



Family Arts
Campaign

Case Study Architecture Centre

Engaging Hard to Reach Families

[Architecture Centre](#) (Bristol) has been an active member of the Bristol Family Arts Network from its inception and has delivered events in 2013 and 2014.

Architecture Centre want to extend our offer for families. As an NPO, we realise that families are a key audience and they feature in our business plan.

Working in partnership we took the lead on delivering 4 x community outreach [Family Arts Festival](#) events in 2014 Festival, in communities outside of the city centre. We also delivered 2 x city centre family events and produced a small temporary exhibition in our gallery.

Our network know there are many barriers to families accessing arts/cultural activities in the city centre and so we worked with community partners to take our Family Arts Festival events out to engage with a wider/more diverse audience in outlying communities.

We believe that in order to deliver inclusive, accessible events, cultural organisations shouldn't rest on their laurels in their city centre galleries/venues, but instead be proactive in going out and working in communities, providing events that are fun and free and which build relationships with new audiences who wouldn't normally engage with city centre cultural organisations.

We hope that these events will expand our family audience, but more importantly we would like the events to diversify that audience to include those communities who don't/can't usually visit our city centre venue for a variety of reasons.

We made the series of Future City creative workshops free to attend to make them accessible to a wider city demographic. In 2014 these events were supported by funding from the [Family Arts Campaign's Test Drive](#) programme and some additional learning and outreach programme funding from the [Ernest Cook Trust](#). The Architecture Centre met some additional costs and young people completing their [Arts Award](#) with us worked as event volunteers. Taking part in the Family Arts Campaign's annual Family Arts Festival helped provide extra marketing and social media promotion. We anticipate the Family Arts Festival community events will form part of our on-going portfolio of work with 'harder-to-reach' audiences and we will seek additional external grants and sponsorship to support them.

We measured impact from evaluation forms, feedback from community partners and informal discussions with project participants. We were pleased to network and partner with other cultural organisations across the city including joint marketing and profile raising.

The main challenges:

- The time it takes to fundraise in order to allow community events to be free to attend
- Building audience numbers - community outreach events won't have the same high numbers of participants as city centre events, but they are still necessary and worthwhile to develop new and diverse audiences

Involvement in the Family Arts Campaign has helped us reflect on our welcome and offer for a family audience. For the next Family Arts Festival we will do more joint marketing with community organisations.

Tips to engage families:

- When delivering events in 'harder to reach' communities, work with existing local partners
- make sure themes are open, inclusive and something everyone can relate to
- make events free to attend
- offer a prize or a competition incentive where possible
- try to build positive relationships that will give participants confidence that your organisation is 'for them'.

Amy Harrison

Learning and Participation Manager: Architecture Centre, Bristol