



RSA Cambridge Update

Inequality in Education and the Transition to Employment

In October 2018 the RSA Cambridge Meetup identified the theme of **inequality in education and the transition to employment** and a number of topics that could be addressed by Fellows. These fell in to three broad areas:

- **Mitigating effects of inequality through education**
 - Educational, cultural and social capital
 - Ensuring **all** disadvantaged students receive support for academic, personal and career development
 - Spreading good practice and “real world” input into schools
 - Influencing governing bodies
- **Facilitating employer involvement in schools**
 - Improve student understanding of knowledge, skills and attitudes needed
 - Develop student aspirations and confidence
 - Supporting local “intermediate” organisations that link schools and employers
- **Influencing elected representatives to better understand**
 - Transition from education to employment
 - Support and resources needed in schools to prepare students
 - For a working life requiring retraining, upskilling and coping with change
 - For development of motivation, confidence and self-reliance
 - For the mitigation of disadvantage

Fellows were keen to have an impact, find practical ways to become involved and also build links with work going on across the RSA and other organisations. In parallel there have been developments in Cambridgeshire, with a **Cambridgeshire Culture Card** project supported by the County and Cambridge City Councils and a wide range of other organisations connected with arts and culture. The project is also supported as part of the national **RSA Cities of Learning** initiative.

Through developing a “smart” version of the County’s Library Card the aim of the project is to increase cultural engagement (but this may broaden out to include other areas of out-of-school and extracurricular activity) by children and young people, and especially those from low-income or disadvantaged backgrounds. It offers the possibility of involvement to RSA Fellows (and others) in Cambridgeshire, using their skills and experience to support its development. The most obvious areas for input from Fellows are:

- helping schools integrate the Culture Card concept within their academic, personal and career development work with pupils at both primary and secondary level, and
- working with the scheme and organisations such as *Form the Future* to build links with employers and culture providers – all of which helps to enhance the academic, social and cultural capital that can help raise young people’s aspirations and career success – and not just in the arts and creative industries.

As the project develops the remit has the potential to extend beyond arts and culture. RSA Fellows will also be well placed to influence local authorities, schools and employers in their work to mitigate disadvantage and inequality across Cambridgeshire.

So far, 20 RSA Fellows and 3 others have indicated interest in getting involved in the Culture Card project as it develops, and they will be kept informed of developments. At present the project team has assessed a small initial piloting of the scheme, and it is expected to extend it with a larger pilot involving around 15 schools from April 2020, with a full roll-out to all Cambridgeshire state schools in 2022. A revised management structure for the extended project will provide opportunities for some RSA Fellows to be involved in appropriate advisory groups. Four RSA Fellows are already involved in the overarching **My Cambridge** Steering Group, which has oversight of the Culture Card, Arts Award and another project ACTIVATE, designed to mitigate inequality by encouraging involvement in the Arts and Culture by disadvantaged young people.

As with all major projects of this type, development depends in part on fundraising from public and private sources. Around a quarter of the funding needed for the next stage has already been raised and it is hoped the remainder can be in place by February 2020. It is encouraging to note that the Government's **Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sports** has included the Culture Card project as an exemplar of excellence in their *Culture is Digital* progress report. There is clearly scope for the project to be extended to other areas of England. However, the continuing uncertainty over Brexit means that budgets in many government departments are unconfirmed pending the outcome of Brexit. Another model being explored is to form a coalition between different local authorities in the country, taking a shared approach to funding the digital platform and to increase the sustainability of the project going forward.

In the meantime there are many opportunities for Fellows to help at the interface of employment and schools/colleges. In Cambridgeshire there is a very effective non-profit social enterprise **Form the Future**, which is also extending its reach into Fenland and Norwich:



Chief Executive: Anne Bailey, FRSA

Our goal is to open students' eyes to a wide range of possibilities and challenge them to think broadly and divergently about their future career options. This will help every young person in the greater Cambridge area to move from education into a rewarding and successful career.

To do this, we bring schools and businesses together so students can learn about employment opportunities in our region, and develop the necessary skills and experience. Meeting and working with professionals is the best way to broaden horizons and help young people prepare for their futures.

Although we cover all industries, we focus on companies in growth sectors to tackle the skills shortages that hold businesses back and increase students' chances of getting into work.

We work with all ages from primary school, through to sixth form and further education, and with both state and independent schools.

Form the Future offers a range of ways in which RSA Fellows can get involved as volunteers: participating in careers fairs and events to inform students of employment opportunities and the requirements of particular careers, offering guidance and practice with applications and interviews, providing support through mentoring schemes within schools. Contacts and advice can also help the organisation find the resources and funding needed to develop and maintain its programmes. To find out more, or volunteer, go to www.formthefuture.org.uk/.

A more detailed description of the Culture Card project is given below. Anyone who would like further information on the RSA Cambridge involvement should contact initially robert.porrer@virginmedia.com. For information on the Culture Card contact Michelle Lord, Arts Development Officer & Cambridgeshire Culture Card Project Manager at Cambridge City Council: michelle.lord@cambridge.gov.uk

Robert Porrer FRSA

Cambridgeshire Culture Card Scheme: overview for RSA Fellows

The **Cambridgeshire Culture Card** scheme is an **ambitious project of potential national significance** initiated by the [My Cambridge](#) Cultural Education Partnership. The scheme has **three strategic aims**:

- 1 Increase** children and young people's access and participation in art, culture and libraries; particularly for those from low-income backgrounds or who face **inequalities of access**
- 2 Recognise and acknowledge** children and young people's engagement in art, creativity and culture; and its contribution to their **learning, skills and career development**
- 3 Provide robust, relevant and visible evidence** of the impact of cultural engagement on children and young people

The project will use the arts to address a range of social, economic, educational and engagement inequalities with an initial focus in Cambridgeshire and the 0-19 age group. The broader aim of the scheme is to **provide a scalable, and field-tested model that can be replicated and rolled out in other local authority areas**. It will provide a template for a **longitudinal research and data-driven project** that will **support mass-engagement in the arts and delivery on a population scale**. The main delivery mechanism of the scheme will be the **universally available library card**, repurposed so that it can be used to acknowledge attendance at a broad range of venues or facilities through different types of technology.

The Cambridgeshire Culture Card scheme is a digital innovation project, testing a particular approach to developing **positive digital relationships** with young people, to support behaviour change, increase take up of creative, arts and cultural activities, and develop a longitudinal evidence base to better understand the **relationship between cultural engagement and outcomes**. It has a specific goal of supporting increased engagement of disadvantaged children and young people, building on evidence of the impact of arts and cultural engagement on attainment and aspiration, and the data that demonstrates that library cards are already more widely held by disadvantaged young people.

Benefits of the scheme

The implemented scheme will lead to the following benefits, including:

- **Robust evidence** of the impact of cultural engagement **on outcomes for children and young people**
- Provide a longitudinal project on a population scale that will record and build a corpus of cultural engagement data on a hitherto **unprecedented scale**
- Map local arts and cultural engagement data with the **Child Taking Part and Taking Part Survey** national statistic
- Provide all participating arts and cultural organisations with a **digital tool to measure the impact of their work** upon young people, particularly those who are culturally inactive through disadvantage
- Provide in depth understanding of the **factors that contribute to arts participation imbalance** and the **approaches that are most effective at correcting inequality** of arts access
- Capacity to test and revise methods for engaging children and young people in real time, allowing for **rapid prototyping and agile development** to achieve intended outcomes
- **Targeted and segmented communication** of the cultural offer by indicators of low cultural engagement, such as **free school meal, Pupil Premium, NEET, and BAME** status
- Evidence to young people, parents, schools and employers the **positive relationship** between cultural engagement and **informal learning, educational outcomes, skills and career development**
- **Reduced social, economic and physical barriers** to engagement by young people from families of reduced means

- Provide a **record of engagement and benefits derived** for young people **building their CVs, and potentially for schools as part of their careers support** for each student
- Use digital technologies to **link together Culture Card with existing, local authority held datasets and to analyse** this through a bespoke designed data science platform
- **Support more effective strategy, planning and evaluation** for activity providers, schools, policy makers, funders and researchers through a set of user dashboards
- Develop a **highly replicable model and toolkit that can be used by other local authority areas**, including access to the data science platform as a national data repository for local authorities

Where we are now: Explore and Test (initial prototype activity)

The Explore and Test phase of the project began in February 2018, and was operationally live from the beginning of August until the end of December 2018. This phase engaged over 250 families with children up to the age of 14 years (target: 120) at various stages, through a lower tech, prototype version of the project that simulates wherever possible, the experience of a live and fully operational scheme. The national benchmark for engagement in any extracurricular activity by a child or young person from a disadvantaged background is 25%. Within a 22 week period, the combination of approaches tested during the prototype resulted in 43% of all children and young people that engaged in a cultural activity through the scheme, and 52% of primary age children receiving free school meals or Pupil Premium, and 61% living in or attending schools in areas with **low social mobility** (including a DfE Social Opportunity Area), **high levels of deprivation**, and **low cultural engagement**. The prototype builds on and tests key areas highlighted in our earlier feasibility study and functional scope paper, including platform development, gamification, information consent, targeted communication and cultural engagement tracking methods. The explore and test phase has:

- Developed a full suite of **GDPR compliant information governance documents** to test parents willingness to share data with us, activity providers and our research partner
- Developed the **branding, identity and user experience** of the scheme through consultation sessions with children, parents and young people (the scheme is now XPIore and XP)
- Developed and tested a cross platform approach, including a bespoke **family friendly mobile app and web portal** that can be used to support engagement, promote targeted incentives and communication
- Devised and tested a **communication tool that can target and differentiate incentives** according to free school meal and Pupil Premium status, as a proxy for low-income status (national first)
- Tested both **anonymised and personalised gamification methods** through challenges and digital badges, incentives and reward points structure, a Creative CV and introduced a school leader board
- Engaged **36 activity providers** (86% of target) to take part across a range of different venues (traditional and non-traditional) and art forms, and promoted **374** activities and events
- Field tested cultural **engagement tracking methods**: mobile app and QR code scanner, coded reward card stickers (as a proxy for the library card at this stage)
- **Created a database** and a linked set of data variables for each individual participant that includes both qualitative (through integrated surveys) and quantitative data, and linked to **Child Taking Part** questions

Implementation and advanced prototype phase

Learning from the initial prototype is already shaping plans and forming partnerships for the next stage, implementation and advanced prototyping. This includes:

- **Whole school roll-out of the Culture Card** (repurposed and future-proofed library card)
- Becoming the next **City of Learning** pilot area, linked to the development of creative skills and careers
- Founding partner in a collective bid to the **AHRC National Centre for Cultural Value** (Loughborough Uni)
- Development of a **data warehouse** to store local authority information relevant to impact measurement and a **data science platform to support multi-criteria analysis** of arts and cultural engagement

- A delivery plan to embed the Culture Card within schools, in conjunction with **Artsmark and Arts Award**