



The Art of Belonging: Exploring the potential of cultural place-making for social inclusion of young forced migrants in Europe

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The Art of Belonging is a research project bringing together teams in Sweden and England

Project partners and stakeholders



LUNDS
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**University of
Nottingham**
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA



And representatives from the municipalities and cultural sectors of our two case study cities:



Lund



Nottingham

Cultural citizenship

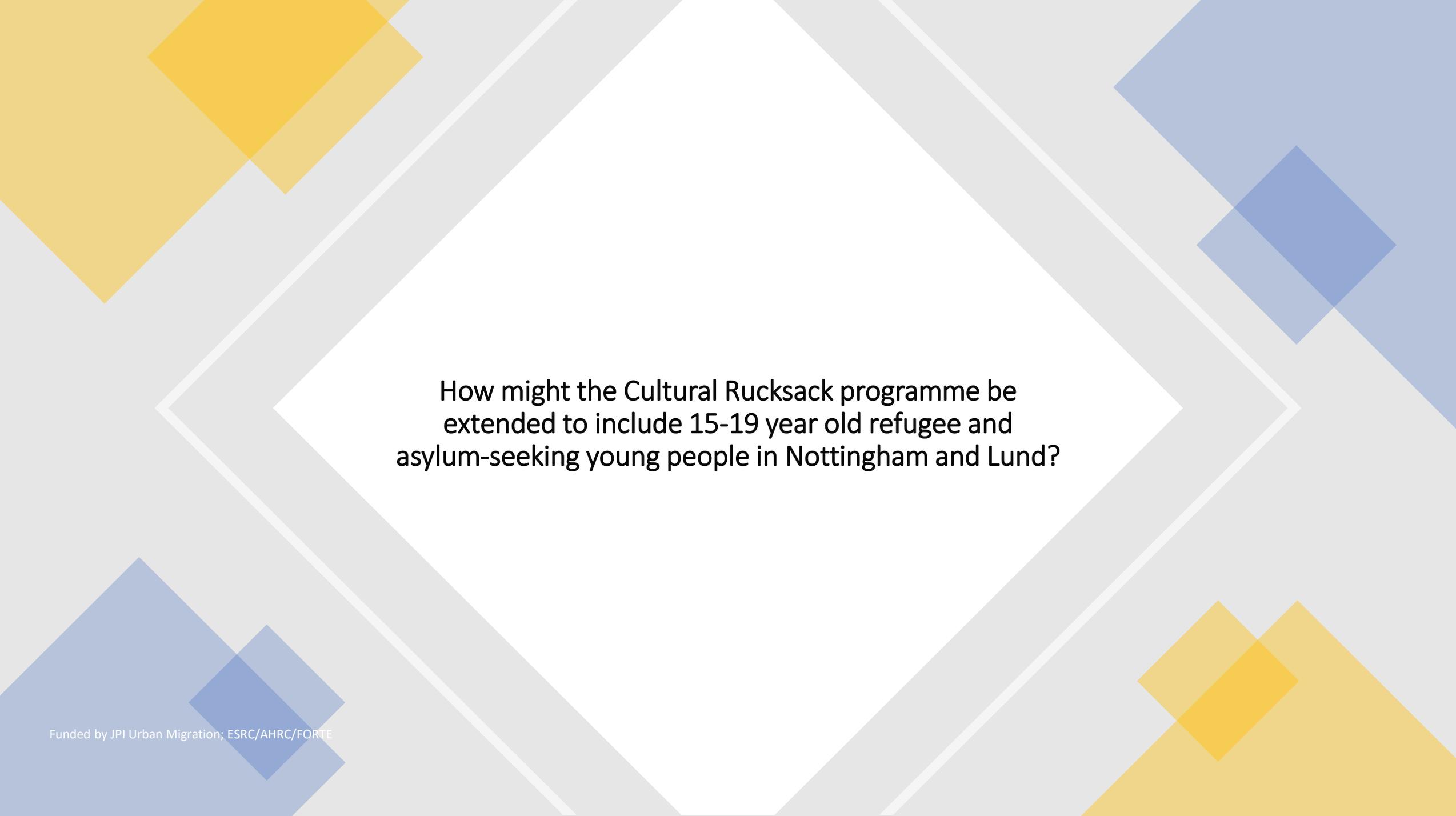
Is defined by interviewees in the project as:

- *feeling part of the whole cultural landscape and feeling that you can enhance and contribute to that cultural landscape*
- *different for every individual, partly a sense of belonging and a sense of community in which I lives, and work and has come from*
- *what you bring to the place you live in and what you can learn from that place*
- *feeling that you can connect to others and be open with others through arts and cultural activities*



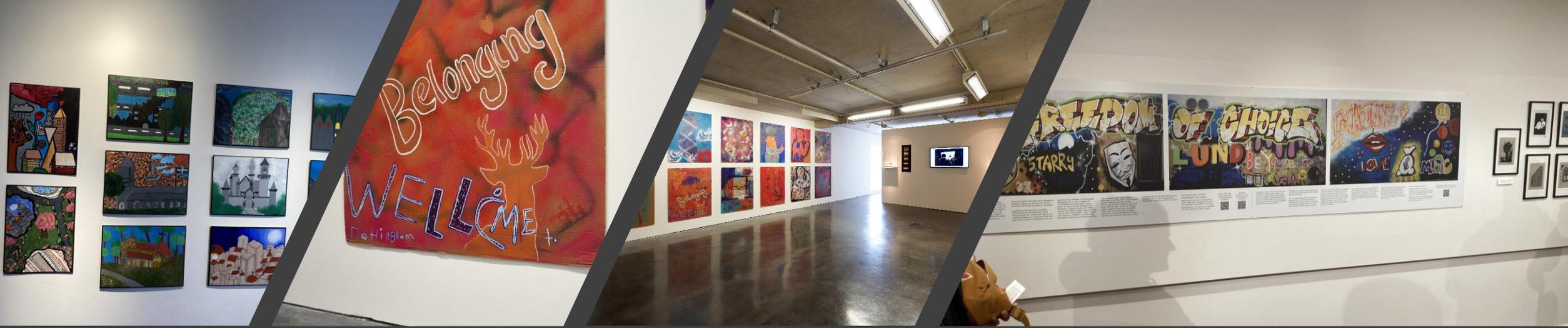
The Cultural Rucksack

An important existing initiative which links to the idea of cultural citizenship in Nottingham is the **Cultural Rucksack** programme. This brings together schools and creative organisations in the city to celebrate the heritage and cultural diversity of Nottingham with the aim of **‘ensuring young people grow up feeling connected to and valued by their city’**.



How might the Cultural Rucksack programme be extended to include 15-19 year old refugee and asylum-seeking young people in Nottingham and Lund?





The public exhibitions at Kulturen and the New Art Exchange – the importance of celebrating and recognizing

‘What people are seeking is not so much the home they left behind as a place that they feel they can change, a place in which their lives and strivings will make a difference- a place in which to create a home’ (bell hooks 2009, 221)





The Signature Pedagogies of Artists working with new arrivals

(drawing on Thomson et al, The Signature Pedagogies Project:
Final Report 2012)

Funded by JPI Urban Migration; ESRC/AHRC/FORTE

Signature pedagogies 1: The artist

- has a personalized and empathetic approach modelling kindness and respect for everyone;
- is inclusive and celebrates diversity encouraging a 'no right or wrong' attitude;
- has strong non-verbal communication, they orchestrate rather than direct the activity;
- is intuitive and relates their own personal experience to the young people often using this as a point of connection;
- values collaborative ways of working and commits to co-constructing the art with the participants based on what they individually and collectively bring to the sessions;
- is ambitious for the individuals, the group and the project.

Signature pedagogies 2: Each session

- begins with a warm welcome and personal conversations without probing into the young person's past;
- encourages the young person to celebrate something about themselves, their experiences, their culture;
- involves a brief demonstration of art technique followed by individual 1:1 time, encouraging personal self-expression;
- references relevant artworks reflecting C/culture within the city;
- allows participants to leave feeling they have accomplished something;
- involves 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi) rather than working to timed activities.

Signature pedagogies 3: Spatiality

- the sessions take place in a designated art space or in a C/culturally relevant place in the city (where they 'do' art rather than simply visit the place)
- there is provision of a range of special materials and use of many different processes
- participants move around the spaces freely, there is little obvious regulation of behaviour
- the sessions create spaces of sociality (Thomson et al, 2012: 12)
 - for the young person to talk about memories and feelings (but never forced)
 - for political debate, giving agency/control, encourages young people to use their voice, to be active citizens
 - for the young people to teach others
 - which allow for divergence from the demonstration and encourages the development of personal styles.

Signature pedagogies 4: Temporality and 'time-flexibility' (Thomson et al, 2012: 13)

There is:

- planned flexibility, for staggered arrival and departure times from the session for individuals, for interruptions as they leave for legal and health appointments;
- a focus on the lived experience of the present without probing into young person's past. A focus on the present and the future. An emphasis on what the young person wants to celebrate about their culture that allows for individual choice over sharing memories of the past;
- a flexible goal- the project evolves over time in response to the young people.