income to reflect our skills and acknowledged expertise as we move towards 2024, and as part of our sustainability plan.

University and FE partnerships

Specialist adviser Liz Moran, Director of Arts and Culture and Co Director Institute of Cultural and Creative Industries at UoK, offers senior strategic links in Medway, as well as opportunities for Ideas Test to benefit from other relevant initiatives in North Kent.

We will offer internship opportunities to graduates and other young people and look for further opportunities for research partnerships and knowledge exchange. We have existing relationships with **Universities of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church and the Creative Arts**, all of whom have campuses in Medway.

Support from Trish Vella Burrows as evaluator for Sea Folk Sing has contributed very significant In Kind or pro bono value to the project and we are discussing further potential for working together, including AHRC. UoK has a Knowledge Transfer Bank and network, which provides



potential PHD graduates (one is working on the Sun Pier House Open Arts project) and will be further pursued as appropriate. Dante or Die are pursuing AHRC for User Not Found and we will look for resources to support this work in Medway libraries.

We have worked with Mid Kent College on our Now Showing strand and as volunteers for Sea Folk Sing and Sheppey College are keen to support the skills strand of our Raising the Sittingbourne Barn project, so we will consolidate and draw on these relationships further in CPP3.

In Kind

We have had a great deal of In Kind support, including from consortium members, and we anticipate that this will continue with the move to Medway. SCVS will provide hot desk and storage facilities. Partnerships with Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust (meeting space and strategic links with museums), The Community Rail Partnership staff time, risk assessment (rail performances Sea Folk Sing), Medway Council Leisure services, as well as our community and voluntary partners, have contributed to very substantial support in terms of use of space for meetings and events. We have benefited from additional In Kind support with evaluation, strategic direction from our specialist advisers and consortium and financial management best practice from working with chartered accountant CJ Mitchell, donating his specialist time and advice.

Other support has included free loan of transport for our youth programme from partners at New House in Sittingbourne, allowing significant savings for Go See trips when appropriate, as well as council rate rebates.

Working in and through our community hubs will represent further in kind support and Nucleus Arts and Arches Local have both offered free use of their Chatham spaces.

In Phase 2, over the first two years our in kind value totalled in excess of £158,000.

Our volunteers gave us £20,000 equivalent time in the past year alone and this is growing. We strive to match opportunities to the interests of individuals in order to support their own progression and stated goals. Our volunteers are often facing significant challenges.

Arts Partnerships - added value

Making Medway and Swale an attractive place to invest. Our strong arts partnerships allow for strategic match of activity with our programme, add value and will allow us to share our community co commissioning models more widely. This model and approach has attracted high profile organisations outside the area, like Counterpoint Arts, Live Art Development Agency



(LADA) Dante or Die and Quiet Down There to work with us in CPP3 and to help access to our community partners and networks. Ideas Test have brokered these relationships and also recommended Revoluton as a partner for QDT. We have supported LV21, Kinetika, Rosa Productions and Leeds Castle with community links and advice.

Other opportunities

We are also planning to approach Gillingham Football Club to explore the potential for working together. One possibility is staging Emily Peasgood's award winning commissioned work for performance at the Gillingham ground in November to mark the anniversary of the end of WW1. *Never Again* was our co commission for **Sea Folk Sing**. This could generate sponsorship and donations. Part of the work includes the England football chant.

Optivo and Hyde Housing are partners who have either already sponsored us or who may be willing to do so and we are keen to explore the notion of using a community space/ house for artist residency, co-commissions or participatory workshops with them under either the commissioning or **Art in the Everyday** strand.

Culture Cubed Social Value toolkit work and SROI will offer new opportunities to share learning about how to evidence social value in genuine community engaged practice, including advice and training in its use. It will also allow us to demonstrate the social value that we know our work creates and provide evidence to potential funders and investors.