

Case studies: How can the arts and creativity support people who are shielding or vulnerable during Covid-19?

Project: Tiny Revolutions of Connection

Organisation: Fun Palaces

Region: National (UK)

Introduction

We have always said that Fun Palaces are about the tiniest of connections, person to person – and that the process of creating a Fun Palace is easily as important as what happens on the weekend. As we say in our Manifesto: *We believe we can do this together, locally, with radical fun – and that anyone, anywhere, can make a Fun Palace.*



Now it's time to give it a try ...

We are sharing practical suggestions, tiny steps anyone can take to connect a little more in their local community or simply pass time creatively in self-isolation. These steps are both online and OFFline – while a great deal of connection is moving online right now, this is not available to everyone and we want Fun Palaces, as ever, to be for anyone who wants to connect.

Image credit: “Dress how you feel” – Ali Wilson; Fun Palaces.

Funders

Alis, Bethan & Siobhan: The National Lottery Community Fund; everyone else, TNLCF and FEAST/CMP/Sheffield Theatres/SLIC

Who is it for?

We have been especially interested in supporting those who are offline – primarily because far too many arts organisations (in our opinion) have ignored those who have little or no internet access, many of whom are among the poorest in the UK, and therefore those most often missing out anyway. We therefore created Tiny Revolutions – ideas to connect and create in community, at least half of which can be downloaded and printed to share OFFline. In particular this includes those who are shielding and who have no internet access – we have been very clear to mention these people in our material and to request that communities include them too. <https://funpalaces.co.uk/news/tiny-revolutions-of-connection/>

What outcomes were/are you aiming for?

The same aims we always have – supporting EVERYONE to take part in arts, culture & creativity, celebrating everyday creativity, celebrating creativity that is community-led (ie rather than specifically artist-led), encouraging those OFFline to take part and also to lead.

Where is it happening?

Our wider work is UK-wide and global, and we have shared Tiny Revolutions widely on social media, with requests to print & post material to individuals and community groups in North Wales, Northern Ireland, Hove, Sheffield, the Highlands, east London.

How many people took/are taking part?

We have been asked to print over 5,000 copies of specific Tiny revolutions for others to share & use in communities, so I think we can guess 5,000?

For how long has it been happening?

We started it the week before lockdown when we had to cancel our annual launch (the date was 17 March & we were meant to be in Inverness with 30 of our Ambassadors and Makers) and have continued the work since, sharing 2-3 new Tiny Revolutions every week. Initially we sourced them from people and organisations we know, and very early on we started to receive them from strangers sending them in.

What were/are the main outputs?

Online sharing, offline sharing, people using the activities for their own communities – eg, it has been picked up by the Renfrewshire area in Scotland:

<https://www.renfrewshireleisure.com/tiny-revolutions-of-renfrewshire/>

What have been the challenges and successes for you?

We have received many emails, tweets etc of gratitude. Members of the public have sent us their own versions, which shows us that it works. Arts organisations have also used it to showcase their community work, sending us their ideas to share, all good. We perceive Fun Palaces to be a conduit and connector for community and arts/creativity workers, and this has certainly worked well in that way. Very good for us.

The big challenge has been to support people to keep their ideas brief and shareable so we can turn them into offline PDFs – it's taken loads of editing work on my part! Worth it, but incredibly labour intensive.

Further information

<https://funpalaces.co.uk/news/tiny-revolutions-of-connection/>

Fun Palaces supports local communities to co-create their own community cultural events, across the UK and beyond. Fun Palaces is a not for profit group hosted by a charity, with 11 roles – all part-time (max 2 days/week) & freelance comms.