



ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS

HOSTED BY
**SOUTHBANK
CENTRE**
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITS
SIX RESIDENT ORCHESTRAS

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ABO Annual Conference

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POWER SHARING

11.45am – 1pm

Kate Whitley (Chair)

Anne Torreggiani

Euella Jackson



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POWER SHARING

"I was raging about the lack of agency and voice young people had in opportunities that were supposedly created for them. I was also operating in a sector where, without exception, all the existing leaders were over 40 and almost all of them white and non-disabled. Something had to change."

Kamina Walton - Rising Arts

"Culture change is about recognising that every individual working in the arts sector can use their power and privilege to distribute power more equitably"

Fostering Equity in the Visual Arts Sector report, Contemporary Visual Arts Network England

"Put crudely there are three ways those in real power in the arts will let go of it: by passing it over, by sharing leadership, or by having it taken away from them."

Mark Robinson - Thinking Practice



the audience agency

Towards a People-centred Future

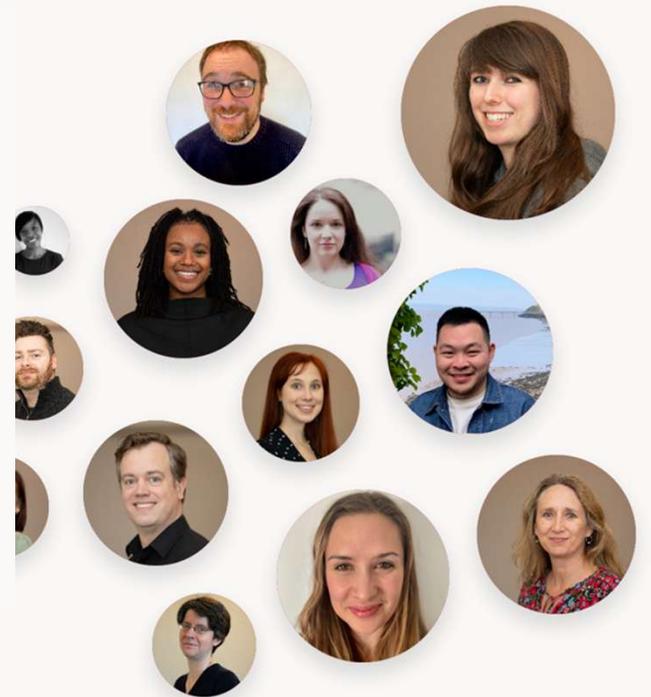


This session will examine how we can open up our power structures to a broader range of voices. We will explore organisational cultures and leadership styles that challenge traditional hierarchies and share power more widely, celebrating and listening to diverse voices to promote creativity and innovation. The discussion will also consider the impact on inclusivity and diversity, both within our organisations and among musicians, audiences, and communities. Kate Whitley,

About Us: The Audience Agency

UK non-profit, research and development for arts and culture

- Audiences and participation
- Research, training, consultancy
- Practice and policy
- 100s arts, culture, heritage organisations
- Municipalities, funders and agencies
- Evidence-led and **people-centred**



Easy to say, harder to do?

People-centred means...

Prioritising the needs, preferences, and values of individuals in making decisions, designing systems and services.

Treating each person with respect and dignity, recognizing their unique qualities and circumstances.

7 Steps to enlightenment

The habits of inclusive, people-centred organisations

A film still from 'Heart of Pendle' showing a group of people sitting on the ground in a forest, surrounded by large trees. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn. The people are gathered in a circle, some looking towards each other, creating a sense of community and shared experience. The forest floor is covered in dry leaves and twigs, and the trees are tall and slender, with some bare branches visible in the background.

Kindness starts at home

Build a culture of care, support and involve everyone in your organisation

In Situ - Film still, Heart of Pendle 2022



Be Kind

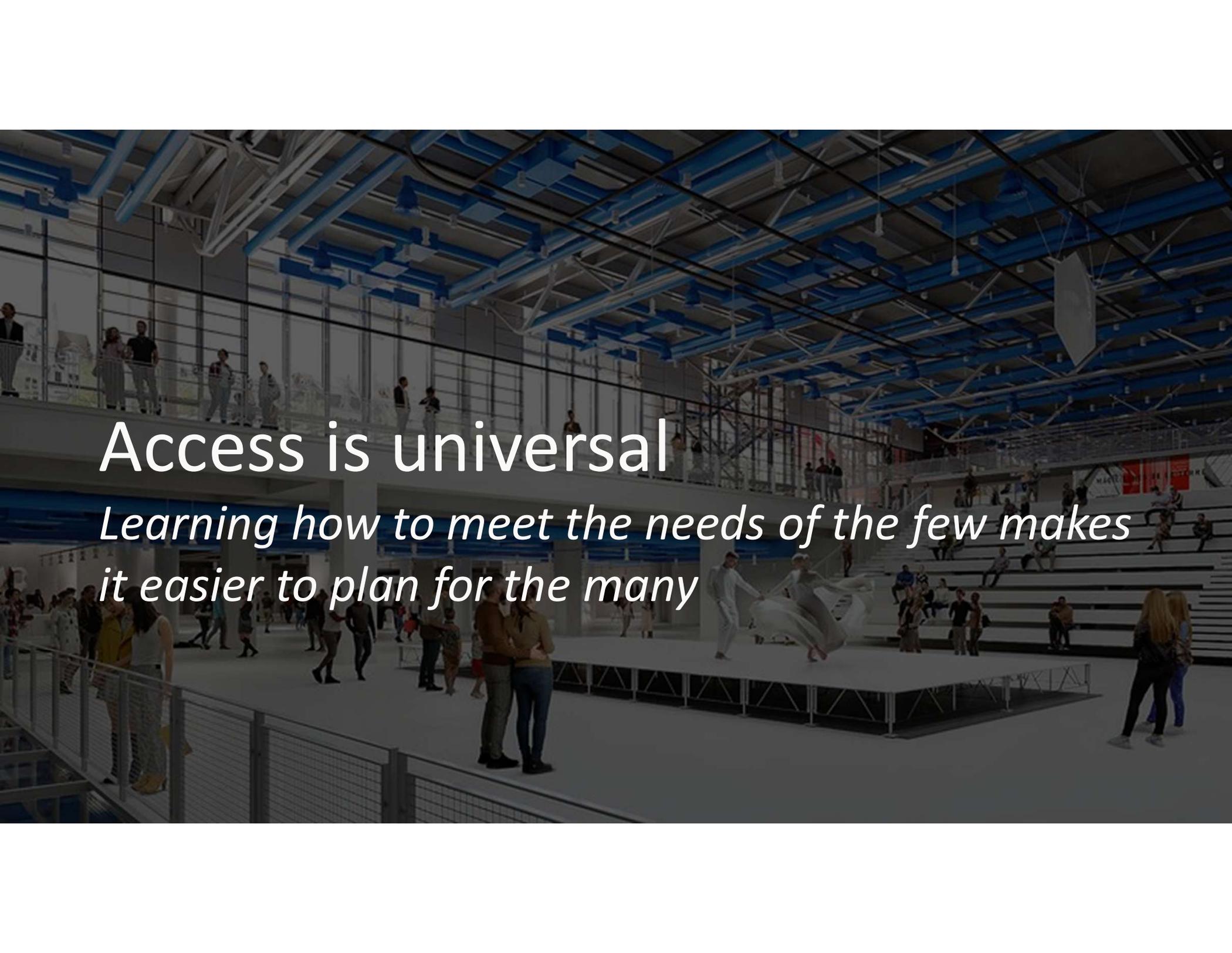
Be Useful

We go again tomorrow, pals

Be a good neighbour

Be active in your neighbourhood

Slung Low, Leeds
Alan Lane's *The Club on the Edge of Town*



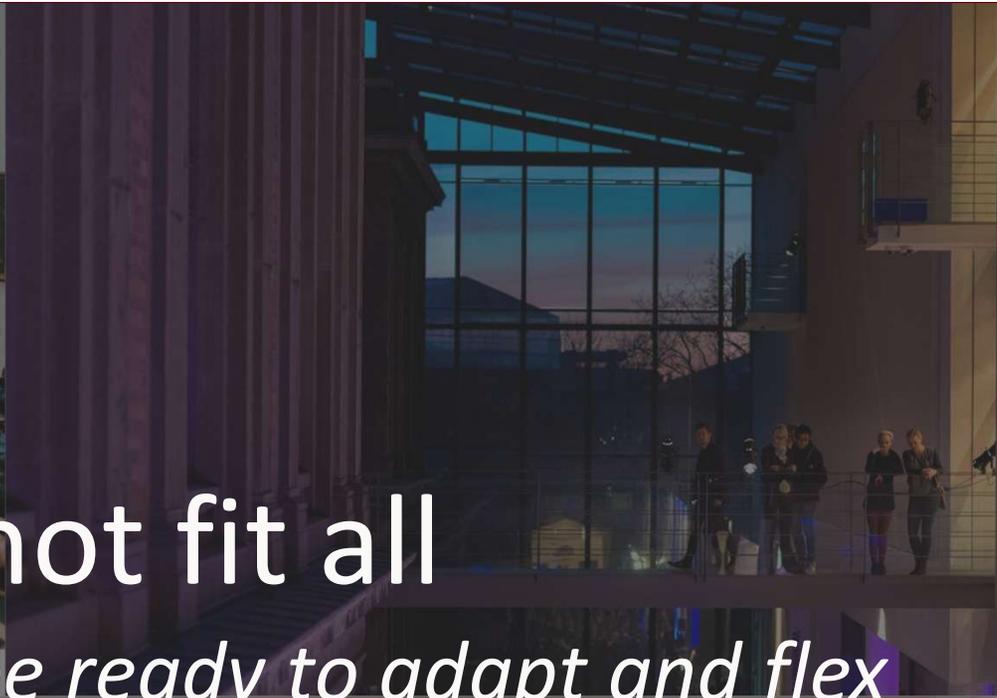
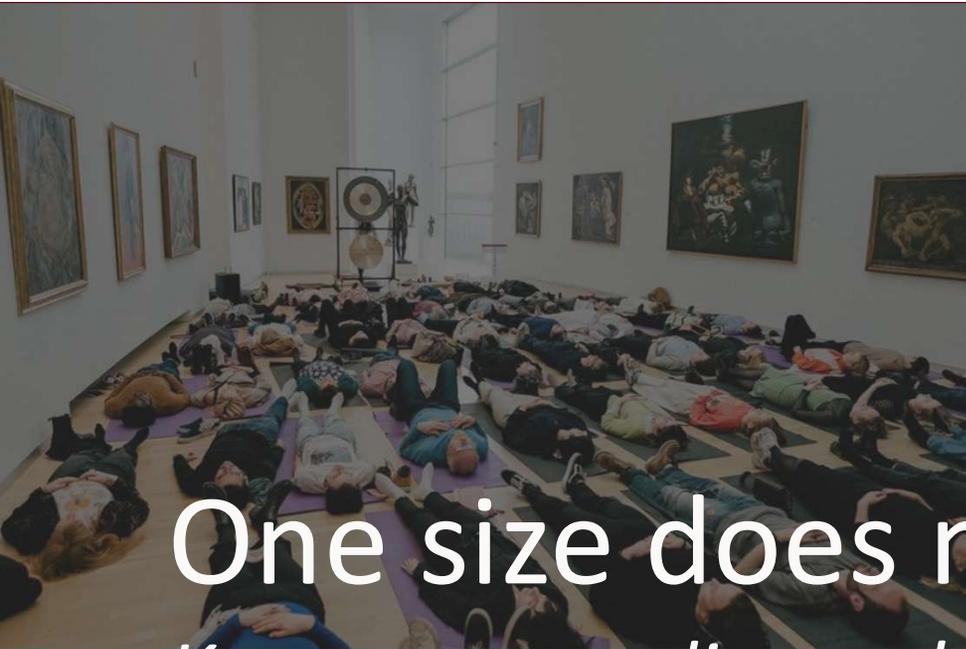
Access is universal

*Learning how to meet the needs of the few makes
it easier to plan for the many*



Active listening...

Know your audience...use the data, get out and listen to different people, understand the value



One size does not fit all

Know your audience, be ready to adapt and flex for individuals



SMK Denmark - SMK Fridays



Share the power
*Involve people in decision-making and
governance*

A hand-drawn diagram on a whiteboard. It features three black human silhouettes in a row. The middle silhouette has a pink sticky note on its head. To the left and right of the figures are blue dashed lines. Below the figures is a large, complex black scribble. Several yellow and pink sticky notes are scattered around the diagram. The entire drawing is enclosed in a blue hand-drawn border.

(Hand-over power)
Lived experiences and Leadership

'Radical Co-Creation', Arts & Homelessness International

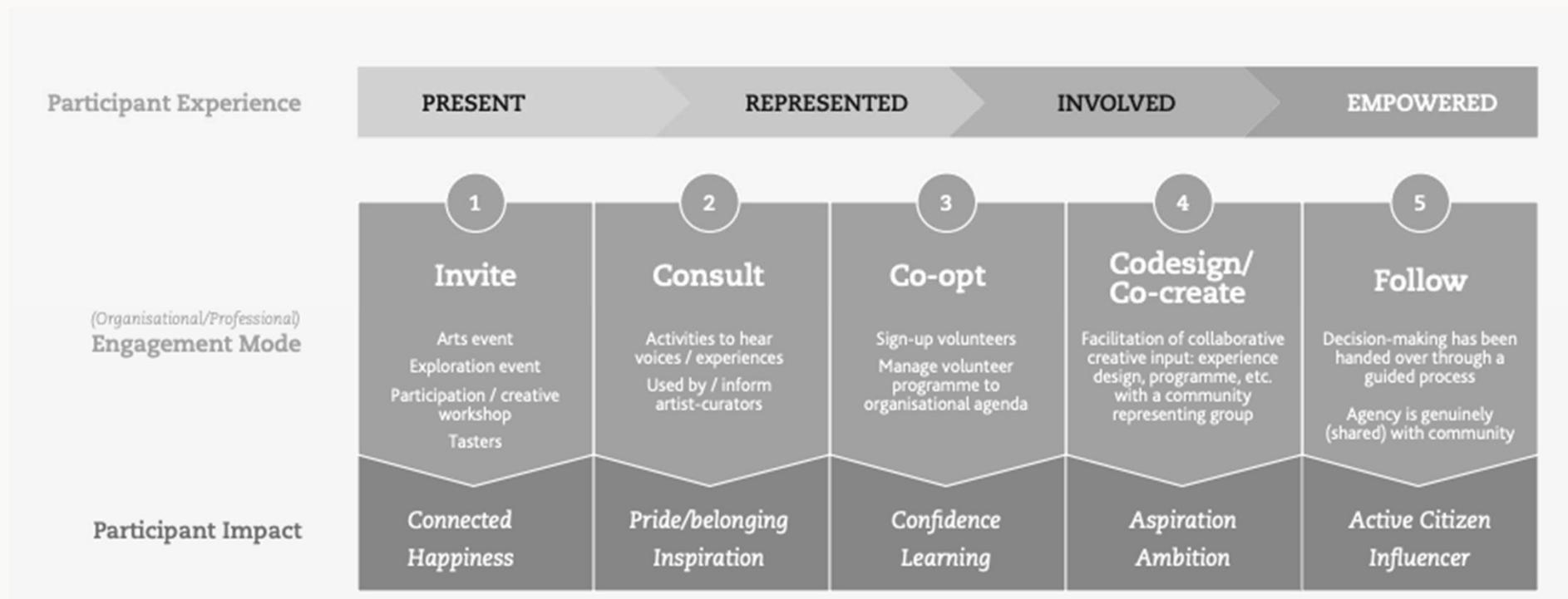


Don't rush!
*Developing meaningful relationships
takes time and commitment*

Motionhouse perform 'Wild' at the Stockton International Riverside Festival: 38 years growing audiences

A journey towards power-sharing

Research & Evaluation with *Creative People & Places* Programme



See also: <https://www.culturehive.co.uk/resources/power-up/>

The People-centred Ps

Research for the British Council: cultural heritage for inc growth



Process distinctive approaches to involve people and respond to needs

Power deliberate attempts to share decision-making, leadership, resources

Principles actions based on mutual respect

Purpose social justice the ultimate aim



Commissioned by British Council *Cultural Heritage for Inclusive Growth* programme evaluation

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-insight/cultural-heritage-inclusive-growth-essay-collection>



A People-Centred Scale

British Council research - Also seen a journey

Expert-led

Puts institutional interests first
Makes decisions with govt/funders
Limited social agenda
Activities delivered by specialists

Consultative/ Participatory

Mutual interest
Decisions consulted on
Social change
Facilitated by "people-centred
specialists"

Citizen-led

Citizen-interests first
Citizens are decision-makers
Social justice
Delivered by citizens/ people



In cultural practice

- A **causal link** people-centred methods and authentically fair outcomes
- "People-centred" **includes everyone**: staff, volunteers, participants
- Not 'taught' but it **can be learned**: experimental mindset + reflective practice
- Challenges traditional ideas of creative exceptionalism – a **new kind of creative leadership** and skillset
- Recognisable methods - **Human Centred Design** and **Asset-Based Community Development**
- "Methods" need to be **locally developed** and applied



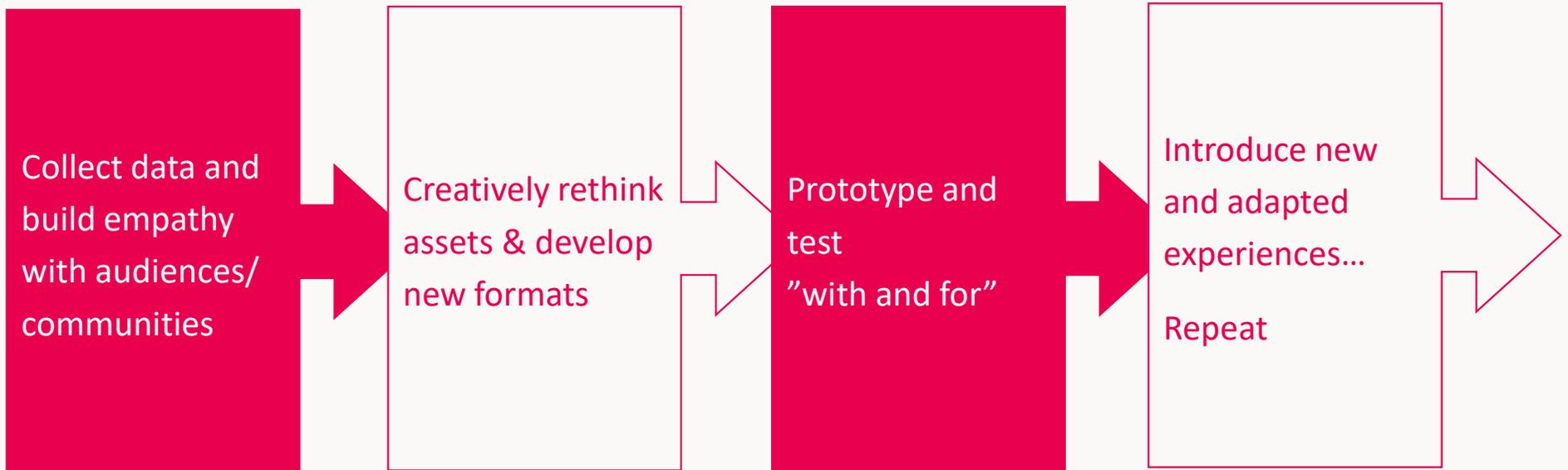


Expert-led design

Human-centred design

Cultural organisations: with and for

From product-led to people-centred mindset



With a partner...

Take 5 minutes each to share your experience:

- *What are the benefits?*
- *What are the challenges?*
- *How have you adapted?*

Thank you

theaudienceagency.org



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