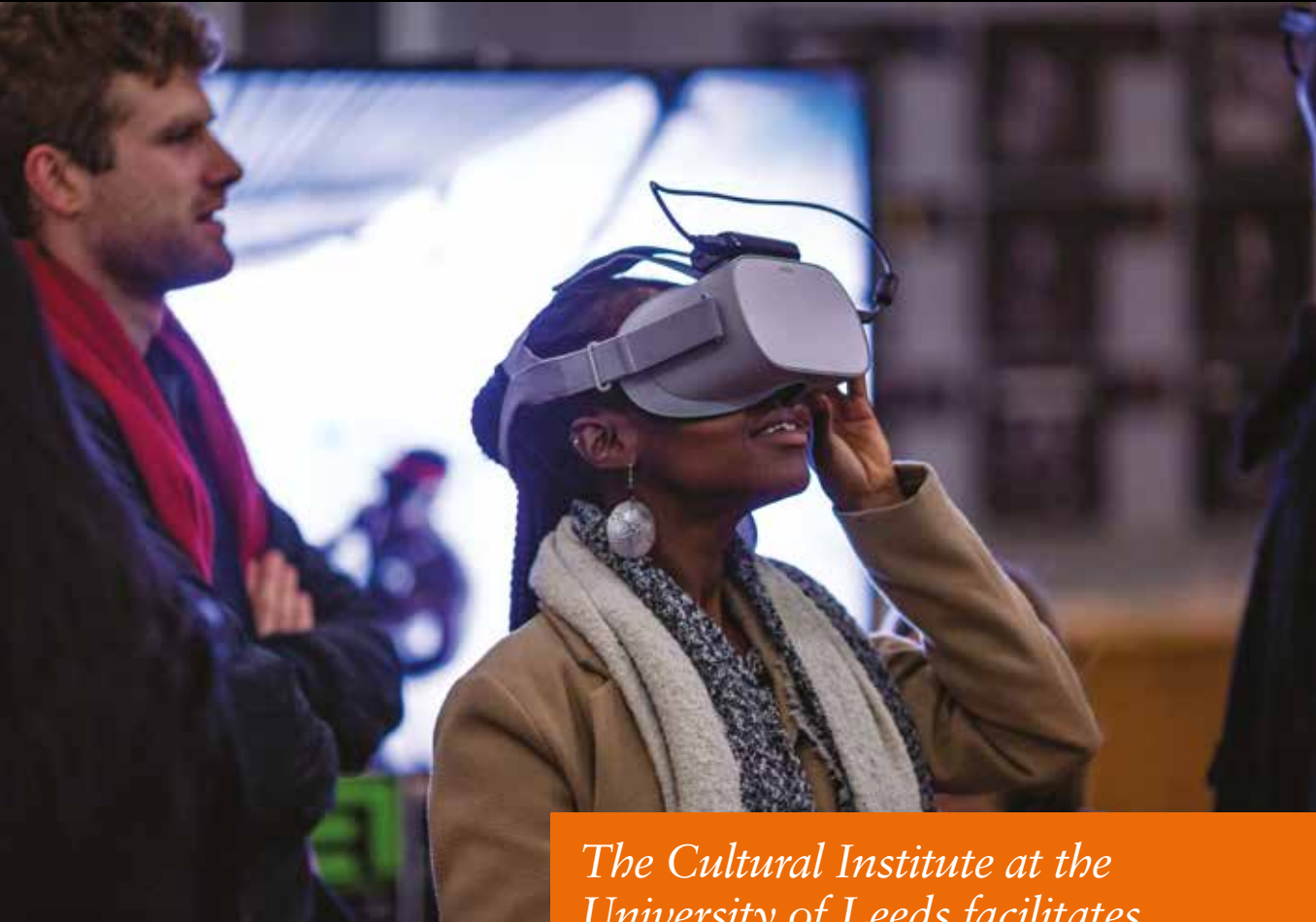




BUILDING CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

CULTURAL INSTITUTE


UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



The Cultural Institute at the University of Leeds facilitates creative connections with cultural partners, creating a valuable ‘third space’ beyond the everyday practices of academic and cultural endeavour.

Our partnerships create new knowledge and approaches, and enhance the lived experience of our staff students and the communities which we serve in the Leeds City Region and beyond.

FRONT COVER: 'THE NECTARY' BY ALISON SMITH,
ON CAMPUS FOR LIGHT NIGHT 2019

INSIDE FRONT COVER: INDIGENOUS ELECTRONIC
ART PRODUCED BY THE BRAZILIAN NGO THYDÉWA
ON CAMPUS FOR LIGHT NIGHT 2019

INTRODUCING THE LEEDS MODEL

When the Cultural Institute launched in 2016, our vision was to broker and develop a diverse range of innovative collaborations with arts and cultural organisations and the creative industries to generate knowledge and opportunity at a regional, national and international level.

Building on the success of our pioneering DARE partnership with Opera North we have developed a model of partnering that combines a number of key elements to ensure mutual benefit and the achievement of shared strategic goals. We place a special emphasis on an ethos of common purpose, co-creation and co-ownership of activities, and a willingness to innovate and take risks. We also recognise the importance of the human dimension to successfully working together; transparency, trust, mutual respect, good communication, and a spirit of honest challenge.

Creative partnerships led and/or supported by the Cultural Institute have unlocked resources to support research and innovation and education projects, many of which cut across traditional academic disciplines and offer sophisticated and creative solutions to some of the complex and pressing challenges which our society faces. At the same time we have enabled academic staff and students to engage with cultural partners to share and enhance expertise, while connecting them with new audiences and those of the communities we serve.

In the past year, for example, we have collaborated with the region's four great sculpture organisations on the Arts Council-funded Yorkshire Sculpture International, a 100-day festival which attracted visitors from all over the world. We contributed to the reimagining and relaunching of the Leeds International Piano Competition which, with the aid of digital live streaming reached 180 countries while garnering national media coverage for the indelible impact it left on the city. We were also the principal Higher Education Partner on the Ilkley Literature Festival, the oldest and largest in the North, which was headlined by the University's Professor of Poetry, Simon Armitage, the Poet Laureate.

In addition to broadening and deepening our relationships with arts and cultural organisations, we have also sparked exciting and important new networks, such as the Leeds Arts, Health and Wellbeing Network, and our work with the Leeds Cultural Education Partnership. Our innovative Creative Labs have connected researchers from across the University with artists and practitioners to embark on radically interdisciplinary adventures, while we are pleased to be involved in the new

national Centre for Cultural Value, the first of its kind in the world.

A concern for, and an ambitious desire to improve, 'place' can be a strong driver for collaboration, and the University via the Cultural Institute is very much looking forward to playing its role in the ambitious plans now starting to take shape for the 'Leeds 2023' festival of culture.

I am deeply grateful to our partners for the time and energy they have committed to working with us, and for exploring opportunities with enthusiasm, zestful curiosity, and creativity. The successes highlighted on the following pages could not have been achieved without their contribution, nor without the passion and drive of our academic and professional support colleagues and students from across the University.

PROFESSOR FRANK FINLAY
DIRECTOR

LEADING THE WAY

400

Members of the Leeds Arts, Health and Wellbeing Network

69

Cultural and higher education institutions represented by Culture Forum North

We have developed our understanding of the numerous ways in which universities can best support the cultural and creative industries. In particular, our active dialogue with sector partners has highlighted the relevance and utility to them of rigorous culture-based research.

SUPPORTING AND BUILDING NETWORKS

The Cultural Institute and the University's DARE partner, Opera North, lead Culture Forum North, an open network of 28 universities and 41 arts and heritage organisations of all sizes and spanning all art forms, right across the north of England. Culture Forum North is the first network of its kind in the UK and is widely regarded as leading nationally.

Launched in 2016, it aims to increase resilience within the cultural sector, through partnership between cultural and higher education organisations. Its mission is to strengthen the sustainability, diversity, adaptability, impact and breadth of skills within arts organisations to support positive social change. In 2019, we were awarded Arts Council funding to further develop Culture Forum North, advance the impact and reach of the forum's activities, grow our membership, develop new projects and provide more opportunities to network and learn from one another.

The Cultural Institute is also a member of the Creative Industries Federation and the only university member of Eurocities Culture Forum, an organisation representing over a hundred cities in Europe.



OPERA NORTH ORCHESTRA CAMP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



DARE ARTS PRIZE WINNER SAMUEL HERTZ PERFORMS 'GUNSLINGER'

SECTOR-LEADING PARTNERSHIPS WITH OPERA NORTH THROUGH DARE

DARE is the University of Leeds' long-standing partnership with Opera North, which delivers an outstanding and challenging programme leading cultural thought, learning and practice. Our joint work has included more than 250 projects and over 80 conferences and symposia, multiple professional development programmes, learning opportunities for over 10,000 students and the creation of 50 new works, which have secured over £3m in contributions from UK and European sector bodies.

Through DARE, models for research practice, including an academic in residence programme and ten DARE sandpits, have brought together academics and artists from different subjects and institutions to explore shared themes, leading to further research and outputs for both organisations.

Opera North benefits from access to the University campus and to our student population. The Opera North Orchestra Camp and Opera Challenge, launched in 2016, provides 120 young people each year with access to the outstanding facilities of the University of Leeds' School of Music.

DARE has enabled the development of accredited practice-based learning programmes with international reach and impact including four Collaborative PhD projects and two annual Pettman DARE Fellowships in Music Education.


Our joint public engagement activities include conferences, public debates, a film series, and the Liberty Lectures, which explore some of the most important topics at the heart of society. Past lectures have been presented by contemporary thinkers including Afua Hirsch, Gina Miller, George Monbiot, Tariq Ali, Jasmin Alibhai-Brown and Sigmund Bauman.

Through constant innovation DARE balances experience in partnership-working with its reputation as 'pioneering'. The DARE Art Prize and Cultural Fellowships have made a key contribution by breaking new ground and raising the profile of the partnership in the wider arts sector as well as the public press.

DARE's vital function is to provide a 'third space' between the arts sector and higher education which reflects shared ambitions and delivers benefits that neither partner organisation could have achieved alone.

"DARE is a model of collaborative excellence that inspires research relevant to contemporary society and provides a framework through which far-reaching impact can be achieved."

PROFESSOR ANDREW THOMPSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ARTS AND
HUMANITIES RESEARCH COUNCIL



ADVOCACY AND POLICYMAKING

THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CULTURAL VALUE IS DEDICATED TO EXPLORING THE IMPACTS THAT THE ARTS AND CULTURE HAVE ON PEOPLE, AND MORE BROADLY ON SOCIETY

The national Centre for Cultural Value, led by the School of Performance and Cultural Industries and co-located with the Cultural Institute, aims to transform thinking, policy and professional practice on questions of cultural value and engagement. Over the next five years the Centre will promote an evidence-based approach to cultural policy, planning and impact evaluation. It is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Arts Council England, and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

The wider impact of the Centre's activities will be achieved through strategic engagement with opinion leaders, for example in education, health and social justice. The Cultural Institute will be crucial to the delivery of the Centre's policy-making remit, working with researchers from many institutions, cultural partners and government decision-makers.

The Cultural Institute will also play a key role in the dissemination of research findings as they emerge from the Centre for Cultural Value. We will collaborate with national bodies to produce shared events, joint stakeholder meetings and policy briefings, which are co-designed with partners.

“The Centre for Cultural Value will help stimulate public debate about the role of national and local governments in creating and enabling cultural value, informed by robust and rigorous research. Our work will cover a diverse range of cultural activity from grassroots and community activities to work produced by our world-leading national organisations.”

BEN WALMSLEY
PROFESSOR OF CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT AND
DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR CULTURAL VALUE

ARTS AND HEALTH

“Leeds Arts, Health and Wellbeing Network is one of the best things I have been involved in. The passion and commitment to bring together the worlds of health and wellbeing, creative arts and academia for mutual benefit from across organisations in Leeds is inspiring.”

MICK WARD

CHIEF OFFICER, TRANSFORMATION AND INNOVATION,
AT LEEDS CITY COUNCIL (ADULTS AND HEALTH)

In recent years, the cultural sector has collectively advanced our shared understanding of the positive impact arts participation can have on mental and physical health – from alleviating symptoms and increasing efficacy of medical intervention for those with existing conditions, to preventing disease, promoting wellbeing, and strengthening communities.

In partnership with Leeds City Council and other organisations across the city, the Cultural Institute has led the development of the Leeds Arts, Health and Wellbeing Network. This network of 400 members is connecting clinicians and public health bodies with a range of organisations and arts professionals who are engaging in arts and health activities. It is the most comprehensive and ambitious of its kind in the region.

We have hosted two Arts and Health conferences, sharing research, policy, practice and evidence in order to support the cultural sector in understanding the valuable contribution arts and culture can make to health and wellbeing.



MICK WARD, AT 'YOUNG PEOPLE, THE ARTS AND MENTAL HEALTH' CONFERENCE HOSTED BY THE CULTURAL INSTITUTE

CREATING A RESILIENT FUTURE

65

*Graduate Arts
Fundraising Fellows*

109

*Cultural Institute-funded projects
with cultural partners*

We are committed to supporting creative and cultural organisations to become more resilient through partnership with higher education. We identify shared goals, areas of mutual benefit, and devise programmes of activity which strengthen the sector's ability to grow and thrive into the future. Our partners benefit through access to the University of Leeds, to our facilities, audiences and research funding routes, as well as increased external profile, development opportunities and advice.

“It has been so beneficial to me and to Cast to be part of the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy programme. I have developed so much since it began, and the professional network of Fundraising Fellows will, I think, be a huge asset to the arts and culture industry.”

LORNA CLAYTON-RAWLE
FUNDRAISING MANAGER,
CAST THEATRE VENUE

NATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We provide high quality professional learning, development and accredited courses to ensure the arts industry continues develop the skills and potential of its workforce.

The Cultural Institute is a Sector Support Organisation within Arts Council England's national portfolio, as a founding member of the Arts Fundraising consortium alongside Cause4 and the Arts Marketing Association. Our acclaimed National Summer School in Arts Fundraising and Leadership is an innovative week-long residential course for arts managers and fundraisers which provides intensive study, practical activities and time out for reflection.

By participating in the residential course and a 12-month work-based distance learning assessment programme, Fundraising Fellows gain a Postgraduate Certificate in Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy – the first of its kind in Europe. The Fellows also join a cohort of the programme's alumni, which provides a professional network for Fellows to continue to grow their practice and explore their potential. All 65 graduate Arts Fundraising Fellows are now working in the charity, arts and cultural sectors, bringing new skills and the latest research from leading academics and practitioners.

ORGANISATION-WIDE APPROACH TO PARTNERSHIP WITH LEEDS MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Our long-standing partnership with Leeds Museums and Galleries exemplifies some of the benefits that can be realised through mature collaborations between the arts and culture sector and higher education.

Over a number of years we have delivered over 300 shared activities, including new cultural research, learning, professional practice and public engagement. We have boosted the skills of staff and volunteers through accredited practice-based learning programmes, whilst also providing valuable learning experiences for our students. Research in partnership with Leeds Museums and Galleries has created new knowledge which has underpinned a huge range of high quality exhibitions and events.



'HERBARIUM' EXHIBITION FEATURING ITEMS FROM LEEDS MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES AND THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS SPECIAL COLLECTIONS.
© JOANNE CRAWFORD

A REVIEW OF OUR PARTNERSHIP RECORDED THE FOLLOWING ACHIEVEMENTS:

£785k

research grant income with Leeds Museums and Galleries as a named partner

4

collaborative PhD projects

900

student research projects and placements

8

museum registrars trained

7

projects recognised for their non-academic impact in Research Excellence Framework 2014

3

Masters programmes delivered in partnership

£287k

funding secured from non-research sources through joint projects

250

students engaged each year through seminars, lectures and placements

90

student volunteers annually

137

public engagement activities by University of Leeds researchers

WIDENING PARTICIPATION

104

grants provided for paid student internships for research projects with cultural partners

86

organisations hosted student placements in 2018/19

The University of Leeds is one of the largest higher education institutions in the UK, with more than 38,000 students from over 170 different countries. We are committed to giving all our students an enriching range of opportunities, and to addressing areas of under-representation in our student body, ensuring our students from less advantaged backgrounds are able to take advantage of the opportunities we offer.

The Cultural Institute plays a key role in supporting the University to increase diversity and access by supporting progression routes for our students to succeed in the cultural sector, regardless of background. Student opportunities include paid internships (either part-time during University terms, over summer, or year in industry placements), in-curriculum placements which contribute to the student's degree, volunteering, or graduate recruitment opportunities. By promoting and supporting student involvement with our cultural partners, we help students to develop valuable skills and experiences that enhance workforce diversity for cultural and arts organisations.

We ensure employers are able to select the most talented individuals, and we believe that any student should be able to access opportunities regardless of funds. Charitable organisations and SMEs can apply for bursaries from the University to help cover the costs of hiring an intern. We also recognise that not all organisations can offer paid opportunities, so we actively develop opportunities for our students to engage with partners through placements embedded within the curriculum.

RAISING ASPIRATIONS

We are addressing inequality in Leeds by working in partnership to ensure all children and young people have access to high quality arts and cultural education in ways that respond to their needs.

The Cultural Institute is a founding member of Leeds' Local Cultural Education Partnership (LeedsCEP), a strategic network to grow the aspirations and talents of children and young people across the city. The group has a wide and growing membership including arts, cultural, educational and community organisations, businesses and city council representatives which cover all geographical areas of Leeds.

“Encountering culture creates a long-term, positive situation of change, where young people embrace their fears, know their talents and progress beyond the limits of their birth. They provide cultural and social capital, enabling young people to shine and aspire in a way that is not limited or defined by their background or space and place of birth.”

ABIGAIL HARRISON MOORE
PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY AND MUSEUM STUDIES

We were delighted to support a learning, engagement and community project between the Leeds International Piano Competition with the Marks & Spencer's Company Archive, housed on the University's campus. Students from the University of Leeds – a principal partner of the Competition – are recording pieces of sheet music from the Archive to be used in weekly sessions and ten of these recordings will be kept and maintained within the Archive permanently.

“My placement was an amazing opportunity where I got to help run college art sessions run by the festival, support the development of the engagement programme and really felt like part of the team. I gained experience that will help hugely in my own career plans to work in arts engagement.”

FRANCES DEE
MA ARTS MANAGEMENT AND HERITAGE STUDIES



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS STUDENTS WHO UNDERTOOK PLACEMENTS WITH YORKSHIRE SCULPTURE INTERNATIONAL

GROWING STUDENT SKILLS WITH YORKSHIRE SCULPTURE INTERNATIONAL

The University of Leeds supported Yorkshire Sculpture International (YSI), the UK's largest event celebrating the art form which took place over 100 days between June and September 2019.

All elements of the YSI programme were free to attend, encouraging new audiences to engage with sculpture. A series of six 'Sculpture-in-the Round' public events, coordinated by the Cultural Institute, explored the nature of sculpture in the public realm from various perspectives.

There was an extensive programme working with schools, universities, communities, and a talent development programme for artists based in the region. Bethan Hughes, a practice-based PhD student based in our School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, was one of YSI's 11 engagement artists working on schools and communities projects. Bethan worked with John Jamieson School to focus on the tactility and materiality of sculpture, working with disabled children from across Leeds to explore the sensory elements of installation art.

The University's partnership also supported talent development and student engagement through a programme of professional practice and learning and skills development. In the run-up to the festival, the partnership provided over 200 opportunities for students at Leeds to gain direct experience of working on a large-scale project with the region's leading sculpture organisations.

As well as specialist skills training for student ambassadors to assist with cultural events, curators from the Yorkshire Sculpture International programme delivered guest lectures in the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, including a two-day insight into curating.

FORGING INNOVATION THROUGH LEEDS CREATIVE LABS

Our Leeds Creative Labs programme matches academics from all disciplines into individual collaborations with artists, creative technologists and cultural practitioners.

We believe that curious people will spark exciting and unexpected ways of working together, and so we create a space where creative professionals can enter into a meaningful dialogue with researchers. Participants are given no brief to fulfil. Instead, artists and scientists are challenged to explore ideas, innovate and take risks.

Since its inception Leeds Creative Labs has incubated an astonishing diversity of concepts and outputs – from new artistic practices to the development of new teaching models, innovative research methodologies and large research grant capture. Alumni of the programme cite Creative Labs as a catalyst which prompts participants to ask vital and fundamental questions, resulting in meaningful and sometimes radical changes to their practice.

PROFESSOR RICHARD BAYLISS, HEAD OF THE SCHOOL OF MOLECULAR
AND CELLULAR BIOLOGY, WITH CREATIVE LABS PARTNER DR JANE SCOTT



NATURE WRITING BEYOND THE PAGE

A creative community engagement project in Leeds will take nature writing into the public sphere, restoring lost connections to the natural world, engaging audiences and preserving habitats. Led by humanities researchers at Leeds with creative producer Suzie Cross, the project will create new walking trails, produce an illustrated children's book, host community workshops and end with a spectacular light show for an audience of approximately 85,000. The project provides £37k directly to artists to deliver activity and further explore their climate-related practices. The Cultural Institute brokered a connection between the research team and Suzie Cross through a special climate-focused edition of our innovative Leeds Creative Labs programme.

SUSTAINABLE ART INSTALLATIONS

Hundreds of festival-goers engaged with current research into urban biodiversity and the human effects upon delicate ecosystems through *The Nectary*, a sound, light and sculptural installation representing giant flower heads. Audiences during Light Night 2019 were invited to immerse themselves in nature and hear 'the hum of the earth' by mimicking a pollinating insect moving from flower to flower. The artwork is made from recycled materials by Leeds-based visual artist Alison Smith in collaboration with her Creative Labs partner Dr Christopher Hassall, a lecturer in animal biology.

IMMERSIVE FOREST EXPERIENCES

An interdisciplinary team of creative specialists and academics from diverse backgrounds is investigating whether audio-visual products might provide a holistic insight into how soil, roots, trees and air interact, allowing the public to feel connected to the natural world around them. The team, brought together through Leeds Creative Labs, comprises composer and music lecturer Dr Scott McLaughlin, atmospheric scientist Dr Cat Scott, climate and soil scientist Dr Marcelo Galdos and digital media company Flat-e. The team hope that co-created projects will allow researchers to better communicate the challenges of climate change to public audiences, while also developing the focus and purpose of Flat-e's commercial and creative practice.



'THE NECTARY' BY ALISON SMITH, ON CAMPUS FOR LIGHT NIGHT 2019

WORKING TOGETHER



'PERFORMING THE MUSEUM', BY SCOTT PALMER
AT TEMPLE NEWSAM



'SHAPING STUDENT LEARNING' WORKSHOP, HOSTED BY THE CULTURAL INSTITUTE

FUNDING RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

We facilitate opportunities for people to get together, cutting across academic disciplines and organisational boundaries to allow innovation to flourish in partnership.

Our programmes support academics at the University of Leeds to develop research projects with external partners, in order to support engaging, relevant and impact-led research. By providing targeted funding, we are enabling researchers to develop projects, programmes and products with cultural and creative partners which will benefit audiences and customers in meaningful ways.

Through the Ignite small grant scheme we have provided funding to over 120 researchers to connect with hundreds of organisations, resulting in a broad range of larger research partnerships. For our partners, this can result in new funding opportunities, access to new audience groups, new projects or programmes and professional growth, learning and networking opportunities.

Our Catalyst scheme, available for partnerships with significant potential, has provided lecturer in physical performance Maria Kapsali with £24,000 to develop the commercial application of *Sonolope*, a mobile-based system of movement sonification currently used in cultural settings. The application was originally explored during a Creative Lab between Kapsali and technology company Curvor. The additional funding allows further development with Experia, a company specialising in multisensory rooms, and Extant, a theatre company specialising in creating performance for visually impaired audiences.

CO-PRODUCING STUDENT EDUCATION

We consult with our cultural and creative partners to increase the number of co-created and co-delivered courses the University offers, ensuring that our students are informed by the latest thinking and practice in the sector.

The Cultural Institute led open consultations with a broad range of employers and cultural organisations to co-devise a new Master's course designed to shape students' learning to meet the knowledge and requirements of the sector. Launched in 2018/19, Civic Researcher: Engaging the Modern City is an innovative module which involves students in a year-long relationship with partner organisations. Students' learning is rooted in a project which responds to the needs of the partner and maximises the specialist skills of the interdisciplinary team, providing benefits to cultural organisations and enabling students to develop skills that employers will value.

"The most important thing is [the students] bring different voices and experiences, and they're coming into our organisation bringing new ideas and questions we might not have thought about asking."

KAREN WATSON
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, EAST STREET ARTS



PROFESSOR MAX SILVERMAN, DARE ARTS PRIZE WINNER ANNA RIDLER AND PROFESSOR GRISELDA POLLOCK

“Winning the DARE Art Prize has been completely transformative to my development as an artist. It has provided the space to develop my practice in ways that wouldn’t have been otherwise possible. My collaborations with researchers at the University have ignited a line of inquiry that I will be exploring over the coming months and years.”

ANNA RIDLER
DARE ARTS PRIZE WINNER 2018

CREATIVE INTERACTIONS

Our Cultural Fellowships support artists to develop their practice within an active research environment, taking inspiration from our staff and students, gaining access to our facilities and resources, and providing a stable income which allows creative practitioners to be bold and take risks.

Since 2017, Christophe de Bezenac and Dave Lynch, both Cultural Institute Fellows in Arts and Science, have been collaborating with the University’s Centre for Immersive Technologies to create an artistic representation of real-time research data. Scientists behind the Born in Bradford project – one of the largest health studies in the world – will be able to experience and visually process tens of thousands of points of data in real time. The prototype can also be used by communities to understand the research they have contributed towards.

The prestigious Douglas Caster Cultural Fellowship in Poetry has supported emerging writers Helen Mort, Malika Booker, Vahni Capildeo and Zaffar Kunial, facilitated through the University of Leeds Poetry Centre.

Other Cultural Fellows include Samuel Hertz and Anna Ridler, winners of the annual DARE Art Prize which challenges scientists at the University of Leeds and independent artists to work creatively together. Anna Ridler worked with scientists in the University’s School of Psychology to explore the functions of memory and the roles of the left and right sides of the brain, and how that might be embodied in a work of art.

“Working with an academic partner made us realise there is a through-line of all our work from 1968 to 2018 which we now can see, we can pick up and make [our work] even more contemporary as we plan our next four years.”

ROD DIXON
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, RED LADDER THEATRE

OUR PARTNERS

- British Council
- Creative England
- East Street Arts
- Eureka!
- Henry Moore Institute
- Ilkley Literature Festival
- IVE
- Leeds 2023
- Leeds Carnival
- Leeds International Film Festival
- Leeds International Piano Competition
- Leeds Museums and Galleries
- Leeds Playhouse
- Marks & Spencer
- National Science and Media Museum
- Northern Ballet
- Opera North
- Phoenix Dance Theatre
- Royal Armouries
- SAA-uk
- South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation
- Thackray Medical Museum
- The Hepworth Wakefield
- The National Trust
- The Tetley
- Transform Festival
- Yorkshire Dance
- Yorkshire Sculpture International
- Yorkshire Sculpture Park

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