



2026 IMPACT REPORT



**April 2025
-2026**

BNI Arts

Table of Contents

→	01	Letter from the CEO
→	02	Year In Review
→	3-4	Proud Moments
→	5-6	BN1 Arts Culture & Values
→	7-8	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
→	9-11	Community & Unity
→	12	Plans For Our Future
→	13	Achievements & Outstanding
→	14	Our DEI Partners: Boxless
→	15-16	Acknowledgements & Contact

Letter from the CEO



At BN1 Arts, our journey as a Further Education College and Arts Centre continues to evolve. In 2026, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion remain firmly at the heart of everything we do, shaping how we grow, collaborate and create meaningful opportunities for our students, staff and wider community.

Over the past year, we have strengthened both our reach and our ambition.

As a college, we are incredibly proud to see our students continue to thrive during their time with us. It is an even greater joy to stay connected with our graduates and see the impact of their training as they build successful careers and creative futures.

The creative arts teach us what it means to be human. Beyond being a multi-billion-pound industry, the arts foster empathy, expression, imagination and connection. In a world increasingly shaped by AI and rapid technological change, these human qualities have never been more important.

This year, we have deepened our commitment to accessible programming, broadened our partnerships and created new opportunities across our college and arts centre. These achievements reflect not only the dedication of our team, but also the energy, talent and resilience of the community we serve.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on growth with purpose. We are committed to widening access, amplifying underrepresented voices and ensuring our programmes continue to respond to the changing needs of our community.

This report is both a reflection of our progress and a statement of intent. In 2026 and beyond, BN1 Arts will continue to push boundaries, champion inclusivity and use the arts as a powerful force for connection, wellbeing and opportunity.

Mia Bird

Founder and CEO of BN1 Arts

BN1 Arts Year In Review



250+ Students

Aged 8-19 years



97% Pass Rate

Achieved in our first graduating year



1,600 Audience

At BN1 Arts shows and gigs in 2025



- ✓ Extended age group of NXT GEN to 8-16.
- ✓ Saw our first year of grads go off to top drama schools/music colleges and conservatoires
- ✓ Partnered with Chichester College Group
- ✓ Partnered with Brighton Youth Centre - new spaces
- ✓ Evolved music course to reflect wider industry
- ✓ Introduced new evening classes to the Arts Centre
- ✓ Partnered with Elderflower Fields Festival
- ✓ We welcomed Martin Wright to the Senior Leadership Team

Proud Moments



Extra Enrichment

16 students travelled to Portugal, gaining invaluable insights and experiences. Taken students to see West End shows/plays



Collaborative Projects

Curated a sold out 'BN1 Arts Benefit and Showcase event



Campaigns & Advocacy

Championed and continued work with the **Keep Creative Arts Education Free** Campaign to ensure arts education remains accessible to all.



Staff Development

Introduced mental health first aider training to staff
Introduced mandatory DEI training to all staff



Ofsted Visit

Achieved a "**Good**" rating in our initial Ofsted feedback, reflecting the quality of our provision.



GCSE Validation

Successfully gained **JCQ centre validation**, making us the only local centre where learners can sit Maths and English GCSEs.



NXT GEN Academy

Launched a Saturday academy for 12–16-year-olds, with a bursary scheme to support low-income families.



Community Partnerships

Music students performed at WaterBear, and Elderflower Fields Festival.



Student Success

First graduation year with an overall pass rate of 97%.

Successful careers week - brought it many HE colleges and industry professionals to work with first years. Introduced Student Reps for DEI Supported students in entrepreneurial efforts - promoter Penned Out



New Facilities

Partnered with BYC and their newly refitted building



<https://bn1arts.co.uk/support-us>

BN1 Arts Culture & Values

At BN1 Arts, our mission is to create inclusive, accessible opportunities for young people with a passion for performance and creativity. We believe the arts have the power to inspire connection, build confidence and bring people together across diverse backgrounds.

Through our industry-led diploma courses in music and performing arts, our Saturday Academy for 8–16 year olds, collaborative projects, workshops and public events, BN1 Arts nurtures emerging talent, celebrates local voices and ensures that everyone, regardless of background, experience or circumstance has the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the arts.

We aim to give our students a springboard into higher education and a taste of the professional world through termly performances. Across the academic year, we stage gigs, musicals, plays, dance shows, screen films and in-house productions, giving students real-world experience both on stage and behind the scenes.

Over the last 12 months, we have welcomed audiences of more than 1,600 people to shows and gigs across some of Brighton’s best venues

Inclusivity

We believe the arts should be accessible to everyone. We actively create welcoming spaces where people from all backgrounds feel valued, heard, and empowered to participate. Too many young people do not have access to the arts, and through our **“Keep Creative Arts Education Free”** campaign we are on a mission to change this.

Community

Our work is rooted in collaboration. We partner with local creatives, musicians and venues to strengthen **community** connections and create meaningful cultural experiences. Through our outreach programmes, we are engaging with young people in their schools to ensure they know that **the creative arts hold a space for everyone.**

Creativity

We champion creativity as a tool for expression, innovation, and wellbeing. We encourage experimentation, new ideas, and artistic exploration in everything we do. We want our young people to play in their work and fail in a safe space. It’s the best way to learn.

Opportunity

We are committed to supporting emerging artists and creating opportunities for individuals to develop skills, showcase their work and grow creatively. Whether through our Graduate Development Schemes, our close ties with Brighton Fringe, or our ongoing partnerships across the industry, we aim to give young people the tools and confidence to take the next step in their creative careers.

Our students also take part in an annual Careers Week, designed to inspire new ideas, broaden ambitions and connect them directly with industry professionals and Higher Education providers.

This year, we welcomed 30 professionals from music, theatre and the wider creative industries to work with our students, offering insight, guidance and real-world experience.

Positive Impact

We use the arts as a force for positive change, supporting wellbeing, encouraging dialogue, and helping to build a more vibrant and connected community

Stakeholder Engagement

At BN1 Arts, stakeholder engagement is central to driving meaningful and sustainable impact. By working closely with local schools, venues, residents, artists, community groups, educational partners, and businesses, BN1 Arts ensures that our courses and activities reflect the needs, aspirations, and cultural diversity of the community we serve.

Through our outreach programme we have reached 1000's of students across the region, whether by workshops in schools, our own open and taster days, and Post 16 events.

Engaging stakeholders allows us to create programmes, courses and classes that are relevant, inclusive, and socially valuable.

Through open dialogue, feedback sessions, and collaborative planning, we continuously refine our projects to maximise accessibility and participation. This approach helps build trust, strengthen community ownership, and ensure that our work delivers long-term positive outcomes.

A key aspect of our engagement strategy is collaboration on events and creative initiatives.

For example, our public arts programmes and community workshops bring together emerging artists and local participants to share skills, explore creativity, and celebrate local culture.

Partnerships with community venues, schools and cultural organisations have helped extend the reach of our activities, allowing more people to experience and contribute to the arts, helping to build a more vibrant and connected community



A Multicultural, Inclusive, and Diverse Arts Centre

BN1 Arts Centre CIC serves as a hub for the whole community, offering an inclusive cultural programme designed to engage individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. Our aim is to provide a space where creativity thrives, cultures connect, and the transformative power of the arts brings people together.

College Management Team

Our stakeholders comprising the College Management Team (CMT), staff, and students play a vital role in shaping the direction of the college. We actively seek feedback through meetings, surveys, student voice initiatives, and training sessions. These open lines of communication enable us to refine everything from day-to-day processes to larger curriculum changes.

Team Culture, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- We have inputted mandatory Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training to our team, reinforcing our commitment to inclusivity.
- Inputted "Conversations with Colleagues" on teacher training days.
- Welcomed Mariam Hussain to the team to chair our DEI meetings and evaluate source material.
- Included focused DEI questions to gather specific feedback through our Term 2 student survey
- Included DEI Committee actions in College Enhancement Plan (CEP) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- Completed an accessibility audit.
- Completed EDI audit on our marketing focus

Student Surveys

Through surveying our students, it is clear to see that Neurodiversity education is the top student-identified learning priority.

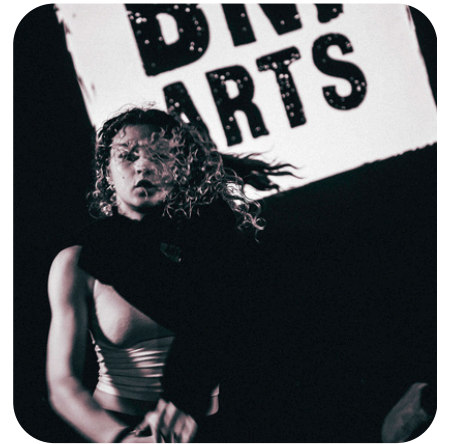
- We commit to inputting training across tutors, team members and students.
- Having appointed DEI Student reps, we hope to create a hotline into the student body to really understand how we can improve.
- Financial barriers remain a concern, which we hope to be able to address through our "KCAEF" fundraising and sponsorship goals.
- We are proud that our college is represented well from the LGBTQIA community.
- We have undertaken an accessibility audit
- We are reviewing our marketing and recruitment policy.
- Created and launched a DEI committee, with associated Terms of Reference and appointed external expert, Mariam Hussein as chair.

On Going DEI Commitments

- Appointed student DEI ambassadors, to develop student engagement, understanding and agency.
- Regular committee meetings
- Mariam Hussein to review source material and academics
- Implemented monthly meetings with Boxless our DEI consultancy to ensure momentum and an action based approach to developing the college mission.

Partnership & Collaboration

Our partnerships strengthen our ability to deliver high-quality education and support.



Community & Unity



Elderflower Fields Fest

We are all about creating opportunities for our students through collaboration.

We are excited to be returning to Elderflower Fields Festival for the second time with a strong cohort of musicians with main stage performances, an acoustic takeover and DJ sets. Our musicians were prominent at the Sounds from the City vent at The Dome with 10 of them filling the bill over 2 nights.

Duke of Yorks Cinema

Watching our first year actors in their big screen debut: Plops. Our students continue to advocate for us and be impressive BN1 Arts ambassadors hosting gigs, performing in Brighton's top venues and stages. Through our support they have released tracks, created promotion agencies and helped to spread the BN1 love.

Royal Variety Hall

Watching a number of our musical theatre students perform at the Royal Variety Performance in Lez Miz, was a particular highlight.

Our students continue to advocate for us and be impressive BN1 Arts ambassadors hosting gigs, performing in Brighton's top venues and stages. Through our support they have released tracks, created promotion agencies and helped to spread the BN1 love.

Careers: 30 School Visits

BN1 Arts visited 30 schools to share and showcase what creative opportunities are available.

Open Days: 400+ Attendees

Held from Sep 25 - A great way to showcase our amazing students, team, facilities and pathways into the arts.

Future Creatives

Partnered with [Future Creatives](#) to better support student knowledge and transition to the creative industries through Careers Week classes, digital badging and team learning initiatives.

Arts Centre Fringe Programme

This includes a diverse theatre programme with a variety of shows to suit many. Keeping ticket prices low for high quality theatre'

Graduate Development Scheme

This initiative offers a unique opportunity for students who have studied at Brighton universities to showcase their talents at one of the city's most vibrant cultural festivals, the [Brighton Fringe](#). By removing common barriers such as the cost of rehearsal spaces, performance venues, and professional resources like recording studios, we empower graduates to take the first bold steps in their professional careers, nurturing their creativity and ambitions.

Taster Days 300+ Attendees

We held multiple taster days welcoming young people into BN1 Arts to have a "day in the life" as a student. These events are free and open to any young person interested in studying with us.

BIMM University

Thanks to [BU](#) for creating opportunities at The Great Escape, Chalk and hosting our Live Lounge project.

WaterBear College of Music

Thanks to [WaterBear](#) who have hosted BN1 Arts gigs in both their venues and run workshops in house at BN1 Arts.

Chichester College Group

Partnered with [CCG](#) as our funding and educational partner. This has opened up many opportunities for collaboration and support including delivering maths and English resits, SEND support, outreach and wider experiences, such as MetFest.

Workshops

BN1 Arts Program Leaders and tutors have visited many schools to run workshops in music and performing arts to ensure access to many young people.



Plans for our future

As ever there are financial challenges, we know we can do more, but we are limited with the funds we receive from DfE.

We are looking at initiatives to increase income and widen our reach. From adult short courses, songwriting camps and working with local businesses we hope to introduce more people into BN1 Arts and drive revenue.

We will continue to tap into funding opportunities, through grant applications etc.

Buildings and spaces. With our growing student body, the challenge remains finding space to grow into. Whilst we one day hope to move into our “forever home” we are lucky to have partnered with BYC and run out of there as well as HQ for 5 days a week. Their £9m refit has seen them build a beautiful big dance studio, many multi purpose rooms and studios plus a live performance venue. Meaning there is now a symbiotic relationship between the young at the heart of BYC and BN1 Arts.

We are fortunate to have been donated music equipment from BIMM.

We are now looking to update and resource our MAC suite, ensuring students have access to relevant software.

Our students and grads are fast becoming our future, as we look to create internships in areas such as digital marketing, and artist promotion.



Achievements & Outstanding

What we've achieved

Moving into year 2 has seen the implementation of the foundations created in year 1 take shape. As we now prepare for year 3 we are already looking at how we plan further down the line, taking the college values, code of behaviour and touch-points with staff and students into consideration. The world has changed considerably over the last 18 months and we need to incorporate the impact of this on our students and the college.

We still have big aspirations to ensure that the material and curriculum we teach from pays homage to its true origin. We know that many of the disciplines within the arts have deep roots with the Global majority. We want to make the necessary updates to ensure that this our teaching material reflects the most honest truths.

What we're working on

Our work has only just begun and we are excited about our future. The age bracket of 16 - 19 years old are such formative years and it is our duty to ensure we are providing students with the tools to be great people in whatever they go on to do with their lives. Our future plans include recognising and awarding our DEI champions, continuing to improve representation of all protected characteristics across staff and the student body and transparently share our journey.

2024

Implemented updated DEI policies from the strategy that are accessible across all platforms.

2024

Launched Creative Roots Programme

2025

Collected baseline data on the current student and staff demographics for annual DEI progress monitoring.

2025

Conduct a curriculum audit to identify areas lacking diversity and introduce multicultural perspectives. Collaborate with academics with lived experience to design DEI-centred curriculum updates for integration in the next academic year.

Recruitment audit and recommendations to ensure DEI best practice. Staff and Students-

2026

Launch a recruitment strategy to target diverse student populations within the BN1 area, prioritising outreach to underserved demographics.

Schedule in series of 'conversations with colleagues' for staff and students to facilitate conversations about global affairs and the impact within the classroom.

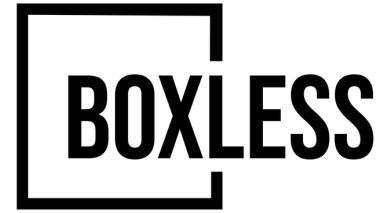
Develop and improve accessible options to ensure DEI representation across all facilities, including consideration for students with disabilities and different learning needs.

Host an annual awards program, recognising DEI achievements among students, staff and community partners.

2027

Share BN1 Arts' DEI journey through public reports and presentations, positioning the college as a leader in DEI in arts education..

Our DEI Partners



At Boxless, we believe that meaningful change begins with culture. Over the last 24 months, we've had the privilege of partnering with BN1 Arts on a shared journey to embed DEI into the fabric of their organisation. This partnership wasn't born out of compliance or box-ticking, but from a genuine ambition to align BN1 Arts' creative expression with inclusive practice, ensuring the voices behind the curtain are as diverse and empowered as those on stage.



Our Approach

We started with a listening phase. Through open, peer led discussions, cultural diagnostics, and student and staff feedback.

We helped BN1 Arts surface hidden challenges and untapped opportunities in their internal culture.

Using this learning, we mapped out how best BN1 could make impact both short term and long term.

Crucially, we didn't apply a 'one-size-fits-all' approach.

Instead, our recommendations were tailored to BN1 Arts' unique identity as a creative organisation deeply embedded in Brighton's cultural landscape.

- BN1 Arts now has a clear set of objectives co-created with staff, supported by a framework for implementation.
- Improved inclusive recruitment policies
- A dedicated and targeted recruitment strategy to increase diversity, resulting in a 20% increase in applications from underrepresented communities.
- Leadership and mid-management engagement in DEI has shifted from passive awareness to active sponsorship.
- A roadmap to continue this work over the next 2 years.

What's Next?

Together, we're building beyond a strategy, we're embedding DEI into the daily rhythm of BN1 Arts. In the coming year, we'll support the team with:

- Utilising their advisory committee to maintain momentum and monitor progress.
- A schedule of 'conversations with colleagues' sessions to keep staff engagement and education consistent.
- Reviewing and improving college values, code of behaviour and wellbeing as the world around us changes.

The next phase is about re-evaluation and re-imagining of how we continue to embed DEI throughout the college.

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has been part of our journey at BN1 Arts. Your support, dedication, and collaboration have been instrumental in our growth and success.

To Our Students.

Thank you for your passion, creativity, and commitment. You are the heart of BN1 Arts, and your achievements inspire us every day.

To Our Staff and Tutors.

Your hard work, expertise, and unwavering support continue to shape the vibrant and inclusive environment we strive for. Thank you for your dedication to excellence and for helping our students thrive.

To Our Industry Partners.

We deeply appreciate your collaboration and shared vision. Your contributions have enriched our programmes and provided invaluable opportunities for our students.

Our Supporters and Collaborators.

The Starr Trust, Culture Shift, BIMM, WaterBear, Northbrook College, ICMP, Elev8 Careers, Aldridge Foundation, Streets Accountants, BARCO, 201 Dance Company, Brighton Youth Centre, Boxless...

Your belief in our mission and continued support have helped us create meaningful experiences and opportunities for our community.

To Our Advocates and Friends.

- **BN1 Arts Patrons:** Julian Stoneman, Dame Arlene Phillips, Ron Elliston, Rob Starr MBE
- Peter Kyle MP
- Sian Berry MP
- Brighton & Hove Council
- Arts Council England
- Streetfunk CIC
- Brighton Fringe
- Theatre Royal Brighton

Thank you for championing the arts and supporting our vision to make creativity accessible to all. Your encouragement and advocacy have been invaluable.



Chichester
College
Group



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



The College of Music

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A huge thanks to everyone who came to our "Keep Creative Arts Education Free" event in March and in particular those who donated.

Additional thanks to:

Sir Rod Aldridge, Rachel Carter, David Court, Felice Ayling, Ebou Touray, Mariam Hussein, Mark Flannery, David Jones Owen, Grace Carter, Dollie Henry MBE, Norman Cook, Beverley Knight MBE, Lewis Cope, Omar Lyefook, Kellie Gnauck, Sam Cassidy, Scott Kybert, JP Omari, Briggy Smale, Jackie Alexander, Dionne Omari.

